

# McCombs Middle School

201 County Line Road, Des Moines, IA 50320  
(515) 242-8447

Nancy M. Croy, Principal Andrew Wade, Assistant Principal Sarai Tillinghast, Assistant Principal

**WELCOME** to all new and returning students and families!

### REGISTRATION

Please note that this year's School Registration must be done on-line. Directions are provided in this newsletter. Assistance will be provided at McCombs Middle School during the following time:

**Tuesday, August 6  
from 10:00am-6:30pm**

**OPEN HOUSE** will be held during the following time:

**Thursday, August 22  
from 3:30- 5:30 PM**

Students may drop off school supplies and meet the teachers.

### CELL PHONES

Students may bring cell phones to school, but phones must be turned off and put away during school hours to avoid disruption to the learning environment. If phones are out, they will be taken and parents will need to pick them up in the office.

### WHERE TO REPORT OPENING DAY

The first student day is **Friday, August 23**. Student hours are from 8:30am-3:25pm. Students are expected to be on time, but walkers and students being dropped off **should not arrive prior to 8:00am**. Students should enter through the main entry. As soon as students arrive they are to report to the following areas: 6th & 7th—gym, 8th—cafeteria. Teachers will meet students in these areas and escort them to homerooms. Your homeroom is period 1.

### LOCKER ASSIGNMENTS

and combinations will be assigned to students by homeroom teachers. Please instruct your child to be careful to keep his/her locker information confidential.

***"Everyone Expecting Excellence Everyday"***

### Mission Statement

***To prepare all students for college & career readiness and success in a global society.***

The Des Moines Public Schools prohibit discrimination in educational and employment programs and activities based on age, race, creed, color, sex, marital status, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or disability. In addition, the district prohibits acts of intolerance or harassment toward employees or students that are not related to the individual's employment or education.

# 2019-20 McCombs Middle School Staff

## Core Academic Teachers

|  |                      |      |
|--|----------------------|------|
| <b><u>Language Arts/Reading</u></b>    |                      |      |
| TBD                                    | 6th grade            | 1322 |
| Jennifer Hyslope                       | 6th grade            | 1323 |
| Theresa Leveke                         | 6th grade            | 1324 |
| Jennifer Overturf                      | 7th grade            | 1313 |
| Raechel Kinney                         | 7th grade            | 1314 |
| Emily Knickerbocker                    | 7th grade            | 1325 |
| Amanda Puderbaugh                      | 8th grade            | 1108 |
| Mary Salomon                           | 8th grade            | 1522 |
| <b><u>Mathematics</u></b>              |                      |      |
| Leanne Dronet                          | 6th grade            | 1334 |
| Bob Beetler                            | 6th grade            | 1333 |
| Tammy Nilsen                           | 6th grade            | 1335 |
| Caitlyn Gruening                       | 7th grade            | 1311 |
| Derek Buyck                            | 7th grade            | 1312 |
| Sejla Mehovic                          | 7th grade            | 1415 |
| Scott Henderson                        | 8th grade            | 1110 |
| Michelle Vrba                          | 8th grade            | 1524 |
| Darin Dowling                          | 8th grade            | 1425 |
| <b><u>Science</u></b>                  |                      |      |
| Cortney Stover                         | 6th grade            | 1331 |
| Denise Bovee                           | 6th grade            | 1336 |
| Theresa Leveke                         | 6th grade            | 1324 |
| Sejla Mehovic                          | 7th grade            | 1415 |
| Leah Mills                             | 7th grade            | 1515 |
| Chris Reeves                           | 7th grade            | 1425 |
| Darin Dowling                          | 8th grade            | 1331 |
| Mallory Mitchell                       | 8th grade            | 1109 |
| Debbie Victor                          | 8th grade            | 1516 |
| <b><u>Social Studies</u></b>           |                      |      |
| Tammy Nilson                           | 6th grade            | 1335 |
| Dustin Roland                          | 6th grade            | 1332 |
| Theresa Leveke                         | 6th grade            | 1324 |
| Beverly McPherson                      | 7th grade            | 1315 |
| Derek Buyck                            | 7th grade            | 1312 |
| Raechel Kinney                         | 7th grade            | 1314 |
| Michael Tarin                          | 7th grade            | 1106 |
| Becky Victor-Baker                     | 8th grade            | 1523 |
| <b><u>TITLE I Interventionists</u></b> |                      |      |
| Tammi Johnson                          | 6th-8th Math         | 1621 |
| Andrea Alysworth                       | 6th-8th Reading/Math | 1631 |
| Monique Funk                           | 6th-8th Reading      | 1631 |
| <b><u>Special Education</u></b>        |                      |      |
| Carol Kirsch                           | 6th grade            | 1512 |
| Breanna Maxwell                        | 6th grade            | 1512 |
| Andrea Bagby                           | 7th grade            | 1513 |
| TBD                                    | 7th grade            | 1513 |
| Dusten Metz                            | 8th grade            | 1514 |
| Diana Marron                           | 8th grade            | 1514 |
| Joy Davey                              | Structure Learning   | 1532 |
| Abby Jones                             | TLC                  | 1402 |
| <b><u>ELL</u></b>                      |                      |      |
| Michaela Cross                         | 6th-8th grade        | 1525 |
| Orli Gubani                            | 6th-8th grade        | 1525 |

