

# TMS Times

Issue 1

September 2017

Greetings to all of our TMS families!

Welcome back to school! This year we opened our doors to 658 eager and excited students. What a GREAT first few days we have enjoyed and we look forward to many, many more! The entire TMS staff looks forward to working with your child(ren) this school year and we are excited to have the year underway.

Those families who wish to apply and receive free or reduced price meals for their children must complete the Free and Reduced Price School Meals Family Application. Return one completed application to your oldest child's school.

Parents and families are asked to visit our school web site ([www.tiffin.k12.oh.us](http://www.tiffin.k12.oh.us)) frequently for information regarding TMS and your child's education. Our web site is updated regularly so that we can provide you current information and happenings at TMS. If you have comments or suggestions regarding our web site, please feel free to contact me at 419-447-3358.

I would also like to remind parents who drop their child off in the mornings to make sure you are pulling all the way up to the bike rack area before having your child exit the vehicle. This will help keep the flow of traffic moving and cut down on morning congestion. Also, do not use the visitor's lot on Shepherd Drive to drop off or pick up students in the morning or at dismissal. Thanks in advance for your help and cooperation.

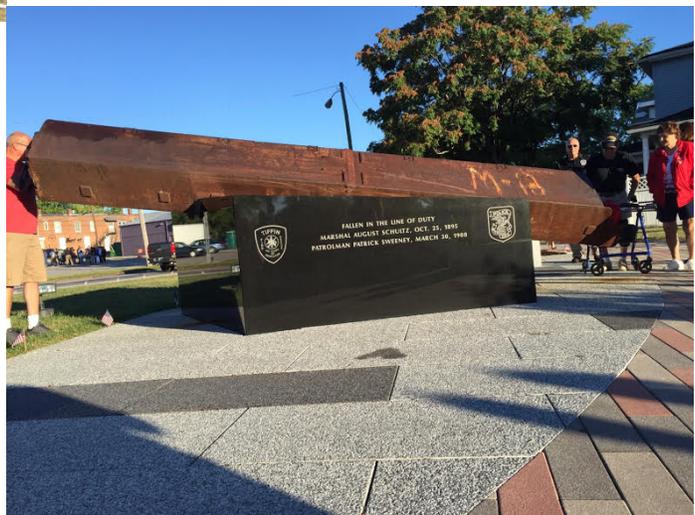
Thank you to all of our families who were able to join us for orientation and open house! Please know that our doors are always open for our TMS families and we welcome you anytime throughout the school year.

And finally as always, if at any time I can be of assistance to you, or if you have any questions, comments, or concerns regarding your child, please do not hesitate to contact me at [shawn\\_murphy@tiffincityschools.org](mailto:shawn_murphy@tiffincityschools.org) or 419-447-3358. I would be happy to talk with you. Have a GREAT September!



## Tiffin Middle School Students to Attend Ceremony at All Patriot's Memorial on 9/11

As part of the Tiffin-Seneca Library Community Read this year, TMS students will be learning about the tragic events of September 11th, 2001, and how it forever changed the country. Students will be attending a memorial service at the All Patriot's Memorial on 9/11 in coordination with the All Patriot's Memorial Committee. Students will hear from several guest speakers about their personal experiences as well as have the opportunity to meet community leaders at a brown bag picnic on Frost Parkway prior to the ceremony. We ask that students come with a packed lunch and water bottle that can be disposed of prior to the memorial ceremony starting to avoid any lost personal belongings.

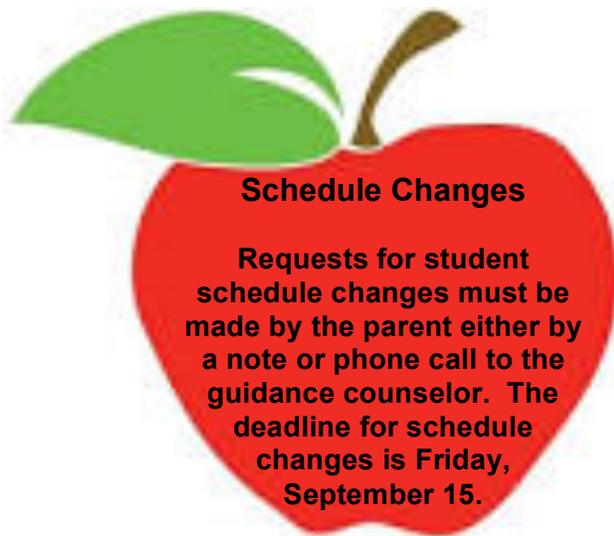


## Picture Day

Individual student picture day will be Friday, September 15, 7:55am – 10:30am. All students will be photographed even though you may not wish to purchase the pictures. Picture packets, with all pricing information, will be sent home with students prior to picture day.



Students wishing to purchase pictures must hand the photographer the completed order envelope, including payment, at the time the picture is taken. Please include the exact amount as neither the photographer nor the office is able to make change.



## Student Medication

Parents, please remember it is Tiffin City Schools' Board Policy that in order for your child to take a prescription medication here at school, we need to have a form on file signed by you and also a form signed by your child's doctor. This is required for all prescription medication, including inhalers, medication a child must take after being ill, etc.

