Dear 2016-17 Parents/Guardians & Students:

#### Welcome to Albert W. Merrill Middle School. Merrill is a very special place where our students aspire to greatness, learn through service, and grow educationally.

I truly hope that you and your families have a very safe summer. We are truly excited about you and your child joining us for the 2016-17 school year.

If you are new to our school and the Merrill community, let me take a moment to especially welcome you and your child to our wonderful school. In case we haven't had the pleasure of meeting yet, please allow me to introduce myself. I've been with the Des Moines Public School District for twenty-five years. I am currently in my 13<sup>th</sup> year as principal at Merrill. Prior to Merrill, I served as vice-principal at Des Moines' East High School and as a Dean and teacher at Theodore Roosevelt High School. I have been married to a wonderful woman, Sharon Gaddy, for thirty-five years, and we have one son, Vincent Darnell, who is a 2007 graduate of Roosevelt.

My educational leadership philosophy as it relates to Merrill and our professional learning community is quite simple. I truly believe in providing every child the opportunity to achieve academic success in a safe and orderly learning environment. My main goal as instructional leader is to challenge and equip each child with the essential learning skills necessary to advance to the next level academically, emotionally, and socially. I'm passionately driven to create the best teaching and learning environment for our students so they can reach their maximum learning potential. I will do all that I can to make certain your child receives a rich and meaningful educational experience during their time at Merrill.

I feel strongly however, that education is a team effort involving our parents/ guardians, teachers, support staff, business partner, and our community. Research clearly indicates when parents and/or guardians are involved, students have:

- Higher grades, higher test scores, and improved learning
- Better school attendance
- Increased motivation and better self-esteem
- Lower rates of suspensions and fewer incidents of violence and/or acts of inappropriate behavior

At Merrill, we encourage our families, teachers, support staff, business partner (Wells Fargo Bank), and our community to work together to improve the quality of education for all students. As a result of building this successful partnership, we will undoubtedly see an increase in academic achievement for our school. *Simply put, working together with us at Merrill affords amazing opportunities for ALL KIDS.* 

As we begin the 2016-17 school year, our success will depend on how well we can work together to overcome any challenges along the way and to make a difference in the lives of the students and families we serve. Needless to say, your involvement in this process is crucial.

As principal of Merrill, the one thing you can be assured of is that my office will always be open to you. Please feel free to share with me any questions, concerns, beliefs, or comments you have regarding our school.

Again, I am very excited about the upcoming school year and look forward to working with you and your child.

### Together, We Can Make A Difference!

Sincerely,

(All Herno)

Alex S. Hanna Merrill Middle School Principal



### SCHOOL OFFICE HOURS 7:15 A.M. - 4:00 P.M. Summer: 7:30 A.M - 3:30 P.M.

#### PHONE NUMBERS

Main Office:	242-8448
Attendance:	242-8358
Counselor:	242-8359
SUCCESS:	242-8361
Fax Number:	274-1844

First Day of School! Wednesday, August 24, 2016 Dismissal time—1:00 PM

> Regular Class Hours 7:45am to 2:30pm M T TH F

**EVERY** Wednesday Dismissal time is 1:00 p.m.

Des Moines Public School Website <u>www.dmschools.org</u>

Merrill Middle School Web Site merrill.dmschools.org

#### **ATTENDANCE ANNOUNCEMENT**

If your child is going to be absent, late to school, or leaving early, please contact: Mrs. Joyce Grace Merrill Attendance Clerk at 242-8358 or Email: joyce.grace@dmschools.org Before 8:00 a.m.

If you know in advance that your child will be absent, leaving early, or arriving late, you may send a note or call the day before. You may also send a note or call the day of an appointment. This will assist in clarifying our records each day and eliminate the need for a phone call home. All late arrival/absences must be reported within 24 hours to be considered an "Excused" absence. However not all absences are considered excused according to DMPS Attendance Guidelines. Thank you in advance for your attention to this important matter.