### **Clerical**

|                   |                |
|-------------------|----------------|
| Kris Cooper       | Office Manager |
| Melinda Hodges    | Bldg Associate |
| Mishelle Richards | Bldg Associate |
| Michelle Bales    | Bldg Associate |

### **Associates**

|                 |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| Theresa Wheeler | Media Associate |
| Louise Green    | Sp Ed Associate |
| Shayla Shade    | Sp Ed Associate |
| Sherri Russell  | Sp Ed Associate |
| Tyler Williams  | Sp Ed Associate |

### **Custodians**

|                |                   |
|----------------|-------------------|
| Jim Corrigan   | Chief Custodian   |
| Rhonna Johnson | Mid-Day Custodian |
| Terry Joss     | Night Custodian   |
| Bruce Blome    | Night Custodian   |

## Related Arts Teachers

### **Art**

|              |      |
|--------------|------|
| Diana Givens | 1601 |
|--------------|------|

### **Business Education**

|                |      |
|----------------|------|
| Derek Schimmer | 1405 |
| Phillip Parker | 1504 |

### **Family and Consumer Science**

|              |      |
|--------------|------|
| Kathy Taylor | 1508 |
|--------------|------|

### **Music**

|                |       |
|----------------|-------|
| Branden Oliver | Stage |
| Kathryn Rathe  | 1632  |

### **Physical Education**

|               |     |
|---------------|-----|
| Billy Proctor | Gym |
|---------------|-----|

### **Spanish**

|              |      |
|--------------|------|
| Miren Abalia | 1101 |
|--------------|------|

## Administration

|                   |                     |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| Nancy Croy        | Principal           |
| Andrew Wade       | Assistant Principal |
| Sarai Tillinghast | Assistant Principal |

## Guidance Counselor

|                 |                         |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Caitlin Denning | Counselor               |
| Joy Erzinger    | Counselor/Behav. Strat. |

## Support Staff

|                       |                    |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Denise Taverne Panatt | BFL                |
| Keith Meeks           | Campus Monitor     |
| Sarah Friedrich       | TLC Coach          |
| Maureen Kennedy       | SUCCESS Worker     |
| TBD                   | SUCCESS Worker     |
| Helen Evans           | Psychologist       |
| Theresa Sellers       | Nurse              |
| Natalie Anderson      | Social Worker      |
| Lori Sojka            | Special Ed Consult |
| Dana Raymond          | Cafeteria Manager  |
| Joslyn Behnken        | Therapist          |
| TBD                   | iJag               |

# Parent Portal

Parent Portal is a student information system that enables parents to view their own student's information via the Internet. Parents will be able to see the following information:

- Attendance
- Class Assignments
- Class Schedule
- Demographics
- Grades
- Assessment Data

This article contains important information, including expectations for Parent Portal participants and how to get your access information if you would like to participate.

