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ABSTRACT

This parent guide addresses common parent concerns about middle schools, focusing on the Long Beach (California) Unified School District. It provides a quick reference to different aspects of the child's middle school education and encourages parent involvement. Sections describe how parents can make a difference for the child in the home and in the school and how middle schools in the district are changing to help students achieve. The guide presents answers to commonly asked questions about school environments, achievement, and school safety and gives facts about Long Beach middle schools. Each of the 21 middle schools in the district, which accommodates 17,600 students, is different, but all are united in their commitment to the developmental needs of young adolescents. Some schools have added new courses and others have shifted to innovative teaching methods, including emphasis on cooperative education. The school district will continue to work until achievement scores and skill levels are much higher. (Contains 5 figures.) (SLD)

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What every

Middle School

should know

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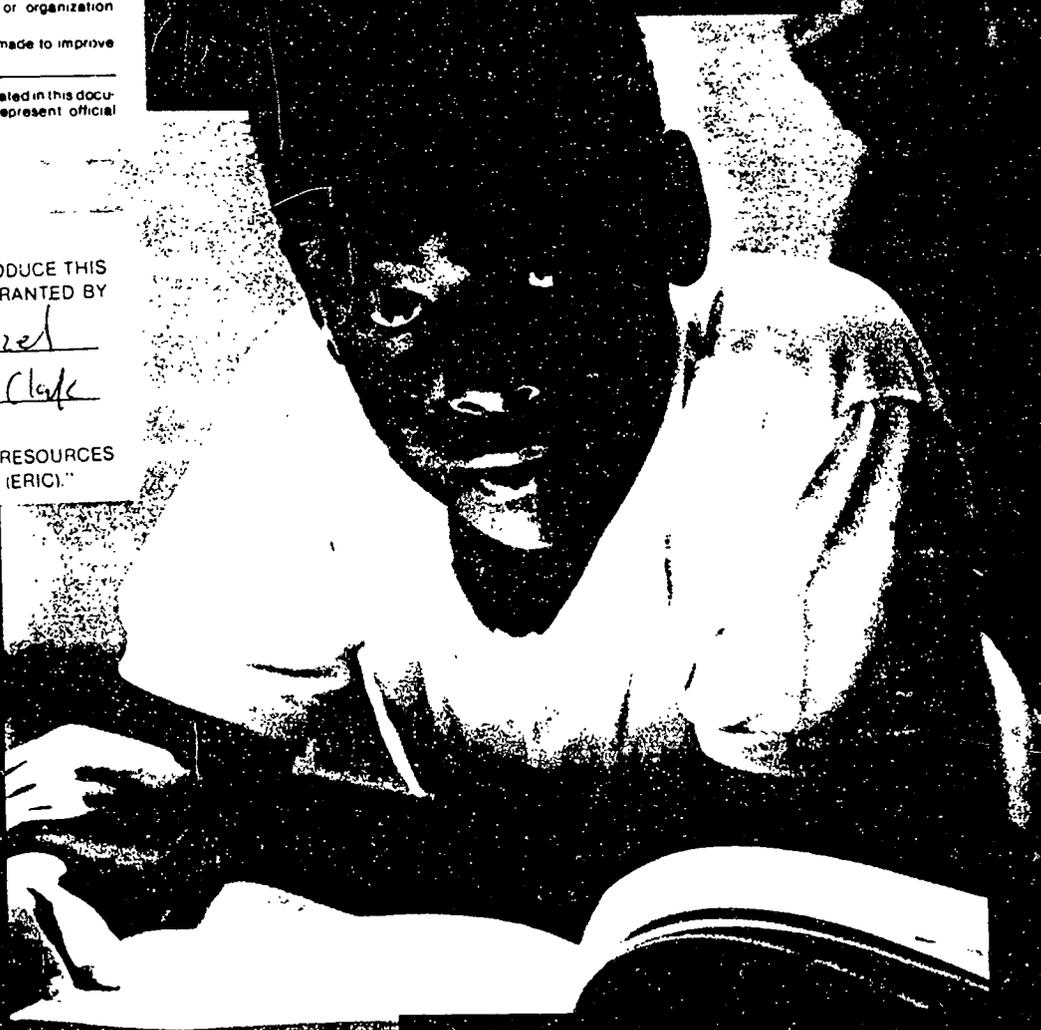
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An Overview of Middle Schools
in the Long Beach Unified School District

Fall 1995

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*This guide was developed by Children Now
in partnership with
the Long Beach Unified School District.
Children Now is a non-partisan policy, advocacy
and media organization that acts as an independent voice
for the millions of children who cannot speak for themselves.
For more information about ways to improve the lives of children,
call 1-800-CHILD-44*



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Dear Parents of Middle School Students:

This is an exciting time in your child's development. At no other time will your child experience such social, intellectual and emotional growth. This is also an exciting time to be a middle school student in the Long Beach Unified School District. We are working hard to provide your middle school student with the very best education available and have set high academic competency standards for all middle school students.

Our teachers are committed to helping students meet the District's high academic standards. Middle school teachers in Long Beach receive strong professional support in academic content and teaching strategies and are now among the best trained in the nation to prepare your student for the academic challenges of high school and beyond.

Parental involvement is also vitally important to the healthy development and educational success of your adolescent. I invite you to become more acquainted with your child's middle school. Get to know the teachers and administrators. Come to school events and participate in activities that interest you. We want parental involvement to become commonplace in each of our middle schools.

