

## MIDDLETOWN TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS

### Thorne Middle School

70 Murphy Road  
Port Monmouth, N.J. 07758  
Phone (732)787-1220 FAX (732)787-5306  
District Website: [www.middlestownk12.org](http://www.middlestownk12.org)

Karen L. Bilbao  
Superintendent of Schools

Alvaro J. Cores, Principal  
Peter J. Smith, Assistant Principal

August, 2009

Dear Parents,

We hope you have enjoyed the summer. We are excited about starting the 2009-2010 school year. We have enclosed several important documents for your review. It is extremely important that you read and review the Student Handbook with your child. This will ensure that you are aware of both the school rules and policies. Should you have any questions about the policies or the Student Handbook, please contact the office.

There are several issues we would like to highlight:

- Attendance/lateness: It is extremely important that your child attend school every day. Academic mastery of the curriculum is very difficult, if not impossible, when the student is not attending school regularly. We want every child to have every opportunity to be successful. We will be complying with the district attendance policy of a maximum of 16 unexcused absences. In order to arrive on time to school it may be necessary to leave earlier as traffic does back up shortly before the start of the school day. **Students must be in the building at 8:05 a.m.** Homeroom begins at 8:10. Excessive lateness sabotages your child's success in school and disrupts the educational process of the other students in their class.
- Morning Drop-off Procedures: Stay in the line. Do not cut through the parking lot as this type of driving endangers both students and staff. When exiting the school driveway, **turn right** so as not to hold up traffic. Police will be periodic observers of the drop off process. In the past they have given tickets to unsafe drivers.
- Lockers: Every student has a locker. Please impress on your child the importance of keeping their valuables secure and not giving their combination out to their friends. During Physical Education classes students are expected to lock up their valuables. We will not be responsible for valuables not secured. Any problems with the locker or gym lock should be reported immediately. The lockers are property of the Board of Education and as such may be searched at any time.
- Backpacks: Every student is assigned a locker. Every effort is made to assign lockers near the student's homeroom. Students will store backpacks in their lockers during the school day. All students will be carrying their books and necessary supplies to every class. Students may go to their lockers at any time, as long as they are not late to their next class.
- School Supplies – To begin the year students should be prepared with the basic supplies such as pencils, binders, assignment pad and loose-leaf paper. During the first week of school the teachers will be distributing materials and will suggest specific materials for each class. Should this present a financial hardship, call the office and we will assist you. This will remain confidential. All students will be issued a school planner.

- Forgotten Items – It may be convenient for some parents to return to school to “drop off” forgotten lunches, homework, gym clothes, money, etc., but **this does not help our students develop responsibility**. Encourage your children to “pack up” everything the night before so that when they leave in the morning they will have everything they need for the school day. It can be a real disruption to the school day if the office staff has to repeatedly call students to the office to retrieve their belongings. **Lost and found items will be donated monthly to Middletown Helps It’s Own.**
- Use of Computers: Computers will be used to enhance the educational process. We have three computer labs, a media center and a computer in every classroom. The district has a computer/internet usage policy, which is listed in the Student Handbook. You will note that the computer is not to be used for inappropriate non-educational purposes. We ask that you monitor your child’s computer usage at home as we have dealt with students sending inappropriate, sometimes threatening IM (instant messages) and emails to other students. **Every student will be held accountable for their actions on the computer.** When necessary the offensive emails and IM messages will be printed and appropriate disciplinary actions will be taken, which may involve contacting the Police Department.
- Early Arrival: There is outside supervision beginning at 7:45 a.m. Students who arrive for breakfast may go directly to the cafeteria at 7:35.
- Clothing: Clothing that is deemed disruptive to the educational process should not be worn to school. Transparent shirts, studded or spiked jewelry, shirts exposing the navel, and short skirts are some examples of inappropriate clothing. **If a staff member deems the clothing unacceptable, the student will be asked to change their attire.**
- Headset/cell phones: By state law cell phones are not permitted to be used by students during the school day. Should a student have these in their possession and misplace them, we are not responsible for them. We do understand that some students will be carrying cell phones to contact parents after school. Please do not contact your child by cell phone during the school day. **Remind them that using the cell phone during the day may result in the cell phone being kept in the office until dismissal and a parent is contacted.**
- Thorne will have an after school care program. This will be available from 2:40 – 6:00 p.m. every day. For more information you may contact Rose Mintz at The Community YMCA at (732) 264-3500.

Finally, Thorne Middle School is comprised of a great variety of ethnic backgrounds. We strive to accept everyone as individuals and to respect people in the same manner we ourselves want to be respected. **All students have the right to come to school without having to be afraid that others will harass or bully them.** Our staff will be very diligent in monitoring the way students treat each other. Please discuss this situation with your children and please remind them that we will not accept the reply “I was only kidding.”

Best wishes for a successful and productive school year.

Sincerely,

Alvaro J. Cores  
Principal

Peter J. Smith  
Assistant Principal