



Middle School Newsletter

September 2021

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,

We are so excited to have your child with us for this school year! As we have started in on our first week, we are so incredibly proud of our community for the successful transition back to in person schooling 5 days a week. Students are reconnecting with school structures and routines and meeting the health and safety expectations of wearing their mask and wearing them in the correct way. This is always helpful to have reiterated at home. If students do forget a mask, we have extras available as students enter for their temp screening daily. Our families have been so supportive, flexible and patient. Thank you for attending our Meet Your Crew to sign all the necessary paperwork and familiarize yourself with what the school day will look like for your child. And of course, a shout out to our teachers. They have engaged in professional development around best instructional practices and aligned them with meeting the health and safety requirements with having students back at full capacity. They have planned a start of the school year focused on team building, routines and relationships. It is very exciting to have students back engaged in fieldwork and off-campus activities. Lots of exciting things as we start off the year. Wahoo!

Throughout this month, students have already received their Chrombook and need to practice charging it nightly and bringing it back and forth with them to school. We will start the year with having students take the NWEA MAPS Reading and Math Assessments to obtain baseline assessment data. This will lead to strategic interventions to ensure that students are receiving all the support they need as they transition back to school.

Later this month, we are having our Back to School Night on Thursday, September 23. This will be a virtual event. Times and links will be sent as it gets closer. If you are unable to attend live, we will record and send it out. This will provide families with an opportunity to meet all the teachers on the grade level team of your child, learn about the classes they are taking and the special opportunities that come with being in middle school. Looking forward to seeing you there!

Each week, grade level teachers update the grade level website with important information for your child. Please check out the websites and bookmark the pages. Check back frequently!

[5th Grade Website](#)

[6th Grade Website](#)

[7th Grade Website](#)

[8th Grade Website](#)

Have a Safe & Healthy September,

Mrs. Lindsay Lee - Principal

Upcoming Important Dates

- ◆ Thursday, September 23: Back to School Night, 5-8 (Virtual)
- ◆ Friday, October 8-Monday, October 11: No School, Professional Development & Indigenous People's Day
- ◆ Tuesday, November 2: Picture Day, 5-8

MIDDLE SCHOOL CULTURE WITH ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL, MRS. MESHULAM

Hello Middle School Families,

We are so excited to have started the 2021-2022 school year with all of our students back in person. The first week of school we spent a majority of the time building relationships with crews, setting structures and routines and collecting baseline data in Math and ELA. Our students were out of the building on fieldwork for the first time since February of 2020! That is something to celebrate. The week of September 13th students will get into the routine of starting their regular schedule for the school year. Remember, our day starts at 8:00 AM and students are back to learning 5 days a week in school.



The week of September 27th, students will host their first grade level community meeting of the school year. One crew from each grade level will plan and host the meeting. We will kick it off during crew time with 5th grade on September 27th, then 6th grade on September 28th, 7th grade on September 29th and 8th grade on September 30th. We will be sure to share photos of our meeting out to the Tapestry community, be sure to follow us on Facebook and Instagram!

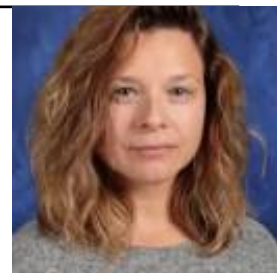
Please reach out to me if you need anything at all! You can call me at (716) 332-0755 x1076 or email me at meshulama@tapestryschool.org.

Let's have a great school year!

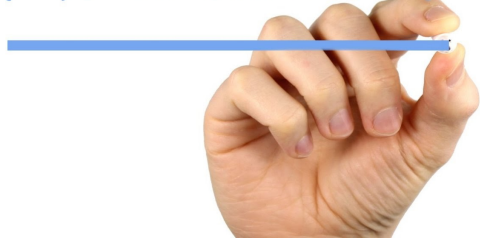
Mrs. Meshulam

WELLNESS & HEALTH WITH JESSICA MASCLE

Back to school is both exciting and, if we are honest, pretty anxiety provoking too! In Health class these first couple of weeks, students will be working on sharing their feelings and listening to and supporting their peers in conversations about fear, worry, and anxiety. This opportunity will help them to realize they are not alone, help them to let go of irrational worries, and teach them coping skills like deep breathing, systematic relaxation, and journaling. Please ask your student what they are learning about in Health and check out [this article](#) to help your whole family navigate back to school anxiety during the pandemic.