To help you learn ways to get more involved in your child's middle school education, we are making this parent guide available to you. It was created by Children Now, a children's policy and media organization, and addresses common parental concerns about school safety, what your student is learning and other important issues.

The purpose of this document is to provide you with a quick reference to different aspects of your child's middle school education. I encourage you to take a few moments to read this booklet about middle school education in the Long Beach Unified School District. Then call or come to your child's school. Together we can help all middle school students reach their full learning potential.

Sincerely,



*Carl A. Cohn
Superintendent
Long Beach Unified School District*



How *Parents*

and Families

Can Make a Difference

in Middle School Education



Research studies tell us that all children can learn. We also know that almost all kids who do well in school have one thing in common: their parents are very involved in their education.

Unfortunately, parents usually become less involved in their children's education during the middle school years. Why? Some parents believe that after elementary school their children no longer need a lot of close guidance and encouragement with school work. Some kids are embarrassed to see their parents at their schools, which keeps parents away. Still other parents would like to be more involved in their children's schools but cannot because of their job demands.

But supporting your middle schooler's education is critical. In fact, spending time with your child now may have more of an impact than it did in the early years. Even if you don't have a lot of extra time to spend at your child's school, you can create an atmosphere in your home that says "learning is important." You can get involved in school and neighborhood organizations that are working to improve student success in school. You can work with local business and community leaders to expand programs that offer recreation and academic help to kids in the middle years.

If you commit time to your child's education and development on a regular basis you'll find that there is no end to what he or she can achieve.



Did you know?

The 3 things that make the biggest impact on kids' success in school are:

- 1) How much they attend school.
- 2) How much they read at home.
- 3) How much television they watch.

These are all things that parents can monitor! You don't have to make a lot of money or have an advanced degree in order to help your middle schooler succeed in school.

Show support for school work and interest in academic progress

- Send your child to school on time every day.
- Be sure that your middle school student has the necessary tools for success: a three-ring notebook, a daily assignment log, lined paper, pens and pencils.
- Your child will be assigned homework every weeknight in at least one subject. Ask to see your child's assigned homework every day. If your child never has homework, contact his or her teachers immediately.
- Let your child know that you are interested in his or her progress and continue to monitor it throughout adolescence.
- Establish a quiet place and regular schedule for doing homework.
- Maintain realistically high standards, but don't expect or demand absolute perfection in homework or schoolwork.
- Show interest in what your child is learning, not just in grades. But be sure to monitor grades too. If the school doesn't require your signature on all report cards, call or drop in to ask for your child's grades and test results.

Encourage reading

- Keep books, magazines and newspapers around the house for your child to read.
- Help your child get a library card and encourage him or her to visit the library on a regular basis.
- Establish a daily routine of reading with your child for at least 15 to 30 minutes.

Monitor television viewing

- Limit the amount of time your child spends watching TV to one or two hours per day.
- Limit the amount of violent programming your child watches.
- Watch TV with your child whenever possible. Even in adolescence young people need help interpreting the messages that TV sends.

Help your student plan his or her time

- Help your middle schooler plan and schedule what he or she needs to do on a daily basis: study, play, do chores.
- Encourage your child to plan ahead for long-term projects and study early for exams.

Explore new places

- Take your child to the library, to museums and to educational programs in the community. Most of these activities are free or very low cost and they can make learning fun.
- Take your middle schooler to places that support what she's learning in school. For example, if she's learning about plants, take her to a botanical garden.

Communicate with your child

- Talk regularly about events happening at school, at work, in the family, in the neighborhood, around the world.
- Listen closely to your child so that you know when problems are affecting his or her school work. Give your child your full attention when he or she talks.
- Play games together.

Make connections with other parents

- Join the Parent Teacher Association or Parent Teacher Organization at your child's school. Call the school to find out about meetings.
- Participate in free classes and social activities at one of the Parent Resource Centers for parents with children in the Long Beach Unified School District. They are located at Barton Elementary School, Washington Middle School, and Jefferson Middle School.
- Get involved with parent groups who help make decisions regarding the school.

Get to know your child's middle school

- Participate in Back-to-School night, school plays and programs, and other official school events.
- Introduce yourself to your child's teachers, either by phone or in person. Let teachers know that you care about your child's progress and want to stay informed. This will encourage teachers to tell you both good news and bad news.
- Schedule a conference with your child's teachers. Conferences don't have to be about problems. To request a meeting with a teacher, call the school office and state the reason for your request. If you have specific concerns, the school might suggest you meet with others on the school staff.

How Middle Schools

in the Peach County School District are

to Help Students Achieve



Kids in the middle

In terms of human development, the period between childhood and the teenage years is very stressful. Similar to the emotional turmoil that can occur during the "terrible twos" or "mid-life crisis years," adolescent stress is quite natural. However the fact that it's natural may not bring much comfort to parents who are experiencing the ups and downs right along with their middle school youngsters.

Young adolescents are socially very self-conscious and egocentric. They spend a great deal of time worried that everyone is looking at them and worried about what everyone thinks of them. They experience rapid physical development and become very physical in their behavior, constantly poking, hugging, punching, and tapping each other. Hormonal changes make them energetic but moody. The combination of mood swings and heightened physicality makes middle school children more prone to fighting than younger and older children. Yet they also have a heightened sense of fairness and justice. If parents and teachers properly harness their intense curiosity and developing reasoning abilities -- which middle schools in Long Beach are doing -- early adolescence can be an exciting time of learning and discovery.

