

SEPTEMBER 2026-27

THE RAIDER RUNDOWN

Horseheads Middle School Newsletter
Safety & Notifications Edition

Contact Us! (607) 739-6357 • Horseheadsdistrict.com/HHMS.cfm

WHAT'S HAPPENING

SEPTEMBER

Picture Day
9/11

Aimsweb Testing
9/15-9/16

PTO Meeting
9/22 @ 5:00-6:00pm

Open House
9/22 @ 6:00-7:00pm



WHAT'S AHEAD

OCTOBER

Conference Day
10/9 No school

Columbus Day
10/12 No School

Progress Report #1
10/14

**Halloween Dance
& Open Gym**
10/30 @ 2:15-4:00pm



Welcome Back to School

The beginning of a new school year is an exciting time for our students to see old friends and make new ones, and compare class schedules and lunchtimes. Students will have many new challenges as the year commences.

Safety and security are not usually the first thing a student thinks about when returning to school, but we want our students to be prepared in the event of any kind of emergency, so safety drills will be taught and practiced regularly.

“See Something, Say Something” is a program we utilize for students to safely and anonymously report suspicious activity. Students can email either Mr. Holloway or Mr. Hoeffner to report someone or something that is of concern to them.

This issue of *The Raider Rundown* is designed to bring awareness and important information to our families. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us at (607) 739-6357.



‘My Ride’ K-12 App

Download MY Ride K-12 mobile app to be the first to know about 2026-27 busing information and receive real-time alerts.

[Download My Ride K-12 App Parent Resource](#)



Welcome Back Raiders!

Middle School Contacts

Middle School

Main Office (607) 739-6357

Principal

Ron Holloway

Assistant Principal

Tom Hoeffner

Main Office Secretary

Ronda Smith

Attendance Secretary

Amanda Garner

Nurse: Angela Wright, RN

LPN: Lynette Palma

Guidance Office:

Secretary

Maggie Bleeker

Secretary

Kathryn Whitmarsh

School Counselors

Sarah Haskell (A-K)

Rachel Raftis (L-Z)

School Psychologist

Sara Michelucci

Social Workers

Tim Wood

Melanie Rahr



Parent Portal

Parents can use Parent Portal to check your student's grades and assignments. You can also email your student's teachers.

In the "QuickLinks" section on our website, hover over "Parent Portal Log-in". You will be directed to complete a short form online. If you have questions, please call Registrar Genie Connel at 739-5601 x4251 or email gconnel@horseheadsdistrict.com

Checking your student's grades on Parent Portal?

URL for computer browser:

<https://schooltool.horseheadsdistrict.com>

URL for the mobile app:

<https://gst1.schooltool.com/horseheads>



Relocation Reminder for Parents

If you move within the district, we require two proofs of residency when you submit the address change for your child(ren). Accepted forms of proof are

- Bank contract or mortgage agreement showing purchase of home with name and address
- Signed rent or lease agreement with landlord's name, address and telephone number, or DSS processed landlord statement
- Most recent utility bill (phone, gas, electric)
- Deposit receipt for gas, electric or phone service start-up
- Driver's license or State ID card with picture showing current district address
- Currently active bank account/checkbook statement with name and address imprinted (bank may be contacted to verify existence of account)
- Payroll stub with address

Please contact Genie Connel, central registrar, with questions @739-5601 x4251

Welcome Back Raiders!

School safety is the job of the entire school community. This effort requires leadership and coordination by school administration and involvement and participation from all sectors of the school community. Planning, conducting drills and participating in exercises with law enforcement, fire, emergency officials and other members of the school community ensures a comprehensive, unified approach to school emergency response planning. Building relationships and community engagement are vital to building a safer school community.”

- From the New York State Guide to School Emergency Response Planning, September, 2020

Horseheads Middle School adheres to the comprehensive safety plan developed by New York State designed to help school districts prepare and plan for varied emergency circumstances. Advance planning with emergency responders in our district ensures that we are ready to provide an appropriate and timely response to emergencies. Students are drilled on procedures and policies throughout the school year. Along with the usual fire drills, other drills such as hold-in-place, lock out and lockdown will prepare students for an emergency occurring inside or outside of the building. Families will receive notice within one week prior to each drill. Students are taught building safety procedures so they are able to respond in a calm and orderly manner, should an emergency situation arise. In the event of a school emergency, please refer to district communications via our all-call or auto-email systems. We ask you not to call or come to the school unless requested to do so in our communication. We will share information as soon as we are able.

Important Contact Information

- Safe Schools Line - 607-795-2044
- Mr. Holloway - Principal - rholloway@horseheadsdistrict.com
- Mr. Hoeffner - Assistant Principal - thoeffner@horseheadsdistrict.com
- Middle School Main Office - 607-739-6357
- Middle School Website - <http://www.horseheadsdistrict.com/HHMS.cfm>
- Horseheads District Phone Number - 607-795-5601
- Horseheads District Website - <http://www.horseheadsdistrict.com>
- Athletic Office Phone Number - 607-739-5601 x4254
- Athletic Office Website - <http://horseheadsdistrict.vom/athletics.cfm>

Health Office Information

School Nurse: Mrs. Wright, RN

LPN: Ms. Palma



Important Reminder

New York state requires all **incoming 7th-grade students receive one dose of the Meningococcal Vaccine prior to entering the 7th-grade school year.** Your child will not be able to attend school beginning **9/22/26** without proof of immunization. If you are new to the district, a copy of your student's immunization record is required within 14 days of entry.

The Health Office is available to support students who are not feeling well, require first aid, or have health-related needs during the school day. Any accidents, injuries, or illnesses that occur on school grounds must be reported to the nurse immediately.

Medication: To administer medication during school hours, a written order from a NYS licensed healthcare provider is required. This applies to both prescription and over-the-counter medication.

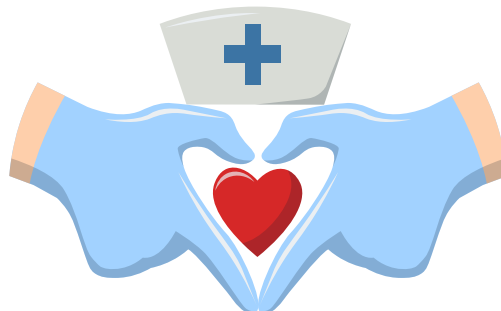
- All medications must be brought to school by an adult in their original, properly-labeled containers. Over-the-counter medications must be in their original packaging.
- Students are not permitted to carry medications unless there is a self-carry order from their healthcare provider and approval from the school nurse. *We encourage self-carry orders for emergency medications such as inhalers and EpiPens to ensure quick access when needed.*
- Medication orders must be renewed each school year.

