



Rice Lake Middle School Student Newsletter August—2017



Welcome Back from Mr. Tomesh, Principal

I hope that all of our students and parents have enjoyed a rejuvenating summer. On behalf of the middle school staff, I would like to welcome everyone back to school. We are excited to begin the 2017-2018 school year. It has been very impressive to see the commitment from our staff this summer. Countless staff members participated in planning, training, and collaboration. This dedication by our staff to be reflective practitioners shows their level of professionalism and commitment to our students.

We are changing the start of our year to make the transition of our 5th graders easier this fall. Friday, September 1st will be a 5th grade only first day. 5th graders will be spending the entire day at school with our entire staff gaining comfort with our school grounds, staff, and procedures. 6th, 7th, and 8th grade parents and students need to schedule a goal setting meeting between 8:00-11:00 am with their homeroom advisor on September 1st. After that meeting, the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students will be excused from school for the remainder of the day. We will be using the goals set in the homeroom meeting on a monthly basis for your son or daughter to reflect on their personal, academic, and career goals. If you have not scheduled a time to meet that morning, please contact the office with a time that may work for you.

Mr. Vlcek (Assistant Principal) and I are committed to serving the students and parents of the Rice Lake Middle School. We aim to build on the successes of the past and focus on continuous school improvement. We are committed to maintaining a safe and productive learning environment. We believe that working together with our parents and families, we will provide the students of Rice Lake Middle School a first class education.

Submission of Back to School Forms and Fees

Parents/Guardians are asked to **log into their online Family Access Account** (link available on the district website) and **complete the online "Back to School Forms/Fees" process**. The process includes the following:

- View back to school information
- Verifying Student/Family/Emergency Information
- Entering text message numbers that you want the school to use to contact you about school cancellations and other school communications (required to receive text messages)
- View information from the School Nurse and provide updates to student health information and authorization for medical treatment and medication usage
- Make payments for fees and school lunch
- Complete an application for free/reduced lunch
- Complete the field trip permission form
- Register for athletics

If you don't have a Family Access account, you can find information for obtaining an account on our district website under the "Skyward Family Access" button

Student Fees

Rice Lake has a few set fees that must be paid by each student. Some of these fees are listed below, while others may arise during the year, depending on the types of classes the student is taking.

Instructional/Materials Fee \$13 (To be paid by all students)

Band Rental Fee - \$50 per semester (those using school instrument)

The fees can be paid through the Back to School Forms and Fees process detailed above.

School Begins:

- September 1st

Daily Schedule

Breakfast 7:45-8:00

School Begins 8:05

Lunch Times

5th Grade 11:19-11:49

6th Grade 11:45-12:15

7th Grade 10:52-11:22

8th Grade 12:10-12:40

School Dismissal 3:20 pm

New Staff

Brandon Speros– Middle School Success

Sarah Flora– World Language

Taylor Willert- 6th Grade Language Arts and Social Studies

Tracey Miller– 6th Grade Language Arts and Social Studies

Tracey Mofle– Special Education

Erica Hutton-Parker– Special Education

Nate Erickson– 6th Grade Math and Science

Rhonda Morris– School Psychologist

Student Handbook

The student handbook has been emailed to all families this summer. In addition, the handbook is posted on our school website. The handbook contains information about discipline, attendance, and other policies, procedures, and regulations necessary for the smooth operation of the Middle School. It is expected that students and parents will read the handbook, have knowledge of the rules, and ask questions about anything they don't understand.



Student Services Department News

Counseling services are provided for all students by the Student Services Department. Counseling is a process to help students in dealing with problems and making decisions. Counselors assist students with academic programs and personal concerns.

Middle School Parent Drop Off

Students that are dropped off by parents should not arrive until after 7:45 am. Students should be dropped off in the north parking lot loop (East of Hilltop). Parents should drop off on the west side of Cameron Road. The bus lanes are dangerous and cannot be blocked between 7:45-8:05 a.m. The bus lanes are closed at the end of the day for student pickup as well. Visitors are allowed to enter the middle school parking lot and park in the bus lanes during the school day for convenience, however, all vehicles need to be moved from bus lanes by 2:45 pm. Parents will be able to enter the north parent drop/pickup throughout the school day.

Medications

If your child is to be given medications at school, the parent and the physician must complete a form authorizing the school to administer the medication. The form is available through the school nurse or online. Once the form is completed, the parent must bring the form and medication, in its original container, to the office. Please do not send medication to school with your child.

