# MARY L. PASSAGE MIDDLE SCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK



Dear Panther Families,

Welcome to the 2023-2024 school year! We look forward to a productive and positive school

year. Our theme this school year is "ACTIVATE then EDUCATE!" We are committed to

unlocking our student's potential, passion, and purpose. Teachers, students, and

parents/guardians make a strong community. Therefore, we appreciate your support in preparing

your student to put in cognitive work that will help them learn and grow.

The Parent Handbook is to help you better understand our procedures, expectations, and

resources. Please do not hesitate in reaching out to us for additional information. Thank you for

trusting us with your students, and we appreciate your ongoing support.

Yours In Education,

Jametha Ruffin

Jametha Ruffin

Principal

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# **Basic School Information**

# Mailing Address:

Mary L. Passage Middle School 400 Atkinson Blvd. Newport News, Virginia 23608

#### **Phone Numbers:**

Phone Number: (757) 886-7600 Fax Number: (757) 886-7661

#### Hours:

School Hours: 7:00 – 1:55 Office Hours: 6:40-3:35

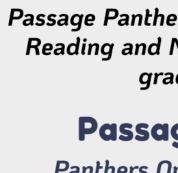
# **MARY PASSAGE MIDDLE SCHOOL**

# Our Mission

Together with our families and community,
we commit to teaching the whole child by actively
engaging students in their learning while providing a safe
and equitable environment. We will foster a culture that will
unlock the potential, passion, and purpose of all learners.







Passage Panthers will increase their Reading and Math scores by one grade level.

# Passage's Motto

Panthers On Purpose: Activate and Educate

(Potential, Passion, and Purpose)





# Our 2023-2024 Core Beliefs

- 1. We are committed to supporting the success and growth of each student.
- 2. We are invested in cultivating a sense of community, acceptance, and understanding for an equitable learning experience.
- 3. In understanding our common goal, we are dedicated to celebrating each individual's unique talents, progress, and accomplishments.

# 2023-2024 Edition

#### 2023-2024 Staff Roster

Principal
Jametha Ruffin
<a href="mailto:jametha.ruffin@nn.kl2.va.us">jametha.ruffin@nn.kl2.va.us</a>

8th Grade Assistant Principal Jessica Weymouthgerman jessica.Weymouthger@nn.kl2.va.us

8th Grade Counselor Monika Mcghee monika.mcghee@nn.kl2.va.us

7th Grade Assistant Principal Patricia Skaggs patricia.skaggs@nn.kl2.va.us

7th grade Counselor Amy Lewis amy.lewis@nn.k12.va.us

6th Grade Assistant Principal Anthony Mungin anthony.mungin@nn.kl2.va.us

6th Grade Counselor Walter Moyler walter.moyler@nn.k12.va.us

Passage School Resource Officer Officer Hughes Office Staff: Registrar Eric Morgan eric.morgan@nn.kl2.va.us

Shakia Murdock Bookkeeper shakia.murdock@nn.k12.va.us

Attendance Secretary
Avianna Campbellharris
Avianna.campellhar@nn.k12.va.us

#### CHANGE OF ADDRESS/PHONE NUMBER

It is vital in the educational process to be able to contact parents/guardians via phone and mail regarding student emergencies, behavior, progress, and other pertinent information. If your phone number or address changes during the year, please notify the school office so that this information can be updated immediately.

#### **Staff Roster**

In order to email your child's teacher, use the following format: firstname.lastname@nn.k12.va.us

**Staff Roster** 

#### Other important Staff Members:

Family Engagement Counselor Mrs. Miller White <a href="mailto:shanta.millerwhite@nn.kl2.va.us">shanta.millerwhite@nn.kl2.va.us</a>

Mrs. Miller White is a great resource for parents and students concerning resources that are available in your community and for your child.

Military Counselor Ms. Lawton <u>lawtonw@MagellanFederal.com</u>

Ms. Lawton is a great resource for our Military families. She can answer questions related to the military and is a support for our students.

Student Support Specialist TBD

This person will be a support to our students with counseling, peer mediation, teacher/student support, and offer additional support to students and families.