Physicals: New York State requires physical examinations for students in grades Pre-K/K, 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11, for new students entering the district, for participation in athletics, and when requesting working papers. A physical completed within 12 months of the start of the school year is acceptable.

- **All 7th-grade students must submit a physical dated September 8, 2025, or later.**
- Physicals must be completed by a healthcare provider licensed in New York State or by a provider practicing within 30 miles of the NYS border.
- All physicals must be documented on the official New York State School Health Examination form.

Screenings: State-mandated health screenings are conducted during the school year. All 7th-grade students will be screened for vision and hearing. In addition, 7th-grade girls will be screened for scoliosis. If a screening indicates the need for further follow-up, parents/guardians will be notified in writing.

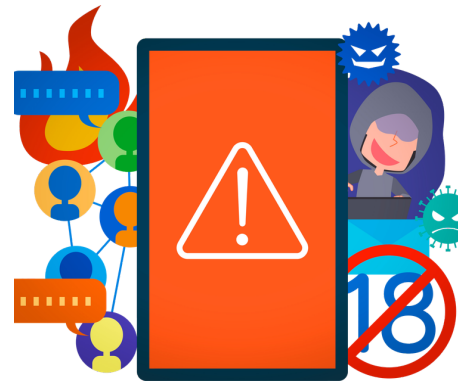
Emergency Contact Form: At the beginning of the school year, an Emergency Contact Form will be sent home. This form includes space to indicate any health conditions and medications. **Please complete, sign, and return this form promptly so the school has current information to support your child's health and safety.**



FBI Buffalo Presents:



DIGITAL DANGERS



Behind the Screens: The Hidden Risks Facing our Youth

a virtual presentation by FBI Buffalo in collaboration with the FBI Buffalo Citizens Academy Alumni Association

SAVE THE DATE
NOVEMBER 19, 6-8PM

FORMAT

In-person WATCH GROUPS hosted by
WNY schools

REGISTRATION

Enroll your school to receive more information
by emailing BUFOUTREACH@FBI.GOV

Enrolling ensures your school will receive future
registration information; it does not commit
your school to hosting a Watch Group

AUDIENCE

Parents, educators, and administrators from
K-12 schools, school resource officers, and law
enforcement in Western New York.

The 17 counties of WNY that FBI Buffalo covers
are Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua,
Chemung, Erie, Genesee, Livingston, Monroe,
Niagara, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Wayne,
Wyoming, and Yates.

DETAILS

Digital Dangers is a virtual presentation
designed to inform parents, educators,
and school communities about today's
most pressing online safety concerns
and provide resources for parents and
educators to use at home and in the
classroom.

Join us for this virtual online safety event
exploring how seemingly harmless
online interactions can turn into threats
of manipulation and violence against our
youth.

For this virtual presentation, FBI Buffalo
invites schools in Western New York to
host in-person Watch Groups, where
parents and educators from participating
schools can view the presentation and
be empowered to help prevent the
children in their lives from becoming
victims.

Questions? Contact bufoutreach@fbi.gov



FBI Buffalo Citizens Academy Alumni Association is a nonprofit organization
separate and apart from the FBI

Preventive, Proactive & Responsive

“The safety of our students is paramount”

Dr. Tom Douglas, Horseheads District Superintendent

Welcome Back Students

Welcome back students, parents and guardians! We hope you all had a wonderful summer break and are refreshed and ready for a new school year. To paraphrase the above quote from Dr. Douglas, student safety is our number one priority here at the middle school. Students can only learn if they feel safe and secure within these walls. Our administration continues to work diligently to promote safety each and every day.

We encourage you to remain involved in your students' education during their early adolescent years. Student success increases when schools and families work together. Therefore, please contact us with any questions, concerns, or suggestions as we work together to provide valuable learning opportunities for our students.

- Mr. Holloway, Principal

-Mr. Hoeffner, Assistant Principal

Safety Precautions at the Middle School

Entrances to all District Buildings

All school buildings have

- School doors that are locked the entire day.
- Door locks that can be programmed to unlock for special events and lock again after the event.

Raptor System

All school visitors are required to provide their government-issued driver's license or other government issued ID card. The Main Office secretaries will scan the license or ID and produce a badge with the visitor's name, photo and where they are visiting within the building.

Building Safety Team

The Building Safety Team at the Middle School consists of teachers, the school nurse, the SRO and our administration.

The mission of the Building Safety Team is to examine, plan and implement safety precautions and plans to keep our students safe in the middle school building.

Preventive, Proactive & Responsive

Safety Precautions at the Middle School

Medical Emergency Response Team

The purpose of the Medical Emergency Response Team at the Middle School is to quickly respond to medical emergencies in our building. A medical emergency is anything that requires an immediate response from trained personnel. Each team member is assigned a specific role to ensure a rapid, coordinated response.

District Bus Garage

All Horseheads School District busses have

- Up-to-date cameras, so footage from a run may be used to verify a complaint.
- Bus numbers painted on their roofs for air surveillance.
- Updated 2-way radios on board to communicate with the garage and other busses and schools
- All the latest safety and technology on board.
- My Ride K-12 is an app designed for parents to monitor their student's bus in real time.
- Get the app here: [My Ride K-12](#)

HMS Emergency Response Plan

The Horseheads Middle School Building Safety Team has created a multi-faceted response plan for potentially dangerous situations. Our plan is aligned with the Horseheads School District Safety Plan and is developed with the latest information related to school safety. Our teams are trained and committed to ensuring students and staff remain safe at school. Cooperating with local first responders is essential for building safety. Therefore, our building safety plan is reviewed, updated and shared with local first responders on an annual basis.

Parents, please

Reinforce the importance of all safety drills with your students. Paying attention and following directions are crucial for everyone's safety. Questions or concerns related to school building safety can be directed to Principal Ron Holloway at 739-6357.

if you
SEE | **SAY**
something something

Call The Safe Schools Line

607-795-2044 or 1-800-305-4984

Mr. Holloway

rholloway@horseheadsdistrict.com

Mr. Hoeffner

thoeffner@horseheadsdistrict.com



Preventive, Proactive & Responsive

Social/Emotional Health Services



In addition to their teachers and teaching assistants, students at Horseheads Middle School have access to staff members trained in social/emotional health services. Although our training does not equip us to conduct in-depth counseling sessions, we are able to assist students and families when social and emotional health needs arise.

