

Commonly Asked Questions - Chaparral Middle School

1. How does the block schedule work?

Chaparral utilizes a “rotating” block schedule. Each day, our students will report to either a “A” schedule, a “B” schedule or a “6 period day schedule.” The schedule is in your student’s binder reminder, and is also available online.

- On “A” days students attend periods 1, 3, and 5. The numeric number on the schedule after “A” or “B” represents the first period that your child will attend that morning. For example, on an “A5” day, students begin school in their fifth period classes, but on an A1 day, they go to period one first.
- On “B” days students attend periods 2, 4 and 6. Again, the numeric value attached to the “B” represents the first period that day.
- On “six period days,” students begin in their first period classes and attend all six of their scheduled classes that day.

2. What is a “Core?”

Cores at Chaparral include groups of teachers (Math, Science, Language Arts & Social Studies) in the sixth and seventh grade that share the same students, collaborate around interdisciplinary assignments, and utilize similar instructional strategies in order to best meet the needs of their students. Given the complexities with 8th grade scheduling, cores are not formed in their truest sense.

3. What if my child wants to switch their schedule?

If your child has the desire to switch their schedule, they may submit a request for a schedule change to their counselor. Forms are available at the front office. This must be done within the first two weeks of the semester. Once completed and submitted to the office, requests are followed through with by your child’s counselor. Though your child’s counselor will do all they can to accommodate changes, schedule changes are very complicated and will be completed only when possible. A change is not guaranteed. Please keep in mind, *no schedule changes will be made for students that feel they may “like” another teacher better, or for students wanting to change classes to “be with friends.”*

4. How do I know who my child’s counselor is?

We have three counselors at Chaparral Middle School, Miss Aquino, Mrs. Ebel, and Mr. Tran. Each has their own webpage at chaparralmiddle.org where you will find contact information. Our counselors will follow their students through their three years at Chaparral. For the 16-17 school year, they will be assigned the following students:

- Sixth Grade: Miss Aquino is the counselor for all sixth grade students. caquino@wvusd.k12.ca.us
- Seventh Grade: Mrs. Ebel is the counselor for all seventh grade students. kebel@wvusd.k12.ca.us
- Eighth Grade: Mr. Tran is the counselor for all eighth grade students. htran@wvusd.k12.ca.us

What should parents do when they have questions about the school’s policies?

Most school policies are defined clearly in your student’s binder reminder. These binder reminders are given to students on the first week of classes. Please review the binder reminder with your child before signing the form that accompanies it and sending it back to school. If you do not find the answer to the question you have, please direct your questions as listed below:

For questions about hours, and general information about the school, please contact the office at 909-861-6227. For concerns about a student grade, or classroom progress, behavior, etc – Please contact your child’s teacher directly. Teacher contact information is available at chaparralmiddle.org.

If the teacher is unable to answer your question, and/or you do not receive a response, please contact your child’s counselor. For questions about services for students, and concerns about student well-being, please contact your child’s counselor.

(To determine your child's counselor, please look at the prompt above.)

For questions related to campus safety, climate, or behavioral and discipline policies, please contact Mrs. Alcazar, Assistant Principal. jalcazar@wvusd.k12.ca.us

If you have not received a remedy to your concerns through the above listed channels, please contact the Principal, Mr. Thibodeaux. rthibodeaux@wvusd.k12.ca.us

5. Will my student get a locker?

All students will receive a locker in their PE classes. These lockers are to be used exclusively for PE (clothes, etc.). If lockers are available, all eighth grade students are given lockers at the beginning of the school year. These lockers are issued by their Advocacy teachers. Students may use these lockers to store books, and other general supplies. If your Cougar has a medical condition that requires them to have a locker, please make their counselor aware of this and we will do all we can to accommodate their need.

6. Does my student have to buy PE clothes?

We highly recommend (but do not require) that all students purchase the PE uniform that is offered at registration. The uniform allows us to identify which students are in their PE classes while out and about on campus doing physical activities. Though *we do not require that students purchase the Chaparral PE uniform*, we do require a PE uniform of some kind for each student. For those of you choosing to provide your student an alternate PE uniform, please be informed that any black athletic short, and appropriately colored plain t-shirt (6th = Gold, 7th = Red, 8th = Grey) will suffice as a PE uniform. Students will begin dressing for PE classes the second week of school. Students may also opt to purchase a sportfolio for use in organizing course material; this is not required as students are given the option of using an alternate organizer.

7. Can you explain teacher supply lists for me?

Many parents ask teachers what type of supplies students could benefit from having in class. Thus, teachers produce supply lists. Supply lists are never required of students, and no grade will ever be attached to the purchasing of supplies. In fact, requiring students to purchase classroom supplies is illegal. If you choose to purchase supplies from a teacher list, please recognize that doing so is completely voluntary.

8. What if my child requires resources for completing an assignment (s) or participating in a school-sponsored academic activity?

The California Education Code, as amended by Assembly Code 1575 in 2012 provides that a pupil enrolled in a public school shall not be required to pay a pupil fee for participation in any educational activity. If your child requires resources for completing any assignment or for participation in a school-sponsored activity, please contact the teacher. *No student will be denied access to any resource to complete assignments or participate in activities.*

9. How early should I get my child to school?

The school's office opens each day at 7:00 AM. If dropped off prior to 7:00 AM, students will be completely unsupervised. Staff are hired to supervise children on campus from 7:10 AM until the start of school. Our recommendation is that you plan to have your Cougar here at school, each day, at 7:10 AM.