Community In School Coordinator Terrian Brown

#### Important Information:

#### **CLEAR BACKPACKS**

To further enhance safety, Newport News Public Schools will require all students to use clear backpacks provided by the school division for the 2023-2024 school year. Traditional solid color backpacks and totes will no longer be allowed. The use of clear backpacks will provide another layer of security as part of NNPS' multi-faceted school safety framework. NNPS is committed to making this change hassle-free for our students and families. The school division will purchase and distribute backpacks to all students in preschool through 12th grade at the start of the school year. In addition, the school division will provide each student with a small, opaque (non-clear) pouch to hold personal items. Students must use a clear backpack provided from the division. Students may NOT decorate their clear backpack in any way. Students may NOT line the inside of the backpack. Lunchboxes do not have to be clear but are subject to search. 10 Students that do not comply with backpack policy will be cited with insubordination which is a violation of the student code of conduct. All backpacks not meeting criteria will be collected and kept in the school office where the student can retrieve them at the end of the day. If a replacement clear backpack is needed, students should notify the school office. A replacement may be issued. Clear backpacks are not required for teachers, staff, volunteers or visitors; however, all bags and purses are subject to search upon school entry.

#### **Water Bottles:**

Each grade level has a water filling station and one on the related arts hall. It is highly recommended that students have a water bottle with them to use. The school does sell water bottles for \$1.00. No cups will be given to students. **Please no glass bottles or containers as well.** 

#### **MEDICATION**

All medication must be administered by the school nurse. Medication includes everything from pain medication to cough drops. Please contact the school nurse for questions regarding medication.

#### Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

#### **Morning Routine**

6:45 AM	Buses start bringing students Drop offs report to the front of the
building	

7:00 AM Students enter the building, go through the metal detectors and go directly to home room

7:05 AM	Breakfast in the classroom. Pledge of A	llegiance, Moment of

Silence and Morning Show

7:10 AM Morning Meeting

7:25 AM Regular Day Begins

#### Afternoon Routine

1:50 pm Announcements begin. Students prepare for dismissal

1:55 pm Dismissal begins (parent pick up and grade level)

#### T Passes

Students will use their T Passes to get on and off the bus. In addition, their T passes will be used in the lunchroom and in the library. Please click the link to learn more about T Passes.

**T-PASS** 

When picking up your child, please do not use the staff parking lot. Please follow the parent drop off/pick up line. All students who are parent pick up will come out through the main entrance.

If picking your child up from the main office, you must have a valid ID. If your child is normally a bus rider and you need to pick them up, you must call before 1:30 so that we can let your child know that they are being picked up. Your child will not be released to anyone who does not have authorization to pick up your child. Please make sure that you have updated your phone number, email and who your student can be released to in case of an emergency.

Please note that we can only talk to those family members that have educational rights to your child. We cannot release information to those that do not have educational rights.

#### **Bus Expectations**

#### Bus and Bus Stop Rules

STUDENT SAFETY on the school buses and at the bus stops is a major priority. Parents are encouraged to monitor student behavior going to and returning from the bus stops and at the bus stop locations. Students' behavior on the bus that endangers others will not be tolerated.

The state law authorizes the proper discipline of students going to and returning from school. "As a general rule, this authority to discipline extends to pupils on their way to or from school if such conduct directly affects the good order and welfare of the school." (1960-61 Op. Att'y. Gen. 274) Principals stress to students that they are expected to conduct themselves in an orderly manner at all times and that failure to do so going to and from school may result in disciplinary action described in this Handbook.

All carry-on items (i.e. book bags, backpacks, etc.) should be held on laps or placed under the seat. Carry- on items must not take a seat required for another student. School projects and band instruments are exempted.

Students may ride a different bus and be dropped off at a different bus stop only with parent and administrative approval. Disciplinary action may be taken against students who purposely board or exit a bus at a stop other than the assigned stop.

Students riding a NNPS school bus are required to scan their T-pass in order to get on and off the bus. T-Passes are to be easily accessible while entering and exiting the school bus.

Students are expected to observe the following rules for safety and courtesy on the bus and at the bus stop.

