



Dear SCJH Parents,

I hope you have had a wonderful summer full of family time and some relaxation. We're looking forward to a great year assisting you in the education, both academically and spiritually, of your Junior High student! What an honor it is to partner with you!

Please take a few minutes to go through this important information; and be sure to refer back to this document as needed.

Meet and Greet

September 8 and 9, the first days of JH, are our "Get-Acquainted"/Orientation Days. We'll have some get-acquainted activities planned, some games, snacks, and we will use those two days to "get the jitters out" and orient everyone to life in the Junior High. Students will be moving through each of their classes as a part of this time. We'll also be talking about our overriding character theme for the year.

As a part of these days students will be resetting passwords and getting acquainted with the necessary technology for them to be successful. Please be sure that your student brings their computer with them each day.

Backpacks

As a staff, we have created some guidelines for the use of backpacks in our Junior High. Let me give you some background...Each student in our JH has his/her own locker. There is adequate room for the books and school supplies in the locker. The only exceptions are sports equipment or band instruments that often will not fit in the locker along with books, backpacks, etc. For that, we have provided shelves near the entry to the building.

Below are expectations for use of backpacks during the school day:

- Students will be expected to leave backpacks in their lockers once they arrive at school. They will need to carry their binder and needed books to each class. There is ample time to go back to their lockers to change books when needed. Bottom line...backpacks will go into lockers upon arrival at school and will stay there until dismissal at the end of the day. The students will learn to manage their time, and plan for which books to carry at what time. It's a good self-management skill for them!
- Student backpacks should be the small "daypack" sort of backpack which easily fits into lockers. **Please do not purchase backpacks with wheels,** as they do not easily fit into lockers and cause problems in the hallways. Hallway shelves are reserved for oversized items as mentioned above.

I do think that most students will greatly appreciate only carrying what they need to each class. Thank you in advance for supporting our guidelines, as we have your child's best interests in mind.

First Things

The first day of each week, promptly at 7:55 a.m., the entire Junior High meets in the hallway or the front porch for "First Things" where we attempt to keep first things first. I, or one of the teachers, will share the spiritual focus for the week, a character concept to consider, or another bit of information that goes along with our theme. ***Please be sure your kids arrive the first day of the week with enough time before 7:55 a.m. to get settled and be ready for "First Things."*** Your attention to this will help us use our time the best way possible. Thank you.

Cell Phones

We all appreciate the convenience of cell phones and sometimes wonder what we did before they became such a part of our lives. I also appreciate the ease of communication cell phones provide. From a school standpoint, they can be both a blessing and a curse.

We want to remind parents and students that cell phones should be set to "silent" during the school day, and only used with permission (from a teacher or principal). We basically operate in the JH as a no cell phone zone; but very rare occasions a cell should only to be used in the following situations:

1. ***In class, under teacher direction, for academic reasons.***
2. ***In case of a serious and urgent need to contact a parent.***

If that urgent need arises, as noted in #2 above, students should first get permission from the teacher to use the phone and step out into the hallway or preferably by Mr. Ness's office.

We are working to protect the educational environment for the sake of your kids. If phones are not being used in class for an academic reason, or the student does not have permission from a teacher to use the cell phone (iPod, etc.) to contact a parent., it is expected that they will be out of sight and set to silent.

Students do not need to use their phones to text friends between classes or during lunch, to check social media, or to have "photo shoots" during lunch or any other time. There are plenty of other important things to concentrate on during the school day. We expect kids to be present and fully engaged in the classroom and what is happening around them.

If you have an urgent need to contact your child during the school day, ***please call the office and have a message delivered.*** Calls/text messages sent directly to student phones during the school day are quite distracting, so please contact the office if you need to get a message to your child. Thanks for your support!

Communication

Please be aware that routine communication with parents from JH staff about events, classroom needs, etc., will be primarily via email. In the vast majority of instances, we won't be sending hard copies of notes, progress reports, or letters home to parents. Thanks for being diligent in checking email for communication from me or from teachers. You can be assured that the JH teachers and I will be prompt in answering your email communication as we want what is best for your child. A normal response time would be within 24 hours unless the communication is sent on a weekend or vacation time. If you need to speak to me or have a question, please send an email to my school

account (nessp@santiam.org). You can give me a call here at school (and leave a message), but email is much better. Please note that serious issues will always receive a personal response.

Junior High could easily be identified as integral transition years for students. As a part of this transition we emphasize student self-advocacy as part of our communication skills. We want students to learn how to build these skills and be all the more prepared for high school.

Study Skills

Please make sure that your kids have what is on the supply list in order to facilitate what will be done in the classrooms this year. Students will use just one binder for all classes, and past work will not be stored in this binder. Teachers will provide classroom specific instructions for the collection and storage of past/graded assignments. Some teachers will have a separate binder for their specific class, but the one large binder is for all classes. This is an intentional choice, as we are focusing on several specific skills to help your kids develop strong organizational/study skills. PLEASE LABEL THE STUDENT'S NAME ON ALL IMPORTANT SUPPLIES.

Supply list link: <https://www.santiamchristian.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/2021-22-JH-Supplies-List.pdf>

We also utilize a common style of note-taking called Cornell Notes in our JH. This note taking style will be consistent throughout all JH classes. Below is a link for more information. We will help your kids learn how to take notes this way, and why it's important, but it would be great if you would review this short video with them prior to the start of school. Please reinforce the importance of strong study skills.

Cornell Notes link: <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=ErSjc1PEGKE>

A variety of other study skills will be focused on as we move through the year. Study Hall time will dedicate some time each day to focus on specific study skills that will aid your student's success.

We will be providing a planner that students will be expected to use. We will be helping them develop the discipline/life skill of keeping track of homework/important dates in their planners and will be checking in with students regularly. Some students prefer to use their phone as a planner. That is perfectly acceptable. We will still be expecting students to use the planner we provide, and they may feel free to transfer info to their digital planner/phone after school hours. Thank you for supporting this plan; it's for their own maturation, self-discipline, and character development.

Keyboarding Skills

Our hope is that students will leave elementary with typing skills at a level of about 20-25 words per minute, with a relatively high level of accuracy. Then, moving on to high school, it would be helpful if students were approaching 30-40 words per minute in order to complete high school tasks with relative ease.

With that in mind, here are some resources for you to use with your kids to help them get to the level they should for JH. We will also direct kids to practice their keyboarding skills when they have extra time and have access to computers.

- Typing Club is a free resource with a placement test that will give you an idea of your typing speed. Go ahead and try it. You might be surprised: <https://www.typingclub.com/>

- Typesy.com is a fee-based typing tutor but comes highly recommended.
<https://www.typesy.com/>

Thanks for pointing your kids to one of these options when they have a few extra minutes. I'm quite sure there are other resources out there, so if you discover something great, let me know and I will pass it on to other parents.

Lunch

At this time, we do not have a JH/HS cook. We do have a nice student store as well as pizza (usually Little Caesar's), Togo's, sometimes some type of food truck on certain days. Options for ordering are sent out each week, so please pay attention. Cold/Sack lunch is always a good option.

Daily Schedule

Classes begin at 8:00 a.m., and the final bell rings at 3:10 p.m. **Students should not arrive on campus prior to 7:45 a.m.** as there is no supervision prior to that time.

Please continue to pray for us as we prepare for the coming year. I'm looking forward to a great year of spiritual growth as we engage with one another in Christlike manner. I know the Lord has good things in store for us as we give ourselves completely to Him.

Many blessings to you and your family.

Peter Ness

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**“The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you;
the Lord turn His face to you and give you peace.”**

Numbers 6: 24-26