10. How late should my child stay after school?

We recommend that all kids get picked up by 2:30 PM. Students that are left loitering after school in an unsupervised setting are placed in a situation that is not conducive to making appropriate choices. There is a late bus that arrives at 3:30 PM for students involved in school-sponsored after school activities. The school office closes at 3:30 PM. If students are not picked up by 3:30 PM, they will be unsupervised. We strongly recommend enrolling your child in Teen Scene, the district-based after school supervision program, offered at Chaparral Middle School.

11. I hear traffic is bad! What should I do?

If you drop your child off after 7:15 AM, you can expect to spend fifteen minutes or more waiting for “your turn.” Traffic wait times increase exponentially when parents opt to violate traffic laws and drop their students in alternate sites along the traffic zone. Please be sure to adhere to the traffic guidelines that have been set aside by the Sheriff’s Department specifically for our school. Other possible options for you to consider are taking the bus, carpooling, or having your students walk or ride their bikes. The more students that get to school by using these methods, the better our traffic problem is. Please see the video at the attached link to familiarize yourself with our traffic pattern. Thank you! <http://goo.gl/n78mIw>

12. Why does Chaparral have so many Late Start days?

First, let me start by saying that we are highly committed to the success of our students. That being said, we also believe very strongly that formal articulation between teachers at Chaparral, and also with teachers across the District is the most effective way to better teaching practices. With that in mind, and in the spirit of collaborating with our sister schools, South Pointe Middle School and Diamond Bar High School, we developed our late start schedule for this year. (Each of these schools also have implemented late starts.) We generally communicate Late Start days in four ways. First, it is on the school calendar which is updated each May. Second, it is also located in student binder reminders. Third, we have reminded our community about each late start day on a monthly basis in the Principal’s Newsletter. Finally, email reminders are sent the day before each late start. (Please make sure that the school has your most current email address). Late start days have been very productive for our school and for our instructional practices. We believe strongly that frequent conversation between professionals yields strong rewards. However, we understand that it also presents some hardships for parents who are trying to get their students to school on time each day. The blacktop will be supervised for students who are dropped off early on late start days beginning at 7:10 AM. All students being dropped off early are expected to go to the blacktop area at the rear of the school and to stay there until the start of the school day.

13. How will I know about the events that are going on at Chaparral?

Events are largely available for your review at our school website, chaparralmiddle.org. A detailed list of activities is updated on the site. Also, the Principal’s newsletter will be sent out at the beginning of each month to give an overview of most major events that will take place during the course of that month. The school also currently maintains Facebook and Twitter accounts as well.

14. How does Chaparral place students in their math classes?

At the end of each school year, or at the time a new student enrolls, we give a math assessment to students. Students are placed into the following year’s math classes based on this assessment. The student’s grade in their previous math class is also considered, as is teacher recommendation (when available.) Our intention for placing students into classes by using this format is to make sure that students are learning the appropriate level of math for their continued development. If you have concerns about your student’s math placement, you may contact your student’s counselor with your concerns.

15. Where do I find information about the student Outdoor Education trips offered for students?

The Outdoor Education camps for the 2015-2016 school year are scheduled for the following locations and dates. Information on these trips will be made available by the staff field trip coordinator as the date nears. Students are not required to participate in these camps and are never excluded from participation solely because of the inability to contribute to camp costs.

6th Grade – Arrowhead, May 8-12, Jim Reutzler, faculty contact, jreutzler@wvusd.k12.ca.us

7th Grade – Catalina, May 15-18, Michael Miller, faculty contact, mmiller@wvusd.k12.ca.us

8th Grade – Pali Institute, Running Springs, February 6-8, Maggie Strand, faculty contact, mstrand@wvusd.k12.ca.us

16. How can parents get involved to help at Chaparral?

We have many options for parent involvement. Parents can speak with their Cougar's teacher individually to find out what that teacher may need. Also, we offer several parent groups that give parents an avenue to become involved in their child's experience at Chaparral. ALL parents are happily invited to join Chaparral Community Club, our longest standing parent organization. They meet monthly at the school and solicit membership during registration. This group is an active fundraiser and has approved thousands in donations to the school in the past thirty plus years. Our Chinese American Parent Association, CAPA, is a group that originated around the idea of giving our Chinese speaking parents an avenue to discuss school related items with other Chinese speaking parents. However, the group is open to ALL parents and also solicits members during registration and has been a benefactor in the years that they have been on campus. Our newest Parent Group, Hispanic Organization for Parents and Education, HOPE, was started six years ago as an outlet to Hispanic parents interested in knowing more school programs and becoming involved with the school. HOPE also is open to ALL parents and solicits membership during registration. (Keep in mind, depending on the level of access to students, parent volunteers may have to be cleared through the District.)

17. Why does my child need to show proof of the Tdap vaccination in order to register?

Starting the 2011-12 school year, the State of California made the Tdap vaccination a requirement for all students entering grades 7-12. Proof of the Tdap (Combined Tetanus, Diphtheria and Pertussis Vaccines) will be expected for all incoming 7th and 8th grade students at Chaparral.

18. What happens if my child has no access to technology at home but has been given a Technology based assignment? What are my options?

Chaparral is a technology school and teaching technical skills is an integral part of what your student will do at Chaparral. That being said, all teachers are always prepared to offer a comparable, non-tech option for completion of projects where needed. Keep in mind, all students have access to several technology options at school before, during and after school. And, that with block scheduling, students generally have multiple days to complete homework assignments. If your child is in anyway uncertain about homework requirements, expectations, or options, have them consult with their teacher for resolution.