#### At the Bus Stop

- Arrive at the assigned stop ten minutes before bus pickup
- <u>Be visible</u> (i.e. stand on the sidewalk or the edge of the street by the curb)
- · Stay off private property
- · Do not stand on the traveled part of the road
- Be respectful and watchful of traffic
- Wait quietly and orderly

#### On the Bus

- Scan your T-pass
- Sit in assigned seat
- · Remain seated at all times
- Cooperate with the driver and practice orderly conduct
- No profanity or obscene behavior
- No smoking
- No eating or drinking
- No vandalism
- · No body parts outside bus
- · No live animals
- No unsafe objects or weapons
- · No throwing items from the bus or on the bus
- No glass
- No balloons
- No skateboards

#### When the Bus Arrives

- Allow the bus to come to a complete stop
- Board the bus in a quiet and orderly manner
- · Cross in front of the bus

#### Leaving the Bus

- · Remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop
- Leave in an orderly manner
- · Leave at your assigned stop

#### In the Event of an Accident Involving the School Bus

- Emergency Medical Services Personnel and Transportation Staff will respond immediately and check for injuries.
- Students should remain with the bus until released by school staff, Emergency Personnel, or a Transportation Supervisor.
- · Bus Drivers may only release students at their assigned bus stop or school.
- Parents who respond to the accident location and request release of their student must present identification and only sign out their own student from the Transportation Supervisor or School Staff.
- Uninjured students will be transferred to a recovery bus to continue the bus ride.
- School Staff will notify parents as soon as possible of serious accidents or provide written notice of minor accidents.

#### Bus FAQ's

#### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### Cell phone Policy per NNPS

The Newport News Public Schools' guidelines for the use of cellular phones and two-way communication devices are designed to ensure that the use of these items does not interfere with teaching and learning, or with maintaining a safe and orderly environment during the school day.

The Newport News Public Schools will assume no responsibility in any circumstance for loss, destruction, damage, theft or charges made on monthly statements for a cellular phone or two-way communication device.

- Elementary students with cell phones should keep them off, and out of sight, during regular school hours and during after-school activities.
- Middle and high school students are permitted to have and use cell phones or two-way communication devices after school dismissal on school board property.
- Under no circumstances may students use any device to photograph, video record, or audio record any student, employee, or member of the public on school grounds unless they have permission from both the person(s) being photographed or recorded and a school official.
- If a student, in violation of these guidelines, should record, or receive a recording of a rule violation that occurred on school grounds and shares such a recording with others, or on a social media platform this will result in consequences in keeping with behavior code:

Relationship Behaviors (RB) 3- Posting, distributing, displaying, or sharing inappropriate material or literature, including using electronics means.

Sanctions for violation of these guidelines will be as follows:

- First Offense: A warning will be given to the student by the administrator or other school official. The policy will be explained to students for any future violations.
- Second Offense: The cell phone/two-way communication device will be confiscated by an administrator, secured in the office, and will be returned to the

student at the end of the day. Parents will be contacted to request their support in policy enforcement.

- Third Offense: The cell phone/two-way communication device will be confiscated by an administrator, secured in the office, the student will receive ISS for 1 school day, and the phone will be returned at the end of the school day.
- Repeated violations of these guidelines, after the third offense, will result in disciplinary actions that can range from Level 2 to Level 4 and may require a parent conference for reinstatement.

No student, unless authorized by the school principal/designee, shall bring or possess any object that has no educational purpose and may distract from teaching and learning (i.e. Toys, iPads, Kindles, Nooks, iPods, other MP3 and CD players, Digital or Tape Recorders, or any other portable communication devices).

In addition, the Newport News Public Schools will assume no responsibility in any circumstances for loss, destruction, damage or theft of any such item. Students who choose to bring such items do so at their own risk. These items may be confiscated and sanctions for violating these guidelines are the same as outlined above for the cell phones/two-way communication devices.

#### **Student Lunch Procedures**

All students receive lunch during their lunch period. Each lunch is broken up into grade level with students having about 30 minutes to eat lunch. Students have a variety of choices to choose from which include salad options. No outside food can be served, however, a parent may sign their child out to eat with the student. If you would like to eat lunch with your student, it must be approved by the Principal.