What Happened to Junior High Schools? What Are Middle Schools?

Did you know that junior high schools no longer exist in the Long Beach Unified School District? Middle schools today are nothing like the junior high school you probably attended. In the late 1980s the Long Beach Unified School District took a close look at the way it educated students in the middle years and found that many students in the 11-14-year-old range who had thrived academically and socially in elementary schools were not doing well in (what were then) junior high schools. Academic achievement for junior high school students was low and incidents of conflict were high.

School district leaders looked carefully at the structure and teaching methods in Long Beach junior high schools. They concluded that something entirely different was needed for young adolescents and began to develop middle schools. Middle schools today are not just "junior" versions of high school, but are places that try to provide the nurturing and family-like atmosphere of elementary schools along with the broader academic, social and extracurricular activities found in traditional junior high and high schools. Other California school districts have come to the same conclusions about junior high schools as Long Beach. Over the past few years most junior highs have changed into middle schools. Now there are 893 middle schools in California, but only 126 junior high schools.

If parents and teachers properly harness their intense curiosity

and developing reasoning abilities, early adolescence can be

a time of exciting learning and discovery.



Changing Schools to Help Students Learn More

The process of changing middle schools is called middle school reform. The bottom line of middle school reform is that teachers and administrators are trying to teach students differently and run middle schools differently so that all children get a better education and are better prepared to excel in high school and beyond.

To keep middle school reform on track the Long Beach Unified School District created a plan. Some specific goals of middle school reform are to:

- 1) Improve student achievement.
- 2) Create new standards for what is taught and learned.
- 3) Figure out better ways to evaluate what is taught and learned.
- 4) Raise expectations for achievement among all students.
- 5) Develop stronger school-community relationships.

One big change the Long Beach Unified School District decided to make several years ago, was to convert 7-9 grade junior highs into 6-8 grade middle schools. Another big development was the shift inside the middle schools. Teachers and other school staff changed middle school environments so that classes were less rigid and more inviting to students than junior high school classes had been. In fact, if you walk on many middle school campuses today, you may notice that they feel a lot like elementary schools, with art on the walls and garden projects in the yards.

Middle schools in Long Beach have also promoted new ways of teaching. One way is by forming teams. For example, teachers who teach different subjects, but share the same group of students, sometimes work in teams at each grade level. Teachers on a team discuss ways that they can each help students learn more in their respective classes, and team members try to teach complementary concepts to students, whenever possible. All middle school teachers are not organized into teams like this, but this is the ideal that many schools are trying to achieve.

Parents can also play a central role in middle school reform. Learn as much as you can about your child's school, get to know your child's teachers, keep up with your child's studies, and work with your middle schooler every day so that he or she knows that education is a top priority.

A Work in Progress

Every middle school in the LBUSD has begun to change old ways of operating to respond to the developmental needs of young adolescents. Some schools have added new courses, such as study skills classes, designed to help adolescents get more out of school. Others have added extracurricular clubs and social activities that appeal to middle schoolers, such as fairs celebrating student diversity.

Still others have changed classroom teaching and learning styles so that students work together more often in groups. Middle schools today also provide new programs like peer counseling and peer mediation that train students to help each other resolve conflicts peacefully.

The transformation of LBUSD middle schools is a work in progress. Some schools have new programs and all are trying to be more welcoming and family-like than the junior high schools they used to be. This is a good start but it's not enough. The Long Beach Unified School District will continue to work at changing middle schools until students' test scores and skill levels are much higher. To make this happen we also need the help of parents like you.



About LBUSD Middle Schools

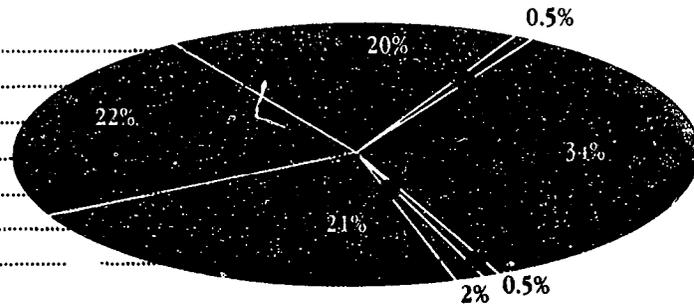
Each one of the 21 middle schools in the Long Beach Unified School District is different, just like each of the 17,600 students in them is different. Each school has a unique culture that is influenced by its student body, its faculty, geographical location, and level of parent and community involvement. And each middle school has different high points and low points. However the following facts provide a very general picture of Long Beach middle schools:

Class Size

Your middle school student has between 35 and 38 classmates for each subject, except in some physical education and elective classes. California schools have larger classes than schools in other states. Large class sizes can affect how much one-on-one attention students get, but many students in large classes are able to get the help they need and do well in school.

Student Diversity

- African American, 20%
- Alaskan/Native American, 0.5%
- Asian, 22%
- Hispanic, 34%
- Pacific Islander, 2%
- White, 21%
- Other nationalities, 0.5%



California is a very diverse state and we know that our future work force will include people from many racial and cultural groups. The broad student diversity in Long Beach middle schools prepares our youngsters to work with different types of people.