ANXIETY



MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT GOVERNMENT

Welcome back, Tapestry!

We are so thrilled to have everyone back in the building five days a week!



Here at Tapestry Charter Middle School, Student Government exists to address the needs of Tapestry Middle School students, and encourage a positive, respectful, and supportive environment.

We will achieve this by:

- Providing a structure for communication between students and the larger Tapestry Community
- Upholding the values of PIRR.
- Promoting school spirit and pride.
- Encouraging student success.

We are also excited to announce that Student Government will be running the TapShack, our school store, this year! We anticipate opening the store during the month of October and more information will be shared as we get closer to opening.

Our first Student Government meeting will be held on Wednesday September 29th from 2:45pm - 3:15pm in room 119.

All students grades 5 - 8 are welcome to join Student Government. If your child is interested in joining, please contact Ms. Smerda (smerdad@tapestryschool.org) or Mrs. Mastrangelo (mastrangelos@tapestryschool.org).

Happy September!

Ms. Smerda and Mrs. Mastrangelo

COUNSELING CORNER WITH MS. BEDELL

Welcome Families ! We are excited for all of our students to be back in the school building. We have a lot of exciting things planned for this school year that I will continue to keep you posted on. In the meantime, if you have questions or concerns please feel free to contact me at any time. Jessica Bedell ext. 1060



MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETICS UPDATE WITH MR. LAMORTICELLA

Sports are back here at Tapestry this Fall. Please fill out the **athletic forms** and bring them to the main office the first week of the school year. We will have hard copies at the school the first week of the school year. Be sure to indicate what sport your child is interested in participating in. Each team will have a tentative schedule so you and your families can plan accordingly.

Tapestry Covid Safety protocols will be in effect for all athletics and are subject to change based on ECDOH.

Your child must also have a physical exam and be cleared for sports participation. Sport physicals should be done annually by your primary care physician.



MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETICS UPDATE CONTINUED

Please get your car pools set up early for games and practices and pick up promptly at the conclusion of the athletic practice or game. Tapestry will not be able to provide transportation to the various locations. Please note that on the schedules it will show where the site locations are.

CO-ED Soccer:

Each participant will need shin pads, cleats, tall socks, shorts and a t-shirt. **A LABELED water bottle is also recommended.** We play soccer in most any weather including rain, snow, wind and cold, so unless you hear otherwise from me, practice is on and your child may need extra clothes to stay warm and dry.



Coaches:

Grades 5/6: Tyler Brunner- brunnert@tapestryschool.org

Grades 7/8: Matt Kahrmanianm- kahrmanianm@tapestryschool.org

CO-ED Flag Football: Grades 5-8

The practices will be on site at Tapestry Charter school behind the gym every Tuesday and Thursday from 2:45-3:45. **Flag football will start on Tuesday September 14th.**

Each participant will need cleats, shorts and a t-shirt and a **LABELED** water bottle is also highly recommended. Please dress accordingly based on the weather. Games against other schools may be scheduled as we get into the school year. This is the start of our grassroots football program. Tapestry has been working with the Buffalo Bills and the NFL to expose our students to the sport.

Coach: Billy Ray Davis- davisbr@tapestryschool.org

Girls Volleyball:

The practices will be on site at Tapestry Charter school every Monday and Wednesday from 2:45-3:45 in the HS gym. This will start on Monday September 13th. Please dress appropriately with sneakers, t-shirt and shorts/leggings and a **LABELED** water bottle.

Coach: Rachel Heidenreich- heidenreichr@tapestryschool.org

School issued uniforms will be distributed. We will rely heavily on email, google classroom, and school messengers for communication. Once the season starts, please check your email regularly.

If you don't have an updated email, please let us know on the permission slip and we will also inform your child's main office. Updates on schedule and information for the communities athletic programming will change as we navigate through the fall season. Stay Safe!

THUNDERHAWK PRIDE!



Art Rotations 2021-22

We are excited to announce that Tapestry Charter Middle School will continue with the rotation throughout the year 2021-22. Our Middle School Art Team is in the process of developing a comprehensive arts integrated curriculum which will connect to students grade level expeditions. 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.

