



AIM HIGH PARENT NEWSLETTER

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Note from Jim Jordan, Director of Programs

Welcome to the October edition of the Aim High Parent Newsletter. This month we will feature two topics, Middle School Success and Social Emotional Intelligence. Both provide tips that you as parents can use to help your Achiever thrive in this age of transitions. I encourage you to visit the websites provided in the articles for more information. Photos from the September Saturday session show that the students jumped right into Aim High and reflected on starting a new school year.

Best,

Jim Jordan, Director of Programs
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September Saturday Sessions Kickoff the School Year at Each Site

All sites started their first Saturday session with a check-in on how the school year is going and are you applying the skills you learned in the summer to “Achieve All You Can Be.” On September 10, Priory focused on team building while Villa focused on English. John Burroughs had close to 100 students attend on September 17 and the teachers and TA’s engaged the students in different academic subject activities.



Students create posters depicting their future aspirations and career choices



Poetry Project exploring who our Achievers are

Aim High Saturday schedule 2016-1017 School Year

You will receive a letter with bus schedule and program details before the program.

October 8 – John Burroughs, Priory and Villa – All sites are on Field trips!

November 12 – John Burroughs, Priory and Villa

December 3 – John Burroughs

December 10 – Priory and Villa

January 14 – Priory and Villa

January 21 – John Burroughs

February 11, 2017

February 18 – John Burroughs

March 11 – John Burroughs, Priory and Villa

April 8 – Priory and Villa

April 22 – John Burroughs

Saturday Bus Schedules

JBS BUS SCHEDULE

Pickup	JBS Bus 1	Drop Off
8:00 am	HENRY ELEM	1:00 pm
8:10 am	JEFFERSON ELEM	12:50 pm
8:30 am	LACLEDE ELEM	12:30 pm
8:40 am	HAMILTON ELEM	12:20 pm
JBS Bus 2		
7:50 am	HAZELWOOD EAST MS	12:25 pm
8:00 am	NANCE ELEM	12:40 pm
8:20 am	ASHLAND ELEM	12:50 pm
8:30 am	FARRAGUT ELEM	1:00 pm
JBS Bus 3		
7:35 am	MANN SCHOOL	1:10 pm
7:50 am	WOODWARD ELEM	12:55 pm
8:00 am	CARNAHAN ELEM	12:50 pm
8:10 am	ST FRANCIS CABRINI	12:40 pm
8:15 am	SIGEL ELEM	12:35 pm
8:20 am	PEABODY ELEM	12:30 pm
8:25 am	HODGEN ELEM	12:25 pm
JBS Bus 4		
8:05 am	CENTRAL ELEM	12:45 pm
8:15 am	BARACK OBAMA ELEM	12:35 pm
8:25 am	JEFFERSON ELEM	12:25 pm
8:35 am	BEL RIDGE ELEM	12:15 pm
JBS Bus 5		
8:20 am	BUDER ELEM	12:15 pm
8:30 am	WYLAND ELEM	12:25 pm
8:40 am	RITENOUR MIDDLE	12:30 pm

PRIORY BUS SCHEDULE

Pickup	Priory Bus 1	Drop Off
7:35 am	NORMANDY MS	1:20 pm
7:55 am	WALBRIDGE	1:00 pm
8:05 am	COTE BRILLIANTE	12:50 pm
8:10 am	WASHINGTON ELEM	12:45 pm
8:20 am	FORD ELEM	12:35 pm
8:30 am	HAMILTON ELEM	12:25 pm

Priory Bus 2

8:00 am	CLAY ELEM	12:50 pm
8:05 am	AMES ELEM	12:40 pm
8:15 am	DELMAR/LEFFINGWELL	12:30 pm
8:20 am	NE CORNER GRAND/DELMAR	12:25 pm
8:25 am	COLE ELEM	12:20 pm

Priory Bus 3

7:45 am	FANNING SCHOOL	1:10 pm
7:55 am	SHENANDOAH ELEM	1:00 pm
8:05 am	SHERMAN ELEM	12:50 pm
8:08 am	MULLANPHY ELEM	12:40 pm
8:20 am	MRH MS	12:25 pm

Priory Bus 4

8:20 am	KRATZ ELEM	12:40 pm
8:30 am	HOECH ELEM	12:30 pm

VILLA BUS SCHEDULE

Pickup	Villa Bus 1	Drop Off
7:55 am	HERZOG ELEM	1:00 pm
8:05 am	CITY ACADEMY	12:50 pm
8:15 am	SUMNER HS	12:40 pm
8:25 am	BRYAN HILL ELEM	12:30 pm
8:35 am	DUNBAR ELEM	12:20 pm