We encourage students and families to utilize our school counselors, social workers, school psychologists, school nurses, school resource officer and school administrators whenever a social or emotional health need arises. We can all be reached by calling 739-6357.



School Counselors: Miss Haskell (A-K) and Miss Raftis (L-Z)

School Psychologist: Ms. Michelucci

Social Worker: Tim Wood

Assistant Social Worker: Ms. Rahr

School Nurse: Mrs. Wright, RN and Ms. Palma, LPN

School Administrators: Mr. Holloway (Principal) and Mr. Hoeffner (Assistant Principal)

School Resource Officer (SRO): Officer Black

Educating the Whole Child

Horseheads Middle School consists of dedicated, knowledgeable and passionate educators whose job it is to **Explore** ways to **Empower** students to **Excel** academically, socially and emotionally.

As adults, we know we do not perform our best when we are stressed, sick or depressed. We cannot expect any different when it comes to our children. Negative emotions and experiences interfere with a student's ability to learn. When students fear failure, doubt themselves or suffer with stress, they are less likely to succeed academically, socially and emotionally.

It is our goal to create a positive building climate where students feel safe and encouraged to participate in their education. Our community also plays a vital role in helping our students succeed. Participation in school programs and supporting our sports and academic events encourages our students to excel academically, socially and emotionally.

Our Parent-Teacher Organization, PTO, is dependent on community involvement to provide our students with various activities and supports throughout the year. We encourage you to join our PTO and assist with the PTO-sponsored events throughout the year. You can email Ron Holloway at rholloway@horseheadsdistrict.com if you would like to volunteer.

Parent Information

What Kind of Mindset do you Have?

Here at Horseheads Middle School, we strive to build confidence in all of our students, challenge them when they fail, and teach them how to develop a strong work ethic. All students have abilities; we work with them to stretch their minds to see what they can push themselves to accomplish. Effort alone is not enough to develop or strengthen a growth mindset. Trying new strategies, learning who to ask or where to go for direction when stuck are what build a successful student. As the great Albert Einstein said, *“Anyone who has never made a mistake has never tried anything new.”*

What Kind of Mindset Do You Have?



I can learn anything I want to.
When I'm frustrated, I persevere.
I want to challenge myself.
When I fail, I learn.
Tell me I try hard.
If you succeed, I'm inspired.
My effort and attitude determine everything.



I'm either good at it, or I'm not.
When I'm frustrated, I give up.
I don't like to be challenged.
When I fail, I'm no good.
Tell me I'm smart.
If you succeed, I feel threatened.
My abilities determine everything.

Created by: Reid Wilson @wayfarerpath © 2015 Icon from: thenounproject.com

“If parents want to give their children a gift, the best thing they can do is to teach their children to love challenges, be intrigued by mistakes, enjoy effort, and keep on learning. That way, their children don’t have to be slaves of praise. They will have a lifelong way to build and repair their own confidence.”

Carol S. Dweck

Ms. Dweck is the Lewis and Virginia Eaton
Professor of Psychology at Stanford University

Parents/Guardians & Students' Responsibilities

School Supplies

We are asking students to come with materials they feel will help them be successful. However, the following items will be required:

- Backpack or other bag
- Three-ring binders: We suggest one binder for AM and one for PM classes
- Folders and dividers
- Loose-leaf paper or spiral notebook
- Composition notebook
- Dry erase markers
- Index cards
- Earbuds
- Pens, pencils and highlighters

Please Note: Some teachers may require additional supplies. Students will receive a district-provided laptop for their individual academic use. More detailed information will be shared at the beginning of the school year.

Grades

Parents will be informed of student progress in two ways. A Progress Report is sent home with each student at the five-week point of each marking period.

A Report Card is sent home with each student at the end of the ten-week marking period.

We also encourage parents to sign up for Parent Portal.

Textbooks / Laptops

Textbooks and a laptop are loaned to students for their use during the school year.

Be responsible by keeping them in good condition. You will be billed for intentional damage to textbooks or laptops.

Repeated accidental damage may also result in a bill.

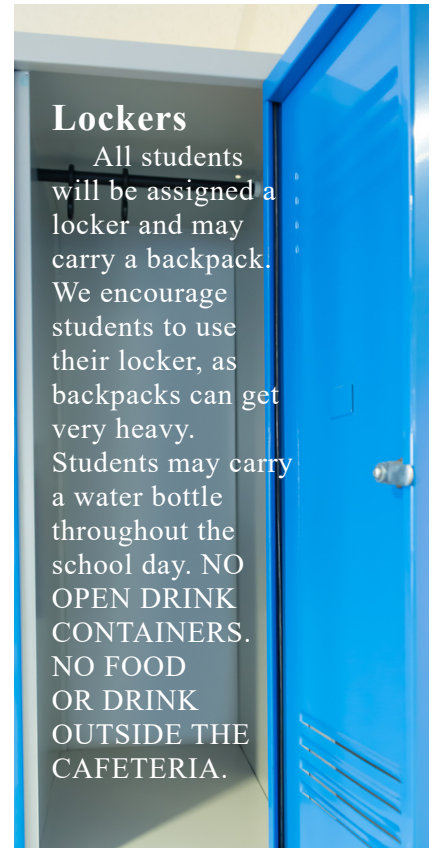


Code of Conduct

Our Code of Conduct can be found on the district website.

Lockers

All students will be assigned a locker and may carry a backpack. We encourage students to use their locker, as backpacks can get very heavy. Students may carry a water bottle throughout the school day. NO OPEN DRINK CONTAINERS. NO FOOD OR DRINK OUTSIDE THE CAFETERIA.





Is Your Backpack Too Heavy?

Your backpack should weigh no more than 10% of your body weight. (Weigh yours and see how you do!) You don't have to suffer all day with back or shoulder fatigue. So what can you do to lighten the load?

1. Wear your backpack properly
2. Reduce the weight of your backpack
3. Use your locker!

How to Wear It?

No! Too low!