#### **REQUESTING HOMEWORK**

Please contact Mrs. Grace at 242-8358 by 8:00am to request homework to be picked up the same day. Homework may be picked up after 2:45pm. This allows teachers time to get it prepared and to the main office. Thank you.

Please **DO** NOT leave your vehicle unattended in the front turn around. You may park in the north or east lots if you will be coming into the school for any reason. Doing this will help immensely with the congestion that occurs during drop-off & pick-up times. Thank you for your cooperation!



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# Office News! From Merrill Office Manager, Ms. Schumann

### Welcome Future Mustangs!!

The pages that follow contain some important information you may want to know before we dismiss for summer break such as the Parent Meeting on May 3rd, the SUCCESS for Sixth Grade & Summer Camp opportunities along with the registration forms for them, the class supplies list, and the 2016-17 District Calendar! On page 10 of this newsletter is information about online registration through Infinite Campus Parent Portal and what to do if you've forgotten your password.

Please keep in mind that Merrill is a "Green" school and only very important information will come home in paper form or sent by mail. All events/activities are posted on our website in the Calendar of Events, key events/news will be on the homepage "Bulletin Board", and after school activities and athletics will be under the Student tab along with a mound of information for you under the Parent tab. Information and dates for 16-17 activities will be posted on our website beginning July 1, 2016 and as they become available. Very few news items will be sent home on a paper copy. Merrill does have flyers and other paper copies on our "Information Shelves" in the main office. And all events/activities will be communicated verbally to your students in the "Morning Announcements"

Please save Merrill's website to your favorites to keep up-to-date with important information and dates for all activities and events at Merrill at: merrill.dmschools.org.

Please call our attendance clerk, Mrs. Joyce Grace, on her direct line at 515-242-8358 if your student is absent, arriving late, or leaving early for any reason. Please leave a voice message before 7:30 AM or after 3:15 PM.

Merrill's Main Office Hours: Summer: 7:30 A.M. to 3:30 P.M. School Year: 7:15 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. Phone: 515-242-8448 Fax: 515-274-1844

### VISITORS MUST BE "BUZZED IN" IN ORDER TO ACCESS THE BUILDING!

ALL Merrill visitors, including parents/guardians & students must enter the building through the doors at the main entrance (front/south side) and will not be allowed access until "buzzed in" by office personnel after 8 AM. Once in the building, please report to the main office and sign in. The Visitor Sign-in book is located on the front counter. If picking up your student, you may report directly to the attendance office upon arrival.

For the **safety of all our students**, it is of the **utmost importance** that we know who is in the building, why you are here, and where you are located. All visitors will be asked for the purpose of their visit prior to entering the building or when signing in at main office.

Merrill asks that the parents/guardians who pick up their students in the front to please make certain that you are not double-parked so traffic can flow smoothly during drop-off and pick-up times or in a position or area that will block cars from exiting the back visitor/ staff parking lot or driveway to the back parking lot. If you need to come into the building or in the back parking lot. Thank you!

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# Incoming 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Parent Meeting

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# **Merrill Middle School**



# **International Baccalaureate World School**

Tuesday, May 3rd, 2016

### Merrill Gymnasium 6:00-7:00pm

We want to welcome you to Merrill Middle School! Join us in the gym at 6:00pm for a short presentation that will preview your student's middle school experience and provide you with some important information as you plan for your student's transition next fall.

After the presentation staff will be available to answer your questions and refreshments will be available in the Merrill Café. We look forward to seeing you! Call the Merrill Office at 242-8448 if you have any questions.