Villa Bus 2

7:55 am	MERAMEC ELEM	12:55 pm
8:05 am	OAK HILL ELEM	12:45 pm
8:15 am	ROOSEVELT HS	12:35 pm
8:25 am	ADAMS ELEM	12:25 pm
8:35 am	WILKINSON ECC	12:15 pm

Villa Bus 3

8:10 am	MCCLUER HS	12:45 pm
8:25 am	MARVIN ELEM	12:30 pm
8:35 am	WASHINGTON ELEM	12:15 pm

Success Tips from a Middle-School Principal

Scholastic Parents articles <http://www.scholastic.com/parents/resources/article/more-school-involvement/success-tips-middle-school-principal>

Get advice from a veteran educator on how to help your child succeed in middle school and beyond.



Although your middle schooler is becoming more independent and is increasingly involved in activities outside the family, you should and must remain the most influential person in his life. Through your involvement in school and extracurriculars, you can do much to help your child believe in the value and importance of education, be enthusiastic about learning, and achieve academic success.

As a middle-school principal, a big part of my job is to help parents support their children emotionally as well as academically. Here is my best advice for parents of preteens:

- 1. Help your child manage homework time.** Encourage her to aim high and always do her **best work**. Check with teachers to see how much time should be necessary to complete homework. See what your school offers to help you help your child, such as an agenda planner or some other homework reminder system, and/or a Web site with helpful links.
- 2. Show interest in his studies** by talking with him daily about what he's learning and doing in school (don't take "nothing" for an answer!). If you know your child has a project for science, get involved. The same goes for cheerleading, sports, and music — any extracurricular activities.
- 3. Discuss ideas and feelings about school, studies, and activities.** Be realistic about what your child can and should be able to do. Don't expect great grades or high test scores if she isn't capable. That expectation will only cause unnecessary frustration.

4. With your child, read and review the information that schools and districts provide. Be familiar with the pupil progression plan, course offerings, student handbook, etc. All these will help you and your child successfully weave your way through the maze called middle school.

5. Contact counselors, administrators, and teachers periodically. Find out what your child should be learning, how she is progressing, and how you can help. Be a full partner in your child's education.

6. Be sure that he attends school on a regular basis. Even if he is absent for illness or another valid reason, he needs to keep up with his studies. Call the school if your child will be missing a day, and find out what he needs to do to make up for it.

7. Encourage her to pursue interests and make friends through extracurricular activities. Be certain, however, that she selects no more than a few activities so she has adequate time for schoolwork. You must help her find a balance; this will take compromise and patience.

8. Know his friends. Who does your child hang out with? Follow up on any suspicions that you may have. It is better to be safe than sorry at this time of his life. Know where your child is at all times. Be clear and consistent with discipline.

9. Make it clear that she must follow school rules and policies. Teach her to respect people as well as property. Help her know right from wrong and what she must do when negative temptations come her way.

10. Encourage him to get to know his counselor and to maintain contact throughout his middle-school years, if possible. Not only will the counselor be invaluable in supporting his academic path, he's also one of many potential adult role models for your child.

11. Attend parent meetings, open houses, booster clubs, parent education groups, and other activities for parents. I mentioned this before, but it is very important for your child!

12. Volunteer at school. Both your child and the school will benefit from your [involvement](#) and help. Schools solicit volunteers to help in a variety of ways: tutoring, assisting in the media center, giving speeches, helping out at activities, chaperoning, etc.

13. Consistently acknowledge and reward efforts at school. Many parents expect the school to provide the incentives for their child's accomplishments. While schools do have a lot of motivation programs, parents need to recognize their child's successes too. When your child works hard, your [acknowledgment](#) motivates him to persist.

None of us are perfect and we sometimes make mistakes in raising our children. But your child needs your love and respect. She needs to become independent, responsible, and self-sufficient to succeed in most of her endeavors in school and at home. The best way to help her in all aspects of development is to try to ensure that her emotional needs are consistently met. Your understanding, common sense, adult judgment, and good sense of humor can make these middle-school years a joy for both you and your child.

Parents: 19 Meaningful Questions You Should Ask Your Child's Teacher

By Terry Heich in [Edutopia](#) online newsletter

Originally Published: August 29, 2013 | Updated: August 24, 2016

To read the full article click on the following link: <http://www.edutopia.org/blog/19-questions-for-parents-terry-heick>



Terry Heich recommends picking two that are of interest to you.

