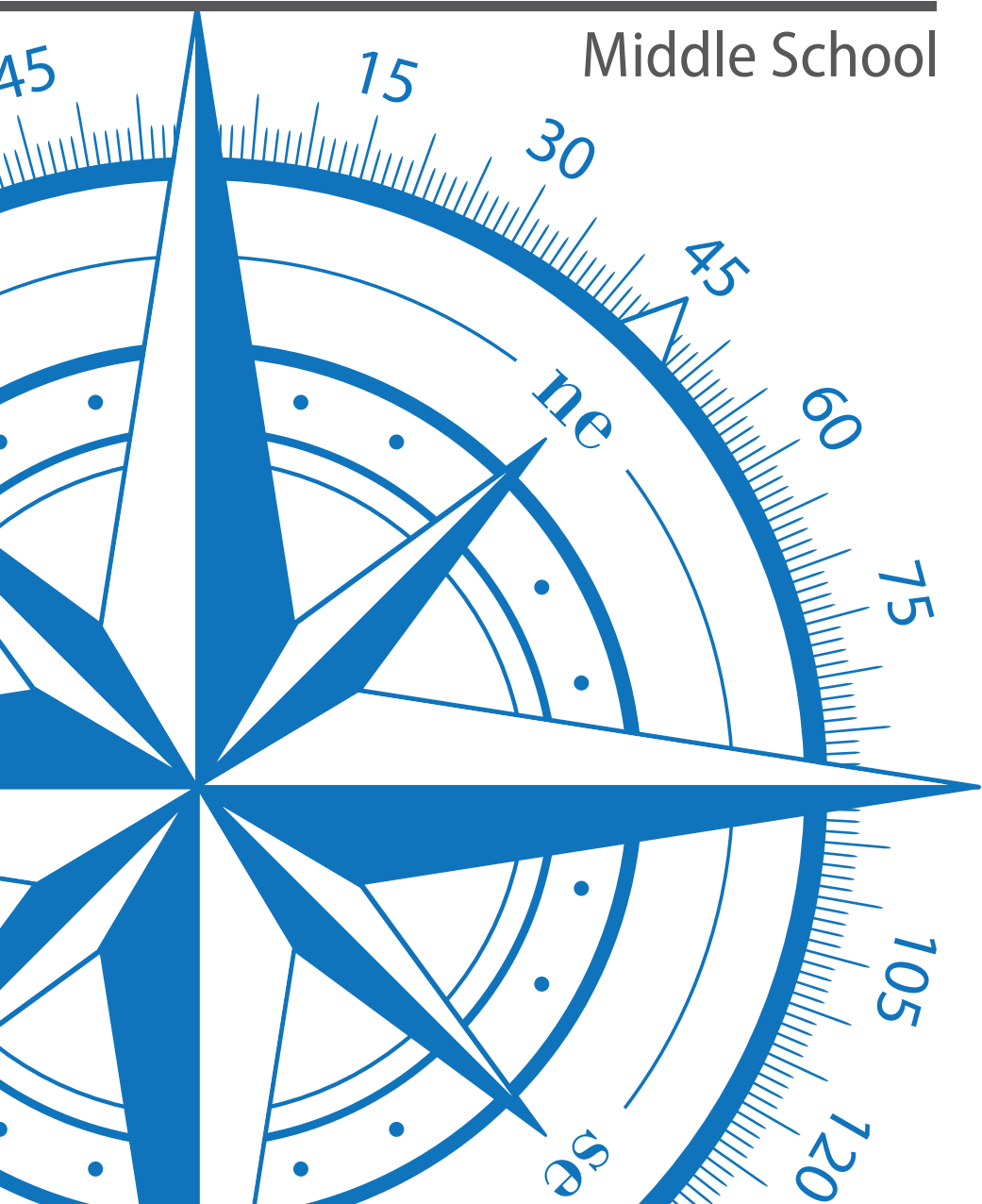


# NAVIGATING

Middle School



THE PRAIRIE SCHOOL

# NAVIGATING MIDDLE SCHOOL

Welcome to Middle School!

