



Middle School Newsletter

Summer 2019

OUR MISSION

To educate and inspire a diverse community of K-12 learners by engaging them in rigorous real-world learning experiences which prioritize intellectual, social and emotional growth.

LETTER FROM THE PRINCIPAL, MRS. LEE



Dear Middle School Families,

I hope that your family has had the opportunity to enjoy the summer days so far and you and your children are looking forward to beginning a wonderful school year together in September.

As you know, the middle school years are such a critical time in the development of students. I look forward to working with each of you to make this year a success. Relationships and communication are first and foremost to me. This will be supported by my weekly email updates to

families which include links to each grade level's updated website and monthly middle school newsletters. Furthermore, your child's crew leader will be a crucial mode of communication throughout the school year. At Tapestry, we often say the EL motto, "We are Crew," this comes from the value of teamwork, relationships and building a beautiful community together. Crew itself is a powerful avenue in which we believe in and comes into our daily lives.



We will have the opportunity to meet crew leaders and other crew members on Thursday, August 29th from 5:00-6:00 in our Middle School Meet Our Crew Night.

Supply Drop Off



The Meet Our Crew Night will also allow families to bring supplies to the school or pick up previously ordered supplies to leave with crew leaders for the following week as well as locate lockers and receive locks. During this event, families will also receive important documents, including the Student and Family Handbook. The handbook has been updated, including slight changes to the Attendance Policy, Personal Electronic Device Policy and the Code of Conduct. These policies will be discussed in detail during the first Principal Advisory Group (PAG) meeting on Tuesday, September 24th at 8:15 AM.

For the first week of school, 6th grade will start on Tuesday, September 3rd. 7th and 8th grade will start on Wednesday, September 4th. For these first 3-4 days, we will be pausing the typical academic schedule and focus on teaching the PIRR traits through a variety of hands-on learning experiences, gathering baseline readings and mathematic levels as well as team and relationship building that will impact our students throughout the school year. Normal classes will start on Monday, September 9th.

As a leadership team, we have spent time developing this coming year's work plan. Within this plan, we outline the structures and programs to have a positive impact on your child's growth as an academic learner as well as their social and emotional well-being. I look forward to engaging in this very exciting and important work with your children this school year.

Within the middle school building, our facilities team has spent a lot of time renovating the space. The middle school has *grown up* over the summer and no longer looks like an elementary space. It now has a sophisticated, yet fun look.

LETTER FROM THE PRINCIPAL, MRS. LEE (CONTINUED)

Programmatically, we have made some adjustments in the course offerings for the 2019-2020 school year. Last year, we piloted the class Expeditionary Literacy as an every other day class. This class provided an opportunity for students to develop and fulfill their academic potential in literacy through the lens of middle school expeditions and case studies.

Given the success and focus on ELA standards in a real world context, we will be expanding this class to an every day schedule in both 6th and 7th grade. Unfortunately, by doing so students will no longer take Spanish in 6th and 7th grade, but will take Spanish and continue to have the opportunity to sit for the Spanish 1 exam in 8th grade allowing students to earn a Regents credit. Additionally, this year we have added a health class for all students in 6th-8th grade. This class places an emphasis on student's physical, social, emotional, mental health by providing a learning environment focused on a safe and healthy lifestyle while teaching students tools to be more aware of and self management themselves. We are confident that these programmatic changes will have a positive impact on your child this school year.

I look forward to seeing all of you on Thursday, August 29th at Meet Our Crew Night!

Enjoy the remainder of your summer and please reach out if you have any questions.

Mrs. Lindsay Lee - Principal, Gr. 6-8

MIDDLE SCHOOL CULTURE WITH ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL, MS. DIMAGGIO

Dear Middle School Families,

We hope you have been able to enjoy some time off with your children over the summer. This is such a great time to relax and reconnect as a family.

This summer the TAPMS team has been hard at work planning and getting ready for the next school year. At the beginning of July we took some time with our EL Education School Designer to develop a comprehensive plan for the 2019-2020 school year. Within this plan, we have a **strong emphasis on building character and culture** within our middle school. It is our overall goal for **students to be prepared for success in high school and beyond in service of becoming effective learners, ethical people and contributors to a better world.** In order to reach this goal, we have set specific performance benchmarks around **attendance, discipline, crew and positive PIRR comments.**

In an effort to start the year with clear and consistent guidelines, we have been working to perfect our PIRR-fect Flight guidelines for common spaces within and outside of our middle school. As we begin the 2019-2020 school year, staff, students and families will have an opportunity to become familiar with our new and improved PIRR-fect Flight for classrooms, hallways, bathrooms, cafeteria, the front office, being a good audience and entering and exiting the building. Staff members, as well as, students from National Junior Honor Society and Student Government helped to create the new and improved guidelines for each of these areas within the building. We will have these expectations posted throughout the building in their designated areas so please come and check them out! Thank you to those that volunteered their time during summer break to help us with this important project.