## Expectations

- ▶ Parents need to allow a reasonable period of time for teachers to post grades and grade changes to their online grade book.
- ▶ Parents need to understand that grades can change - if there is a concern you should:
  1. Ask your child first about the concern.
  2. Have your child talk to the teacher if there is still confusion or a concern.
  3. Talk to the teacher directly.
- ▶ Parents need to understand that Internet emails may lose confidentiality on the Web, so be careful what communication is sent by that means. (Each teacher will have a direct email link.)
- ▶ Parents need to understand that there will be times when access to Parent Portal will be blocked. For example: when teachers are inputting grades at the end of grading periods, parents may be blocked to prevent the network from crashing. Also, parents' access to final grades may be blocked until final report cards are run.
- ▶ Parents will have access to any of their student's information through a single account. **Sign up at one school only.**

Parents will have some direct links to other areas in Parent Portal:

1. Attendance
2. Demographics - Registrar

## Access Code, Password & Directions

Parents will need to use the Internet to access Parent Portal. If you do not have Internet access, it is suggested to utilize computers at the local libraries or contact school.

Parents need to email our Office Manager at [kristin.cooper@dmschools.org](mailto:kristin.cooper@dmschools.org) and request a user name, password and directions for Parent Portal.

- ▶ Include the following information in the email:
  1. **Parent Name** - Only one name can be put on an account. Parents may share the account or each may have a separate account. If you wish to have separate accounts for each parent, two emails need to be sent from two different email addresses.
  2. **Email Address** (Even if it is the same as the one you are sending the message from.)
  3. **Mailing Address**
  4. **Student's Name**
  5. **Parent's Birth Date**
  6. **Phone Number** - In case we have any questions.
- ▶ After your request is received via email your user name, password and directions will be sent via email.

For general questions or concerns, please contact the main office at McCombs Middle School at 242-8447.

**PORTAL QUESTIONS** may be directed to [kristin.cooper@dmschools.org](mailto:kristin.cooper@dmschools.org)  
Assistance will be provided at McCombs Middle School on **Tuesday, August 6**  
from **10:00am - 6:30pm.**



## BUS ROUTES

Students residing more than two miles from school are eligible for transportation. Bussing information can be viewed in Parent Portal.

## DART (Des Moines City Buses)

They will again serve the McCombs area. Students who ride a Dart bus will need to show their ID to ride.

Students without passes will be required to pay for rides to and from school. Bussing information can be viewed in Parent Portal. Students will receive permanent passes when school ID cards are distributed.

## WEATHER CLOSINGS

On occasion, school starting times may be delayed, schools may be closed for the day or schools may close early because of severe weather conditions. Stay tuned to local radio or television stations for information or visit the district website. The media will be notified of delays/closings as early as possible. DMPS will also communicate with parents who are register on Parent Portal via text and email. We ask that parents use the above means of finding out about weather closings and avoid calling the school to get this information as we are unable to handle that volume of calls.

## BUS RIDER RULES

Bus rider behavior expectations will be given in writing to all students as part of the *Expectations Handbook* on the opening day of school. The school bus is considered to be an extension of the classroom. Therefore, students shall conduct themselves while on the bus in a manner consistent with established standards for classroom behavior.

Misconduct on the bus will be brought to the attention of the administration. When continuing or serious problems exist, the student's bus riding privileges may be suspended.

Bus riders shall promptly obey the bus driver's directions. Refusal to obey the bus driver shall be sufficient reason for being denied transportation services.

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS/ TELEPHONE NUMBER

Please notify the school immediately at **242-8447** upon change of address or telephone number. You may be asked to provide proof of address for the change to be made.

