



Middle School Newsletter

August 2020

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 and Caregivers,

I hope this summer is going well and everyone is remaining safe and healthy. We are preparing for a school year unlike any others in history. We have learned a lot from last school year and are developing a strong program for this upcoming year that focuses our **top priority on the health and safety** of our students and staff while having an environment that **embraces the social-emotional well being** of students and **pushes academic rigor** in an **equitable** structure, whether we are in a hybrid model, which we are planning for, or remote.

I am excited to announce that our **K12 Tapestry program will be 1:1 for technology**. This means that all students will have access to their own device that they can transport between home and school learning. K-2 students will have iPads and in grades 3-12, students will have a Chromebook.

Within the Tapestry Program, the priority has been given to have K-2 students in the building everyday, Monday-Friday. As a result of prioritizing K-2, the classroom space for K-2 has doubled and there is a need to use the 5th grade classrooms to support the rest of the K-4 program. **5th grade will be moving for this year only and joining the middle school.** 5th grade will have its own space in the middle school and as a result the high school students and teachers will no longer occupy any space within the middle school building. Although the transition to middle school is happening sooner than anticipated, we are excited to welcome these students and teachers into this space and have plans in place to keep them more isolated from the rest of the middle school program during common times, such as arrival, screening, PE/arts, bathrooms, hallways, and dismissal. 5th grade families will receive a more detailed communication within the next week.

There has been an extensive amount of planning going into this year. I want to share this information with families and caregivers now so you feel comfortable making educational decisions for your children. **There remained of the newsletter are detailed sections below on the following topics:**

- Hybrid and Remote Learning Model
- Instructional School Day
- K12 District and School Health and Safety Operations Plan
- Calendar (Instructional calendar and detailed September calendar)
- School Supply and Summer reading assignments
- Middle School Culture and Crew
- Wellness, Health and Counseling
- Athletics
- Arts
- Food Service

The health and safety of your children is our top priority at Tapestry. As such, we will be developing a video that walks parents and caregivers through the logistics of the school day that will be available soon (screening, arrival, hallways, bathrooms, and classroom set up) so there is comfort and knowledge in what the day, with all the safety precautions, will be like for students.

Mrs. Lindsay Lee - Principal

HYBRID AND REMOTE LEARNING MODELS IN GRADES 5-8

Remote & Hybrid Option	Families have the choice to keep students 100% remote and not participate in the hybrid model. Students can try the hybrid model and transition to the remote model at any time. Once in the remote model, students must remain remote for the quarter before transitioning to the hybrid model.	
A/B Cohort Group	Students in each grade level will be grouped in an A or B cohort. Students have been grouped intentionally to remain with siblings in the same group and support the academic needs of each student. Within those groupings, students are split into a crew cohort. Students will remain with their crew cohort for the entire school day. Teachers will transition from class to class and students will remain in the classroom. <i>There will be a detailed calendar shared with families to indicate the A/B instructional days of learning.</i>	
Hybrid Instructional Model	Students will be grouped in an A or B cohort and follow a consistent learning schedule for the week. On the days when students are learning in the building, the lessons teachers develop will be engaging and introductory that will lead to asynchronous learning application tasks/assignments when they are home. When students are home, they must participate in a live synchronous crew lesson at 8:00-8:30. For all students, on Friday will be an intervention day that is virtual. There will be crew to start the day and staggered live office hours for direct support.	<p>Monday: A cohort is in building, B cohort is learning from home</p> <p>Tuesday: A cohort is learning from home, B cohort is in the building</p> <p>Wednesday: A cohort is in building, B cohort is learning from home</p> <p>Thursday: A cohort is learning from home, B cohort is in the building</p> <p>Friday: 100% Virtual Day with all students learning from home and live office hours and crew.</p>
Remote Instructional Model	Students will be 100% learning from home and will be grouped in an A or B cohort and follow a consistent learning schedule for the week. They must engage in a live synchronous virtual crew daily from 8:00-8:30. They have the opportunity to follow a schedule and engage in learning through live synchronous lessons. If live lessons are not possible, they will be posted to be viewed at a later time. They will follow the same schedule as the A/B cohort with live synchronous lessons on their in school day and follow up with asynchronous application tasks for their home day.	<p>Monday: A cohort has live lessons, B cohort is learning from home</p> <p>Tuesday: A cohort is learning from home, B cohort has live lessons,</p> <p>Wednesday: A cohort has live lessons,, B cohort is learning from home</p> <p>Thursday: A cohort is learning from home, B cohort has live lessons,</p> <p>Friday: 100% Virtual Day with all students learning from home and live office hours and crew.</p>