Enjoy these last few weeks of summer break and we look forward to welcoming you back in September!

Ms. Amy DiMaggio - Assistant Principal, Gr. 6-8

WELCOME NEW STAFF TO TAPESTRY MIDDLE SCHOOL



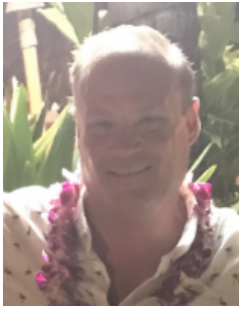
JESSICA MASCLE - Gr. 6-8 HEALTH TEACHER

Jessica Mascle has been teaching at Tapestry High School since 2007. She is excited to teach children the skills they need to grow up healthy, happy, and safe. She is also a certified yoga teacher and ayurvedic specialist who loves to share her knowledge of nature and movement with adults.



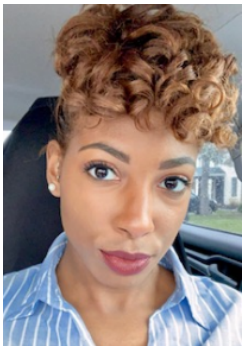
ERIN GERCHICK - Gr. 6 ELA TEACHER

Erin Gerchick taught at The Emily Dickinson School on the Upper West Side of Manhattan for the last fourteen years. She recently moved from Brooklyn back to Buffalo, her hometown, where she and her husband are raising their one year old son. She loves running with her dog and reading Shakespeare.



ROBERT CLOSE - Gr. 7 SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHER

Rob Close has worked at Amherst the past 9 years as both an encumbered Social Studies Teacher and as the Assistant Dean of Students. He is very excited for his new role at Tapestry as the 7th Grade Social Studies Classroom Teacher. Rob has many diverse interests including sports, Bills and Sabres, and theatre. His favorite musical is Les Miserables!



ASHLEY FIELDS - Gr. 6-8 PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHER

Ashley Fields, an Amherst High School graduate, has a background in educational psychology and student support at Baylor and Syracuse University. She is excited to focus her Physical Education Instruction to get all students active and developing a healthy sense of self. Ashley was an All-American in Track and Field at Baylor.



RACHEL BEERMAN - Gr. 6 SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHER

Rachel Beerman, a Buffalo native, previously taught middle school ELA and Social Studies at Tapestry before moving to Brooklyn, New York, ten years ago as a founding Social Studies teacher at Brooklyn Prospect Charter School. She loves spending time with her husband and two children, exploring Buffalo, and reading and learning.

We are in the hiring process to find the best candidate for the following positions and will communicate to families once these positions have been filled.

- **MIDDLE SCHOOL GUITAR TEACHER**
- **MIDDLE SCHOOL BAND TEACHER**

- **GR. 7 EXPEDITIONARY LITERACY TEACHER**
-

FAMILIAR FACES IN NEW PLACES AT TAPESTRY MIDDLE SCHOOL

The Middle School is excited to announce that three of our Tapestry teachers are taking on new roles for the 2019-2020 school year in Tapestry Middle School.



ELLEN FLORES



MICHAEL GENTILE



JUNE BAILEY

ELLEN FLORES - MOVING TO GR. 8 MATH

Ms. Flores joined the Tapestry community in 2006, starting as a 7th grade Mathematics Teacher and moved up to 8th grade Mathematics/Algebra 1 Teacher. She has had a variety of classroom teaching experiences over the past 15 years. She graduated from Columbia University with her BA in Architecture and minor in Art History. Immediately following she joined Columbia Urban Educators Program and worked on completing her M.Ed in Secondary Mathematics Education, while teaching in NYC, including as a founding teacher at a EL Education School, Washington Heights Expeditionary Learning School. Last school year, Ms. Flores she taught Spanish 1, her native language. She is very excited to announce that this year she will be returning as the Gr. 8 Mathematics Teacher.

MICHAEL GENTILE - MOVING TO Gr. 6 ELA EXPEDITIONARY LITERACY

Mike Gentile has been with Tapestry for a year, molding the Expeditionary Literacy classroom. This year, he welcomes the opportunity to hone the course into a year-long curriculum for the incoming 6th graders, preparing them for the new responsibilities that come with Middle School. This fall, he will also be completing his M.S.Ed. in English Education. He is also a HUGE Superhero fan!