# 2016-17 Merrill Middle School 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Class Supplies List

For Use in All Classes	Language Arts		
2 Dozen #2 Pencils	6 3-Prong Pocket Folders		
6 Black or Blue Ink Pens	Math		
2 Red Ink Pens	3 <sup>°°</sup> 3-ring Binder		
1 Pink Eraser	1 Basic Calculator		
2 - 4 Glue Sticks	1 Pocket Folder		
1 Box Colored Pencils	1 One Subject Spiral Notebook		
1 Box Crayola Markers	Science		
2 Yellow Highlighters	1 Roll Paper Towels		
1 - 4 Color Pack Dry Erase Markers (to 1st P. teacher)	1" 3-ring binder		
2 Pkgs Loose Leaf Paper (wide or college ruled)	3 Dividers (for 3-ring binder)		
2-4 Spiral Notebooks	Social Studies		
2-4 2-Pocket Folders	1 Pocket Folder		
1 Pack Index Cards (3x5 inch ruled)	Spanish		
Flash Drive (minimum 2GB)	1 Composition Notebook		
Tash Drive (inininuni 200)			
Device Fducation	1" 3-ring Binder		
Physical Education	Art Class		
T-shirt* - navy, gray, black, or white only	1-50 Sheet 9X12 Sketch Pad		
Shorts* - navy, gray, white, or black only	1-Vinyl Eraser		
Sweats* - navy, gray, white, or black only			
Socks & tennis shoes	To the Main Office (for building-wide use!)		
Deodorant & lotion are recommended but not required.	1 Ream White Copy Paper		
	3-4 Boxes of Tissues		
*PTA Merrill Apparel is preferred but not required.	1 Med to Large Bottle Hand Sanitizer (Girls)		
Apparel will be for sale during registration on August	1 Large Anti-bacterial Pop-up Wipes (Boys)		
$10^{th}$ from 7 AM to 7 PM.			
	1 Box of Band-Aids (one box per family)		
Band*/Music/Choi	rus/Orchestra		
Band & Orchestra	Intro to Music/General Music		
2 Standard 2 Pocket Folders	1 Spiral Notebook		
2 ID Tags for Instrument Case**	i Spildi Notebook		
	Channa		
<u>#1 Standard of Excellence</u> -Red Book (Band)	<u>Chorus</u>		
	1 Standard 2 Pocket Folder		
*Note from Mr. Morgan (Band Director)			
Have your horn oiled & serviced with a			
GPC service prior to school starting.			
<b>**Name tags are available at music vendors and</b>			
typically free for the asking.			
Donations for Names 9 (	SUCCESS Program		
Donations for Nurse & S	DUCEOS Frogram		
Tylenol and/or Ibuprofen (Tablet/Chew tabs/Liquid)	Personal Care Products (tampons, pads, wipes)		
Cough Drops	Sweat Pants & T-Shirts (all sizes)		
Antiperspirant/deodorant	Girls Underwear (sizes 4-5)		
Liquid Hand Soap	General School Supplies (as listed above)		
Granola Bars or Other Healthy Snacks	Backpacks		
	A		
Juice Boxes	Gift Cards-Wal-Mart, Target, Hy-Vee, Etc.		
<b>X7 X</b> / <b>4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4</b>			
Your generous donations will help They are greatly apprec			

- All students are encouraged to have a sturdy backpack and small pencil bag to carry their supplies to and from school as well as store them in their lockers. Students are <u>not allowed</u> to carry their backpacks to the classroom. Your student is responsible for having the supplies required and necessary for all classes.\*
- Students are allowed to bring their own technology (IPAD, laptop, netbook, Kindle, etc.) for use only at their teacher's discretion. Merrill is not responsible for loss or damage to such items.



# Are you ready for the 6<sup>th</sup>

6<sup>th</sup> Grade Day Camp Des Moines Public Middle Schools

FREE, One day camp at your new middle school

• Build leadership skills

- Get to know other students and the building
- Learn the secret to opening your locker in record time
- Discover everything you need to know about your new school
- Lunch and Busing provided (from selected elementary schools)