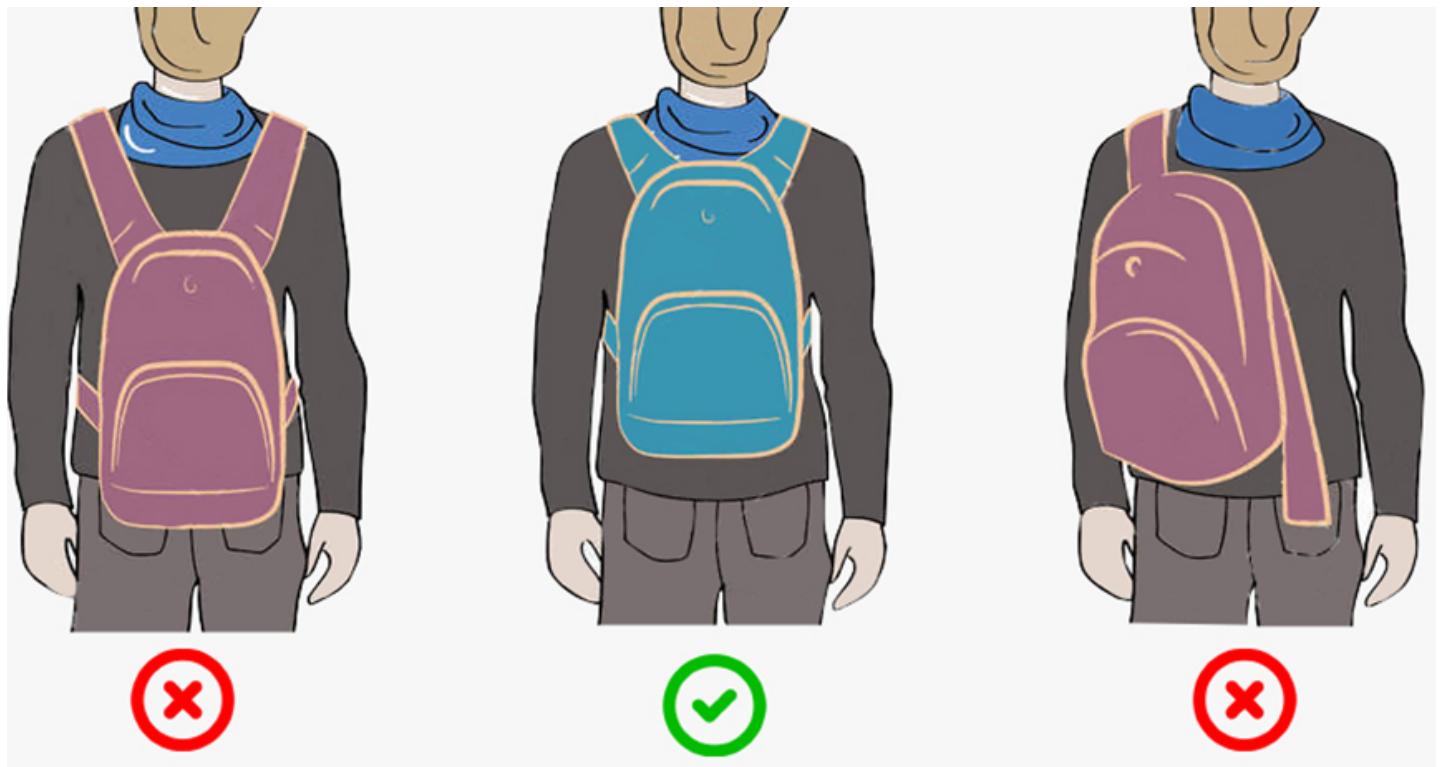
Puts weight on your lower back, where you are weaker.

Yes! Just right!

Puts weight higher on your back, where you are stronger.

No! Not good!

Wear both straps to distribute the weight to avoid pain.



Ergonomics, or Human Engineering

Ergonomics, in its simplest form, is the study of how the human body and its environment work together for an efficient outcome (i.e., is your chair the right height? What about your desk and computer? Do you have eye fatigue? Are you in pain while studying or working?)

Adjusting the items you use (furniture, desks, computers, etc.) in the spaces you frequent will result in more productivity and a happier you! Visit <https://ergo-plus.com> for more information.

Required Notices

Parents' Bill of Rights Relating to Student Data

The District, in compliance with Education Law 2-d, hereby establishes the following Parents' Bill of Rights in regard to student data:

1. Parents/guardians or eligible students have a right to inspect and review the student's education records;
2. Parents/guardians or eligible students have the right to request that records be amended to ensure that they are not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights;
3. Parents/guardians or eligible students have the right to consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) authorizes disclosure without consent; and
4. Parents/guardians or eligible students have the right to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education alleging failure of the district to comply with FERPA and its regulations. Complaints may be sent to:

Family Policy Compliance Office

U.S. Department of Education

600 Independence Avenue SW

Washington, DC 20202-4605.

Cross-ref: Student Records Policy and Regulation 5500 and 5500-R

Ref: Education Law Section 2-d(3)

Approved: September 25, 2014

Revised: July 23, 2018

Teacher Qualifications

Pursuant to the federal No Child Left Behind Act, parents and guardians have the right to request and receive information about the professional qualification of their children's classroom teachers.

Parents wishing such information about their child(ren)'s classroom teachers should contact the building principal.

Special Education Services

Chapter 434 of the New York State Education Law requires school districts to notify parents or persons in parental relation of their rights regarding the referral and evaluation of their child for the purposes of special education services or programs.

This information can be found on our district website (www.horseheadsdistrict.com) or on the New York State Education Department website (www.nysed.gov) in "A Parent's Guide to Special Education." If you have further questions, please contact Kelly Squires, director of Student Services, at 607-739-5601 x4300.

APPR of Teachers and Principals

The District is required to implement Annual Professional Performance Reviews (APPR) of most teachers and principals.

The outcome of the APPR is that each teacher and principal subject to APPR this year will receive a composite evaluation score between 0 and 100. A score of 0-64 means that the teacher or principal is rated Ineffective, a score of 65-74 means that the teacher or principal is rated as Developing, a score of 75-90 means that the teacher or principal is Effective, and a score of 91-100 means that the teacher or principal is Highly Effective.

You may request the final composite rating for the teachers and principals in the school building to which your child is assigned for the current school year by contacting the building principal of your child's school.

Further, if you require additional explanation of the ratings for the teachers and principals, you may contact Caitlin DeFilippo, director of Human Resources, at 607-739-5601, x4211.

Required Notices

Notifications of Rights Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

This is to advise you of your rights with respect to student records pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). FERPA is a federal law designed to protect the privacy of student records. The law gives parents/guardians and students over 18 years of age (referred to in the law as “eligible students”) the following rights:

1. The right to inspect and review the student’s education records within 45 days of the day the district receives a request for access.

Parents/guardians or eligible students should submit to the building principal a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records that the parent/guardian or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading.

Parents/guardians or eligible students may ask the district to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading by writing the principal, clearly identifying the part of the record they want changed and specifying why it is inaccurate or misleading.