#### **Classroom Visits**

If you would like to visit your child's classroom, it must be approved by Mrs. Ruffin, the Principal, 24 hours prior to the day you would like to visit. Please email her at the address listed above.

# **Student Dress Code Policy**

Elementary, Middle, and High

The following dress practices are not allowed in school:

- Headwear or head coverings of any kind such as hats, hoods, sweatbands, bandannas, scarves, sunglasses, combs, picks, curlers, or rakes worn in the hair. Exceptions to this are religious, ethnically-specific, or significant head coverings or hairstyles, including hijabs, yarmulkes, headwraps, braids, locs, and cornrows which are allowed.
- Any article of apparel which displays obscene words, pictures or designs. Any article that conveys a sexually suggestive message or a pro-alcohol, drug, or gang related message. This would include the display of any apparel, jewelry, accessory, or tattoo, that by virtue of its color, arrangement, trademark, or any other attribute, denotes membership in a gang that advocates illegal or disruptive behavior.
- Clothing that is transparent or exposes the midriff, back, navel, or has a low-cut neckline.
- Tank tops, tube tops, halter tops, one shoulder tops, spaghetti straps, strapless or backless tops (unless covered).
- Dresses, skirts, or shorts that do not reach at least mid-thigh or have slits above mid-thigh.
- Underwear worn as outer garments.
- Pants, skirts or shorts worn below waistline ("sagging") or inside out. Pajamas/sleepwear of any kind. Cut-up shorts or pants with slits, rips or holes above mid-thigh.
- Bare feet. Footwear must always be worn.
- Jewelry or accessories that may be used as a weapon (e.g. two or three finger rings that are joined, chains, oversized or spiked accessories).
- Garments that are excessively tight, clothing that resembles leggings, jeggings, tights, or yoga pants unless worn underneath a shirt, shorts, dress, or skirt that is at mid-thigh length.
- \* Refer to the section on Behaviors related to School Operations Dress Code violation for disciplinary sanctions.

The dress code does not preclude instructors from requiring, or forbidding specific items of personal protective equipment, and footwear for the safety and participation of students.

NNPSPolicy JICA - Student Dress

A student will not dress, groom, or wear items where the effect is to cause disruption or interference with the operation of the school. The principal or designee will determine whether any particular mode of dress or apparel results in such interference or disruption. Such determinations will not be made by direct physical contact with a student or student's attire, nor by a requirement to disrobe.

Please have students refrain from bringing blankets to school as well.

# **Discipline Procedures**

The School Board acknowledges that each parent of a student enrolled in an NNPS school has a duty to assist that school in enforcing the standards of student conduct and compulsory school attendance in order that education may be conducted in an atmosphere free of disruption and threat to persons or property, and supportive of individual rights.

Passage Middle School follows the Rights and Responsibility handbook in accordance with Newport News Public Schools. In accordance with the Rights and Responsibility handbook, students may receive consequences according to it.

Link to the Rights and Responsibility Handbook:

Rights & Responsibilities: A Handbook for Students and Parents

# **Appeals Process**

#### Short Term Suspension (Level 3 through Level 4 Actions)

A short-term suspension is a suspension of 10 school days or less. The principal or designee has the authority to make a determination, based on an investigation, that a student has violated a rule that may require a suspension of 9 days or less. If a principal determines a suspension of 10 days is warranted, they would need to contact the Office of Student Conduct and Discipline. Upon receipt of the principal/designee's determination, if the Parent desires to appeal an out of school short-term suspension, he/she should follow the procedures set out below. The student does not serve the assigned number of days until the appeal process is complete and the suspension is upheld. (Note: The student may be able to remain in ISS, until the appeal process is complete, and the suspension is upheld; providing that aggravating circumstances do not exist.)