This guidebook is a compilation of many voices, each offering information to help you feel at home in our community. If you have other questions or need additional information, please ask! We encourage you to ask questions, and the Middle School Office is the best place to start.

## IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Main School Switchboard .....262.752.2500

Attendance Line .....262.752.2541

**Middle School Office**.....262.752.2551

Bonnie Benes, Head of Middle School .....262.752.2551  
bbenes@prairieschool.com

Todd Albers, Dean of Students.....262.752.2554  
talbers@prairieschool.com

### Health Office

Camille Jensen-Guion, RN.....262.752.2660  
healthoffice@prairieschool.com

### School Counselor

Ana Moreno.....262.752.2662  
amoreno@prairieschool.com

SRC.....262.752.2677

School website.....[www.prairieschool.com](http://www.prairieschool.com)

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## MIDDLE SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

The Middle School supports the School's mission by developing and fostering self-worth, responsibility, character, knowledge, and the abilities of all students.

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# Welcome to Middle School!

Whether you are returning to Prairie or entering for the first time, we want each of you to know how important you are to us. We want to help every student achieve their highest potential. Prairie's Middle School provides a challenging, well-structured, yet innovative environment for our grade 5-8 students.

We study mathematics, English, reading, social studies, science, and world languages - and we believe that a complete middle school education addresses the whole child. PE and a strong arts program round out our day. From Rocket Science to athletics and Student Activities Board, we offer a wide variety of co-curricular choices allowing our students to engage in creative growth and physical development.

This guidebook provides a snapshot and is a link to specific Middle School offerings not covered in the School's Family Handbook (that can be found on the School website). Please refer to this guidebook often, as you navigate your way through Middle School. Feel free to contact us with questions at anytime at 262-752-2551.

Best wishes for a successful school year - welcome and enjoy all we have to offer!

***Warmest regards,  
Bonnie Benes, Head of Middle School***

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I am Mr. Albers, and besides teaching Social Studies, I am also the Middle School Dean. The role of the dean is to help students grow in a safe and healthy learning environment. A dean strives to achieve this standard in many ways:

- Know that students make mistakes and trust students will learn from them.
- Work with students, in conjunction with their families, advisors, and teachers, to make appropriate choices and to behave suitably.
- Hold students accountable to the expectations of the School by assigning appropriate consequences.
- Recognize and support students who help maintain the positive atmosphere of the School.
- Encourage students to seek help from the dean, an advisor, a school counselor, or a teacher.

I can help students best when I know that a student needs help. See me directly or talk to an adult who can inform me. My office is always open!

***Todd Albers, Middle School Dean***

# NUTS AND BOLTS



## **What are school hours?**

Classes are held between 8:30 a.m. and 3:45 p.m.

## **Where are students dropped off and picked up?**

The drop-off and pick-up area for Middle School is outside door #3. However, if students have siblings in another division, they may use any entrance.

## **May my student come early?**

Middle School students may come to school as early as 7:30 a.m. when the SRC opens.

## **How will we know if there is a snow day or delayed schedule?**

In the event schools must be closed because of inclement weather, we follow Racine Unified's lead because many families depend on the busing system to transport their children to and from school. Please check the major television stations for closing information. If school is cancelled, or if there is a delayed start, this information will also be available by calling the School's main number or by accessing the School's web site.

## **How can I get a message to my child during the school day?**

You may text or email your student, or you may contact the MS Office and a note will be placed on his/her locker.

## **What if my child will not be in school?**

If your child is ill, arriving late, or leaving early, report to the school attendance line before 8:30 a.m. 7/8 students can access their assignment calendars and email teachers with questions about homework. 5/6 students can email their teachers directly for assignments. If you know in advance your student will be absent, please remind him/her to stop by the Middle School Office for a planned absence form for collecting assignments ahead of time.