If the district decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent/guardian or eligible student, the district will notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent/guardian or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the school board; a person or company with whom the district has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent/guardian or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the district discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the district to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 600 Independence Avenue SW Washington, DC 20202-4605.

Notification of Directory Information Designations

In addition to the rights outlined above, FERPA also gives the school district the option of designating certain categories of student information as “directory information”. Directory information includes a student’s name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major course of study, participation in school activities or sports, weight and height if a member of an athletic team, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, most recent school attended, class schedule, photograph, including video recordings, email address and class roster.

You may object to the release of any or all of this “directory information”; however, you must do so in writing within 10 business days of receiving this notice. If we do not receive a written objection, we will be authorized to release this information without your consent.

Required Notices

Non-discrimination Notification

The Horseheads Central School District offers educational programs without regard to race, color, national origin, creed, religion, marital status, military status, sex, sexual orientation, age, gender identity, predisposing genetic characteristic or disability, and provides equal access to applicable groups under the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act. Inquiries regarding this policy may be made to Caitlin DeFilippo, Title IX/DASA Coordinator, and Co-Civil Rights Compliance Officer; Anthony Gill, Co-Civil Rights Compliance Officer; or Kelly Squires, Section 504 Coordinator, Horseheads Central School District, One Raider Lane, Horseheads, NY 14845, (607) 739-5601.

This policy of non-discrimination includes access by students to educational programs, counseling services, course offerings, and activities, as well as recruitment and appointment of employees and employment pay, benefits, advancement and/or termination.

The following person(s) has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies:

Caitlin DeFilippo
Director of Human Resources
cdefilippo@horseheadsdistrict.com
2 Hibbard Road
Horseheads Central School District
Horseheads, NY 14845
(607) 739-5601

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Civil Rights
LBJ Department of Education Building
400 Maryland Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20202-1100
(800) 421-3481

District Dignity Act Coordinator

The Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC) for the Horseheads Central School District is Caitlin DeFilippo, director of Human Resources. If there is a complaint regarding discrimination, harassment or bullying of any student, the complaint should be filed with Ms. DeFilippo, at 2 Hibbard Road Horseheads, NY 14845; 607-739-5601 x 4211 or at cdefilippo@horseheadsdistrict.com.

Middle School Dignity Act Coordinator

The Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC) for the Horseheads Middle School is Ron Holloway, building principal. If there is a complaint regarding discrimination, harassment or bullying of any student, the complaint should be filed with Mr. Holloway at 950 Sing Sing Rd., Horseheads, NY 14845; 739-6357 x 3640 or at rholloway@horseheadsdistrict.com.

Notice

The Horseheads Central School District offers educational programs without regard to gender, race, color, national origin, or disability. Inquiries regarding this policy may be made to Caitlin DeFilippo, Title IX/DASA Coordinator, and Co-Civil Rights Compliance Officer; Anthony Gill, Co-Civil Rights Compliance Officer; or Kelly Squires, Section 504 Coordinator, Horseheads Central School District, One Raider Lane, Horseheads, NY 14845, (607) 739-5601.

Required Notices

Network and Internet Acceptable Use

The Horseheads Central School District Board of Education considers computer access to the Internet to be a valuable tool for education. Staff and student uses of the Internet must be in support of education and consistent with the purposes of the Horseheads Central School District. This access, through the District network, should be used to support and enhance instruction and professional development.

Because access to the Internet provides connections to systems located all over the world, staff, students, and parents of students must understand that neither the Horseheads Central School District nor any individual District staff member controls the content available on these systems. Some of the information is controversial and may be offensive. The Horseheads Central School District does not condone the use of such material.

The Horseheads Central School District Board of Education considers network and Internet use to be a privilege not a right and that use entails responsibility. Staff Internet use is currently available via individual accounts. Student Internet use may be available as well. CIPA compliant Internet filtering software will not eliminate the requirement to act responsibly. All District users have a responsibility to use the network in an appropriate and responsible manner following the rules set forth in this policy.

Failure to adhere to the regulations accompanying this policy will result in revocation of access privileges and may result in disciplinary action.

Users should expect only limited privacy in the contents of their personal files on the District system. Routine maintenance and monitoring of the system may lead to the discovery that users have violated this policy, the District / Building Discipline code or the law.

An individual account search may be conducted to determine if a user has violated this policy, the District Code of Conduct, or the law. The investigation will be reasonable and related to the suspected violation.

Cross Ref.: Policy 4526.1, Email Acceptable Use

Approved: July 1, 2001

Revised and Approved: November 26, 2001; August 4, 2003; April 2, 2007, April 24, 2019

Promotion and Retention of Students

It is essential that each child experience both challenge and success from school activities. To this end, the district will make every effort to place each student in the most appropriate learning level for a successful educational experience. Early Identification/Intervention Classroom teachers are expected to make every effort to identify early those students at risk of failing. The Building Principal and the parents/guardian must be notified promptly if retention is anticipated, and a special support program shall be designed for each child identified as in danger of failing. Such support services may include, but are not limited to, individualized assistance before, during or after the school day; remedial classes; a change in instructional treatment, and, where appropriate, referral to the Committee on Special Education for evaluation. Promotion/Retention No student will be retained without an appropriate educational plan defining what will occur that is instructionally different for the student. Once the educational plan has been implemented, the student will be monitored regularly. The educational plan will be revised until the student demonstrates acceptable performance.

The following provisions shall apply to promotion and placement decisions:

- No student promotion or placement decision for grades three through eight shall be based solely on student performance on the ELA or Mathematics State assessments.
- Student assessment scores may be considered as a measure of student performance only if the decision-making process uses multiple measures of assessments and data in addition to the State assessments and the State assessments are only a minor factor in the promotion/placement decision.
- In making promotion and placement decisions, the school will consider in class performance, teacher observation, homework, input of the parent, social and emotional needs as well as any other applicable measures, other than State assessments.
- The final decision regarding placement and promotion is the decision of the building administrator.

Ref: Education Law §305(47); §1709(3); 8 NYCRR Sections 100.3(b)(2)(iv), 100.4 (b)(2)(vii), 100.4 (e)(6) Isqwith v. Levitt, 285 App. Div. 833; 137 N.Y.S.2d 497 (1955) Matter of Eckert, 13 EDR 270 (1979) Op. Counsel, 1 EDR 775 (1952) Approved: July 1, 2001

Revised and Approved: October 23, 2014; November 20, 2014; April 18, 2018; March 02, 2021.