#### Written Request for Appeal

- If the student is suspended by a principal's designee, the appeal is to the building principal. The Parent must request in
  writing a review of the suspension decision within two (2) school day (the beginning suspension day starts the appeal
  counting) or the decision becomes final.
- The principal will review the incident and within two (2) school days after receipt of the written request notify the Parent of the decision. A letter stating the decision will be mailed to the Parent.
- If the Parent requests an appeal of the principal's decision to suspend a student, the written request must be submitted within two (2) school day of the principal's decision or the decision becomes final. A letter of appeal may be filed with the Elementary School Leadership Department (PK-5) or Secondary School Leadership Department (6-12).
- Within three (3) school days after receipt of the notice of appeal, the Executive Director of Elementary or Secondary School Leadership will review the actions taken by the principal/designee, and confirm or disapprove such action based on the examination of the record of the student's behavior. The decision of the division Superintendent/designee shall be final.

# Safety Plan

• Speak up is an anonymous service for students, parents, and concerned staff to report safety concerns.



See something? Hear something? Do something!

Report safety concerns anonymously anytime.



Click the SpeakUp icon on your chromebook



Email speakup@nnschools.org



Call or text757-765-4440

**Easily Report:** 

Bullying • Violence • Weapons

Social Media Threats • Suspicious or Dangerous Behavior Students in Crisis • Other Urgent Situations



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# **Safety Drills**

Throughout the school year, safety drills are conducted to ensure that students and staff are aware of what to do during the event of an emergency. The following safety drills are conducted throughout the school year:

Fire Drills- done Weekly the first month, then monthly the remainder of the year

Tornado Drills-As a state, tornado drills are conducted on specific dates throughout the school year.

Lockdown Drills-We do two type of lockdown drills:

- a. Modified Lockdown-during this drill, doors are closed and locked with windows covered and teaching continues as normal. An example of this could be for a medical emergency,
- b. Full lockdown-during this drill, doors are closed and locked with windows covered and lights off. During this time, there is no noise and students are away from windows and doors.

Parents, we encourage you to talk to your child about taking all drills seriously as we want our students to be prepared in the event of an actual emergency. We ask that you explain the importance of listening to the adults and following all rules. Please remind your child that there should be no talking and they should listen to all adults directions.

### **CLUBS & ACTIVITIES**

We offer a variety of clubs and activities for your child to be involved in after school. We have tutoring sessions as well.

Some of our clubs that we have:

- 1. Intramurals
- 2. SCA
- 3. Bloom
- 4. Male Mentorship
- 5. Fun and Fitness club
- 6. Robotics

Our tutoring program is called Century 21 and this is a program where students get enrichment activities as well as opportunities for homework help. This program runs Monday through Thursday from 2:15-5:00. More information will be provided on how to sign up.

#### **SPORTS**

Students have an opportunity to try out for our sports programs at Passage. As these are competitive sports, all students must have the Virginia High School League physical prior to trying out. All grade levels are eligible to try out for sports.

#### VHSL physical form

All students that are participating in Middle School Sports will be required to have a 2.0 overall grade point average. If a student is an uprising 7th or 8th grader, their eligibility will be determined by their previous year grades. Students must have passed at least 5 subjects with an overall average of 2.0. Students who are rising 6th graders will be eligible to play for this school year, but for spring sports must have a 2.0 or passing 5 classes in order to play.

The following sports are being offered. These are on a tryout basis and no student can try out without the VHSL physical form. NO other form will be accepted and it must be completed prior to the first day of tryouts.