## **What happens after school? Can my child stay late?**

After school is over for the day, MS students still on campus must be in one of the following places, ensuring they are supervised at all times:

- After School Study Hall (ASSH) - runs Monday through Thursday in M7 from 3:45-4:30 p.m. Students have a place to complete assignments, eat a snack, ask teachers questions or get help on homework.
- Students may arrange to meet with a teacher for extra help or tutoring.
- After school club meetings; athletic activities, or rehearsals
- Stay and Play is only for MS students when they must stay on campus beyond the completion of an after school activity, past 4:30 p.m.
- Stay and Play: 262.752.2599

## **Where is the lost and found?**

Please label all clothing, headphones, and any other personal belongings with your child's name. When labeled items are found, they are returned to their owners. Unlabeled items may be reclaimed from the lost and found. There are lockers outside the Middle School Office designated as lost and found, as well as a shelf near the Primary School Office. Items left in the lost and found over the summer are donated to a local shelter.

## **Is there a hot lunch program?**



Yes. In Middle School, students may purchase a yearlong lunch pass OR may buy lunch tickets as

needed. Complete information on the lunch program (including how to purchase a lunch pass) can be seen at the School website (Home>Parent Resources>Lunch Programs & Menus). No cash is needed as ticket purchases are charged to the student's account.

## **May I pack a lunch for my child?**

Yes, and if you like, your child may purchase beverage tickets for milk or juice.

## **When do Middle Schoolers eat lunch?**

Students go to their homeroom at 11:05 a.m. to pick up their lunch pass or tickets and are dismissed to lunch at that time. The lunch period, including outdoor recess ends at 11:50 a.m.

## **Where can I find the lunch menu?**

The lunch menu is posted on the school website (Home>Tools and Resources>Lunch Menus). There is also a copy of the lunch menu posted outside the Middle School Office as well as on the video monitors.

## **Does every student receive a locker?**

Yes. Each student is assigned a locker. There are no locks and students are expected to respect the privacy of their classmates.

## **What about items that won't fit into a locker?**

Projects, sports equipment and other larger items may be stored in the Middle School Office during the school day, or in an area appropriate to the particular item (for example, musical instruments in the storage practice room).

## **Can lockers be personalized?**

Students may set up locker shelves and hang mirrors, photos, etc. on the inside of their lockers only. Birthday decorations also belong on the inside of the locker only. No tape may be placed on the outside of a locker.

## **Where can I buy uniforms?**

Lands End, Penneys, Kohls or Sears are good sources for finding reasonably priced uniform pieces. Also, used uniforms are on sale during the spring and summer in the administration wing. Neckties may be purchased in the Middle School Office and will be charged to your student's account.

## What are the uniform requirements?

Regular Uniform Day (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday):

Boys' Dress	Girls' Dress
Red/white/light blue/navy blue polo shirt	Red/white/light blue/navy blue polo shirt
Khaki or navy blue pants	Khaki or navy blue pants
Prairie sweatshirt (red/white/navy blue/gray)	Prairie sweatshirt (red/white/navy blue/gray)
Black or brown leather belt or red/white/blue or khaki cloth belt	Prairie approved plaid skirt or skort, or solid navy blue or khaki skirt or skort
Khaki or navy blue shorts may be worn until mid-October and then again in May	Khaki or navy blue shorts or capri pants may be worn until mid-October and then again in May
Closed toe and heel shoes	Closed toe and heel shoes

Wednesday Blazer Day (Wednesdays from mid-October through mid-May):

Boys' Dress	Girls' Dress
White/light blue button down collared shirt	White/light blue button down collared shirt
Navy blue blazer	Navy blue blazer
Navy blue or khaki pants	Navy blue or khaki pants
Black or brown leather belt or red/white/blue or khaki cloth belt	Prairie approved plaid skirt or skort, or solid navy blue or khaki skirt or skort
Prairie issued school tie (may be purchased in the MS Office)	Closed toe and heel shoes
Closed toe and heel shoes	

Casual Day (Each Friday for students who have earned the privilege):