## DRIVEWAY AREAS AT McCombs

Parents who transport students to and from school must drop off and pick up students in the first driveway or the parking lot. The driveway closest to the building is for buses only. The driveway closest to the building is **strictly for bus loading and unloading**. Cars aren't permitted to drive through the bus lane. Please cooperate for the safety of all our students.

## STUDENT ABSENCES

When a student is unable to attend school, a parent/guardian of the student must call the attendance office at **242-8447** to report the absence as early as possible. Please indicate the reason for absence. Each day of absence must be cleared by a phone call.

If a student is absent from school for three or more days, homework may be requested by calling the attendance office at 242-8447.

Students leaving school before the end of the school day because of illness, appointments, etc., must report to the attendance office to sign out prior to leaving the building and parents must be present to sign student out.

## BACKPACKS

Backpacks are not allowed in classrooms or lunchrooms at McCombs Middle School. Students carrying backpacks to and from school must leave them in their lockers during the school day.

The reasons for this school policy, all which involve health and safety, are listed below:

1. Chiropractors and physicians are cautioning that health risks may be associated with carrying heavy backpacks throughout the day. This is especially risky for adolescents whose bones are still developing.
2. Backpacks cause congestion in hallways, lunchrooms and classrooms. Many times there is no place to put them except in the aisles. Students and employees have been injured when tripping over, or being bumped by backpacks.
3. Illegal substances or items can be too easily concealed in backpacks and find their way into classrooms.

## APPROPRIATE SCHOOL DRESS AND PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Children's appearance reflects, and influences, how they feel and behave. Most of us would agree that middle school students should be allowed to exercise a degree of freedom and discretion about how they dress. Sometimes, however, middle school students need parental advice and supervision when it comes to their dress and overall appearance.

The *Expectations Handbook*, which is distributed to and discussed with all students during the first few weeks of school, includes McCombs Middle School's expectations related to students' attire and personal appearance. It should be mentioned that the school policy on dress is intended to be general. It is not our intent to create an all-inclusive list of do's and don'ts. **The key is for students and parents to use good judgment and common sense when it comes to dress and personal appearance. Although a look or fashion may be acceptable for a rock concert or a day at the beach, it may be inappropriate for school. It is important that parents assist students when they are unable to make these types of distinctions on their own.**

Parents are asked to send their children to school ready to learn. In turn, parents can expect that their children will attend school in a safe, well-controlled setting. Monitoring students' appearance will help them focus on learning and assist in maintaining an orderly, safe school environment for everyone. We thank students and parents for your support and cooperation in this matter.

## FASHION FAUX PAS & WARDROBE MALFUNCTIONS

The *Expectations Handbook*, which is distributed to and discussed with all students during the first few weeks of school, includes a general description of the expectations related to student attire and personal appearance. McCombs Middle School students are expected to be in compliance with the following common sense dress code rules:

- Underwear, including boxers, panties, bras and bra straps, should not be visible.
- Shoulder straps must be at least two fingers wide. Spaghetti straps are inappropriate for school unless they are worn under another garment.
- Shorts and skirts must be at least fingertip in length. It is recommended that leggings be worn under skirts.
- Breast cleavage, bottom cleavage, and midriffs should not be visible.
- Holes in jeans must not expose skin above fingertip length.

Students who are inappropriately dressed for school will be asked to immediately correct the fashion faux pas. When necessary, parents will be contacted.

## PHONE CALLS AND MESSAGES DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

Messages and deliveries for students can be taken care of in the main office. We do not interrupt classes, however. If it is not a true emergency, we ask that you take care of situations at home so that instructional time is not interrupted.

Please be sure to make prior arrangements for rides, keys, lunch money, activities, inclement weather, etc.

Thank you for your cooperation.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLOTHES

An acceptable pair of athletic shoes, socks, t-shirt (white or gray) on which students' name can be written, athletic shorts or sweat pants are required to be kept at school for physical education class.