## Instant Alert

Parents, you have the capability of logging into your Instant Alert account to update your contact information with new phone numbers, email, etc. Please go to our school website, [www.tiffin.k12.oh.us](http://www.tiffin.k12.oh.us), click on the “parents” tab, drop down to Honeywell Instant Alert, and follow the prompts. Thanks!



### Student Pick Up During School Hours

If you need to pick up your child during school hours, please use the main entrance located on Shepherd Drive near the flagpoles. This entrance has a button to push to the right of the doors where we can speak to you and allow you access to the building.

## ProgressBook

If you used your ProgressBook Parent Access last school year, the same login information is correct. Any parent, including our new parents, with an unused registration code will receive a letter in the mail from our technology department with instructions on how to create your account.

If you used your parent access last year but have forgotten your password, go to the site and click on the link “Can’t access your account?”

# Excessive Absences and Truancy

## Fast Facts for Families

It is important for your child to attend school every day. When your student misses a significant amount of school, even if the absences are excused, the child misses critical instruction time and learning opportunities. This often has long-term, negative effects on a child, such as lower achievement and a greater chance of not graduating on time.

A new state law defines excessive absence and truancy:

**Excessive absence:** a student misses 38 or more hours of school in a single month, or 65 or more hours in one school year, with or without a legitimate excuse.

**Truancy:** a student is absent from school without legitimate excuse for 30 or more consecutive hours, 42 or more hours in one school month, or 72 or more hours in a school year.

The same state law requires schools and districts to create their own local policies to tackle excessive absences and truancy. Each truancy and excessive absence policy must outline a district's interventions, supports and processes for making sure a student gets to school every day.

Here are key points from the law to keep in mind:

- Fact 1      **When students miss school because they are chronically or terminally ill and the district excuses their absences, the missed school hours do not count toward truancy.**  
The law allows schools to not count these students absent if they actively are receiving home instruction. When a student is chronically or terminally ill, families and districts should work to update the student's individualized education program (IEP) to include home instruction.
- Fact 2      **Districts cannot file a complaint with the juvenile court against a student or the student's family for excessive absences.**  
State law outlines acceptable reasons for not attending school. Districts also may add to the list of excused absences.
- Fact 3      **Truancy includes only unexcused absences.**

# Middle Years

Working Together for School Success



## Short Stops

### On that note

Middle school courses cover a lot of ground.

Taking good notes will help your child keep up. Encourage her to write down key points instead of every word, noticing items the teacher emphasizes or repeats. Also, note taking will go faster if she uses shorthand like symbols, abbreviations, or the first letters of words (“&” for *and*, “imp” for *important*).

### Together time

Spending even a few minutes one-on-one with your middle grader each day will help you stay connected. Look for ways to make the time enjoyable. Invite him to show you how to do his latest Frisbee trick, for example, or tell him a funny story from your day.

### Meet the staff

Secretaries and other staff play huge roles in running your tween’s school—and they can be a terrific resource. Say hello when you’re in the office, and encourage your child to do the same. The staff will feel appreciated, and you’ll both feel more comfortable asking for help if you need something.

### Worth quoting

“The expert at anything was once a beginner.” *Helen Hayes*

### Just for fun

**Q:** When you lose something, why is it always in the last place you look?

**A:** Because when you find it, you stop looking!



## In gear for a new year

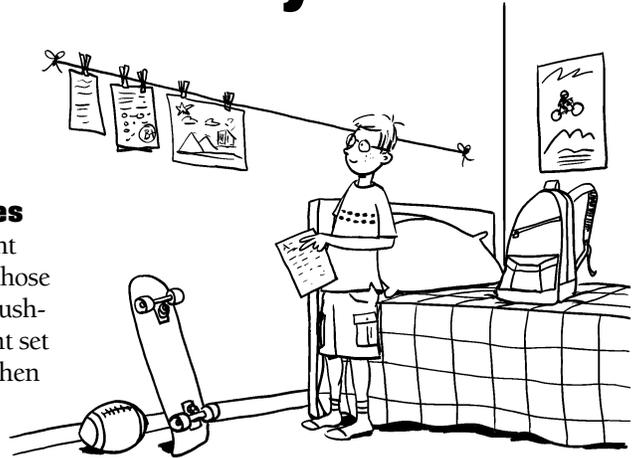
As the new school year gets under way, encourage your middle grader to set himself up for success with these strategies.

### Sticking to my routines

Let your tween experiment with routines until he finds those that work best. If he’s often rushing to catch the bus, he might set his alarm 5 minutes earlier, then 10 minutes earlier, until his mornings go smoothly. For his evening routine, perhaps he’ll do homework after dinner on days he has sports practices and right after school on other days. Once he has routines he likes, have him write them down so he’ll remember them.

### Expecting my best

Encourage your child to decide what he expects from himself. Where does he want to improve? He might focus on paying attention to detail if he lost points last year by not filling out science lab reports thoroughly. Or maybe he’ll create a plan for spreading out long-term projects so



he’s not scrambling at the last minute. He’ll gain satisfaction from a job well done when he follows through.