Boys' Dress	Girls' Dress
Shirts must be neat and clean, and appropriate for school	Shirts must be neat and clean, and appropriate for school
Athletic pants are acceptable	Athletic pants are acceptable
Shorts may be worn until mid-October and then again in May	Shorts and capri pants may be worn until mid-October and then again in May
No tank tops	Shoulders must be covered, and shorts/skirts/dresses must be of appropriate length
Closed toe and heel shoes	Closed toe and heel shoes

## **Are there required PE uniforms?**

Students are required to change clothes daily for PE classes, but there is not a mandated uniform. Gym clothes include appropriate shorts or sweats, a t-shirt, and two pairs of gym shoes (one indoor - no black soles, one outdoor). Please remind your student to bring their gym clothes home weekly for laundering.

## **Where can I purchase Prairie spirit wear?**

Shop for Prairie spirit wear on the school's website (Home>Athletics>Spirit Wear). The website will provide the most up-to-date information on vendors and ordering information.

## **How can we order a yearbook?**

For 7/8 students, yearbooks are now a part of the flat fee charged for activities and incidentals. 5/6 students will be given an opportunity to order a yearbook in the spring. Yearbooks are distributed the last week of school.

## **May my child bring a cell phone to school?**

Students bring and use personal technologies at their own risk: Prairie School is not responsible for it. If a student is concerned that his/her cell phone could be damaged, lost, or stolen, he/she should leave it at home.

## **What happens at morning meeting?**

The entire Middle School community gathers each morning to share announcements and take care of school business. This is the time when club meetings, SRC closings, changes in rehearsals/sports practices, and so forth, are announced to the students.

## **How else is information disseminated?**

There are video monitors in the 5/6 hallway and in the 7/8 hallway where daily information is posted. Students are expected to check these monitors throughout the day. In addition, general information is sent via the emailed Weekly Reminder. **Please be sure to check it each weekend.** Occasionally, specific email information is disseminated from the Middle School Office. Please be sure you have submitted up-to-date email addresses in Power School.

## HEALTH OFFICE

### **Do I really need to fill out all of those medical forms?**

YES! State law mandates that your child may not begin school, participate in athletics, or travel on school trips until all the Emergency Information and Consent/Medical/Immunization forms are on file.

### **What if my child needs medication during the day?**

If a child requires prescription or non-prescription medication during the school day, a medication authorization form must be on file with the school nurse, along with the medication in its original container. Middle School students may not carry or self-administer any medications. For more information, to make medication arrangements, or if your child has special medical needs, please contact the Health Office. Please be sure all health info is up to date in PowerSchool.

### **What if my child gets sick at school or has an appointment during school?**

If your student becomes ill at school, they must report to the Health Office. The nurse will call a parent if a student needs to go home during the school day. Students are expected to sign in/out in the Middle School Office if they come late or leave/return during the school day.

### **Is there a counselor on site?**

Prairie has a school counselor available for students, parents, and faculty. Services provided by this office include assistance for students, consultations with teachers and parents, and in-service training.

## iPAD INFORMATION

iPads are an extension of the classroom and a tool for students and teachers to use in education: the focus of iPad use during the school day is academic. Please follow the expectations outlined hereafter, as well as the expectations each student and parent sign off on the Loan Agreement and Expectations for Students documents:

### Expectations

- Devices must arrive to school each day, fully charged.
- When using devices in class, students must be on the task assigned by teacher.
- Classroom teachers will establish rules for use within their respective classes, and they will review with you their expectations. **THIS INCLUDES SRC AND COMMONS AREAS.** It is expected that students will respect and adhere to these rules without question.
- Be a respectful digital citizen: someone who appropriately and responsibly uses technology 24/7/365.
- Unless directed by a teacher, students will not take and use other students' devices. Ask someone if you can use or hold their iPad **BEFORE** taking it.
- iPads are not permitted in bathrooms.
- iPad cover must have on it your last name and graduation year.
- Update academic apps at home to help conserve bandwidth at school.