### SCHOOL FEES

|                         |                      |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Textbook Fees           | \$55.00 (grades 6-8) |
| PE Lock                 | \$ 7.00 (if lost)    |
| Registering for a sport | \$15.00/sport        |
| Instrumental Rental     | \$50.00              |
| ID Replacement          | \$ 5.00              |

## HOW TO HANDLE A CONCERN

We hope that things will go smoothly this school year. However, should a problem arise be assured that we are anxious to positively assist. Try to resolve a problem at the level closest to it. If it concerns something that happened in the classroom, contact your child's teacher. Good ways to communicate include email, phone and the student assignment notebook which each student should have. Assignment notebooks are used not only for students to organize their work assignments, but also as a communication link between parent and teacher. The assignment notebook should be reviewed daily by both parents and teachers. If the teacher can't resolve the concern, call Assistant Principal Andrew Wade or Principal Nancy Croy.

## **SCHOOL MEDICATION GUIDELINES**

For many reasons, students may be directed by a physician to take medication during the school day. Medication may be distributed by trained school official if the parent/guardian provides the following required school forms:

- *Physician's Authorization of Medication for a Student while in School*
- *Parent/Guardian Medication Consent Form*

In addition, all medicine must be in a labeled medication bottle or container which includes the child's name, prescribed dosage and time, pharmacy and physician.

It is understood that if school personnel require additional information regarding medication, the physician will be contacted by phone. Medication will be kept in a locked cabinet in Nurse's Office and supervised by designated school personnel.

## **SCHOOL PICTURES**

Individual student portraits will be taken on **Thursday, August 29**. All students are required to have their picture taken. The envelopes will be collected by the photographers. For proper credit each student should pay separately. You may order as many combinations and/or selections as you like. Information regarding portrait packages will be available at registration and sent home with students the first day of school.

## **PHOTO ID CARDS**

Each student will be issued a bar-coded photo identification card. All students are required to wear their ID card on a daily basis. ID's are useful for identification purposes, to checkout books from the school library, and ride busses to and from school. Students will need to learn to be responsible for the cards. Replacement ID cards will cost \$5.00. Sixth graders and new students will be provided lanyards that ID cards clip on.

## **Student Planners are Important for Academic Success**

The student planner is an organizational tool that also provides communication between teachers and parents. The planner can assist students with organization during their academic workday when they record and track work completion. Students are required to carry the planner to all classes, and between home and school everyday. Students are also expected to have their planner with them like a pass when moving between locations within the building during the school day.

Parents frequently ask for steps they can take to encourage and support students with academic concerns in middle school. Students who struggle with academics often times do not write assignments down, rush through their work, do not follow directions or complete work, and do not turn in assignments. As part of your routine at home, ask your student to show you his/her planner. This is one proactive way to be better informed about how the student is approaching the classwork. Becoming aware of how the planner is used early in the school year might prevent receiving a disappointing grade report.

When used as intended, planners can strengthen communication between home and school. The planner provides documentation as to how a student is taking responsibility for his/her part in learning experiences at school. The planner helps students prepare for approaching tasks expected of them today; in addition, it develops basic life-skills to face challenges in the multi-tasking workplace of tomorrow.

## **FEES & FEE WAIVERS**

Des Moines Public Schools collects fees to help support student needs in classrooms including textbooks and digital content. Textbook fees will be assessed to all students at all schools.

To qualify for full or partial waiver of fees, all families are required to fill out the **Household Economic Survey** as part of the online registration process. Based on the family household income indicated on the survey, fees will either be fully waived, partially waived or not waived at all.

**NOTE**—McCombs is a Community Eligible school. This means students are provided free breakfast and lunch. The Community Eligible status does NOT automatically waive textbook fees. Fee waiver status is based solely on household income as indicated on the **Household Economic Survey**.

