



First Day of School

Post Essential Information for Students: Post laminated directional signs for hallways and classrooms to make it easy for new students to find their way. Post important pieces of information on colored paper around the school- the bell schedule on yellow, the lunch schedule on blue, homeroom lists on green etc. This makes it easy to direct students to the information they need. Hallway tack strips are a good investment – it keeps the hallway paint in tact and allows for easy posting.

Welcome the Staff: Leave a note and a small gift, such as a piece of candy, in the staff mailboxes for their arrival on the first day. The note can be a preprinted card stock bookmark with a welcome and reminders. (PHD)

Be Visible to Greet Staff and Students: You never get a second chance to make a first impression. Be visible outside the building, greeting staff and students verbally and with a handshake sets a positive tone. Be in the halls throughout the day to help direct students and assist the staff. Consider having student volunteers on hand to help new students with opening their lockers and finding their classes.

Important Announcements: Prepare announcements that need to be made to open the day. Begin with a positive welcome message that inspires the staff and students – do this via a pre-taped video message if possible. Provide necessary directions: The bell schedule for the day, registration/homeroom procedures, explain the lunch schedule and any lunchtime rules/directions. Provide reminders for staff regarding forms that may need to be distributed and collected from the students.

The Lunch Hours: Plan to be in the cafeteria and to have extra support staff on hand to provide students with direction regarding the food lines and behavior expectations during the lunch hours. Giving clear direction and setting high expectations on the first day is an important key to establishing good behavior.

Check the Counseling Office: Go to the counseling office throughout the day to greet new families and students as they are arriving to get schedules. Make sure Counselors are providing transfer students with a “buddy” for the first day. (PHD)

Stop in the Library: Many students will be checking out their textbooks on the first day of school. Stop in the library to make sure things are running smoothly and to help as needed.

Check in on New Staff Members: During passing periods, stop by the classrooms of staff members who are new to the building to offer your support and a friendly face.

Send a Parent Email, Facebook/Twitter or Website Message: At the start or end of the day, send a note to parents with a welcome and any important dates/reminders for the first week of school.

Expect the Unexpected: Inevitably there will be problems...late busses, students who miss the bus, frustrated parents, teachers who are late for work, not enough food during lunch, textbook shortages, etc. It all goes with the territory – stay calm, find solutions and be positive...you run this.