Instructional School Day

In the building for hybrid model	At home-hybrid and 100% remote learning
The instructional school day will go from 8:00-1:30 . Doors will open and screening will begin at 7:30 AM. Crew is from 8:00-8:30 and counts for daily attendance. Students will be dismissed at 1:30.	Crew is from 8:00-8:30 and counts for daily attendance. Teachers will have lessons posted by 8:30 am for the day. Students have the opportunity to follow a live schedule on the days their cohort is in the building. Work for the week is due by 3:00 on Friday for A students and 3:00 on Monday for B students , each week.

TAPESTRY K12 REOPENING PLAN

The multi-stakeholder Tapestry Reopening Committee been meeting throughout the summer and reviewed Tapestry's Reopening plan that was submitted to the state on July 31st. The plan is aligned to the following Foundational Elements of Reopening.

- **Ensure the safety and wellness of students and staff.**

The safety and wellbeing of our students and staff remain our highest priority.

- **Holding tight to our core values.**

Remain focused on a three-dimensional view of student and teacher success, and on our continuous cycle of improvement.

- **We are crew, through and through.**

Culture & Character and Social Emotional Wellness, and Academic Learning, are interconnected and interdependent; we will not separate these two.

- **Our commitment to equity.**

Ensure equitable outcomes for students and a commitment to social justice are held at the center of decision-making.

We have updated [our website](#) to include all the details of our [Re-Opening Committee Meetings](#), including agendas, slides that address the details of our draft plan, feedback documents that will help inform our plan and videos of each of our meetings.

[Here is Tapestry's Reopening Plan.](#)

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The **health** and **safety** of our staff and students is the top priority when developing a plan for reopening. Below and on the following page are the details on the school operations plan that are specific to the middle school building and aligned with Tapestry's Reopening plan that was submitted to NYS. For more details, please refer to [Tapestry's Reopening Plan](#).

General Health and Safety

- Students and staff must wear a mask at all times
- PPE will be available to staff and students
- Temperature checks before students and staff enter the building daily
- Isolation room for students with a temperature to wait for parent pick up and a healthy nurses office for healthy students
- If a **student is sent home with a temperature**, families will be provided with guidance on how to get tested and the process for being readmitted into school. Students are allowed back to school with documentation from a health care provider, negative COVID test and symptom resolution. If the student has not been tested, they must quarantine for 14 days before returning to school or have no fever for 24 hours and have been diagnosed with another condition and be cleared to return to school
- We have eliminated all shared materials
- The building will be extensively cleaned each night and on a frequent schedule paying extra attention to high traffic areas (bathrooms, door handles, railings)
- **Healthy hygiene practices**
 - Taught in crew and health class
 - Built into daily schedule (masks breaks, hand washing)
 - Hand sanitizer and cleaning supplies readily available