1. What academic standards do you use, and what do I need to know about them?
2. How will you respond if or when my child struggles in class?
3. What are the most important and complex (content-related) ideas my child needs to understand by the end of the year?
4. Do you focus on strengths or weaknesses?
5. How are creativity and innovative thinking used on a daily basis in your classroom?
6. How is critical thinking used on a daily basis in your classroom?
7. How are assessments designed to promote learning rather than simple measurement?
8. What can I do to support literacy in my home?
9. What kinds of questions do you suggest that I ask my children on a daily basis about your class?
10. How exactly is learning personalized in your classroom? In the school?
11. How do you measure academic progress?
12. What are the most common instructional or literacy strategies you will use this year?
13. What learning models do you use (e.g., project-based learning, mobile learning, game-based learning, etc.), and what do you see as the primary benefits of that approach?
14. What are the best school or district resources that we should consider using as a family to support our child in the classroom?
15. Is there technology you'd recommend that can help support my child in self-directed learning?
16. What are the most common barriers you see to academic progress in your classroom?
17. How is education changing?
18. How do you see the role of the teacher in the learning process?
19. What am I not asking but should be?

Social Emotional Intelligence

Social Emotional Intelligence Parent Toolkit (www.parenttoolkit.com)

Social and emotional intelligence involves understanding your feelings and behaviors, as well as those of others, and applying this knowledge to your interactions and relationships. The term “emotional intelligence” was coined in 1990 by Peter Salovey of Yale University and John D. Mayer of the University of New Hampshire. The concept was popularized in 1995 by Daniel Goleman, author and co-founder of the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). The concepts highlighted in the Parent Toolkit are based on CASEL’s five interrelated sets of competencies.



- **Self-awareness** is knowing yourself. It’s about knowing your emotions, strengths and challenges, and how your emotions affect your behavior.
- **Self-management** is knowing how to control your behaviors and moods, and setting and working toward goals.
- **Social awareness** is the ability to understand and respect the perspectives of others, and to apply this knowledge to interactions with people from diverse backgrounds.
- Having good **relationship skills** involves knowing how to establish and keep rewarding and positive relationships with friends, family and others from a wide range of backgrounds.
- **Responsible decision-making** involves identifying the impact of your choices on yourself and others, and using empathy, relationship skills and self- and social awareness to make decisions.

Unlike IQ, social and emotional intelligence can be enhanced at any age through thinking about these competencies and putting them into practice. You are your child’s greatest influence, no matter how young or old your child is. In order to help your child’s social and emotional development, you can model the skills you would like to see. Many social and emotional skills are developed over time, and some adults are stronger in this area than others, as is the case with children. We offer examples below as a guide to help you continue to be a strong positive influence on your child’s social and emotional growth, and to reflect on your own skills in the process.

The following tips and advice offer suggestions for you to support your middle school child’s social and emotional development. More tips for each area are available at the Parent Toolkit under Tips for Middle School. (www.parenttoolkit.com)

Self-Awareness

Look for Opportunities to Just Listen - Education consultant [Jennifer Miller](#) notes that children may not confide in you at convenient times or when you ask them direct questions. However, if you create a trusting and open listening environment, they will be more likely to open up to you when they are ready. At those times, listen actively and ask questions. Try not to offer solutions to problems immediately. Instead, discuss the problem and allow them the chance to think for themselves about their own issues.

Encourage Your Child to Explore His Strengths - Even if he excels in an area that might not be popular, like a certain sport, playing a certain instrument, or joining certain clubs, his ability to recognize his strength and value in an unpopular area is self-awareness. Acting upon that strength and developing it further is a way to really show self-awareness, especially at this age when peer acceptance and pressure is so prevalent. [Tom Hoerr](#), who is Head of School at New City School in St. Louis, recommends praising your child's effort, energy, and participation instead of focusing on the final outcome.



Be Careful Not to Tell Your Child How He Feels - Director of Rutgers Social and Emotional Learning Lab [Maurice Elias](#) says that it's better to say what you see. For example, "It looks like you are feeling conflicted about going to that party, because you are not acting as excited as you usually do," or "You say you are not nervous about the test, but you are very fidgety when you are trying to sit down and study." By saying what you see, you signal to your child how he looks and give him a chance to correct you, explain, or perhaps deny what you said, but still have that feedback. This is different from saying, "You don't really want to go to that party, do you?" or "I can't believe you aren't nervous about that test."

Self-Management

Be an Example of Self-Management - At this age, some children may say that their parents are "stupid" or "don't understand anything," but parents are still one of the biggest influences in their lives. It can be frustrating to deal with a middle-schooler who may seem more difficult than in her younger years, but by maintaining your own composure, remaining calm, and addressing your child with respect, you can show her what self-management looks like. Try to remember that you will feel better if you're able to maintain your calm when dealing with your child, and try to talk through your strategies, too. For example, "I'm going to count to ten before I respond to your question." You might be surprised when you see your actions reflected in your child.