Required Notices

Pesticide Application

New York State Education Law Section 409-H, effective July 1, 2001, requires all public and nonpublic elementary and secondary schools to provide written notification to all persons in parental relation, faculty and staff, regarding the potential use of pesticides periodically throughout the school year.

The Horseheads School District is required to maintain a registry of persons in parental relation, faculty and staff who wish to receive 48-hour prior written notification of certain pesticide applications. The following pesticide applications are not subject to prior notification requirements:

- A school remains unoccupied for a continuous 72 hours following an application
- Anti-microbial products
- Nonvolatile rodenticides in tamper resistant bait stations in areas inaccessible to children
- Nonvolatile insecticidal baits in tamper resistant bait stations in areas inaccessible to children
- Boric acid and di-sodium octaborate tetrahydrate
- The application of EPA designated biopesticides
- The application of EPA designated exempt materials under Title 40, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 152.25

The use of aerosol products with a directed spray in containers of 18 fluid ounces or less when used to protect individuals from an imminent threat from stinging and biting insects, including venomous spiders, bees, wasps and hornets. In the event of an emergency application necessary to protect against an imminent threat to human health, a good-faith effort will be made to supply written notification to those on the 48-hour prior notification registry.

If you would like to receive 48-hour prior notification of pesticide applications that are scheduled to occur in your school, please complete the attached form and return it to Tony Stager, the Horseheads School District pesticide representative at: Horseheads School District, Facilities Services, 507 Fletcher Street, Horseheads, NY 14845. You may also fax this form to (607)795-2595.

Please note: Four times per year via newsletter or equivalent, a written announcement concerning impending pesticide applications, pesticide use, “emergency” applications and any other associated pesticide use will be provided. This will occur at the beginning of the school year, at the end of the winter recess, the end of the spring recess and the end of the school year. Please feel free to contact Tony Stager at the District Safety Office at 739-5601 ext. 4270 if you have any questions or require further information concerning these requirements.

Forty-eight Hour Pesticide Application Prior Notification Form

Is email an appropriate method for notifying you of an impending pesticide application? Yes/No

If not, you will receive a brief notification letter 48 hours prior to an impending pesticide application. Every effort will be made to ensure the notification reaches you 48 hours (or more) in advance of the pesticide application. This time may vary slightly due to postal conditions beyond the control of the district.

Horseheads School District Request for Pesticide Application Notification

School Building (or field) _____

Your Name & Address _____

Phone or Cell Phone _____

Email Address _____

Return to the Main Office, or mail to Horseheads Middle School, 950 Sing Sing Road, Horseheads, NY 14845.

Required Notices

Student Device Loan Agreement

Student Device Loan Agreement for 2026-2027 School Year

This laptop should only be used for educational purposes and must be returned if the student moves out of district or at the end of the year. Failure to return the device may result in the district issuing an invoice for the laptop, or reporting it lost or stolen to law enforcement.

The Horseheads Central School District is providing students with a laptop and power cord for the 2026-2027 school year. Read this Student Device Loan Agreement very carefully and be sure you fully understand the expectations, as you are responsible for this device.

Safety and Security

- I understand that this device includes tracking software that will report its location to the district.
- I understand that this device includes a web filter that is compliant with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). This does NOT guarantee that all objectionable content will be blocked.
- I understand that this device includes a webcam and that the webcam will only be used for instructional purposes.
- I understand that there is no expectation of privacy for internet activity conducted on this district- issued device, and that search terms and browsing history may be monitored and reviewed by District Network Administrators.

Using the Computer at Home

- Students should protect their device from extreme heat or cold.
- Devices should never be left in a car, even if the car is locked.
- Students should avoid eating or drinking while using their device or use their device near others who are eating and drinking.
- Heavy objects should never be placed or stacked on top of the device. Objects include books, musical instruments, sports equipment, etc.
- Students should use care when plugging in and unplugging the power cord and headphones.
- It is advised, when at home, the device should always be used under adult supervision or in a common family location, such as kitchen, living room, dining room, etc.
- If the device is lost or stolen, parents/guardians should immediately report the loss or theft to the local police and school administration within 2 days.
- If the device is damaged or not working properly, it must be turned into the school for repair or replacement. Parents/guardians are NOT authorized to attempt repairs themselves or contract with any other individual or business for the repair of the device.

Equipment

The Horseheads Central School District retains the sole right of possession of the student device and related equipment. The student device will be issued to students according to the guidelines set forth in this document. School District staff retain the right to collect and/or inspect the student device at any time and to alter, add or delete installed software or hardware.

(Cont.)

Required Notices

Student Device Loan Agreement

Student Device Loan Agreement for 2026-2027 School Year

Authorized Use and Modification of Equipment

The student is permitted to personalize certain settings on the assigned student device to support their learning and work style (e.g., setting links on the desktop) or as directed by a classroom teacher. The student is not permitted to install or remove software, add decals or other decorative materials, or otherwise alter the assigned device. Students may not attach, install, or use any hardware peripheral, software application, or online service that requires administrative installation or configuration, modifies device security settings, or interferes with district management, monitoring, or content-filtering systems. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to, unauthorized peripherals, encryption tools, VPNs, proxy services, anonymization services, or any other technology that circumvents or attempts to circumvent district security, monitoring, content-filtering, or device-management controls.

Damage, Loss, or Theft of Equipment

In the event of damage, loss, or theft, the incident must be reported to the school immediately. The District may provide coverage for certain manufacturer defects or accidental damage; however, damage resulting from negligence, misuse, or abuse is not covered. A School Administrator and the Technology Director will review each incident to determine the cause of the damage and any resulting responsibility. If the student device is damaged through neglect or abuse, or is lost and not recovered, the student and/or parent/guardian may be held financially responsible for the cost of repair or replacement, as determined by the District.

Standards for Personal Student Device Care

Student Responsibilities:

- Do not let anyone else use the student device.
- Horseheads Central School District's Acceptable Use/Technology Policy and Code of Conduct always apply to the use of the student device.

General Care:

- Do not do anything to the student device that will permanently alter it in any way. This includes accessing and making changes to the BIOS.
- Do not remove any serial numbers or identification placed on the student device.
- Keep the equipment clean. For example, do not eat or drink while using the student device.

Screen Care:

- Clean the screen with soft, dry anti-static cloth or with a screen cleaner designed specifically for LCD type screens only.

Weather / Text Messaging Services from the District

Information about Emergency School Closings/Delays

Schools are closed when the weather makes it impossible to have reasonable attendance or when the schools or vehicles would not be able to operate safely. The school day is delayed when inclement weather conditions improve by early morning. Inclement weather may include snow, ice, and freezing temperatures. If the school day is delayed, buses will run and schools will open two hours later than the usual time.