Health and Safety by Location

Arrival/Screening	Classrooms	Dismissal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will be screened with a temp check and posted questionnaire upon arrival Repurpose the cafeteria as screening location Social distance lines 2 confidential screening spots Completed by screening team (screening and walking to isolation room) Distribute masks to those without them Wait in hallway on 6 ft markers until 7:45, then go to crew room for breakfast and crew 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 13 student max Desks 6 ft apart Leave belongings in classroom in crate Stay with crew cohort, with the exception of Rtl Teachers transition from class to class Transition only for intervention block (Rtl) and PE Cleaning and disinfecting supplies available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Different doors to exit out of Staggered times (5 mins apart) <p>Parent Pick up at Middle School Building for all 5-8 students</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Transportation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NFTA can accommodate 1:30 dismissal time and will continue to provide special busses In communication with Districts for out of district bussing. Will update individual families when information is available
Bathrooms	Hallways	Water Fountains
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limit 2 person per bathroom Social distance waiting Paper towels replace hand dryers Open lid garbage cans Extra staff supervision to maintain social distancing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social distancing labeling No use of lockers Traffic patterns Extra staff supervision to maintain social distancing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No water fountains Repurposed as water bottle filler stations Will have disposable cups available for students It is recommended that students supply their own clear water bottle

SCHOOL CALENDARS

Instructional Calendar	Grades 5-8 Middle School Instructional Calendar, 2020-2021			
	Start of School Calendar			
Grade Level	5th Grade	6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade
September 3 & 4	Virtual school starts. Students and families will receive communication from crew leaders, including an in-person home visit or at school meeting for a meeting and greet . There will also be virtual orientation of the virtual and hybrid learning environment which includes invites to crew google classroom . Students with the highest need for technology will receive a Chromebook at the home/ school visit with crew leader.			
September 7-11	1) NO school September 7th-Labor Day 2) All students will begin work in their crew google classroom alongside their crew leader, focusing on crew expectations, safety protocols and managing google classroom. 3) Online live synchronous virtual crew meetings start, everyday 8:00-8:30. Students MUST attend for daily attendance.			
September 14-18	5th grade starts hybrid model, following A/B schedule.	6-8 students will continue online learning in crew google classroom focusing on how to use google classroom, structures and routines for google classroom, restorative justice and crew structures.		
	All students in person/virtual live synchronous crew meetings, everyday 8-8:30. Students MUST attend for daily attendance.			
September 21-25	5th and 6th grade are in the hybrid model (6th grade starts), following A/B schedule		7th and 8th grade students will start learning in google classroom for their individual classes	
	All students in person/virtual live synchronous crew meetings, everyday 8-8:30. Students MUST attend for daily attendance.			
September 28-October 2	1.) All students in hybrid model (7th and 8th start) 2) All students in person/virtual live synchronous crew meetings, everyday 8-8:30. Students MUST attend for daily attendance.			

School Supply and Summer Reading Lists

Supply Lists	5th Grade Supply List for 2020-2021	6th Grade Supply List for 2020-2021	7th Grade Supply List for 2020-2021	8th Grade Supply List for 2020-2021
*Please note, these lists have been updated to accommodate the hybrid and remote learning models	5th Grade Supply List for 2020-2021	6th Grade Supply List for 2020-2021	7th Grade Supply List for 2020-2021	8th Grade Supply List for 2020-2021
Summer Reading	Incoming 5th Grade Summer Reading	Incoming 6th Grade Summer Reading	Incoming 7th Grade Summer Reading	Incoming 8th Grade Summer Reading
	Incoming 5th Grade Summer Reading	Incoming 6th Grade Summer Reading	Incoming 7th Grade Summer Reading	Incoming 8th Grade Summer Reading



Hello Middle School Families!

We have been spending the majority of the summer working on a plan to get our students safely back into the building for in-person learning and instruction. At Tapestry, we take great pride in building a positive, welcoming, and safe environment for our students, staff and families. With this in mind, we have crafted a goal for this year that directly aligns with our core belief that We Are Crew!

One of our Character goals for the 2020-21 school year states that Tapestry Middle school staff members will create a **safe and affirming** learning environment for **students and families** by engaging in a **positive professional community focused on character development, social, emotional, mental and physical health and wellness**.

To reach this goal, we will be preparing teachers to implement Trauma Informed Care techniques to address the social and emotional needs of our students that are both related and not related to experiences with the pandemic and the closure of school. Teachers will receive professional development throughout the first few weeks of school as well as ongoing learning during our professional development days during the school year.