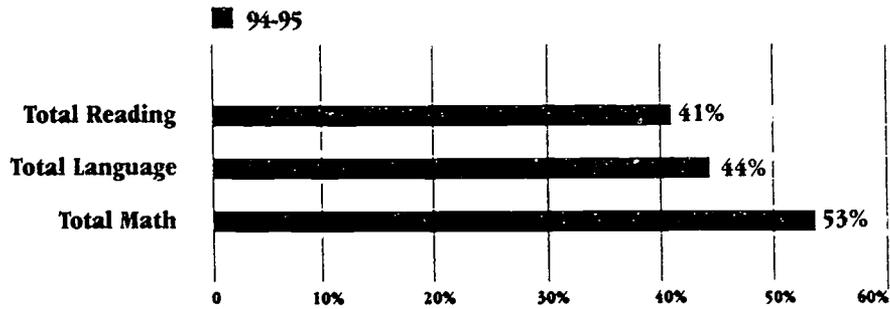
Middle School Teachers

In the 1994-95 school year the LBUSD employed 769 middle school teachers. About 6% were new hires and about a quarter of all middle school teachers had been teaching in the same middle school for 8 or more years.

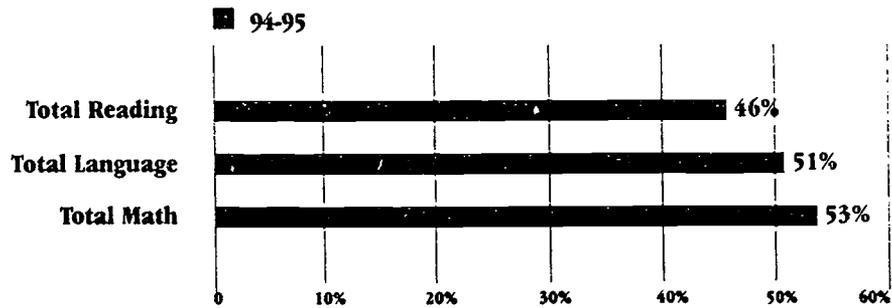
Student Test Scores

The Individual Test of Academic Skills (ITAS) is a multiple choice test given to all middle school students each spring. It measures math, reading and language skills. The following charts show how LBUSD students in each middle grade performed on the ITAS in the 1994-95 school year. Percentile rankings compare LBUSD middle school students to middle school students in other districts. Please note that the 1994-95 school year was the first time the test was taken by every middle school in the district.

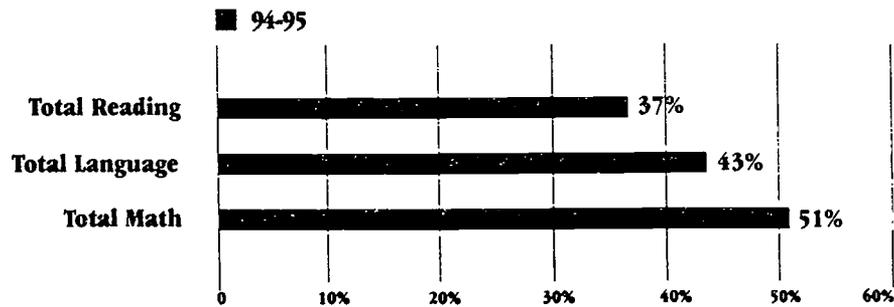
6th grade percentile rankings



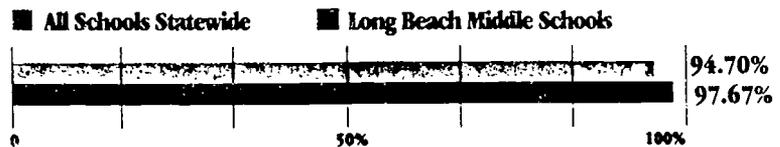
7th grade percentile rankings



8th grade percentile rankings



Student Attendance



For the 1993-94 school year, the (apportioned) districtwide average daily attendance was 97.67%. The 1993-94 statewide average daily attendance was 94.70%*

* This figure does not include excused absences as full attendance. There were approximately 200,000 excused absences in the 1993-94 school year.

Is my child being taught the basics?

Yes, but not using the same methods that teachers used when you were in school -- no more than you would want your doctor to perform surgery using techniques from 20 years ago. All LBUSD middle schools teach science, health, reading, writing, history, civics, social studies and math. These subjects are grouped into four core areas: Science, Language Arts, History/Social Sciences and Mathematics.

Middle school students also take exploratory classes. Exploratory classes include foreign languages, visual and performing arts, and computer arts.

It's important for parents to understand that even though your child's middle school classrooms may not look like the kinds of classrooms you remember as a kid, teachers are still teaching basic skills that will provide a solid foundation for high school success.

What is my child supposed to learn in each grade?

The complete answer to this question is included in an upcoming LBUSD publication called *What Did You Learn in School Today?* This document will give specific information about what concepts and skills students should know in each subject area at the end of each grade.

The following pages give a more general picture of what your middle schooler should learn. But please keep in mind that this is not a complete guide to what concepts and skills your child should know by the end of each middle grade.