Remind Your Child That There Are Consequences to Her Actions - Slamming doors, yelling, or acting out against family members or friends may happen frequently at this age. When your child has calmed down from an outburst, talk to her about how her actions reflect on her and affect the family. For example, she may scare a younger sibling or pet

when slamming doors, or she may hurt a friend's feelings when acting out. You might also point out a time where she was able to handle a similar situation better. By pointing out her self-management skills and how her actions affect others and their perceptions of her, you are giving her a tool to see the impact of her behavior on the people who matter to her -- including herself.

Social Awareness

Nurture Your Adolescent's Empathy - Middle school is an awkward time for any young person. It may involve a move to a larger school with more peers and going between classrooms for the first time. Your child may feel uncertain in this new and shifting social scene. He may also be nervous about making friends. By talking to him and explaining that everyone else is going through the same challenges, you can help him better-understand his peers and the importance of using empathy in his social interactions. You may also want to encourage him to make new friends or join school clubs and organizations to get to know different people.

Keep the Communication Lines Open - Your child's social world broadens during middle school, and it's important to take the time to regularly talk to him openly and honestly about his feelings and friendships. Whether it's at the dinner table or right before his bedtime, have frequent chats with him about his social life and his role as a friend. Try not to be too judgmental while having these discussions, as this can cause him to withhold information or not want to talk about these issues at all. Director of Rutgers Social and Emotional Learning Lab [Maurice Elias](#) says that it's good to always offer to drive for your adolescent and his friends. He adds that you will learn a great deal by listening to their conversations in the car, and you will also get to know more about your child's friends and what they are doing.

Relationship Skills

Use Your Child's Interests to Help Him Develop New Friendships - Many middle-schoolers have passions and pursuits that are important to them, and it's helpful to encourage your child to find out what his "thing" is. You can do this by researching topics of interest together or pointing out potential hobbies or future career options. Colorado-based school counselor [Sharon F. Sevier](#) suggests that once you identify your middle-schooler's interests, you may want to have him participate in groups or activities outside school that foster his talents and may help him find new friends. She says that these groups enlarge the friendship circle beyond school. Youth groups and programs at religious organizations, scouts, athletics, music, drama and volunteer work all offer adolescents a chance to grow and blossom and develop new friendships with different people.

Discuss Peer Pressure With Your Middle-Schooler - Regardless of your child's friends and social status, peer pressure will become an issue at one point or another. Education consultant [Jennifer Miller](#) recommends that you discuss peer pressure openly with your child, and talk about possible scenarios. You can ask her questions like, "What if the other kids are spending the night at a house while the parents are unaware and out of town?" Ask how your child feels about the scenario you've offered, and discuss the potential consequences of various choices and what she might say to a friend who is asking her to take part. Talking through these kinds of possibilities prepares her with language to use with her peers so she is ready.

Decision Making

Support Your Middle-Schooler's Decisions - Support your child when he makes decisions you don't agree with. It is bound to happen in every parent-child relationship. Even if you knew it was a bad decision, take the opportunity to talk with your child about it. Try not to lecture; instead, ask what he learned from the choice, and how he'll handle a similar situation in the future. If he hurt you or someone else, give him the opportunity to make amends and ask for forgiveness. It's important to show your adolescent that even if you don't agree, you will still love him and be there to talk with him. For example, instead of saying, "I told you it was a bad idea to skip studying for that test," say "Do you think you'll skip studying next time? What would have been a better choice?"

Define Safe and Smart Choices With Your Middle-Schooler - For example, talk to her about her physical health and the consequences of making irresponsible decisions like smoking cigarettes. Tell her about the impact on her health, like how it would affect her soccer skills or singing ability. Also talk through alternatives to negative choices. For instance, explain to her that she can always call you or other family members for a ride home instead of getting into a car with someone who has been drinking or using drugs.

Bring Your Middle-Schooler Into Discussions About Family Issues - By allowing him into discussions like which movie to see or what to have for dinner -- as well as more important matters, such as how to deal with issues affecting younger siblings -- you're giving him the opportunity to have his opinions heard. This shows that his opinions matter and that you're open to hearing about his ideas. This may encourage him to share decisions he has to make about school or friends with you as well.

STAY CONNECTED WITH AIM HIGH!

Aim High is on social media so you can always stay in the loop! We have a Facebook page and Twitter account that we regularly update with program information, pictures of student activities, and more. Use the links below to find us on Twitter and Facebook or click the icons below. No worries if you don't use social media sites. You can still view our information on either site without creating an account.

Twitter- <https://twitter.com/aimhighstlouis>

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