The curriculum in each of the arts classes are designed to challenge students' problem solving and critical thinking skills to foster a greater sense of self-esteem, creativity and expression through expeditionary learning practices.

Arts Rotations 2021-2022 by Grade level

Visual Art: Grade 5, 6, 8

Performance Art: Grades 5, 7, 8

Music: Grades 5, 7, 8



UPDATE FROM THE HEALTH OFFICE

Welcome back to our Tapestry Families!

Health Exams:

All new students and students in grades K, 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11 are required to submit a current physical to the health office. This is per Education Law Article 19 and Regulations of the Commissioner of Education.

Immunizations:

NYS Education Law requires all parents/guardians submit proof of mandated immunizations to the health office prior to the first day of school. Mandated immunizations can be found on the Tapestry website under the health office.

Students without proof of required immunizations will be exempt from school if documentation is not received by September 21st.



All paperwork can be submitted to the health office via fax, email or dropped off in person.

Nancy Burns

Burnsn@tapestryschoo.org

Fax: 332-0758

NEW FACES & NEW PLACES

We are excited to welcome many new staff members into our community for the upcoming school year! We are able to do this with the development of strategic positions to support students in their academic and social and emotional learning. Please take a moment to Meet the New Faces of Tapestry Staff and New Places of returning Staff in a different role.

NEW FACES

5th Grade

Christine Fiorella

5th Grade Integrated Co-Teacher, Crew Leader



Hi! My name is Christine Fiorella. This is my first year at Tapestry and my third year of teaching. I am excited to be part of this community! I received my Bachelor of Science in Social Work from Nazareth College of Rochester and Master of Science in Childhood/Special Education from Canisius College of Buffalo. I love a good book, hiking, and coffee! I am excited to be working with the students and staff of Tapestry this year.

Eleni Shehata

5th Grade ELA Teacher, Crew Leader



Hello! My name is Eleni Shehata. I live in Amherst with my two dogs (Irwin and Teddy) and my husband. I love riding my bike, playing Pokemon Go, baking, and listening to audiobooks. I am from a large family which fostered my love for kids at a young age. I am very proud to be the first teacher in my family! This will be my third year of teaching since obtaining my masters' in English Language Arts Education from the University at Buffalo. However, this is my first year at Tapestry. I am excited about the collaborative and explorative culture at Tapestry. I am looking forward to a long career at Tapestry beginning this year.

Christina Tolli

5th Grade Math (Long Term Substitute) Teacher, Crew Leader



Hi! My name is Christina, this year I will be a long term sub for 5th grade math and then 7th grade science. I graduated undergrad from Niagara University in 2019 and I am continuing at NU for my masters in special education. Some things I enjoy are going out on the boat and doing water spots in the summer and snowboarding in the winter. I am looking forward to getting to know you as well as working with you all at Tapestry this year!

NEW FACES & NEW PLACES

NEW FACES

6th Grade

Corey Griswold

6th Grade Humanities
Teacher, Crew Leader



Hello! I'm Corey Griswold and this is my tenth year in education. I have taught middle school social studies and humanities both in Virginia and here in my hometown of Buffalo. I'm a graduate of the University at Buffalo with a history degree as well as Canisius College with a Master of Education. I'm looking forward to working with students in the classroom again and spending meaningful time with them and their families.

Tiffany Howe

6th Grade Math Teacher,
Crew Leader



Hello! My name is Tiffany Howe and I am beyond excited to be joining the Tapestry Community as I am entering into my first year of teaching! I graduated from Buffalo State College, majoring in Math Education 5-12. I grew up in West Seneca and continued on to live there myself. I am the oldest of five siblings and have a rather large family. Family is super important to me and I love spending time with them. I am most looking forward to working with students in the classroom and forming bonds with students and staff. I can't wait to kick start this school year by joining the Tapestry family!

Luna Yager

6th Grade ELA Teacher,
Crew Leader



Greetings! I am Luna Yager and I moved from San Diego to Buffalo in 2019. I have a background in ELA and special education, and this year will be my third year as an ELA classroom teacher. In my free time I love to read, be outdoors, and spend time with my cat. I am most looking forward to having meaningful relationships with students and families and to having fun learning in the classroom.