*Answers
about Middle Schools*

BY THE END OF 6th GRADE YOUR CHILD SHOULD KNOW:

Science Concepts Such As:

Matter has characteristics that can be observed, classified and understood in terms of models and theories. For example, the basic building block of matter is the atom.

- The changing Earth is part of the changing universe. For example, your son or daughter should learn that astronomical objects like stars and moons come in many different sizes and have different characteristics.
- All living beings are classified according to a hierarchy of classifications.

Science Skills Such As:

- How to use a compound microscope.
- How to develop and test a hypothesis.
- How to use standard metric measuring tools.
- How to use simple dissection tools.

Language Arts Skills Such As:

- Reading for comprehension including drawing conclusions, predicting outcomes, interpreting characters' feelings and attitudes, understanding the author's choice of language and applying an aspect of a story to a different context.
- Selecting the best reference source for a given task, extracting information from a variety of reference materials and interpreting information presented in various forms.
- How to write a first-hand biography, how to write a problem-solution paper, how to report information, how to develop stories.
- How to use vocabulary to make a specific point or create a mood, how to use standard English grammar, language mechanics and spelling; and how to work on smooth transitions and flow of ideas.

Social Science Concepts Such As:

- The development of ancient civilizations such as Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, China, Greece and Rome.
- The impact of physical and cultural geography on history.

Social Science Skills Such As:

- How to analyze a civilization over time and be able to understand the influences of religion, trade and social classes on past societies.
- How to create a map, using latitude and longitude.
- Drawing conclusions from maps in regard to how people and cultures have migrated.
- How to use primary sources and support personal convictions regarding historical and current issues.

BY THE END OF THE 7th GRADE YOUR CHILD SHOULD KNOW:

Science Concepts Such As:

- Sound and light are forms of energy.
- The Earth and the universe are constantly changing in patterns that are often cyclic.
- Fossils show how living things have become more complex and varied.
- Living things have body structures and functions that help them operate within a particular ecosystem.

Science Skills Such As:

- How to make and test predictions.
 - How to create and analyze a complex graph.
 - How to conduct research using simple research skills.
 - How to develop a proper conclusion including support from data.
-

Language Arts Skills Such As:

- Reading for comprehension including drawing conclusions, predicting outcomes, interpreting characters' feelings and attitudes, understanding the author's choice of language, recognizing genre and applying an aspect of a story to a different context.
 - Selecting the best reference sources for a given task, extracting information from a variety of reference materials and interpreting information presented in various forms.
 - How to write a problem-solution essay, how to write papers speculating about causes and effects, and how to develop stories.
 - How to write effective related paragraphs, how to use vocabulary to make a specific point or create a mood, how to use standard English grammar, language mechanics and spelling.
-

Social Science Concepts Such As:

- The Fall of the Roman Empire, the Rise of Islam, the Kingdom of Sub-Saharan Africa, Imperial China and Feudal Japan, the Renaissance and the Incan and Mayan Civilizations.
- The historical origins of democracy.
- World social and political units.

Social Science Skills Such As:

- How to use a topographical map.
- How to use a variety of oral and written styles to present information.
- How to read, organize and assess graphs and charts.

BY THE END OF THE 8th GRADE YOUR CHILD SHOULD KNOW:

Science Concepts Such As:

- Changes in energy and the structure of matter affect humans and the environment.
- Earth's systems interact and over a long enough time scale, are in balance.
- Living things show both genetic diversity and genetic similarities.

Science Skills Such As:

- How to work independently on experiments.
- How to independently construct a science project.
- How to manipulate a pulley.
- How to use a control and manipulate variables on an experiment.

Language Arts Skills Such As:

- Reading for comprehension including drawing conclusions, predicting outcomes, interpreting characters' feelings and attitudes, and identifying the type of conflict in a given selection.
- Selecting the best reference source for a given task, extracting information from a variety of sources, interpreting information and presenting it effectively.
- How to write an evaluative essay, developing a first-hand biography, observational writing, and speculating about causes and effects.
- How to judge the degree of a writer's success in accomplishing a task, how to improve the overall organization of essays, how to make effective word choices, and how to use Standard English grammar, mechanics and spelling.

Social Science Concepts Such As:

- The Colonies, the American Revolution, the Constitutional Convention, Westward Expansion, the Civil War and Reconstruction, and the Industrial Revolution.
- The history and development of the United States.
- The writing of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.
- "Cultural diffusion" and "assimilation" and how to analyze their effects
- The contributions of various groups, such as the Indians, slaves and immigrants to this nation.

Social Science Skills Such As:

- How to design a map based on given information.
- How to use special reference resources and more detailed primary sources.
- How to analyze different points of view.
- How to recognize bias and propaganda and appreciate the skill of compromising.

Math Concepts and Skills Your Child Should Learn in the 6th, 7th and 8th Grades:

- How to solve counting problems.
- How to use mathematical models to predict real-life occurrences.
- How to use multi-dimensional figures to analyze or solve problems.
- How to create and evaluate word problems.
- How to use common measurement systems to solve real-life problems.
- How to use mental arithmetic, paper and pencil, calculators and computers to solve problems.
- How to determine the statistical likelihood of an event.
- How to use computers including word processing, managing databases, using spread sheets, learning computer graphic applications and programming.



These goals for what your child should learn in each grade are called content standards. These content standards are new and all students will be expected to meet them. If your middle schooler needs extra help meeting some of the new standards, teachers or tutors can provide it.