9:00-2:30 ~ Check in from 8:45-9:00

\*Brody program will be 9:00–12:00 due to construction\*

SCHOOL	DATE	SUCCESS CASE MANAGER	PHONE #	Buses will only stop at these locations. Please pick the one that is closest to your home.
BRODY	August 5 9:00-12:00	TIFFANY CAMPBELL tiffany.campbell@dmschools.org	242-8433	Morris, Park Ave, South Union, Wright
CALLANAN	August 1	DAYNA CHANDLER dayna.chandler@dmschools.org	242-8386	Edmunds, Hubbell, Greenwood, King, Perkins
GOODRELL	August 4	AMY HALTER amy.halter@dmschools.org	242-7502	Garton, Phillips, Stowe
HARDING	July 26	CARI LONG cari.long@dmschools.org	242-8354	Cattell, Moulton, Madison, Oak Park
HIATT	July 29	ERIN HEMESATH erin.hemesath@dmschools.org	242-8128	Capitol View, Carver, Garton
НОҮТ	July 28	CARRIE CRIST carrie.crist@dmschools.org	242-8446	Pleasant Hill, Stowe, Willard
MCCOMBS	July 27	MAUREEN KENNEDY maureen.kennedy@dmschools.org	242-8356	Lovejoy, Morris, South Union
MEREDITH	August 2	JENNIFER MURPHY jennifer.murphy@dmschools.org	242-7792	Hillis, King, Monroe, Samuelson, Douglas Woods Apartments
MERRILL	August 3	CARLA TURNER carla.ridgelyturner@dmschools.org	242-8361	Hubbell, Perkins, Windsor, Deer Ridge Apartments
WEEKS	July 25	STACY CORNWELL stacy.cornwell@dmschools.org	242-8449	Jackson, Lovejoy, McKinley, River Woods, South Union

### <u>Pre-Registration is required to attend.</u> <u>Please fill out the attached registration</u> <u>form and return to your 5<sup>th</sup> Grade teacher by May 31<sup>st</sup></u>.

This program will be facilitated by the Des Moines Public Schools SUCCESS Program

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SUCCESS 4 SIX	TH GRADE
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Da	
Registration	
ŀ,	
Student Name	Birthdate
Street Address	Zip
Flementary School student attended	Gender
Middle School student will attend	
Parent/Guardian Name	
Home # Cell #	Work #
I will need transportation to attend this program (circle	
Bus stop that I live closest to:	
**See attached flyer for pick up/drop off sites for each	
in the confirmation letter that you will get	two weeks prior to the program.**
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EMERGENCY INFO	DMATION.
EMERGENCY INFO *All information needs to be included	
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Doctor Phone	
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Dentist Phone #	
Hospital Preference	
Alternate Contacts in Case of Emergency:	
Name Relationship	Phone #
Relationship	Phone #
r Name Relationship	Phone #
Medication (Please list name, dosage & time)	
Health Condition (including allergies)	
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$\overline{\zeta}$ I give full consent to the Des Moines Public Schools to use any photographs, audio, or video	
claim for payment, for any promotional/recognition activities of the program or school	district.
I assume all responsibility for any accidents or injuries that may occur, and release the Des services related to the middle school transition program of all liability. I understand the	at the Des homes rubic senous and other starrare not responsible for any
stolen or lost personal belongings. In case of accident, injury or sudden illness and I c physician/dentist may be contacted in case of medical treatment or as necessary and	annot be reached; I request that necessary medical care be instituted. Our
responsible for all medical expenses. $_7$ I also give my consent for the Des Moines Public School staff and other agencies affiliated w	th the middle school transition program to provide transportation in the course
of their participation in SUCCESS 4 SIXTH GRADE.	
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r Parent/Guardian Signature	Date
	Date
Diase return all registration forms to y	our 5 <sup>th</sup> arade teacher by May 31 <sup>st</sup>
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April 1, 2016

Dear Parents and Guardians:

The Des Moines Public Schools AmeriCorps Program is offering incoming 6<sup>th</sup> grade students a no cost 3-week program from <u>July 25th-August 12th</u>. This program will run Monday through Friday from 9:00-3:00.

The overall goal of the Merrill Summer Program is to increase graduation rates by improving student achievement and engagement. There will be field trips, guest speakers, and various topics of curriculum. Breakfast will also be provided every day of the program for students.