Football all grade levels

Boys and Girls Basketball all grade levels

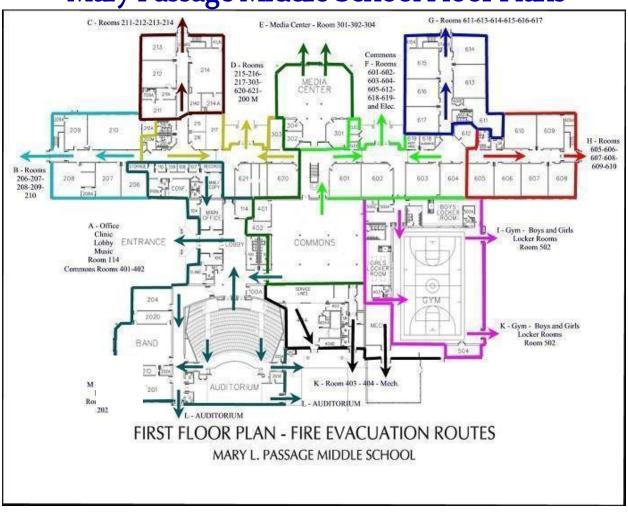
Boys and Girls Track all grade levels

Boys and Girls Soccer all grade levels

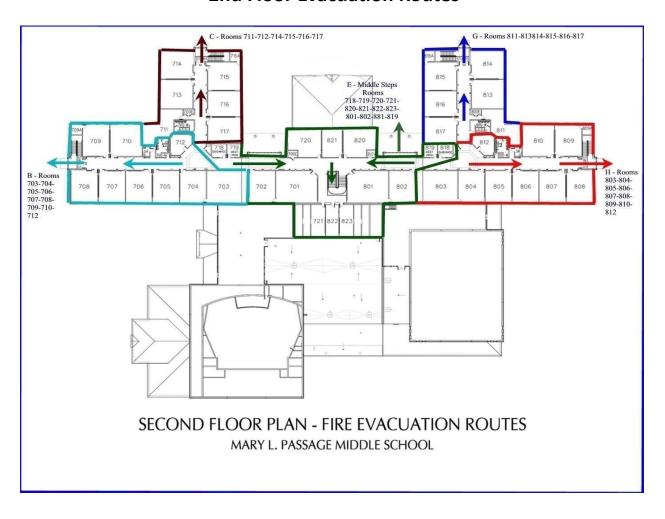
Boys and Girls Volleyball

Wrestling (tentative)

# Mary Passage Middle School Floor Plans

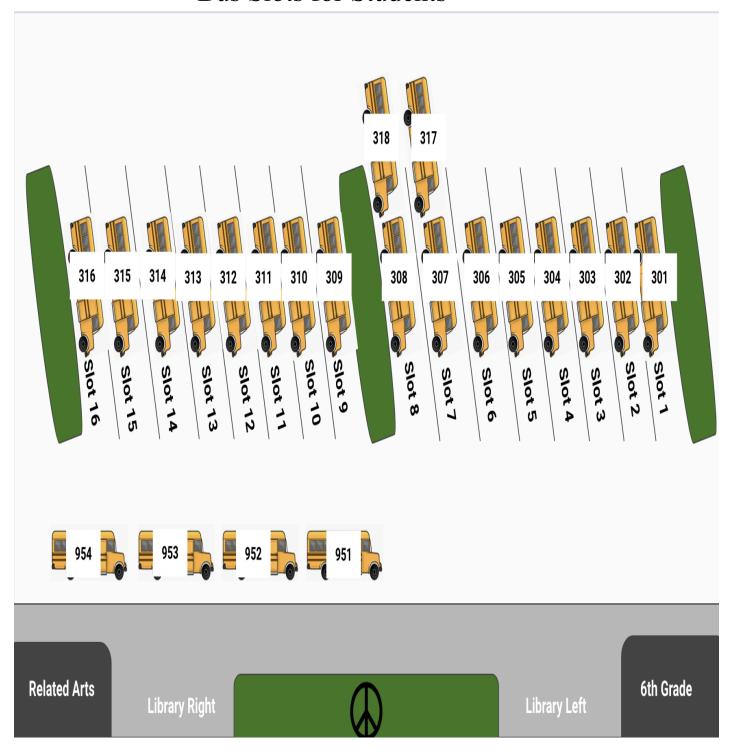


#### **2nd Floor Evacuation Routes**



Aerial View of Passage Middle School Passage Middle School

## **Bus Slots for Students**



# **MPMS Schedule**

#### 2023-2024 Passage Bell Schedule

6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade
7:00-7:30 Homeroom	7:00-7:30 Homeroom	7:00-7:30 Homeroom
7:30-8:53 Core 1	7:33-8:18 1st RA	7:30-8:53 Core 1
8:55-10:17 Core 2	8:21-9:06 2nd RA	8:55-10:18 Core 2
10:20-11:05 1st RA	9:10-11:05 Core 1 Rolling lunch 10:20-11:00 10:20, 25, 30	10:20-12:15 Core 3 Rolling lunch: 11:30-12:10 11:30, 35, 40
11:08-11:53 2nd RA	11:07-12:30 Core 2	12:18-1:05 1st RA
11:56-1:55 Core 3 Lunch 12:10-12:40; 12:45-1:15	12:32-1:55 Core 3	1:08-1:55 2nd RA