NEW FACES & NEW PLACES

NEW FACES

7th Grade

**Michael
Capestrani**

7th Grade Math Teacher,
Crew Leader



Hello! My name is Michael Capestrani and this will be my first year of teaching. I'm super excited to start my career at Tapestry Charter as the new 7th grade math teacher. I graduated from Buffalo State College with my Bachelor's in Mathematics with my teaching certification for grades 5-12. I'm beyond excited to start working and building bonds with both my students and the staff at Tapestry Charter!

Dominique Jones

7th Grade Integrated Co-
Teacher (Long Term
Substitute), 7th Grade
Crew Leader



Hello! My name is Dominique Jones and I am so excited to begin my teaching career here with the Tapestry Family! I graduated from Buffalo State College with an undergrad in Public Relations in 2018. After a few years of substitute teaching I fell in love with being in the classroom. I am currently enrolled at Buffalo State College for my masters in SPED 7-12 and will graduate May 2022! I have lived in Buffalo my whole life and I am really looking forward to getting to work in such a great community and helping all of our students!

8th Grade

Melissa Heidenreich

8th Grade Math Teacher,
Crew Leader



Hello, my name is Melissa. I grew up in Western New York, with two brothers and a sister, and am proud to call it home. After earning my bachelor's and master's in mathematics education at Buffalo State, I went on to teach at the college for four years. I had the pleasure of working with STEM majors and elementary education majors. This year, I am most looking forward to working with eighth graders and watching them grow as individuals and mathematicians.

Alexa Santora

8th Grade ELA Teacher,
Crew Leader



Hi! My name is Alexa Santora and I am teaching eighth grade ELA this year. This is my sixth year teaching, and fifth year teaching eighth grade ELA. I enjoy middle school and am very excited to be able to continue doing what I love. I have lived in Buffalo my entire life, and love it here! I am looking forward to meeting all my new students and immersing myself in the Tapestry culture!

NEW FACES & NEW PLACES

NEW FACES

5th-8th Grade

Greg Barresi

5th-8th Grade Music Teacher (Long Term Substitute), 7th Grade Crew Leader



Hi, my name is Greg and this is my first year teaching full time. I have spent my career teaching guitar and music privately in one on one settings as well as workshops and ensembles. Additionally, I have served as a Musician in Residence at Children's Hospital and Roswell while performing locally. I am looking forward to working with so many new (to me) students and colleagues!

Miquela Chudy

5th-8th Grade ELA Co-Teacher (Teacher on Special Assignment)



Hi! My name is Miquela Chudy and it is my first year of teaching! I'm very excited to be a part of Tapestry Charter Middle School this year. I graduated with my bachelor's from SUNY Fredonia in English Education, and I am continuing my graduate education at University at Buffalo. I love books and learning and I can't wait to share that passion with students in person this year.

Amy Jakiel

5th-8th Grade Math Co-Teacher (Teacher on Special Assignment)



Hi there! I'm Amy and I'm thrilled to join the team at a school I've admired for many years. I was born and raised in North Buffalo and now live in West Seneca with my husband, two teens, and a toddler! I love theater, music, travel, languages, Buffalo Bills football, and am a recently obsessed with OrangeTheory. I graduated from Canisius over a decade ago with a degree in Special Ed/Childhood Ed and a concentration in music, then went on to work in the human service field. I am currently working on my masters at Buff State with a focus in Gifted Ed and couldn't be more excited to be back in the classroom!

NEW FACES & NEW PLACES

NEW FACES

5th-8th Grade

Johanna MacDonald

5th-8th Grade Literacy Specialist, 5th Grade Crew Leader



Hi! My name is Johanna. This will be the start of my 14th year of teaching. I started my teaching career as a reading specialist almost 20 years ago. After spending some years home with my two children, I returned to teaching in 4th, 5th and 6th grades. When I am not “uber”ing my kids to and from their Volleyball and Soccer activities, I love working out, having a good laugh with friends and playing with my puppies. I am excited to be part of the Tapestry community and family.