JUNE BAILEY - Gr. 6 SCIENCE

June Bailey moved from Rochester to the Buffalo area and joined the Tapestry family as the High School Earth Science Teacher in the middle of last year. With 30-years of teaching experience, she is excited to be back at the middle level as our 6th grade Science Teacher. Outside of school she enjoys skiing, swimming, being outdoors and spending time with family.

EXPEDITIONARY LEARNING (EL) & ENRICHMENT

Tapestry Middle School embraces the EL Education idea that adventure is not only fun, but can often be used as a learning tool to be self-reflective about one's own character traits and how one interacts with others around them. As we all know, developmentally, learning about social and emotional well-being is paramount to middle schoolers! That said, the first week the middle schoolers come back, each grade level will be leaving the building for an entire day to engage in team building with their crews. Come to Meet Our Crew Night on August 29th to learn more!

During the first week of school, students will also be taking their reading and math NWEA MAPS assessments. This is another data point that our school uses to track student growth and find areas in need of extra literacy and math support. If your child is coming up from the K-5 program, they are already familiar with this assessment. As a middle school, we stress the importance of growth throughout the entire year. Students reflect on their scores for SLC's through the creation of goals.

Stephanie Miranda, Instructional Coach, Gr. 6-8

Jessica Kauffman, Expeditionary Learning Gr. K-12

COUNSELING CORNER - MS. BEDELL

I hope you are enjoying this beautiful summer weather! Just to let everyone know, all students have been assigned to their art majors. If you filled out a request to switch your child's major, it has been honored. As a school, we are trying to keep consistency when children choose a major so they can build on their craft. Therefore, your child will be in the same major until they are in 8th grade. If students choose to switch their major entering 9th grade, they can have that option. If the school year begins and your child is not enjoying their major, we ask that you have them give it some time. Often times after giving it a chance they change their mind and actually enjoy what they are learning.

Please contact me at ext.1060 if you have any questions. Enjoy the rest of your summer!

Ms. Jessica Bedell - Counselor, Gr. 6-8

PAG Meetings for 2019-2020

The Principal's Advisory Group (PAG) serves as a consultative body to assist the principal and administration in making decisions that reflect the interests of parents, faculty, and students. Subcommittees of the PAG have been established to address topics that are considered important by TCS parents/guardians. Community voice is encouraged in such areas as the setting and maintaining of school policies, the hiring of staff, the raising of funds, and the setting of priorities for use of funds. The PAG includes at least two representatives from each of the following groups: parents, students, and faculty, as well as administrative presence.

The 2019-2020 Middle School PAG meetings will be held in the Middle School library from 8:15-9:00 AM on the following dates:

- Sept 24 - Oct 29 - Nov 19 - Dec 17 - Jan 28 - Feb 25 - Mar 31 - April 28 - May 31 - June 16

SCHOOL HOURS FOR THE MIDDLE SCHOOL

Tuesday-Friday: The school day starts at 8:00 AM and dismisses at 3:07 PM. Students are welcomed into the building at 7:30 AM for breakfast. Crew starts promptly at 8:00 AM. **Mondays:** The Monday school day does not officially start until 10:00 AM and dismisses at 3:07 PM. As any other day, we will open at 7:30 AM for middle school students who need to arrive earlier. For the students that arrive prior to 10:00 AM, there will be structured academic instruction available from 7:45-9:45 AM, students can arrive anytime between 7:45 and 9:45 AM. Attendance is not mandatory until the school day starts with crew promptly at 10:00 AM.

MIDDLE SCHOOL UPCOMING EVENTS

August 29, 2019	Gr. 6-8 Meet Our Crew Night @ 5:00-6:00 PM
September 3, 2019	Gr. 6 First Full Day of School - 8:00 AM - 3:07 PM
September 4, 2019	Gr. 7 & 8 First Full Day of School - 8:00 AM - 3:07 PM
September 24, 2019	Gr.6-8 Principal Advisory Group (PAG) Meeting & Coffee with Counselor Bedell @ 8:15-9:30 AM
September 24, 2019	Gr. 6-8 Back to School / Open House Night @ 4:00-5:00 PM
October 4, 2019	Harvest Festival, K-12 @ 4:00-7:00 PM
October 8, 2019	Middle School Picture Day

CONTACT INFORMATION

65 Great Arrow Avenue

Phone Number: 716.332.0755 | Fax Number: 716.332.0758 Website: www.tapestryschool.org



Tapestry Charter School is an arts-integrated, K-12 Expeditionary Learning, tuition-free, public school located in the city of Buffalo, NY. Founded by passionate individuals who shared a commitment to choice, accountability, and excellence, Tapestry received approval from the State University of New York Board of Trustees to open in September 2001.