#### Half Day Dismissal Schedule (March 29):

6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade	Related Arts			
7:00-7:30 Homeroom/Morning Meeting/Review Schedule for the Day						
7:30-8:15 Core 1 8:17-9:15 Core 2 9:17-10:30 Core 3 Grab and go lunch during core 3	7:30-8:15 Core 1 8:17-9:15 Core 2 9:17-10:30 Core 3 Grab and go lunch during core 3	7:30-8:15 Core 1 8:17-9:15 Core 2 9:17-10:30 Core 3 Grab and go lunch during core 3	Partner with grade levels during these cores: 6th grade: 1st Core 7th grade: 2nd Core 8th grade: 3rd Core			

#### Early Dismissal Schedule (June 10-12):

6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade	Related Arts			
7:00-7:30 Homeroom/Morning Meeting/Review Schedule for the Day						
7:30-8:40 Core 1 8:45-9:15 RA 1 9:18-9:50 RA 2 9:55-11:05 Core 2 11:07-12:25 Core 3 Lunch at 11:35	7:30-8:00 RA 1 8:03-8:35 RA 2 8:38-9:45 Core 1 9:50-11:00 Core 2 11:03-12:25 Core 3 Lunch 11:10	7:30-8:40 Core 1 8:43-9:55 Core 2 9:58-11:20 Core 3 11:23-11:50 RA 1 11:53-12:25 RA 2 Lunch 10:30	7:30-8:00 1st 7th Grade 8:03-8:35 2nd 7th Grade 8:45-9:15 1st 6th Grade 9:18-9:50 2nd 6th Grade 11:23-11:50 1st 8th Grade 11:53-12:25 2nd 8th Grade			

Passage Middle School Behavior Matrix: Please talk with your child about the expectations.

# **MARY PASSAGE MIDDLE SCHOOL**

# Pathways to Success

								AFTER
SCHOOLWIDE EXPECTATIONS	HALLWAY	CLASSROOM	RESTROOM	CAFETERIA	GYM	LIBRARY	BUS & BUS LOT	AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES
Prepare Daily	Make sure you get all of your materials during your locker time.	Have all necessary supplies.	Only use the restroom when absolutely necessary	Have your lunch and/or snack money ready ev- ery day.	Have appropriate attire on to participate.	Must have a pass. Have necessary supplies.	Be on time and board quickly.	Have all of your belongings before you leave your location.
Act Appropriately	Walk on the right and move quickly.	Follow all classroom expectations.	No horseplay. Report any problems to staff member	Use level 1 voice at all times. Stay seated and raise your hand if you need assistance.	No horseplay. Be safety conscious at all times.	Use level 1 voice. No horseplay	Remain seated at all times. Follow bus diver's directions.	All school expectations apply. Report any problems to a staff member
Take Responsibility	Use a calm voice.	Arrive on time Complete all assigned tasks.	Have a pass Return to class in a timely manner	Clean your area before you leave.	Participate to your best ability. Use equipment properly	Return books on time and in its proper location. No food or gum allowed Keep your area clean.	Keep your hands and feet to yourself. Keep up with your belongings	Be in the right location at all times.
Have Respect	Keep your hands to yourself. Use a calm voice.	Listen to the instructions. Use appropriate language and voice level.	Wash your hands Leave the restroom neat and clean. No more than three students in there at a time.	Enter quietly. Following your administrator instructions. Exit the cafeteria at level 0.	Listen attentively Be kind because skill levels are different. Cooperate will others.	Follow instructions. Listen attentively. Use technology appropriately. Only operate your computer unless teacher tells you otherwise.	Use level 1 voice. Use appropriate language. Music must be played through earbuds.	Follow all instructions