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**Korematsu Middle School**

**Frequently Asked Questions 2015-2016**

**Q: How does registration work?**

**A:** Packets are mailed home in July and include information about the registration that takes place in August. 2015-2016 registration is on August 11th (for 7thgraders), August 12th (for 8th graders), and August 13th (makeup day).

For all 3 days, the schedule is as follows:

9 a.m.: Last names starting with A-H

10 a.m.: Last names starting with I-Q

11a.m.: Last names starting with R-Z

If you are away for all of these days, please call the school as early as possible during the week of August 17-21st from 8:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m. to make alternate arrangements. If you did not receive a packet in the mail, please contact Korematsu Middle School at 510-524-0405. All forms can be found on the website: [www.korematsumiddleschool.org](http://www.korematsumiddleschool.org)/forms.

**Q: When do I get my books, PE clothes, student ID, and final schedule? What about the PE locker?**

**A:** Students get books, student IDs, and schedules at registration. You can purchase a PE uniform at registration ($22-$26 cash only). Because we are a public school, we cannot require families to purchase a PE uniform, but dressing for PE is required for your student to pass the course. You may either purchase the official uniform (shorts, T-shirt) for $22-$26 or self-provide your student with any grey shorts/sweats and grey T-shirt that will be dedicated for use during PE. PE lockers are assigned during the first week of school. Each student is given a lock for their PE locker. Lost locks cost $5 to replace.

**Q: How do I sign up for the after school program?**

**A:** We expect to have an after school program run by the El Cerrito Recreation Center.Sign up information is provided at the August registration. Signups occur at a separate El Cerrito Recreation Department orientation. Dates and times will be announced.

**Q: Does the after school program fill up?**

**A: No**. In the past, the program was free and available to all students who want to enroll.

**Q: Do I have to go to the after school program everyday? I have some other activities I am committed to.**

**A:** In the past, students had to sign up for every day attendance, but the program understands that kids do other activities outside of school and are flexible and will work with you to make the schedule work for everyone.

**Q: What is the class schedule at school?**

**A:** See attached copy of the bell schedule.

**Q: Is a school uniform required?**

**A: No**, but all students must follow the WCCUSD dress code. Please see district website for details ([www.wccusd.net/Resources](http://www.wccusd.net/Resources)/Parents/School Uniform Policy).

**Q: Is school lunch available?**

**A: Yes.** Students can apply for the free lunch program at registration (same as the elementary school program). Students not qualifying for free lunch can set up an online account to purchase lunch items at [www.mylunchmoney.com](http://www.mylunchmoney.com) or pay cash at the Korematsu cafe.

**Q: Are lockers assigned?**

**A: No.** Due to space issues, there are only PE lockers. They are assigned during the first week of class. Instead of book lockers, students have access to three sets of books: one for home, one for each classroom, and one for the afterschool program to facilitate homework completion.

**Q: Where do I drop off and pick up my child?**

**A:** Students can be dropped off on either Moeser Lane or Portola Drive. AC Transit drops off and picks up in front of the school on Moeser Lane.

**Q: How much homework can be expected?**

**A:** Expect 1-3 hours per night. Assignments can be found on **PowerSchool** (https://wccusd.powerschool.com) or a similar online program of each teacher's choice (teachers will notify families as to where assignments can be found if not using PowerSchool). **PowerSchool** usernames and passwords are assigned approximately two weeks after school starts. The students get their own logins at school. Parents also receive a login generated by the district office and mailed home with more instructions for using this program.

**Q: Is there homework help available?**

**A:** Yes, there is free tutoring after school. Teachers are also regularly available to help at lunch and after school. The tutoring schedule is being formulated now! Stay tuned for more information!

**Q: How does the school communicate with parents?**

**A:** There are many ways to learn about key dates, events and activities. **PowerSchool**, as mentioned above, is a web-based account of news, homework assignments, attendance, and grades for parents, students, and teachers.

Additionally, “***The Phoenix”*** newsletter is posted to the e-tree every Thursday. This is the main form of communication on campus. Parents, guardians and students **are highly encouraged** to sign up for the e-tree. Send an email to KorematsuPTSA@gmail.com.

