

Sixth Grade Survival Guide

Welcome to Sixth Grade!!

Your child has finally finished elementary school and is headed to middle school. I am sure every member of your family has a thought or feeling about this major mile stone. Probably everything from tears to cheers!

Well, I am hoping this guide will help alleviate some worries, create some short cuts, and solve some dilemmas for you and your child.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Brinlee Study Skills

The School Supply List and Party

This list is actually very important and extremely well thought out by the Cobb sixth grade teachers. We don't have you order anything your child doesn't need. We also have purposely color coded each class as this helps your child remember what they need to bring to each one of their 7 different classes. Please try to match the list as best you can.

This year at Cyclone Camp, in August, we will be having a school supply party. Plan to bring all of your school supplies **along with a Sharpie marker** to Cyclone Camp. We will help you get it all labeled and ready, and loaded in your child's locker for the first day of school. This party will be in the cafeteria toward the end of Cyclone Camp. More information will be given to you in August.

Communication with Teachers

Communication with teachers is a little bit different in middle school. 😊 Some teachers have more **than 150 students**. Therefore, we have created very detailed websites that you and your student should learn to understand together. We have calendars that tell you when test and major projects are due, and we have class resource pages where we can post assignments. It is also important that as a family you check HAC weekly. This will help you and your student keep up with low grades and missing work. At the beginning of the year please visit HAC with your student, toward the middle of the year have your student visit HAC and report back to you. They will need to learn to manage such things on their own. **You will not be able to get on HAC until after the first week of school. We have to give you login information first!**

😊

<http://schools.friscoisd.org/ms/cobb/site/home>

Backpacks

The students are not allowed to carry backpacks or drawstring bags from class to class. Therefore, their backpack needs to fit in their locker all day with all the rest of their things. This is often a big problem especially if it is crammed in and touching the lock mechanism on the inside of the locker. The best backpacks are soft and very easy to roll up so that they can fit either in the top or bottom of the locker.

Locker shelves are very helpful in organizing the locker contents. I have seen lockers with just one shelf or with two. They both work well and give your student more room to organize! Just make sure you buy the right size.

Buy a pencil pouch instead of a pencil box!!! If they drop the box in the hall, it will break open and everything will come flying out. If they drop a pouch in the hall, it will not break open at all. Think... 100 kids milling around the hall and your kiddo on the floor trying to chase rolling pens and pencils. Scary.

PE Clothes

As a mom, I would suggest that you provide your child with at least two sets of PE clothes. That way, they always have a clean set. They will have a PE locker to keep everything organized. It might also be a good idea for them to have a pair of PE shoes that they can keep at school unless they wear athletic shoes everyday anyway. A good place to buy PE clothes is at Frisco Sports. It is in the Strikz parking lot facing Lebanon. They sell shorts and shirts that say Frisco Athletics on them.

The library

Your child will visit the library through their ILA class. They will go as a class on occasion, and they can also go in small groups. However, the library is open before and after school for checking out books in case your child is an avid reader. We have an amazing librarian named Ms. Meeks. She loves kids and books!! You student may want to join library club when they come to Cobb. Lots of reading, activities, hot chocolate and a way to make new friends!

Devices

(Ipad, Ipod, phones, Kindle, Nook) Does my child need one?

The answer is not necessarily. I would not go out and buy one specifically for school use. If a device is needed for a lesson, the teacher will check out devices from the library for projects. Different classes use them for different reasons. ILA will use the dictionary app and then they can read on the device. Science and social studies may let them look up information. Students can definitely survive without a device. Be wary of social media. Instagram, Facebook and Twitter allow much more opportunity for bullying and drama.

Tutorials

Tutorials are from 7:55-8:15 each morning and 3:35-4:05 every afternoon. Each teacher will have a different tutorial schedule depending on when they have meetings and duties of their own. Your children are always welcome to come to tutorials. They should come if they have questions about an assignment, need extra help with a topic they do not understand, or if they just need a quiet place to work. If the specific teacher they need is not there, they can go to any of the sixth grade classrooms for support.

They still need support from home!

As your students enter middle school, please remember many of them have never studied before, and now they will have to. None of them have ever organized and handled assignments, papers, notes, tests and quizzes from **8** different teachers. They are still going to need your support from home for a while. They need a quiet, distraction free place to study that you can monitor. They need you to check Home Access Center (HAC) with them at least once a week and go over their planner with them every night. This will be building the foundation for how they organize and study for the duration of their school career. Let's work together to build a strong foundation!

The Locker

There are several things to note about the lockers at Cobb Middle School.

1. The lockers have a standard combination lock. It is a good idea to buy a lock and let your child practice over the summer (they cost about \$3). The hand movements are the same, and this will alleviate some panic on the first day of school.
2. Your child may have as many as 3 lockers. Their regular locker, PE locker, and band or orchestra locker. All with different combinations. Practice is a good thing!
3. Decorations. It is very common and fun to decorate the inside of the lockers. However, a note of caution, the lockers can jam easily if anything is touching the combination mechanism on the inside. With all of their books, binders, spirals and journals, I would limit the decorations. Lots of students end up just taking things down over time.
4. You also **cannot use tape of any kind**; magnets are your only option for putting things up, so make sure you have the necessary amount of magnets. At the end of the year we have to turn in the names of students who used tape or adhesive items in their lockers to the assistant principals for monitored clean up. Just buy lots of magnets, trust me it is better! 😊
5. Last but not least, bring a pair of scissors with you to cut the locker paper. It is not pre-cut to size and lots of moms are not prepared for this task. Please note the dates for locker decorating in the summer communication. **Decorating does not take place at Cyclone Camp.**

Attendance

In Middle School you are NOT required to call the office if your student will not be attending school OR if they are leaving for an appointment. If your student is ill and out for more than a few days you can access your student's teacher's email via HAC. You do however still have 3 days to contact the attendance clerk to report an absence.