# ASSIGNMENTS/ASSESSMENTS/GRADES/COMMENTS

## **Should I buy my child an assignment notebook?**

5/6 students will be issued a paper agenda, which is included in the flat fee for activities and incidentals. 7/8 students use the assignment calendars on their iPads in lieu of paper assignment notebooks. If your 7th/8th grader's workflow includes writing down assignments, there will be a limited number of paper agendas available in the MS Office. Or, you are free to purchase an assignment notebook from any office supply or education store.

## **Do students have any time for study hall during the school day?**

Study halls are built into the master schedule for 5th-8th graders during their flex period. Students are expected to bring study materials with them and be prepared for a work period.

## **When are parent-teacher conferences?**

Student-Led Conferences

- In the fall and in the spring, parents, students, and the advisor will meet for the student's academic conference. Additional advisor/parent conferences can be scheduled as needed.
- The middle school uses a student-led format, which gives the student an opportunity to organize and discuss his or her strengths and challenges in each academic subject. We believe

this format helps develop ownership and accountability for success.

## **When are grades and progress reports sent?**

The school year is divided into semesters, with mid-term progress reports and end of term grades and comments viewable online by logging into PowerSchool. End of year report cards are sent in the mail.

## **How can I check up on my child's progress?**

Regularly checking PowerSchool (our online database) is the easiest way to keep track of your child's academic progress. PowerSchool is your window into attendance, grades (both historic and current), mid-term teacher comments, e-mail notification options, your child's schedule, and more. For PowerSchool questions or for your log-in information, contact the Middle School Office.

## **Do students take standardized tests?**

In the Middle School, 6th and 8th graders take the Terra Nova standardized tests in January, spread over several days. Scores are mailed to parents approximately 8-10 weeks following the testing dates. Please be sure your student is well rested and has eaten a good breakfast in preparation for the exams.

## How does my child know when assessments are, or when school work is due?

- **Online Calendar** - All 7/8 teachers use Google Apps, and share their class calendars with 7th/8th grade students
- **Teachers** - verbal announcements, posted in classroom
- **PowerSchool** - Teachers may opt to list homework or assessments ahead of time.
- **Agenda** - 5th/6th grade students will record their assignments in their issued agenda (assignment notebook).

## SPECIAL PROGRAMS/ OPPORTUNITIES

### What are advisors? What is advisory?

#### The Advisor

- Each student will be assigned an advisor who supports them through 5th and 6th grade. They will receive new advisors again for 7th and 8th.
- The advisor is an advocate for the academic success of the child and is the primary liaison between home and school.
- Parents should contact the advisor for questions, concerns, or to provide information that would be helpful for all of the child's teachers. The advisor can also gather information from each teacher to share with the parent or vice-versa if needed.

#### Flex Period / Advisory Activities

- Flex is a normal, class-length period that meets each day. Students meet in their advisor's room where they can touch base about academic progress and challenges.
- During 'F' days, students participate in an advisory program / character education lesson, or a digital literacy lesson coordinated by the academic technology staff. Students learn about ways to be positive members of the middle school community during advisory lessons and how to safely and appropriately make use of the technology tools and resources they will encounter in the coming years.
- The Flex period also provides a time for students to do their homework or visit a teacher for extra help or to catch-up on a missed assignment. They can also meet with other students for extra work on group projects.



## **What is OEE?**

Outdoor Experiential Education affords the opportunity each September for 5th and 6th graders to participate in leadership training, team building exercises, and relationship building between students, faculty and peers. Located in rural East Troy, Wisconsin, Camp Timber-lee is the perfect venue for this three day/two night trip. A mandatory parent information meeting prior to OEE will provide all necessary forms and answers to your questions.

## **Do the 7th and 8th graders take any class trips?**

Each spring, the 7th graders take a class trip to Cincinnati/Hannibal/Springfield and the 8th graders travel to Washington, D.C. These trips are a required part of the curriculum and are the climax to a year of study. Mandatory parent meetings take place prior to the trips to provide all necessary information and to answer questions.