We believe that the character and culture of the Middle School does not live only in crew, but it is incorporated throughout the day. Staff and student wellness is something that is of the highest priority. We have a plan to promote the wellness needs of our community through active breaks, multi-sensory instruction, and classroom management that demonstrates awareness of students' mental health. We will also have both HOW and Wellness targets as a part of daily lesson structures (focusing on PIRR, Social Emotional Learning competencies and wellness. We will support our staff and students' wellness through:

School traditions and routines are important for the overall wellness of teachers and students. It is our goal to keep as many of these traditions alive within the Hybrid and/or remote model of school this year.

Communication with the Middle School community has always been a priority. We have a plan in place to ensure that we have ongoing communication with all of our stakeholders.

We are so excited to implement this plan for our community this year and see our students through virtual live lessons and in person learning. We hope you enjoy and use the rest of summer to rest and recharge to get ready for the structure of the 2020-21 school year!

Miss Amy DiMaggio - Assistant Principal

CREW

Crew will be a vital component of our reopening plan in the Middle School. Your child's Crew Leader will be the main source of information and communication within the middle school. We have created a goal for this school year that specifically addresses the work around crew and building relationships with students and their families. The first character goal in our work plan states:

I can **build relationships** with my crew students by implementing **restorative and equitable practices** that **support all students** with their academic, social, emotional and behavioral needs that will contribute to becoming an effective learner.



Based on the feedback from our community, it was clear and important to build a program that incorporated live lessons for our students. The Crew structure will be as follows:

- Students stay with their Crew cohort in their assigned crew room.
 - Crews were determined based on existing crew groups, special education needs (due to scheduling) and sibling alignment, K12 (A/B)
- **Crew meetings will happen daily from 8:00-8:30AM, Monday-Friday.**
 - Crew will be used as a way for teachers to take attendance for the day.
 - **If a student does not attend their LIVE (in person or virtual) Crew session, they will be marked absent for the day.**
 - Remote students (students who are learning from home everyday) will need to attend their crew through the link provided by their Crew leader on a daily basis.
 - Every other day will be a virtual LIVE Crew for Hybrid students. In the hybrid schedule:
 - On days when in the building, meet as a Crew 2x per day in person (AM, 8-8:30 & PM during extended lunch).
 - On days when not in the building, meet as a Crew 1x per day virtually.

Teachers will receive professional development that provides strategies to build positive relationships with their crew students and families through the use of restorative practices. Teachers will plan and deliver crew lessons that address the social, emotional, and wellness needs of our students on a daily basis. Crew lessons will be designed using these structures:

- Lessons that promote safety and wellness for all community members for the first weeks of school (see schedule)
- Daily crew lesson that address the Social and Emotional Needs of our Students
 - Social Emotional Learning Standards based lessons
 - Self Care, Mindfulness, Agency, Relationships & Joy
 - Emphasis on Trauma Informed Care and Responsiveness
- Structure to build **relationships** within the crew and with crew families.
- Crew Leader will be the student and family's middle school point person for communication.
- Weekly check-in with families
- Crew Accountability Partners for students (another layer of support)

CREW (CONTINUED)

The schedule allows time for students to have an extended lunch period with their crew. During this time, students will be able to engage in the following:



- Build in time for hygiene (washing of hands at designated sink)
- Students will be eating lunch in their classroom.
 - Buddy Crew Leader will “Cover” lunch to allow for a teacher break.
- Academic Monitoring (Protocol will be provided to help guide this)
 - Setting students up for success for their at home virtual day
 - Writing Assignments in Student Agenda
 - Answer clarifying questions
 - Academic check-in, as we know it, will still occur
- Mindfulness and Self Check-In Time
- Recess