School Attendance Regulations

School attendance is critical to being successful in school. All students are required to be in regular attendance at school and attend every scheduled class, assembly, and special event that is scheduled during regular school hours. We will be paying special attention to tardiness to first hour class. Please ensure that your children are in school and on time. Regular school attendance is a great first step to student achievement and is also state law. School begins promptly at 8:05 a.m. for all students.

Wisconsin law dictates all parents are able to excuse their children from school for a maximum of 10 days in a school year, provided the following is done:

1. A written note from the parent is filed in the office prior to the absence occurring.
2. All school work is arranged to be completed before or after the absence.

After the 10 parental excused days, or if the above conditions are not met, the principal determines the validity of the excuse. Parents are requested to call the school (715) 234-8156 before 9:00 am on the day of the absence. If the student is absent and a call has not been received, the school will attempt to contact a parent at home or work to notify them of the absence using our automated calling system. A written note must be presented on the day the student returns to school for the absence to be excused.

Open House - 5th Grade Orientation

Friday, September 1, 2017 from 8:00 to 9:30 am

Fifth grade parents are invited to join us for an informational meeting on September 1st at 8:00 am. We will try to answer questions and provide parents with pertinent information. Following the meeting in the gymnasium, parents are invited to the 5th grade classrooms to meet teachers and help your child get settled. At 9:30 am, parents will be asked to leave so that the children can begin their day. 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students will not be in session on September 1st. They will be asked to schedule a 20 minute appointment with their homeroom advisor for a goal setting meeting.

Change of Contact Info

Changes in demographic information (ie. address, phone number, emergency contacts, etc.) throughout the school year will require changes be made online by parents through family access. This is also a part of the online "Back to School Forms and Fees" completion process.



Attendance

We need your help, understanding, and cooperation: it is in the best interest of your son/daughter to be academically successful. Regular attendance is a key indicator in the academic success of a child. This requires regular attendance! Please stress this at home - insist on regular attendance.

Pre-Excused Absences

If a trip or other pre-planned absence is anticipated, parents should send a signed note to school or print a pre-excused form off the school website. The note or signed form should come to the office and the office staff will give the student a pre-planned absence form. The student will bring the form to class and will be given home work prior to the absence. Please be sure that the note comes to the office rather than going straight to the classroom teacher.

Athletics Opportunities:

Co-Ed Cross Country– 5-8
Girls Volleyball– 7-8
Boys Basketball– 7-8
Girls Basketball– 7-8
Swimming– 6-8
Archery– 5-8
Wrestling– 5-8
Track– 6-8

Forrest Run—A Fight Against Brain Cancer

Save the Date—September 16

The sixth annual Forrest Run will be held Saturday, September 16 at 9:00 am at the UW Barron County campus sponsored by the RLHS Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA). Last year over \$11,000 was raised for the fight against brain cancer! The Forrest Run is in memory of Forrest Olson, an alumnus of RLHS, who passed away from brain cancer. The run is family-friendly—a one mile course for kids under 12, and a 5K course for 12 and up. All the profit goes to research brain cancer and support families who have loved ones suffering from brain cancer. For additional information go to www.forrestrun.org Hope to see you there!

Student Schedules

The student schedules are available in skyward family access. Please contact Mrs. Krovoza with questions regarding your son or daughter's schedule.

Lockers, homeroom teachers, and classes have been finalized. We will make very limited changes for those whose schedules do not reflect their choice of exploratory electives. At this point, we will not be granting requests to move students from one house or homeroom to another. Class lists have been developed with academic and behavioral needs being considered to best meet the needs of all students. Teaching staff have begun creating class lists and organizing classrooms based on the finalized lists. Thank you for your assistance in working with us on scheduling needs.

School Dress Code

Please keep the school dress code in mind as you shop for school clothes. Here are some good general guidelines:

- * Clothing should always completely cover the torso from above the chest to **mid-thigh**.
- * Clothing items such as spaghetti straps, backless tops, halter-tops, and tube tops are not allowed.
- * Undergarments should not be visible.
- * Any fashion (dress, accessory, or hairstyle) that is distracting from the learning process or presents a safety risk will not be permitted. Students are not permitted to have backpacks or jackets in classes.
- * Hats, caps, or other headgear are not to be worn in the building during the school day.

Security Cameras

The Rice Lake School District has security cameras and electronic entry at the main entrances of all district buildings. The interior doors will be locked once students are in the building. Visitors will be asked to sign-in in the office prior to entry. Please be patient with office staff as this is intended to maintain the highest level of safety.