## **What sports opportunities are available?**

### **Fall Sports**

- 5/6 Intramural golf – Coed
- 5-8 Cross Country – Coed
- 5/6 Tennis – Coed
- 5-8 Volleyball – Girls (5th grade Intramural only)

The fall season runs from September through October, with practices and games occurring on Mondays and Wednesdays. The 7th and 8th grade teams compete interscholastically while the 5th and 6th grade teams,

with the exception of cross country and 5th grade volleyball, participate in intramural competitions. The 6th, 7th, and 8th grade girls' volleyball teams compete in the Racine Parochial Athletic League (RPAL).

### **Winter Sports**

- 5-8 Basketball – Boys/Girls

The winter basketball season for the 5th-8th grade boys/girls runs from November through mid-March with practices held twice a week. Teams compete in the Racine Parochial League (RPAL) and league play is on Saturdays. Each grade level will participate in tournaments throughout the season.

### **Spring Sports**

- 5-8 Track – Coed
- 7/8 Soccer – Girls
- 7/8 Tennis – Boys
- 7/8 Intramural Golf – Coed

The spring season runs from April through May with practices on Mondays and Wednesdays.

Students interested in participating in MS Sports must sign-up. Information/sign-up for Fall, Winter and Spring sports will be announced in The Weekly (email newsletter).

Practices and Game Schedules will be posted on the following website:  
<http://www.prairieschool.com/athletics-2/middle-school-athletics/>

## **What extracurricular activities are available?**

In addition to athletics, many clubs and activities are offered at the Middle School level. Meeting times and club sponsors will be announced at the beginning of the school year during morning meetings.

- Math Club - open to all students in grades 5/6 and grades 7/8. Hands-on math competition held throughout the school year culminates with the State Math Counts in March.
- Book Club - open to students in grades 7/8. Pre-selected adolescent literature is read and discussed throughout the school year
- Rocket Science - open to all students in grades 5-8. Hands-on science activities lead up to the regional and state Science Olympiads in February and April.
- Foreign Language Clubs - open to all students in grades 7/8 and offers cultural exposure to languages.
- Writing Club - open to all students in grades 5-8. Meeting weekly, students learn that improving their writing is actually a lot of fun!
- Tech Club - open to all students in grades 5-8. Students assist with "cart-duty," and meet weekly to explore the latest technology has to offer.
- Student Activities Board - homeroom representatives meet periodically to plan student events and service projects.

## **THINGS TO CONSIDER**

### **How can parents volunteer in the school?**

Parents have many opportunities to volunteer, most of which are coordinated by the Parent Community (POP). School-wide activities where volunteer help is needed are announced through email, the website and flyers, and parents are able to sign up online. Some classroom volunteer opportunities are coordinated by individual teachers, and those are made available through the Middle School. During registration, parents will have the option of filling out a Volunteer Survey so their area of interest can be matched with a volunteer need by a member of POP.

### **Where do I find information on school procedures and policies?**

The Family Handbook is located on the school website (Home>Tools & Resources>Forms and Documents).

### **What is the Annual Fund?**

Regardless of the size of your gift, contributions to the Prairie Fund have a direct impact on EVERY student here at Prairie, and we always aim for a 100% parent participation rate. The Prairie Fund is a year-long campaign and dollars raised help to maintain the School's physical plant, keep technology current, and maintain lower tuition costs, just to name a few. Parents are sent a letter requesting a donation in the fall, and are always able to give online at [www.prairieschool.com](http://www.prairieschool.com). Money received from current parents makes up approximately 34% of the total dollars raised for the Fund overall, the rest of the contributions come from past parents, alumni, grandparents, faculty and staff, corporations, and friends.

