

Counselor Corner (September, 2017)

Granite Oaks Middle School is off to another fantastic school year. Granite Oaks Middle School has approximately 533 7th grade students and 553 8th grade students enrolled for the 2017 - 2018 school year. Both Granite Oaks and Spring View Middle Schools employ a grading system compatible with Rocklin and Whitney High Schools. A student who is not passing the essential concepts of a core, elective or Physical Education class will receive a No Mark (NM) communicating he or she needs to discuss his or her performance with the teacher; if the student continues to not pass the essential concepts for the class he or she will receive a final semester grade of No Mark (NM). Middle school is the bridge to high school; becoming accustomed to this grading system will help your student transition to the world of credits, official transcripts and college entrance requirements. Here are suggestions which may help your student be successful in middle school:

1. Work with your student to maximize his or her planner --- check to see if assignments are recorded daily, encourage using blank space for notes or lists that relate to homework assignments, for long term projects create deadlines to ensure timely completion (share your personal systems for tracking work, appointments or home projects);
2. Monitor the websites for additional information or assignment changes --- use school websites (Schoology) as a good backup to the planner and source of current information;
3. Decide on a weekday with your student where he or she can check grades with you --- ask your student to explain missing assignments or low scores, strategize with your student on ways to improve a grade or remove a No Mark (NM);
4. Encourage communication with your student's teachers --- prompt your student to contact their teachers either before or after class in person or by e-mail --- practicing advocating for themselves will help prepare your student for high school and college.

Ongoing communication is the key to the success for academic success in secondary education. Please contact your student's teachers with questions or concerns. Ms. Marcarian is the counselor working with the 7th grade academies of Key, Legacy, Odyssey and Rubicon. Ms. Elston will be working with the 8th grade academies of Talon, Sierra, Quest and Discovery. Both Ms. Marcarian and Ms. Elston are available via telephone; however, due to the meetings, parent teacher conferences and student contacts, e-mail tends to be the most effective form of communication.

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