Dena McCraith

5th-8th Grade Physical Education Teacher, 5th Grade Crew Leader



Hey! I’m Dena McCraith. I am going into my 15th year of teaching. Spent 10 years working in Fairfax County Public Schools while living in Alexandria, VA. 2 kids later decided to move back to WNY to be closer to family. Spent the last 4 years teaching Health & PE at Maritime Charter and now I continue my journey with Tapestry. I’m really looking forward to becoming part of the Tapestry community and putting down roots. Hoping to get back a little more normal this school year and if it’s just as crazy...I’ll be ready for that too!

Brendan McFall

6th-8th Grade Humanities Integrated Co-Teacher, 7th Grade Crew Leader



Hello! My name is Brendan McFall and this is my second year in education. I am so excited to become a part of the Tapestry family! This year, I will be working as the humanities ICT for grades 6-8. I graduated from SUNY Fredonia in 2020 with a degree in Adolescent Social Studies Education and spent my first year teaching 8th grade social studies at Hamburg Middle School. In my free time I am usually playing sports, watching the Buffalo Bills, or hiking! I can’t wait to get started in this new role at Tapestry Middle!

NEW FACES & NEW PLACES

NEW FACES

5th-8th Grade

Liz Palmer

5th-8th Grade Science
Co-Teacher (Teacher on
Special Assignment)



Hello all! My name is Liz Palmer. This is my first year teaching and I couldn't be more excited to be part of the Tapestry community. I will be co-teaching science in grades 5-7, and teaching an elective on Food Chemistry in the High School. I received my Bachelor's in Chemistry from SUNY New Paltz, and my Masters in Chemistry Education from the University at Buffalo. When I have free time I enjoy yoga, tea, and being with family and friends. I am most looking forward to building relationships and community within each classroom I am a part of.

Jennifer Winarski

5th-8th Grade Science
Integrated Co-Teacher,
7th Grade Crew Leader



Hello, I'm Jennifer Winarski. I was born and raised in WNY. I enjoy watercolor painting, yoga, reading and tending to my flower garden. Most of my time, however, is spent raising teen boys and watching them play sports. I have over 7 years of experience working in the classroom. I have also taught preschool, led intuitive art classes with adults, and was a nanny while my own children were small. Learning is part of my everyday life; whether I am researching child development, the latest crafting techniques or reading about recent discoveries in science. As a young girl I enjoyed studying rocks, stargazing and making art. That is why I am very excited to be co-teaching with the science department. I hope to encourage enthusiasm in science and a love of learning with my students. I am looking forward to returning to the classroom with my experience, motherly patience and love of learning here at Tapestry.

NEW FACES & NEW PLACES

NEW PLACES

5th-8th Grade

Victoria Cooke

6th-8th Grade Humanities
Co-Teacher (Teacher on
Special Assignment)



Hello! My name is Victoria Cooke and I'm excited to be returning to Tapestry for a second year in a new role! This year I will be serving as the Humanities TOSA in grades 6-8. In 2020 I earned my Bachelor's degree in History with initial teaching certification for adolescent education from SUNY Geneseo. Outside of school I love baking, crafting, and reading. In the coming year I'm most looking forward to serving as the advisor for the Gender and Sexualities Alliance again!

Donna Latham-Edwards

5th-8th Grade Student
Support



Habari Gani! My name is Donna Latham-Edwards and I'm very excited about my new role at Tapestry. I have 20 years of experience working with youth from the Church to our Homeless and at risk community. I'm looking forward to connecting and continuing building relationships with students, teachers and staff.

Matt Goehrig

6th & 7th Grade Math Lab
Teacher, 6th Grade Crew
Leader



Hi! Matt Goehrig here! I've been teaching math in one form or another for the past 8 years. My work at UB's Gifted Math Program includes the writing of my own textbook and the coaching of middle school competitive math teams. This year I am the 6th and 7th Math Lab instructor, a position very close to my own educational passions of project based learning and hands-on instruction. I am also very passionate about social justice and the environmental crisis, so I'm very happy to be working at Tapestry where so many staff and administrators are equally driven.

Matt Hahn

6th & 7th Grade
Language Lab Teacher,
7th Grade Crew Leader



Hello! My name is Matt Hahn, and I am returning to Tapestry for my 3rd year. I am taking on the role of 6th and 7th grade Language Lab teacher, and am incredibly excited to get started this year! I have my Bachelors and Masters Degree in English Education 7-12 from Buffalo State College. This will be my 5th year teaching English and I am most excited to continue building relationships with my amazing students.