The district announces school closings and delays in a variety of ways:

- Text messaging – Parents/guardians can receive a text message if schools are closed or delayed by opting in to our text messaging service through SchoolMessenger. To opt in, text Y or Yes to 67587. You will receive a text response confirming that you are registered for texting.
- District website at www.horseheadsdistrict.com
- District Facebook pages (the district and all seven schools have pages)
- Twitter - @HhdsSchools
- Local television and radio stations:
- TV - WENY, WETM, Spectrum Cable News
- Radio – WELM 1410AM, WNKI 106.1FM/WPGI 100.9FM, WENY 1230AM/ MagicFM 92.7FM/WGMM 98.7

Note: Television and radio stations also put closing/delay information on their websites. Please do not call the radio/TV stations or the district's Transportation Office.

Important notes about school closings/delays:

- There may be a time when any of these means of communication do not work due to Internet or other issues, so we ask that you check more than one of our communication methods to determine if school is in regular session or not for that day.
- If schools are closed, they will remain closed all day for scheduled activities, including remedial programs, extra-curricular activities, use of facilities by non-school groups, and evening programs.
- When school is delayed, there is no supervision for students until schools open two hours later than the usual time, so parents should not drop their children off at school until they open. Additionally, on school delays, there is no breakfast served.
- On school delays, prekindergarten begins at 10:30am.
- If a storm develops after school begins, usual procedure is **NOT** to close school early. This allows time for highway crews to plow and sand the roads and has proved to be less disruptive and confusing than attempting to send students home early.

Text Messaging Service

The Horseheads School District uses the SchoolMessenger system to deliver text messages straight to your mobile phone with important information about school closings, safety alerts, and more.

You can participate in this service by sending “Y” or “YES” by text to our school’s short code number, 67587.

You can also opt out of these messages at any time by simply replying to one of our messages with “Stop”.

SchoolMessenger is compliant with the Student Privacy Pledge™, so you can rest assured that your information is safe and will never be given or sold to anyone.

**Opt-In
from your
mobile
phone
now!**



**Just Send
“Y” or “Yes”
to 67587**

School/District Communication

Our schools publish newsletters monthly or every other month. The district has an annual budget newsletter and other communications shared as needed. These will be sent by email and are available online.

The online district calendar can be found here:
<https://www.horseheadsdistrict.com/fullcalendar.cfm>.
It is updated regularly. Calendar information is also shared in school and district newsletters.

Use of Student Photos

If you do **NOT** want your child to be photographed or videotaped for school publications or by the media, please complete the form below and return to your student's school.

Throughout the year, our school and district may photograph, videotape, and/or interview students for its publications or broadcasts, which include school and district newsletters, videos, and social media. Additionally, local newspapers and TV stations often attend school events and photograph, videotape or interview students about events and issues. These stories will also appear on the media's websites and social media platforms.

Note that we will still publish student photographs in school yearbooks.

Student Photos

I DO NOT want to have my child photographed or videotaped while in school.

Student's Name _____

School _____ Grade _____ Date _____

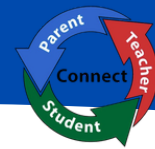
Parent/Guardian Name _____

Parent Signature _____

Character Trait of the Month: **RESPECT**

Be courteous and polite. Judge all people on their merits and abilities. Be tolerant, appreciative and accepting of individual differences. Don't abuse, demean or mistreat anyone. Don't use, manipulate, exploit or take advantage of others.

Parents/Guardians & Students' Responsibilities



Being a Blue Raider

The Horseheads Middle School faculty and staff are committed to promoting academic, developmental, behavioral and social growth in our students. We encourage parents to help us achieve this goal by supporting our efforts. The responsibility for this growth does ultimately rest with each and every student. Below is a list of characteristics of a middle school Blue Raider:

- Blue Raiders come to school and class prepared, on time and ready to learn.
- Blue Raiders complete all homework, class work and class projects to the best of their ability.
- Blue Raiders know and understand school policies and procedures and accept the direction of teachers, school officials and others who have been assigned the responsibility to enforce them.
- Blue Raiders practice good citizenship, particularly by respecting the rights, privileges and property of others.

Tardiness

Being on time to class and prepared to work is very important. Students are to be in their seats and ready to work when the bell sounds.

If a student is late to class without a pass, the teacher and student will discuss why. If the student is late to class a second time, the teacher will warn the student that if they are late again, they will be assigned a lunch detention. Two lunch detentions will be assigned after their sixth tardy.

Note: Students are tardy for 1st period at 7:15.

Please expect longer wait times in the drop-off line the closer you get to 7:00am.

Attendance

The building principal is authorized to excuse, upon receipt of a written and signed explanation from the parent/guardian, an absence, late arrival or early departure from school for the following reasons:

- Illness
- Illness or death in the student's family
- Serious, contagious, or epidemic disease in the household where the student resides
- Doctor, dental or other medical professional appointments which cannot be arranged for any other time
- Unsafe travel conditions
- Required presence in court
- Religious observance

Any other absence is considered unexcused. Each absence must be accounted for. It is essential that parents/guardians provide a written excuse for each absence. Such excuse should contain the reason and date of absence.

Sports Information

Planning on playing a sport this year? Be sure to visit the Athletic Department's website for information on registration, sports seasons, and code of conduct rules. <https://www.horseheadsdistrict.com/athletics.cfm> or call Damian Saks, Director of Athletics & Physical Education dsaks@horseheadsdistrict.com 607-739-5601, x4254

NOTE: Students in HS credit-bearing courses must be in attendance for 85% of scheduled classes to receive credit. You will be notified of absences by your student's teachers and building email and all-call systems.

Parents/Guardians & Students' Responsibilities

Middle School Drop-off & Pick-up Procedures

We understand that the large volume of cars during arrival and dismissal often leads to long lines, and we truly appreciate your patience. Our goal is to keep traffic moving through the parking lot as smoothly and efficiently as possible.

To help protect students and keep traffic flowing, we ask that all families follow the same process; it benefits everyone.