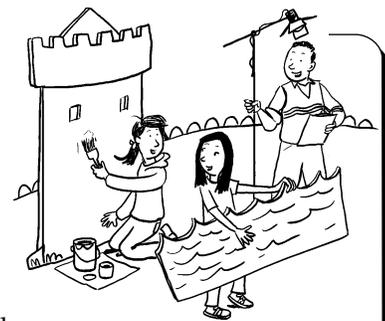
### Watching my progress

Suggest that your middle grader hang a school year “timeline” in his bedroom. He could string yarn from one corner to another and use clothespins to clip on assignments or tests he’s proud of. Perhaps he’ll display an essay on a favorite novel or a self-portrait he drew in art. Seeing his progress can motivate him to keep working hard. 👍

## Extra worth it

Are extracurricular activities worth the time when your tween has a lot on her plate? Share these reasons for giving them a try.

1. She’ll get to know classmates and teachers. As she builds sets in drama club, for example, she’ll bond with peers who have similar interests. And forming connections with club advisers can lead to networking for the future.
2. She’ll learn to set priorities. If her robotics club has a competition coming up, she’ll have to organize her study schedule around team meetings.
3. Gaining new skills will boost her confidence—and translate into school success. Playing doubles tennis encourages teamwork, for instance, while working on the yearbook helps with writing and editing. 👍



# Responsibility? It's all mine!

Tweens take on more responsibility in middle school. Help your child understand what she's responsible for now—and how she can meet her obligations.

**Do your work.** Teachers might not remind middle graders when homework is due or to hand it in. Your tween should write due dates in her planner and put completed projects by the front door. That way, she will be more likely to complete assignments and take them to school.



Or perhaps a teacher wants finished work placed in a tray. Your child might get in the habit of not sitting down until hers is turned in.

**Do your part.** When others depend on your tween, it's up to her to do her part. For group projects, she could meet with members to get work done and let them know how her section is coming along. To prepare for a band concert, she may set goals for her practice sessions.

Then, at concert time, her performance will be stronger, and she'll feel good about holding up her end. 👍

## Parent to Parent

### Mobile manners

I was in line with my son James at the store when his cell phone rang. He proceeded to carry on a conversation while the cashier rang up his purchase.

After we left, I told James it was rude to talk on his phone while he was being waited on. When he said, "Everyone does it," I knew it was a good time to discuss cell phone manners. I said people tend to talk loudly on their phones, disturbing others and turning private conversations into public ones.

James said he hadn't thought about it that way. He agreed to put his phone on vibrate when we're out and to return calls later. My son can't imagine what it was like growing up without cell phones. But I'm trying to help him understand that just because we have them, we don't need to use them all the time—and that good manners still apply. 👍



## Read to relax

Reading for pleasure can help your middle grader unwind—and has the added benefit of boosting reading skills along the way. Suggest these two ideas to encourage reading for fun.

### 1. Go on a "blind date"

Your child could swap books with friends using this interesting twist: Each person wraps a novel in paper and writes or draws clues about it. Everyone gets together and selects a book based on the clues. Then, they open it to reveal what book they have a "date" with.

### 2. Play reading bingo

Let your tween turn reading into a game by making a bingo card on a sheet of cardboard. In each box, have him write a reading category, such as mystery, science fiction, graphic novel, poetry, and autobiography. As he reads each type, he should X out a matching square. How quickly will he cross out a row? How about the whole bingo board? 👍



## On the same team

**Q** My oldest child just started middle school. Now that she has different teachers for each subject, how can I partner with all of them?

**A** To put faces with names, try attending an upcoming event to meet them, such as an open house or a curriculum night. You could also introduce yourself by writing a short message and copying and pasting it into an email for each teacher.



Either way, let them know you want to help your tween succeed, and ask what you can do to support her at home. Also, ask the teachers how they want to be approached (email, phone call, note).

Finally, find out if they want your child to come to them directly before you contact them. A middle school teacher may prefer that a student take the first step if she needs help or has a question. 👍

### OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ideas that promote school success, parent involvement, and more effective parenting.

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# September

2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
						CC @ Ashland
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	Labor Day, no school	VB @ Sandusky CC @ Norwalk		Computer Club, 2:45-3:45 FB vs Huron VB vs Willard		CC vs Bellevue
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
 Patriot's Day VB @ Bellevue PTO Mtg, 6:00pm				Computer Club, 2:45-3:45 FB @ Shelby VB vs Shelby Join Scouting Night, 7:00	Picture day, morning only Deadline for schedule changes	CC @ Galion
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	St. Council Lemonade Stand, this week VB vs McPherson			Computer Club, 2:45-3:45 FB @ Perkins VB vs Norwalk CC @ Upper	Interim grades	VB @ New Riegel CC (open date)
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
		VB @ Oak Harbor TCS Board Mtg., 7:00, cafe		Computer Club, 2:45-3:45 FB @ Bellevue VB vs Sandusky		CC @ Old Fort

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