Educators in the LBUSD know that today's middle school students have to be able to master basic skills, solve problems, and know how to apply their knowledge to real-life situations. That's why we raised the content standards for each grade. Some reports say that 80% of the jobs our kids will have don't even exist yet. We want your child to be as ready as possible to master the jobs of the future.

Look for information about the new content standards at your child's middle school.

What kinds of tests will my middle school child take ?

Your child will take a number of different tests in middle school. The main ones are standardized tests and classroom tests.

Standardized tests

LBUSD students and other students in other parts of the state and the country take similar standardized objective tests. These tests let Long Beach students, parents and teachers see how well LBUSD students are doing compared to other students in the same grade level.

LBUSD students also take standardized performance tests at each grade level to measure how much skill each student has in reading, writing and math. These tests are not used to compare students to each other. They measure how much students are expanding their skills from year to year and let you know whether or not your child is learning what he or she needs to know.

Classroom tests

All teachers give classroom tests, including quizzes, final exams, writing assignments and class projects. These tests give teachers a chance to see how well students understand and can demonstrate what they have learned.

Tests help you, your child, and your child's teachers track academic progress and alert everyone to potential problems. But please remember: no single type of test can provide a complete picture of your child's school achievement.

What are the schools doing with computer technology? Does every school have computers?

All schools have computers for students to use. Not every school has the same number or type of computers, but every middle school provides computers as a tool to help students learn.

Students use computers in different ways. Some students use classroom computers to help them with their assignments, similar to the way many adults use computers as a regular part of their jobs. A lot of these students develop computer literacy that can carry them beyond middle school. Kids also use computers in technology labs where they learn how to use specific programs and sometimes even learn how to create their own programs.

Is my child being grouped with students at his academic level or is he being taught with kids at different academic levels?

Both, but it depends on the subject, assignment or project. At some times your child will work in groups with students at the same academic ability level and at other times teachers will put children into groups where the students are at different academic levels.

Tracking is the practice of consistently placing students in groups or classrooms with other children close to their age and their academic ability. Teachers use statewide tests and their own judgment to decide in what groups students should be tracked. Tracking usually starts in elementary school and it can determine what will happen to students for the rest of their school careers. Very often, when teachers place young children in low-achieving tracks these students miss opportunities to take college-prep courses when they get older.

We generally don't track students in Long Beach middle schools. However, we do have special courses for students who are gifted, and we have special courses for students who need extra help learning basic skills. Our experience with young people has shown that when we consistently separate children into groups by academic ability they are less prepared for working with others in real world situations. Part of our mission as educators is to prepare these kids for a work world in which they can interact with co-workers with different skills and levels of education.

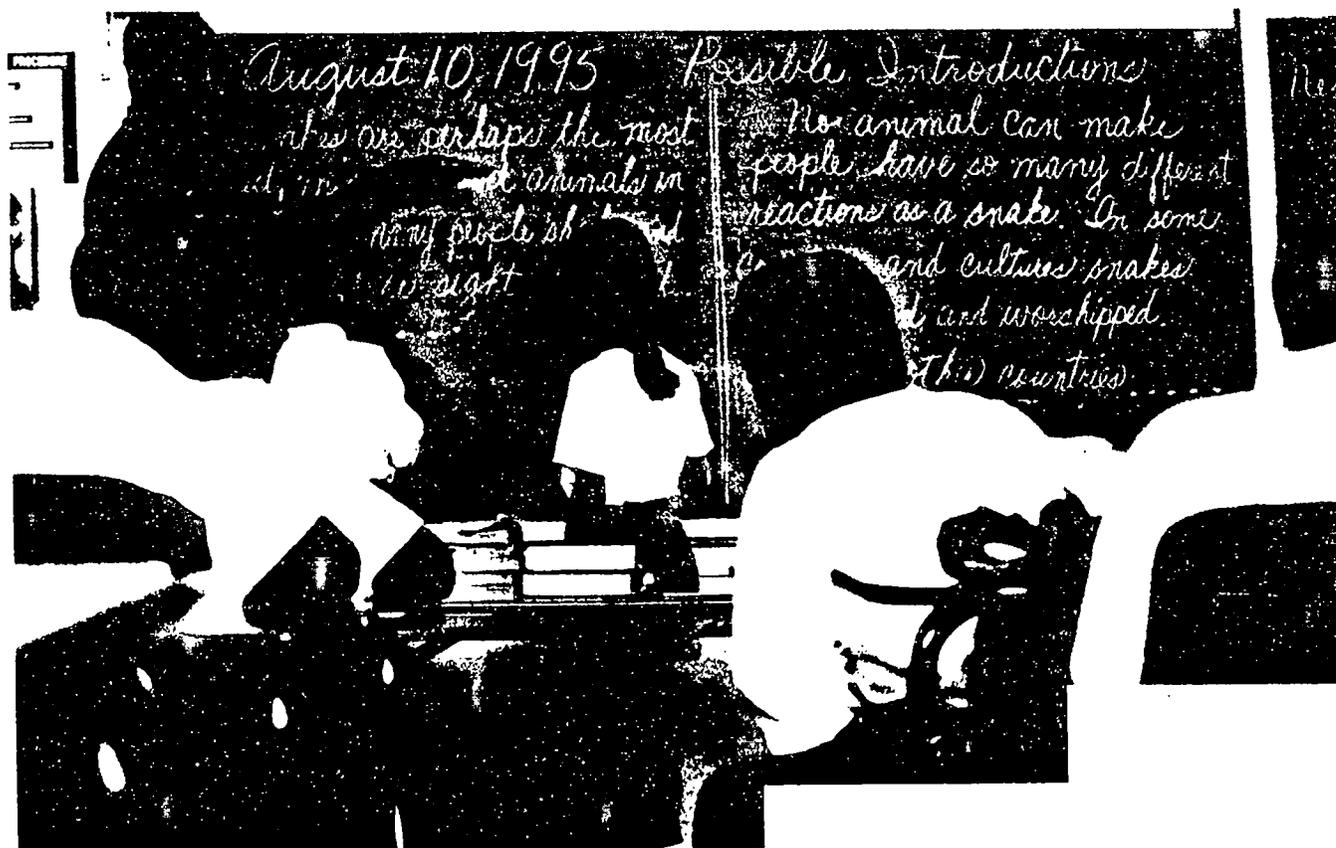
QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Is my child being taught subjects that will prepare her for a job?