## **Who to Contact**

### **Teacher**

- Progress in a specific class
- Teacher expectations
- Grading questions

### **Advisor**

- Academic progress
- Homework / organization
- Middle School life

### **Middle School Office**

- Attendance
- PowerSchool
- Scheduling
- General questions

### **Middle School Dean**

- Uniform questions
- Behavioral issues
- Student Activities Board (SAB)
- Middle School life

### **School Counselor**

- Adolescent development issues
- Parental involvement in Middle School
- Relational concerns

### **Head of Middle School**

- Philosophy of Middle School
- Program / Curriculum
- School climate and tone

## **Contact Information**

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**MS Office** – (262)752-2551

**Head of MS**– Bonnie Benes (262)752-2551 • bbenes@prairieschool.com

**MS Dean** – Todd Albers (262)752-2554 • talbers@prairieschool.com

**Guidance Counselor** – Ana Moreno (262)752-2662 • amoreno@prairieschool.com

**Director of Technology** –

Klay Shannon (262)752-2676 kshannon@prairieschool.com

**Albers, Todd** – Social Studies 5 - talbers@prairieschool.com

**Albers, Tracy** – 5/6 Science – (tealbers@prairieschool.com

**Barbian, Sarah** – Reading 5, French 6 – sbarbian@prairieschool.com

**Bray, Jacob** – 7/8 Technical Theatre – jbray@prairieschool.com

**Breiwick, Jamie** – 7/8 Instrumental Music – jbreiwick@prairieschool.com

**Broetzmann, James** – 7/8 Science – jbroetzmann@prairieschool.com

**Cobb, Jenny** – 7/8 English – jcobb@prairieschool.com

**Costello, Clare** – English 8 – ccostello@prairieschool.com

**Craig, Rick** – Robotics – rcraig@prairieschool.com

**Doyle, Brianna** – Art 5/6, 7/8 – bdoyle@prairieschool.com

**Gasser, Alicia** – 5/6 English – agasser@prairieschool.com

**Johnson, Jessica** – Art 5/6, 7/8 – jjohnson@prairieschool.com

**Joost, Matthew** – Boys PE – mjoost@prairieschool.com

**Kunstman, Brianna** – 7/8 Math – bkunstman@prairieschool.com

**Mills, Alan** – 7/8 Social Studies – amills@prairieschool.com

**Moore, Meagan** – 5/6 Social Studies – mmoore@prairieschool.com

**Oscarson, Matt** – 5/6 Instrumental Music – moscarson@prairieschool.com

**Owsley, Melody** – Girls PE – mowsley@prairieschool.com

**Paulsen, Fletcher** – Vocal Music – fpaulsen@prairieschool.com

**Rivera, Carla** – 6/7/8 Spanish – crivera@prairieschool.com

**Schafer, Shannon** – Science 8 – sschafer@prairieschool.com

**Smalley, Allyson** – Vocal Music – asmalley@prairieschool.com

**Steig, Galen** – 5/6 Math – gsteig@prairieschool.com

**Warren, Carmen** – 7/8 Math – cwarren@prairieschool.com

**Wojahn, Alison** – Chinese 6 - awojahn@prairieschool.com

**Yan, Chao-ying** – 7/8 Chinese – cyan@prairieschool.com

## MS ROTATIONAL SCHEDULE 2016-2017

	A Day	B Day	C Day	D Day	E Day	F Day			
8:30 am - 9:15 am	1	4	6	9	1	2			
9:15 am - 10:00 am	2	6	7	10					
10:00 am - 10:20 am	MM	MM	MM	MM	MM	MM			
10:20 am - 11:05 am	4	7	9	1	4	6			
11:05 am - 11:50 am	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch			
11:50 am - 12:35 pm	6	9	10	2	4	6			
12:35 pm - 1:20 pm	7	10	1	4	7	8 FLEX			
1:20 pm - 2:05 pm	FLEX	FLEX	FLEX	FLEX					
2:05 pm - 2:50 pm	9	1	2	6	9	10			
2:50 pm - 3:35 pm	10	2	4	7					
3:35 pm - 3:45 pm	Check-in	Check-in	Check-in	Check-in	Check-in	Check-in			



# THE PRAIRIE SCHOOL

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