### **Addresses Verification**

Per district policy, addresses will be verified when you register online. If you plan on registering during the August 6 registration day at McCombs, please bring proof of your home address with you. The following will be accepted:

- Utility Bill
- Bank Statement
- Cell Phone Bill
- Credit Card Statement
- Lease Agreement
- Notarized Letter from Landlord

If you pay fees by check, rather than online, checks should be made payable to

***McCombs Middle School***

and brought in, or mailed to, Kris Cooper in the main office.

## **PARENT BOOSTERS**

McCombs Parent Boosters will hold their first meeting on **Monday, Sept. 9th at 6:30pm in McCombs' Library**. All McCombs parents/guardians are encouraged to attend. Students' success in school is proven to be higher when parents stay involvement. Please support our school and students by becoming an Eagle Booster.



## OPEN HOUSE AT MCCOMBS MIDDLE SCHOOL

Thursday, August 22, 2019 3:30-5:30 pm

\*Pick up your class schedule

\*Take your supplies to your homeroom

\*Meet your teachers

\*Take a self-directed tour with your parents

*Students must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.*

# McCombs Middle School 2019-20 Supply Lists

|  | Required Supply Items  | 6th         | 7 <sup>th</sup> | 8 <sup>th</sup> |
|---|--|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|   | Spiral Notebooks <i>includes one for PE. FAST elective students need to add one more spiral.</i>   | 5           | 10              | 8               |
|   | 3 " Ring Binder*   | 0           | 1               | 1               |
|   | Loose Leaf Paper- # of Packages  | 0           | 0               | 2               |
|   | 8-Tab Plastic Dividers with Pockets  | 1           | 1               | 1               |
|   | Pencil Pouch (to fit in 3-Ring Binder)   | 1           | 1               | 1               |
|   | Pencils (includes 2 for PE)  | 48          | 48              | 48              |
|   | Colored Pencils - # of Packages  | 2           | 2               | 1               |
|   | Markers (Not Sharpies) - # of Packages   | 2 fine line | 1               | 1               |
|   | EXPO Dry Erase Markers - # of Packages   | 2           | 1               | 1               |
|   | Blue or Black Pens - # of Packages   | 0           | 0               | 1               |
|   | Red Pens - # of Packages   | 0           | 0               | 1               |
|   | Post-It Notes - # of packages  | 1           | 2               | 2               |
|   | 3x5 Index Cards - # of Packages  | 1           | 1               | 1               |
|   | Highlighters - # of Package of 5   | 1           | 2               | 1               |
|   | Copy Paper - # of Reams  | 2           | 1               | 2               |
|   | Flash Drive - (Business Class)   | 0           | 1               | 1               |
|   | Glue Sticks  | 6           | 1               | 8               |
|   | Scotch Tape  | 0           | 0               | 1               |
|   | Scissors   | 1           | 0               | 1               |
|   | Kleenex Tissue Boxes   | 4           | 4               | 4               |
|   | Ruler  | 0           | 0               | 1               |
|   | Hand Sanitizer   | 0           | 1               | 1               |
|   | Clorox Wipes   | 2           | 2               | 2               |
|   | Roll of Duct Tape (to repair binder)   | 1           | 1               | 1               |
|   | NOTE: Students are required to carry a McCombs Student Planner. <b>The first one is provided at no cost.</b> The replacement cost is \$5.00. | 1           | 1               | 1               |

|  | PE Supply List— All Grades                   |
|---|--|
|   | 2 Pencils (included above)                   |
|   | Spiral Notebook (included above)             |
|   | Tennis Shoes with Laces                      |
|   | Socks  |
|   | Athletic shorts and sweatpants or yoga pants |
|   | Solid White or Gray T-shirt                  |

**\*Please DO NOT purchase a binder if you are a 6th grader!**

**Note:** McCombs will provide all 6th grader students with a 3-ring binder. Every student is required to carry the binder to every class, every day. Replacement binders, or binders for students in other grades, are sold at school and cost \$5. The divider and pencil pouch listed above must be purchased to fulfill the binder requirement.