Principal Burnham regularly makes **telephone calls** to remind families of important events and announcements.

The **Korematsu PTSA website** at www.korematsumiddleschool.org is updated regularly. You can sign up to be notified of new website postings on the website.

**You can LIKE us on Facebook** <https://www.facebook.com/PortolaMiddleSchool>

On occasion, Mr. Burnham **tweets** at: <https://twitter.com/bhambytes>

**Occasional printed flyers** are sent home with students. They are distributed on Thursdays in 7th period. We suggest periodically asking your student if anything was distributed at school.

**Q: How can parents reach the school or individual teachers? When is it expected that the student will communicate on their own behalf, and when is a parent expected to be involved?**

**A:** At Korematsu we encourage students to take responsibility for their own education. As such, the first line of communication should be between the teacher and the student. When there is a question about grades, assignments, etc., please coach your student to approach the teacher before or after class and ask for a good time to talk. If the teacher and student do not come to a satisfactory conclusion, parents can contact a counselor for a meeting (see counselors and contacts below). Some teachers encourage email communication with parents; others prefer that the normal procedure through counselors be maintained. Parents are encouraged to contact their student's counselor for case-by-case guidance.

**Q: Who are the counselors and what is their role?**

**A:** The 7th grade guidance counselor is Mr. Jones. The 8th grade guidance counselor is Ms. Gail Simpson. Both counselors can be reached through the main office phone number, 524-0405. Counselors are in charge of scheduling, academic achievement, behavioral issues, and leveraging of internal and external student resources.

**Q: What classes are required and what are the electives?**

**A:** The Course Offerings Handbook contains this information and was distributed to students during the Spring enrollment period. An updated handbook will be available at registration in August if you did not have a chance to review it in the Spring. Electives generally include Band, Spanish, Gateway to Technology, Leadership, and Drama. Any updates to electives will be reflected in the 2015 -2016 Course Offerings Handbook.

**Q: What is the Independent Study PE (Physical Education) and who can get one?**

**A:** Students can apply for Independent Study Physical Education by providing official documentation of 400 minutes every 2 weeks of organized physical activity year-round. Additional information and applications will be available at registration. At the time of application, students must provide signed documentation demonstrating that they are enrolled in sport(s) that will provide 400 minutes of activity every two weeks year-round. Documentation of participation in the sport must be turned in twice a quarter. The independent study contract must be renewed each semester. Missing more than two documentation periods in a row or four for the school year will result in the student being removed from the independent program and returned to traditional PE. Please note that there may not be space in electives for all the students who qualify and wish to avail themselves of Independent Study PE. This privilege will be granted on a first come first served basis, and a waiting list will be generated.

**Q: What is the discipline policy at the school?**

**A:** From the WCCUSD Parent-Student Handbook, discipline is defined as training that enables students to make appropriate choices in a climate of warmth and support. The goal is the maintenance of a safe and orderly learning environment for all students. It is as important to recognize good behavior and to provide consequences for misbehavior. Teachers are responsible for communicating any behavior problems with students, parents, and administrative staff and for giving consequences for minor behavioral infractions. Administrators are responsible for communicating serious behavioral infractions to teachers, communicate with students and parents, issuing detentions and suspensions, and recommending expulsion when necessary. Consistent with district policies and procedures, staff and faculty at Korematsu extend great efforts to balance the needs of individual students with the needs of the school community as a whole. If you have concerns about your own student's behavior, or the impact of a behavioral issue on your child's learning environment, please contact your student's counselor to discuss the matter.

**Q: What programs are available for support and enrichment?**

**A:** Y-Team, Project Success are available by referral to students who need additional support. Student Success Team meetings are employed for students needing academic and behavioral support. Math Enrichment, Math Club, Jazz Band, Intramural Sports, Cross Country and Track, National Junior Honor Society, and Reading and Technology Stars (Library RATS) are examples of programs available to enrich student academic and social experience at Korematsu. Regular and consistent parent teacher conferences scheduled through guidance counselors are encouraged to meets the needs of individual students.