

Greetings rising sixth grade families!

It is my hope that this email finds you healthy, happy, and choosing joy in the midst of the school closure and quarantine. Thank you for your continued commitment to helping your fifth-grade student attend to their distance learning program and finish their fifth-grade year with pride.

At Drake Middle School, we too are focused on finishing our last couple of weeks of distance learning. Our staff is disheartened that we will not have the opportunity to close out the school year in traditional DMS style; but we look ahead with delight as we as we complete a major construction project and plan for a significant move in order to unveil a brand-new instructional building to your student this August!

Most importantly, we are looking forward to welcoming your child to the Drake Middle School family in a few months. Please take a moment to review the information below regarding school supply kit information, changes to orientation plans, and dates to note regarding team placement and transition events.

Elimination of Lockers

After months of thoughtful consideration, we have decided to transition to one large zippered binder for all school related materials in the fall of 2020. **We will not issue lockers this fall.** We wanted to be sure this was communicated early enough for proper awareness and planning. Students will be allowed to bring a backpack for athletic shoes and personal items and will use a large zippered binder with a shoulder strap for academic materials and classwork. This is a positive change that will make organization and managing multiple classes easier for our incoming sixth grade class.

School Supply Kit Orders

Last year was such a success that again this year we are offering a school supply kit in hopes of saving our families time and money! The supply kit is customized by the teachers at Drake Middle School and includes the exact items required for next year. Please use the information below to place your order.

Order Online: <https://www.educationalproducts.com/shoppacks/>

School ID: DRA029

Dates: Online ordering begins **Monday, May 4th** and will end on **Tuesday, June 9th.**

Pickup: Supply kits will be available for pick-up at Drake Middle School Open House in early August.

If you have questions, please contact Kim Boston at 334-887-1940 or kboston@auburnschools.org.

Team Placement Letters and Orientation Events

Team placement letters will be *mailed* on Wednesday, June 10th.

Due to significant construction projects in the months of May – July, **we are unable to host our traditional Camp Drake summer orientation experience this year.** We simply do not have a sufficient meeting space to conduct this important event this summer.

One of the most important parts of the Camp Drake experience is the **parent learning session with DMS administration and counselors.** I am still hoping to host several smaller in-person orientation sessions for parents in late June or early July based on guidelines for safe gatherings as established by Governor Kay Ivey. If we are unable to gather in person due to continued COVID-19 restrictions, I will provide a live parent orientation experience using WebEx and a recorded option for individualized viewing.

Prior to the school closure, plans were being made to host a **large back to school celebration** and we remain hopeful that we can welcome our new sixth graders with a novel and exciting event in early August.

Dates for all of these events will be communicated via email and the DMS website around the first of June.

Parent Orientation Topics and Q&A

The following topics are covered in our summer parent orientation experiences:

- Daily Schedule
- Teaming Concept and Structure
- Arrival, Dismissal, and Transportation
- Discipline Procedures and our Positive Behavior Program
- Success Tips
- Dress Code
- Safety
- Clubs and Activities
- Adolescent Development and Challenges

If you have other questions that might not be included in the above categories, please complete a survey using the link below so that I can focus our orientation program or subsequent emails intentionally for your maximum benefit.

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=Mh7UKHBPP0uWjDLAC0Fp7ghULMGWRINJkC-07cP9CrRUOUhFRE1LMkJYWVI1S0gyWUNKR0FCVzBYMi4u>

Communication

Please consider following our various communication platforms to stay updated on upcoming events, dates, and school related information.

DMS Website: www.auburnschools.org/drake

PTO Facebook: Drake Middle School PTO 2020-2021

Twitter: @PrincipalDMS and @jdrakemiddle

Instagram: @jdrakemiddleschool

We wish you the blessings of health and happiness as you complete your experiences in elementary school. We are thrilled to welcome you to the Drake Middle School family and we look forward with excitement to a wonderful school year to come.

Best regards,

Sarah Armstrong
Principal
J. F. Drake Middle School