Yes. Middle school is not the end of your child's educational journey, but in Long Beach our middle schools continue the process of instilling work habits and skills that can prepare students for the job market they will eventually join.

Examples of middle school courses offered on different campuses that can help your child get ready for the real world include: Introductory Business Skills, Exploring Technology, Drafting, Wood Construction, and Introductory Computer Skills.

The Long Beach Unified School District is working on a comprehensive plan to help our students move from the classroom to the world of work. While most Long Beach graduates attend college, not all do. And for those young people who don't plan to attend college we will offer work preparation programs that combine strong academic skill-building and job-skills training.



How safe are middle schools in Long Beach?

Very safe. In fact, middle school campuses are a lot safer than the streets. Many people find that hard to believe because we hear a lot of stories about school violence. The district doesn't draw a lot of attention to its safety programs, but parents should know that maintaining safe and orderly campuses is a top priority. The district provides a strong security network to make sure that conflicts don't become unmanageable on our middle school campuses.

Middle school students do get into fights, but they are usually contained by teachers and administrators before they get out of hand. Middle schools also have access to School Safety Teams that include trained staff from throughout the district. If there is the potential of a serious disturbance on a school campus, School Safety Teams can be immediately mobilized to go to that school. The teams remain there until the situation is under control.

The district also operates a security program staffed by uniformed and non-uniformed personnel who are specially trained to intervene in conflicts between middle school kids. They drive from campus to campus to diffuse fights before they reach crisis status. In addition, the Long Beach Unified School District has a good working relationship with the Long Beach Police Department, which helps keep trouble makers away from campuses.

So far we haven't had to resort to installing metal detectors or putting security guards at middle school campuses, because conflicts have been handled effectively through our security programs.

How do teachers deal with troublemakers in the classroom?

The answer to this question depends on what exactly students do to cause classroom disruption. Teachers use a number of disciplinary techniques including time-outs and assigning after-school or lunch time detention. Teachers may also refer students to peer counselors, school counselors or administrators. Some of the more serious disciplinary actions that counselors or administrators use include on-campus suspensions, home suspensions or expulsions.

Teachers, counselors and administrators try to resolve serious and ongoing disciplinary problems with parents, because young people who act out in school are often reacting to personal troubles that are not directly school-related. Punishing students without getting to the root of why they misbehave doesn't usually change behavior in the long term.

If your child is ever involved in a classroom dispute call the school and arrange a meeting with your child's teacher as soon as possible.

What happens when kids bring drugs or weapons to middle school campuses?

First the substance or weapon is immediately removed from campus and the appropriate authorities are contacted. District policy also requires parents to be notified and involved in disciplining the student. Students may be suspended, transferred to another school or expelled, depending on the type and/or amount of drugs or weapons brought on campus.

What would happen if there were some emergency, like a major earthquake, while my child was in school?

Each school has an emergency plan. Teachers and other staff at middle school sites have been trained in emergency procedures and regularly review their emergency plans. If there were a crisis students would be kept at the school sites, which are stocked with emergency supplies, until their parents picked them up.

Because unexpected crises do occur, it's crucial that your child's school have up-to-date information on how you or another responsible adult can be reached during the day.

Why do middle school students wear uniforms?

- 1) To create a sense of order on the school campus.
- 2) To reinforce the idea that appropriate school appearance and behavior are different than recreational appearance and behavior.
- 3) To keep members of youth gangs from advertising gang affiliation through clothing styles.
- 4) To make daily clothing preparation as simple as possible for families.
- 5) To help equalize the students by drawing attention away from differences in students' family incomes that might be reflected in ordinary street clothes.
- 6) To reduce clothing costs for families.

Since the Long Beach Unified School District instituted a uniform policy for elementary and middle school students in 1994, the number of school suspensions has decreased by one third. The number of fights has decreased by half. Are uniforms the only reasons school violence is down? No, other school reforms have also helped improve school environments. But uniforms have made a major difference in the way students relate to each other on campus.

Financial assistance and opt-out provisions are available. Contact the principal at your child's school for information.

How does the district deal with graffiti on middle school campuses?

The district has a "no-graffiti" policy that requires all incidents of graffiti to be recorded and immediately painted over before they attract the attention of students.

How much influence do parents have over the way middle schools are run?