Crew is such an important structure to our program and we are looking forward to supporting our students through the supportive lens of crew.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8/31 Staff PD	9/1 Staff PD	9/2 Staff PD	9/3 Crew Leaders Contact Families	9/4 Crew Leaders Contact Families
9/7 No School	9/8 Virtual Crew Lesson <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Crew Expectations (Mandatory Attendance) - BBK of the Hybrid and Online School Model for kids 	9/9 Virtual Crew Lesson <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are your physical, social, and emotional needs and limits for crew (In Person and Online). - Build Norms for In Person and Online Crew. 	9/10 Virtual Crew Lesson Safety Protocols in the Middle School <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Entry Procedures - Handwashing and hygiene - Sick or have a temperature, stay home. - Bathrooms - Hallways - Breakfast - Lunch - Transitions - Dismissal 	9/11 Virtual Crew Lesson Safety Protocols in the Middle School <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Entry Procedures - Handwashing and hygiene - Sick or have a temperature, stay home. - Bathrooms - Hallways - Breakfast - Lunch - Transitions - Dismissal
9/14 5th Grade 1st A Day Crew Lesson: Managing your Google Classrooms	9/15 5th Grade 1st B Day Crew Lesson: Crew Journaling, structure and format	9/16 Crew Lesson: Introduce Academic Check-In for Crew	9/17 Crew Lesson: Circle Lesson: Introducing Talking Signal	9/18 Crew Lesson: Circle Lesson: Check In Circle



Hello Tapestry Families,

As we move closer to back to school time there is likely anxiety for everyone. How can we as families transition towards a more structured way of life? This year at Tapestry we will teach Health curriculum to all 5-8th grade students. We will be covering the following topics: mental health, healthy routines and habits, hygiene, mindfulness, sleep and nutrition. These are the topics that we feel can benefit our children's transition back to school and their minds and bodies in this uncertain time best. It is wise to start having conversations with our children about getting readjusted to school. These are my top three tips for easing your child into a "back to school" mindset this August.

Start to Establish a Healthy Sleep Routine

The American Academy of Sleep Medicine has recommended that children aged 6–12 years should regularly sleep 9–12 hours per 24 hours and teenagers aged 13–18 years should sleep 8–10 hours per 24 hours. Students who get enough sleep have an easier time with focus at school. What time then will your child need to get to sleep when school starts? How can your family ease them into this pattern with the assumption that they will need to be awake and ready to learn early in the morning come fall? Regardless of the method that works for your family, I recommend talking about these sleep facts with your child and seeing what kind of schedule they propose. Use this as a jumping off point for putting that plan slowly into action throughout August.

Understand Hand Washing and Mask Wearing

Covid has kept us all on our toes much more about washing our hands. We, in New York have gotten accustomed to wearing masks everywhere we go in public and coming home to wash our hands. Continue to nudge your child to wash their hands really well often. Teach them how to use warm water and soap when they wash their hands. Teach them to wash thoroughly and for a longer period of time than they were used to before Covid. Also, be sure they understand why it is important for them to be responsible with their hand drying towels as well. Explain the importance of doing this often and with integrity even when no one is watching at school. Be sure your child understands the importance of wearing a mask for the safety of the community. Find some that are comfortable and well fitting for your child this month.

Learn to Manage Anxiety Proactively

Anxiety is a normal human reaction to life in such uncertain times. It is important to also add that anxiety feels different for all people. Talk to your child about how anxiety feels to them. Do they get short of breath? Feel scared? Struggle to focus? It is a good strategy to talk about and name anxiety as a feeling in our households. Be sure to reassure your child that this is a common feeling and that all of their peers struggle with this as well. Explore strategies to help your child manage their own anxiety about coming back to school. There are apps you can download to help with relaxation, but the best tool is teaching your child to pay attention to the inward and outward flow of their own breath. It is also best to practice this everyday proactively. Oftentimes when we are already anxious it is hard to remember the tools we have learned.

WELLNESS & HEALTH (CONTINUED)

These are tips that we can all start talking about and practicing in our households as September gets closer. Let's use this time to ease our children into routine and to educate our children on the facts that will help empower them to keep themselves, their families, and the community more safe, adjusted, and healthy.

Jessica Mascle, Wellness & Health

COUNSELING CORNER WITH MS. BEDELL

Dear Tapestry Families,

During this uncertain time I want all of you to know that I am available for all of our students and families. Please reach out to me via email or my extension at the school and we can figure out the best way to connect whether it is via phone, virtually or in person.