Merrill will be staffed with at least four AmeriCorps service members that have already worked at Merrill or at another school in the district during the academic year. New members will also join the team after being trained to provide service during the summer. These members will also support the SUCCESS 4 SIXTH GRADE transition day on August 3<sup>rd</sup> so there will be no Merrill Summer Program but participants are encouraged to attend the transition day instead.

Please return the permission slip on page 9 of the newsletter by  $\underline{May 31^{st}}$  to the main office at your student's current school. If you have questions or concerns, please contact:

Alexis Townsley, Merrill AmeriCorps Member 515-242-8448 Ext. 5027 | alexis.townsley@dmschools.org

**Eric Whitney**, DMPS AmeriCorps Program Director 515-242-7944 | <u>eric.whitney@dmschools.org</u>

### AmeriCorps Merrill Summer Program

### **Summer Program Permission Slip**

### Please complete and return by May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2016 to your school's office manager

Student Name:		Birthdate:	
Student Address:		Zip:	
Parent/Guardian Name:			
	Work #:		
Student's Future or Current	Middle School:		
Will your child be eating bre	eakfast? (Provided each day)	Yes	No
Will your child need medica	tion dispensed during the scheduled program time?	Yes	No
If you answered yes, please of	explain:		
<b>Emergency Information</b> *All information needs to be	included and will be kept confidential*		
Doctor:		Phone #:	
Dentist:		Phone #:	
Hospital Preference:			
Alternate Contacts in case	of emergency:		
Name:	Relationship:	_ Phone #:	
Name:	Relationship:	_ Phone #:	

By signing below, you are giving permission for your child to attend the *Merrill Summer Program* being offered at your student's middle school. Field trips are included as part of this program. DMPS AmeriCorps members will chaperone the field trips and transportation will be provided by a DMPS school bus. Pictures may be taken over the course of the program by Des Moines Public Schools, Merrill Middle School, and our community partners. I authorize Des Moines Public Schools, Merrill Middle School, and our community partners to use my child's picture for marketing purposes.

Parent/Guardian Signature:	Date:	
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### HEALTH HINTS FROM YOUR SCHOOL NURSE

As your child progresses through middle school, there are a few health related items that will assist in making the school year less stressful for everyone. The health and safety of your child has a great effect on their academic success. Please feel free to contact the school nurse with any health related questions or concerns regarding these matters.

- The Des Moines School District requests that 6<sup>th</sup> graders have a physical prior to the start of school. <u>All grade level athletes must renew athletic physicals every 13</u> <u>months.</u> Physical forms should be completed by the parent and physician and returned to the school nurse. <u>Students are not allowed to participate in athletics unless a completed physical form is on file in the school nurse's office.</u> The form can be obtained from your school nurse or from the Merrill office.
- Please review the emergency information on your enrollment forms and make any necessary corrections. The school staff utilizes this information to contact you in case of an emergency or illness. If this information should change throughout the school year, please notify the office with the updates.
- If your child is going to be absent from school, please notify the school attendance office at 242-8358. Absences will be excused if a physician's written excuse is submitted to the attendance clerk or nurse. This includes excuses for illness and scheduled appointments.
- Physical Education excuses are required to be written physician orders and should be given to the School Nurse.
- The Merrill Health Office follows the medication policy of the Des Moines Public Schools. Physician prescribed medications must be in an original pharmacy container with a pharmacy label listing the student's name, the name of the medicine, the dosage, and the time to be given. Students may also receive up to 5 total doses per year of Tylenol and/or ibuprofen without a physician's order if parents check the consent box on the Health Services-Over the Counter Medications section of the Infinite Campus Online Registration. Cough drops and chapstick are allowed in class unless the individual teacher refuses the privilege if misused. Self administration of inhalers requires certain forms to be completed by your physician. These forms are available from your school nurse. Please contact the nurse if you have individual concerns.
- Please see that your student receives an adequate amount of sleep and a proper breakfast to assist them in their classroom success.