Weather Related Cancellation Procedures

School and school-sponsored events are occasionally cancelled due to severe weather conditions. Parents can listen to local radio stations for information regarding cancellations (WJMC 96.3 FM, 1240 AM, and WAQE 97.7 FM) We will also be using the district mass communication system to notify parents of cancellations by phone, email, and text messaging. In order to receive text messages from the school, parents must give permission for the school to do so by entering their text message number(s) in Family Access under the "Skylert" link.



Supplemental Student Insurance

Students and their parents/guardians are responsible for providing accident insurance for the student. The school assumes no financial liability in connection with any accident at any time. Although many families have adequate health and accident insurance, there are some families whose coverage is not adequate or who have no insurance. A low cost group insurance plan is being offered through the First Agency Insurance Company for those who feel they do not have adequate coverage or wish to have additional protection. Information regarding coverage and online enrollment is included in the "Back to School Forms and Fees" process. Please note that premiums and applications should be sent directly to First Agency Insurance and not to the school office.

Electronic Communication

We are sending more and more information through email. It is critical that you give the school your email address that is current. Additionally, please check our school website page as we try to post forms and other pertinent information.

Website Notice

Check our website for calendar of events and athletics at:

www.ricelake.k12.wi.us

Athletics

Students can register for middle school sports by filling out the following paperwork.

1. Registration/medical information card
2. Signed Athletic Code
3. Concussion Forms



All forms are available on the school website or through the online “Back to School Forms/Fees” process . They can also be picked up in the main office.

Middle School Parent Advisory Council Meeting (PAC)

The Middle School Parent Advisory Council meets throughout the school year. This is a great opportunity to sit down with the RLMS administration and discuss programming, policy, and have other questions answered. This organization has focused more on getting parents the information that they desire. Each meeting will have an agenda with different topics and information.

Mentorship Program

Rice Lake Middle School has developed a school-based mentorship program. Selected students are matched with an adult mentor from the community through a screening process. Students and mentors meet for 30 minutes weekly based on the convenience of the mentor and student schedules. All mentoring occurs on school grounds and during the school day. If you are interested in mentoring or your child participating in the program, please contact Nathan Vlcek or Mary Krovoza in the school.

School Based Mental Health Services

The Rice Lake School District will continue to offer mental health counseling in the school during the 2017-2018 school year. We have partnered with local mental health providers. The counselors are employees of the outside agencies and the counseling sessions are confidential. We offer them a space within the school that is private. The families work with the agencies on insurance or medical assistance. We are excited to have eliminated barriers to get students the services that they need. By offering these services in school, we eliminate the need for parents to take time away from work. In addition, students time away from class is reduced. If you are interested in exploring services for your child, please contact one of the guidance counselors.

Skyward Family Access

Family Access is a program through the Rice Lake School District that enables parents to check their students schedule, assignments, grades, lunch accounts, attendance, submit back-to-school forms/fees, and much more. Your accounts carry over from year to year once you do an initial sign-up. You may find the form on the Rice Lake Area Schools Website (www.ricelake.k12.wi.us) or stop at your child’s school to pick up a form. You only have to fill out one form for all of your students and then take the form to any school that your child attends. You must present a photo ID to the secretary when you do the sign-up.

Student Assessments

Assessments at Rice Lake Middle School are used to inform staff about what our next instructional steps should be for our students, as well as what they have learned. Students will be continuing to take classroom based assessments. In addition, students will take the Star Assessment. This reading and math assessment gives teachers a snapshot of a child’s current academic levels. The Star Assessment is given three times a year to all students. This is a computer based assessment that assesses your student’s abilities and then instructional decisions are based on those scores. The state assessment that your child will take is the Forward Exam in the spring of the year. We will provide more information as the testing window approaches.

Upcoming Events

September 1 - Start of School
5th Grade Only First Day
No school for 6th, 7th, 8th graders
September 4– No School
September 20 & 21– School Pictures
September 29– No School (Staff PD)
October 10– Parent Conferences
October 12– Parent Conferences
October 19– MS Band Concert
October 24- 6th Grade Band Concert
October 23– No School (Staff PD)
November 22-24– Thanksgiving Vac.
November 28– MS Choir Concert
December 14– Parent Conferences
December 25-Jan. 2 Winter Vacation
January 22– No School (Staff PD)

Opportunities to get involved!

Academic Activities:

Battle of the Books– 5-8
Forensics– 7-8
Jazz Band– 7-8
Math Counts– 6-8
Quiz Bowl– 6-8
Science Olympiad– 7-8
Show Choir– 7-8
Skills USA– 6-8
Student Council– 5-8
Theatre Productions– 5-8
5th Grade Leadership– 5
Archery Club– 5-8