Morning Drop-off Procedures

- Doors Open at 6:50am
- Breakfast is available from 6:50-7:12am
- To help your student start their day on time, please ensure they are in the building by 7:10am. First period begins at 7:15am.
- Use the entire drop-off lane between the first and last crosswalks.
- Middle School Drop Off: Use the outside loop, farthest from the canopy.
- Intermediate School Drop Off: Use the inside loop near the canopy.
- Please refer to the map provided.
- Do not wait until you're directly in front of the entrance to drop off your student. Our supervisors have been instructed to direct traffic and speak directly to students when procedures are not followed.
- Use caution when pulling around other vehicles.
- Make sure your student is ready to exit quickly with all belongings in hand.
- Students must use the crosswalk near the main entrance. Please wait for the staff member to cross you. They may hold pedestrians at times to keep the traffic moving.
- Please do not drop off students in the parking lots or on Sing Sing Rd.



Horseheads Central School District is launching ParentSquare as our new district-wide communication platform. ParentSquare brings school, district, and classroom communication into one place, making it easier for staff to connect with families and for families to stay informed.

Helpful Videos and Tutorials (Watch These First):

- [ParentSquare Overview](#) (2 minutes)
- [Creating Your Parent Account](#) (2 minutes)
- [ParentSquare Academy - Supporting Your Student Course](#)

Other Resources:

- [Getting Started Guide](#)
- [Opt Out Form](#)

Pick Up and Drop Off Procedures

Middle School Drop-off & Pick-up Procedures

Please Do **NOT** drop students off in the parking lots or on Sing Sing Road.

Afternoon Pick-Up Procedures

- Students who ride the bus or walk are dismissed at 2:05.
- Students who are being picked up are dismissed at 2:10.
- You may pick up your student using the middle school drop-off lane, the intermediate school drop-off lane, or the designated parking spots in the upper section of the parking lot.

Tips for a Smooth Pick Up

- Use the same pick-up location each day to help your student know where to go.
- All students must use the crosswalk near the main entrance.

Important Timing Notes

- Intermediate School Pick Up: Begins at 1:55 PM
- Middle School Pick Up: Begins at 2:10 PM ~ Please do not arrive before 2:05 PM to avoid overcrowding the parking lot.
- From 2:10 to around 2:20, only left turns are allowed when exiting the middle school lot. This helps buses leave on time to get to the high school.
- Before 2:10 and after 2:20, you may turn left or right as usual.

Safety Reminder

- Watch for students and staff in the parking lot and crosswalks.
- Follow all directions from our staff — they're here to keep traffic moving efficiently.

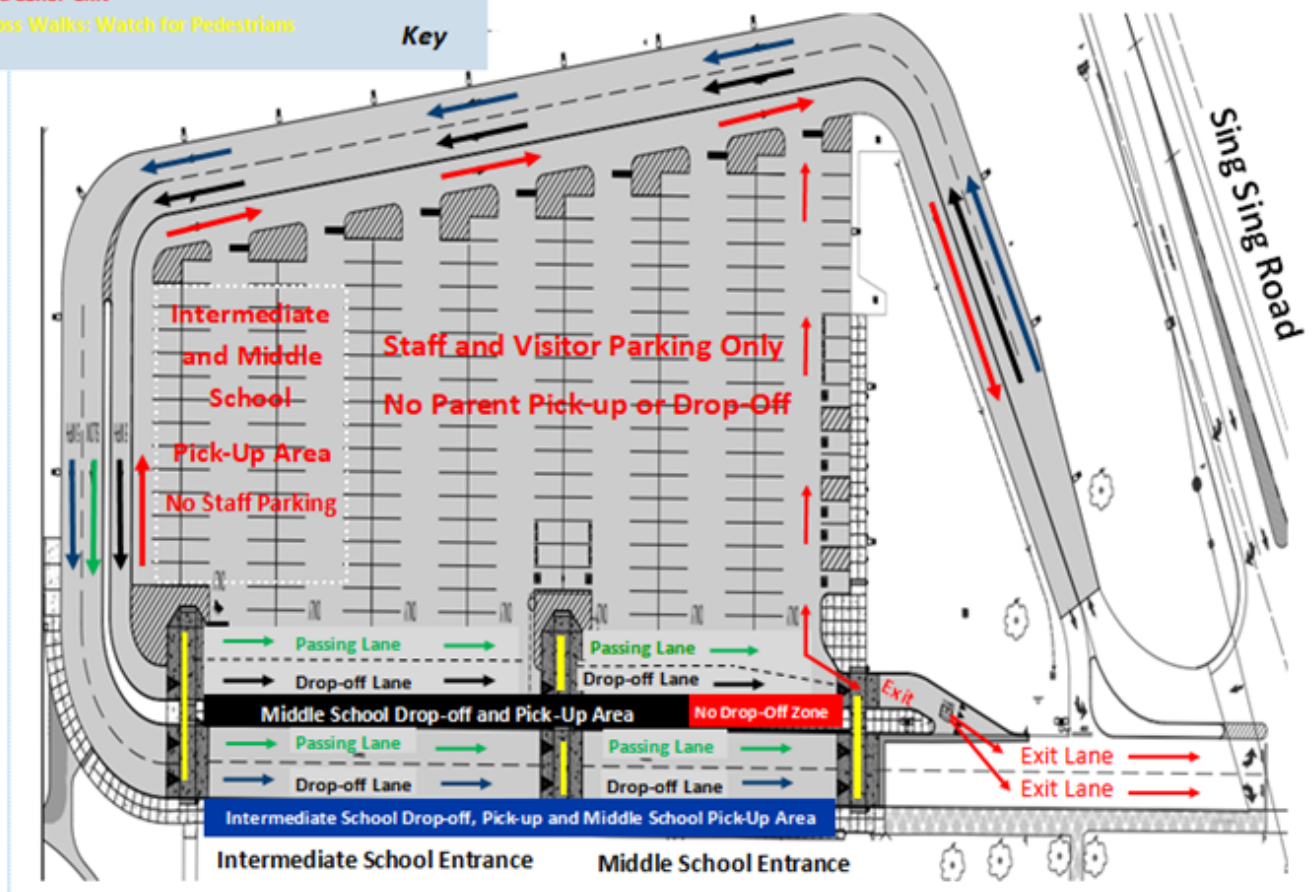


Parking Lot Map for Pick Up and Drop Off

Blue Lane: Intermediate School Drop-Off, Pick-Up, and Middle School Pick-Up Only
Black Lane: Middle School Drop-Off and Pick-Up
Green Lane: Passing - proceed with caution
Red Lane: Exit
Cross Walks: Watch for Pedestrians

Key

Intermediate and Middle School Main Parking Lot



Thank you for your cooperation and for helping us make drop off and pick up run smoothly. Please understand modifications may occur should the need arise.





Let's Have a Great Year
The Raider Way!