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Last year the Des Moines Public School district began online registration through the Infinite Campus Parent Portal. 2016-17 online registration will begin July 5th, 2016. An email with the link to register for school will be sent to the student's primary parent's/guardian's IC (Infinite Campus) email inbox July 5th. If you registered online last year, you already have an Infinite Campus Parent Portal Account!

DMPS requires that at least one parent/guardian have an active Infinite Campus Parent Portal account. All communication about 16-17 school registration will be through Infinite Campus email. So, if you are new to DMPS, or we do not have an email address on file for you, or you have forgotten your login information, you will need to fill out the form below and return to Merrill's main office by June 1, 2016, so you're all set up by July 5th!

Having an active email address and an Infinite Campus Parent Portal account is important and will be the main form of contact and communication between the district, your child's school, and his or her teachers. You may have not used Infinite Campus at the elementary level very often, but it will be a very important and necessary tool in middle and high school!

<u>Only parents or legal guardians can have access to their student's Infinite Campus account</u>. Only one email address is needed to set up a Parent Portal account and only one password can be assigned per email address. If you wish to have a Parent Portal account set up for more than one parent/guardian in your household, please enter their name and email address on the form below.

Questions? Please contact Merrill Office Manager, Jane Schumann, at 515-242-8448. You may also request IC Parent Portal access or have your password reset via email to: <u>merrill@dmschools.org</u>. Please email all information from the form below and type "IC Access" in the subject line of the email.

Request for Infinite Ca	mpus Parent Login Access
(Please F	Print Neatly)
Student Name:	Grade:
Parent or Guardian Name: Email Address:	
Other Parent or Guardian Name: Email Address:	
Date Requested*:	

If you are having trouble reading this page, you can access a printable version of the calendar from Merrill's website at: <a href="http://merrill.dmschools.org/parents/2016-2017-regular-school-calendar/">http://merrill.dmschools.org/parents/2016-2017-regular-school-calendar/</a>

## DesMoines

2016-2017 REGULAR SCHOOL CALENDAR School Board approved on October 6, 2013

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August 2016

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CALENDAR LEGEND	
STAFF DEVELOPMENT	
HOLIDAYS (No classes; offices closed)	
CONFERENCE Comp Days (No classes)	
Winter/Spring Recess (No classes)	
FIRST/LAST DAY OF SCHOOL	

ADJUSTED DISMISSAL DAYS Wednesdays during school year. 90-minute adjusted dismissal.

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Dates/Events Aug 12	Year 1, Alternate Contract Teachers Report
	(201 day contract)
Aug 13&16 Aug 17&18	First-Year Teacher Training New to District Teacher Training
Aug 18	Year 2, Alternate Contract Teachers Report (197 day contract)
Aug 19, 22, 23	
Aug 24	First Day of School (Adjusted dismissal time)
Sept 5	Labor Day (No school)
Oct 28	Teacher EQ Development – Associates do not report
	All teachers report
Nov 23	No school for students, teachers
	(Fail Conference Comp Day) & Associates
Nov 24-25	Thanksgiving Holiday (No school)
Dec 23-Jan 2	Winter Recess - No classes
Dec 26, 27, 30	Holiday – Offices Closed
Jan 2 Jan 13	Holiday – Offices Closed First Semester Ends
Jan 16	Martin Luther King Day (no school
	For students, teachers or associates)
Jan 17	Start of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester
Mar 10	No school for teachers, associates or Students (Spring Conference Day)
Mar 13-17	Spring Recess
Apr 26	No school for 9 <sup>th</sup> , 10 <sup>th</sup> or 12 <sup>th</sup> graders
	11th grade students attend a.m. only
	For ACT test
May 22	Last day of school for 12 <sup>th</sup> grade
May 29	Memorial Day – no school
May 30	Last day of school for Elem & Middle Schools; students dismissed after
	half day; lunch will be served in Elem
	(In-service half day for Elem/MS
	Teachers and associates)
May 31	Last day of school for High Schools-
	No Adjusted dismissal
June 1	Alternative Contract Teachers last day
May 31,Jun 1,	2Reserved for inclement weather make
	up days