Parents can have a lot of influence over school management and operations, but to do this they have to spend some time and energy. Almost every middle school in Long Beach has a group of parents, teachers and administrators that is responsible for making decisions that affect that particular school. What these groups do is called site-based management or site-based decision making and the activities and policies they oversee vary from school to school. Site-based management groups often take the lead on planning school events, purchasing equipment for the schools, reviewing curriculum and scheduling, and creating opportunities for teachers to update their skills.

Is there a parent group at my child's school that I can join if I want to get more involved in school?

Yes, and that group is the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) or Parent Teacher Organization (PTO.) PTAs and PTOs are voluntary organizations that include parents, teachers and students -- but mostly parents. They try to serve as a bridge between schools and families and they provide specific ways for parents to get involved in their children's schools. PTAs exist in schools around the country, and have been around for decades. They have a good reputation for getting things done in schools.

Contact the principal at your child's middle school to find out when the PTA meets and how you can get involved. If there is no PTA or PTO at your child's school, call the district's PTA Resource Center at (310) 436-9931, extension 1247. Start one up!

Middle schools in the Long Beach Unified School District, like many middle schools in districts around the nation, are working hard to improve student achievement. By promoting new ways of teaching and raising the content standards for all middle school students we have taken some critical steps toward helping students learn more. But improving student achievement is a complex job. Parents must work in partnership with schools.

No matter how many good changes the district makes, we can't make as much of a difference in your middle school child's education as you can. Your child needs your time and commitment to his or her schooling. We hope that this booklet has explained more about some of the reforms taking place in Long Beach middle schools and how you can help your child achieve as we improve old ways of teaching.

Please take a moment to complete the questionnaire below and have your child return it to his or her teacher. Thank you.

✂ Tear here ✂

Middle School Parent Questionnaire

Did this guide give you new information about Long Beach middle schools? Yes No

Are you interested in learning more about the new content standards that the district is forming to improve what middle school students learn? Yes No

Are there any policies or programs in the middle schools that you would like to know more about? Yes No

If so, please list them: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone: _____ Today's Date: _____

Teachers: Please return completed forms to **Kristi Kahl**, Administrative Assistant for Middle School Reform, LBU'SD Administration Building 306.

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Cocur D' Alene Elementary School, Los Angeles Unified School District

Schools Serving Students in Grades 6-8

School	Principal	Address	Telephone
Avalon Middle High School (K-12)	Mark Ur	Avalon, Santa Catalina Island, CA 90704	(310) 510-0790
Bancroft Middle School (6-8)	Arlene Havishida	5301 Centralia Street, Long Beach, CA 90808	(310) 425-7461
Butler School (3-8)	Sandra Rogers	1400 E. 20th Street, Long Beach, CA 90806	(310) 591-7477
Constellation Community Charter Middle School (6)		51 South Pine Avenue, Long Beach, CA 90802	(310) 435-7181
Cubberley School (K-7) (In 1996 will be K-8)	Bill Vogel	3200 Monogram Avenue, Long Beach 90808	(310) 420-8810
DeMille Middle School (6-8)	Fred Navarro	7025 E. Parkcrest St., Long Beach, CA 90808	(310) 421-8424
Franklin Middle School (6-8)	Shawn Ashley	540 Cerritos Avenue, Long Beach 90802	(310) 435-4952
Hamilton Middle School (6-8)	Cynthia Terry	1060 E. 70th Street, Long Beach, CA 90805	(310) 602-0302
Hill Middle School (6-8)	Robin Wiley	1100 Iroquois Avenue, Long Beach, CA 90815	(310) 598-7611
Hoover Middle School (6-8)	Gary Graves	3501 Country Club Dr., Lakewood, CA 90712	(310) 421-1213
Hudson School (K-7) (In 1996 will be K-8)	Jill Stepanoff	2335 Webster Avenue, Long Beach, CA 90810	(310) 426-0470
Hughes Middle School (6-8)	Daniel Woirovich	3846 California Avenue, Long Beach, 90807	(310) 595-0831
Jefferson Middle School (6-8)	Jean Reynolds	750 Euclid Avenue, Long Beach, CA 90804	(310) 438-9904
Lindbergh Middle School (6-8)	Adelmo Martinez	1022 E. Market Street, Long Beach, CA, 90805	(310) 422-2845
Marshall Middle School (6-8)	Karen DeVries	5870 E. Wardlow Rd., Long Beach, CA 90808	(310) 429-7013
Newcomb Academy (6-8) for Academic Excellence	Monica Daley/ Diana Williams	3351 Val Verde Ave., Long Beach, CA 90808	(310) 493-3596
Robinson School (K-7) (In 1996 will be K-8)	Alexis Alessi	2750 Pine Avenue, Long Beach, CA 90806	(310) 595-9038
Rogers Bayside Academy (6-8)	Linda Moore	356 Monrovia Avenue, Long Beach, CA 90803	(310) 434-7411
Stanford Middle School (6-8)	Judith Gutierrez	5871 Los Arcos Street, Long Beach, CA 90815	(310) 594-9793
Stephens Middle School (6-8)	John Bowles	1830 W. Columbia St., Long Beach, CA 90810	(310) 595-0841
Washington Middle School (6-8)	Susan Barker	1450 Cedar Avenue, Long Beach, CA 90813	(310) 591-2434

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