This time in our country has affected everyone in different ways for a variety of reasons. The message that I want to send to everyone is simple and to the point. There is no exact "correct way" to handle what we are experiencing right now. Every question, concern or emotion is "ok", so please know that we are all in this together, School should be a safe haven for families, whether your child is in the building or learning virtually, they should feel positive about their learning experience. I connect with students in a variety of ways and I will bring students together to make the most out of this situation so they feel they are part of this community.

<https://allstatefoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Allstate-Foundation-SEL-Parent-Guide-072220.pdf>

I have included a parent guide that I feel has some important information that can help parents with providing social emotional learning skills at home during this time in our country.

If you have any questions, please reach out to me. Looking forward to the upcoming school year!

Jessica Bedell

5-8 School Counselor

MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETICS UPDATE

Thunderhawks,

We hope your families are enjoying an active healthy summer. This has truly been some trying times for those that love sports and athletics. It's hard to believe that sports have been on hold for the last five months. With this being said it is so important to care for our overall wellness during these challenging times. Our department's priorities are getting our community back to school in the safest way possible.



Athletics has been postponed for public schools for the fall ahead. There is a COVID task force of individuals across NYS that have been meeting and communicating the recommendations and guidelines to implement sports back in schools. As of now we have no start date of when extracurriculars will happen for sure. We will continue to assess the recommendations given to us from NYS and communicate with families as to how we plan to unroll and reintroduce extra curricular.

As we prepare for our hybrid model of instruction, I am excited to say that physical education is going to be in the schedule both in person and virtual. With safety guidelines in place our goal is to identify fitness components that adolescents can focus on at home. For adolescents, these are the developmental years that are so crucial for your child to be active. As physical educators we are going to give students the knowledge to take responsibility for their individual fitness. This will be done by setting fitness goals and learning exercises to meet the needs of the various components of fitness.

Please stay tuned as we continue to plan and formulate the activities for your families this upcoming school year.

Here is a link for some fun fitness and sport skill activities your families can enjoy this summer.

<https://www.projectplaywny.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Free-Play-Cards-PPWNY-CR.pdf>

On behalf of the Thunderhawk Athletic and PE department we look forward to supporting your families overall wellness this upcoming school year.

THUNDERHAWK PRIDE!

Marc LaMorticella
Director of Athletics
Grades 5-8 Physical Education



THE MIDDLE SCHOOL ARTS

We are excited to announce that Tapestry Charter Middle School will be combined arts with rotations throughout the year. Our Middle School Art Team is in the process of developing a comprehensive curriculum which all students will partake in. Below is the time students will spend with each art

- ☼ 20 weeks in visual art
- ☼ 10 weeks in performance art
- ☼ 10 weeks in music

This curriculum will allow all students to sample exploratory learning and develop new skills: physical, social, and thinking. Combined Arts classes offer the chance to strengthen other intelligences such as spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, musical, and interpersonal. Each class will be designed to challenge students' problem solving and critical thinking skills to foster a greater sense of self-esteem through creativity and expression.

FOOD SERVICE

When students are in the building for the hybrid model, they will receive **breakfast and lunch** as usual, both will be served within the crew space. **Breakfast will be waiting for students to eat when they come to school and can be eaten between 7:45-8:00**, prior to crew. **Lunch will be served in a 45 minute block in the middle of the day** and is combined with a mid-day crew that focuses on academic monitoring and recess. Students will still have the option to order the lunch they would like and that will be delivered directly to them. Lunch and breakfast will only be served once hand washing has taken place. Prior to leaving for the day, students will receive their breakfast and lunch for their "home" school days.

When students are not in school and are learning remotely, parents/guardians can come through the **meal pickup line** at the lower school. The times of service will be between 11-1. Food service will only be available to Tapestry students, not any other children in the household. Meals cannot be picked up on days the students are physically in school.

All meals will follow the free, reduced, paid plan, as we usually do during the school year.

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.