



ATTENTION: 5TH GRADE PARENTS

To assist you in the transition to Twin Peaks Middle School, please refer to our list of Frequently Asked Questions. Counselor and/or Counseling Assistant will be available to answer additional questions after May 1st either by phone or e-mail.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS!

1. How are students placed in classes? How do I let counselor/teachers know of specific concerns about my child?

Placement in classes is computer generated and allows for the equal distribution of students in academic classes, PE and electives. While we do not honor requests for specific teachers, we do understand that you may have specific concerns about your child. These concerns should be shared with the classroom teacher at the start of the school year either by phone or e-mail.

Due to caseload and time constraints, we are unable to conference with individual families entering Twin Peaks from elementary school. Please be assured our teachers have a wealth of experience transitioning students to the middle school and spend the time needed to insure that they feel comfortable and secure. It is very common to hear the sixth grade teachers refer to their students as “my kids.” They operate on a village philosophy, teaming together to bring out the best in your child. Feel free to contact your student’s teacher with any concerns throughout the year.

2. If my student is GATE identified, how are they placed?

Selection letters will be mailed in early spring asking parents and students to select either the Homogenous GATE or Heterogeneous (also referred to as Cluster) GATE program. As soon as you receive this letter, complete the bottom portion and return to our site.

3. What is the difference between Homogenous and Heterogeneous GATE?

Heterogeneous GATE is a cluster of 8 - 12 GATE students within a heterogeneously grouped, self-contained classroom (language arts and social studies). Homogeneous GATE is GATE identified students only (language arts and social studies).

Both formats focus on the core curriculum and offer high quality, academically rigorous programs. The class size of the homogeneous and cluster classes will be comparable to the other basic education classes. Requests can be made for either classroom environment; however, if the number of requests for the GATE Homogeneous classes

exceeds the maximum class size, we will conduct a lottery (a district-wide practice) to determine the class roster. Students not selected in the lottery will be automatically assigned to a GATE Cluster class.

4. What Math options are offered at Twin Peaks and how is placement determined?

The majority of sixth grade students will take 6th grade Math, which will prepare them for Pre-Algebra in 7th grade. For those few students truly advanced in Math, we offer Pre-Algebra for sixth grade students. Students are placed in this class by District determination based upon their CST scores, MAP scores, and end of year grade. Both programs are considered college preparatory classes as they lay the framework for participation in our rigorous high school math curriculum.

5. What orientation services are available for my child?

We have a wonderful program called WEB (Welcome Everybody) scheduled for all of our incoming sixth grade students. This program is offered in August and is a great opportunity for our incoming students to meet other students and participate in fun activities to help them learn about their new school. Please make every effort to have your child attend this event.

6. If my child is coming from private school or out of the area, how can I make sure to be updated with information about registration dates, orientation, placement, etc.?

The best source of continuing information is our website. This site is frequently updated and lists all upcoming dates and programs. Once you have registered in our school and/or district, you will automatically be on our mailing list.

7. If my child is on an IEP, how does he/she make the transition to middle school?

Case managers from the Special Education department will review the IEP and schedule your student into classes that fit the particular needs of your student.

8. If my child is on a 504 Plan, how does my child make the transition to middle school?

Copies of the 504 Plan developed in 5th grade will be sent to our site and we will forward copies of the plan to your child's 6th grade teachers. Counselors will then arrange a team meeting, including parent, student and teachers, typically before the end of October to review the plan and make any necessary adjustments.

9. What opportunities in music are available for my child?

All sixth grade students have the opportunity to take Band every day or Orchestra every

other day during RAM time (homeroom/study hall). Students do not need to have prior experience with an instrument to participate. Students need to practice daily and understand that this is a full year commitment. Those students who are not involved in the music program attend RAM class daily.