

Parent Handbook



Manhattan Middle School of The Arts and Academics

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School Mascot: The Phoenix
School Colors: Navy and Red

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What is the History of Manhattan Middle School?

Manhattan Middle School of Arts and Academics is a result of the consolidation of two smaller middle schools, Baseline Middle School and Burbank Middle School in 2003. The two schools were combined at the location of Burbank Middle School and incorporated the arts focus program of Baseline Middle School. In order to create a cohesive environment, the students of this new arts and academically focused school were asked to consider a new name and symbol for the school. A poll was taken and the name Manhattan Middle School of Arts and Academics was the result. The Phoenix Bird was chosen as a symbol of a new school rising from the combination of Baseline and Burbank Middle Schools. Our student enrollment is approximately 550 students. We are a neighborhood school with an open enrollment population of about 40% and 60% of the students come from the surrounding neighborhood.

What is the Communication Network at Manhattan Middle School?

The best possible communication with our families is an ongoing goal for administration and teachers at Manhattan Middle School. We want you to be informed and we want you and your student involved in every activity that interests you. The following booklet was created by the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) to answer the question, "Where do I find information at Manhattan?"

Below are ways in which the school regularly communicates with parents and families of students at Manhattan Middle School:

- Weekly emails from the Principal (*email Loli Hudson to be added to the list serve*)
- School website: <https://sites.google.com/a/bvsd.org/manhattan>
- Back to School Night
- 6th Grade Parent Orientation
- 360 Parent Mentors
- Parent Teacher Conferences

What Makes Manhattan Middle School an Arts Focus School?

Arts focus classes are based on DBAE (discipline based arts education) principles. Class lesson plans are based on aesthetics, art history, art critique and performance in visual arts, music, theatre, and dance. Each student has an opportunity to choose a focus in seventh and eighth grades. It is possible to choose a different focus for each year if desired or to not focus on one area of study but take a sampling of different areas.

Manhattan maintains very high academic standards for all its students. The arts are a vehicle for highlighting and supporting academics and the DBAE principles offer a very academic approach to the arts. The ultimate goal is to develop students who are fully prepared for high school and college because they can read, write, understand and use mathematics, analyze, articulate, and create at very high levels.

What will Your Student Learn by Choosing the Visual Arts Focus?

Visual arts students have many exciting opportunities to develop explicit skills, explore the artistic process and nurture creative expression. This program offers drawing, painting, design, printmaking, sculpture, pottery, textiles, and computer graphics. Professional artists work directly with students during workshops throughout the year.

Students share their works of art with the community through frequent school and community exhibitions. Art history and critiques along with museum visits combine to form the most comprehensive visual arts program in BVSD. Our young artists are consistently celebrated and recognized through this distinctive program.

What will Your Student Learn by Choosing the Theatre Arts Focus?

Theatre arts students explore the rigors of theatrical training, including play analysis and character work. They are exposed to various acting techniques, technical theatre basics, play production, film production, reader's theatre, and theatre vocabulary. The historical, cultural and literary elements of theatre are also explored. Guest artists and field trips are utilized to expose students to dance, music, and stage, as well as exposure to a variety of theatre genres. Students share their efforts with the community through frequent performances.

What are the Music and Dance Programs?

In the music focus class, students perform, understand, describe, and create music in both individual and ensemble settings. Students develop their musicianship through performance, composition, analysis, improvisation, and research. Classroom seminars explore aesthetics, history, and ethnomusicology. In addition, students can participate in band or orchestra. Manhattan is the only middle school in BVSD with a marching band. Jazz band is offered as an after school activity.

Manhattan Middle School is the only school in the Boulder Valley District with a professional dance studio. Through dance courses, students will create, choreograph and perform. Students explore the history and culture of dance and choreography while receiving training in such forms as ballet, modern, jazz, hip-hop, salsa, stepping: and folk dancing. Community field trips and professional guest artists broaden students' understanding of creative movement and artistic expression. Students have opportunities to share their work through frequent performances.

What if Your Child is Not Particularly Artistic?

Manhattan offers the arts focus program for students interested in the arts. However, MMS is also a neighborhood school with the same academic curriculum and sports offerings found in all BVSD middle schools. The only difference between MMS and other middle schools is that all our electives are in the arts, world language and technology. We do not offer electives in consumer and family studies (home economics) or industrial arts. Students can choose to participate in the arts focus program or choose to take a variety of electives as one would find in any BVSD middle school.

What is the Gifted and Talented (TAG) LAB Program?

Manhattan Middle School is the TAG LAB middle school in BVSD. Approximately 20% of Manhattan's students are identified as gifted and talented. The needs of TAG students can be met in a variety of ways. When appropriate, TAG students can accelerate in mathematics, as MMS offers courses through Advanced Geometry on site. Students can also enroll in 7th and 8th grade in Advanced Language Arts and have the opportunity to take advantage of advanced curricula in social studies and science. 7th and 8th grade TAG students may choose to enroll in a TAG seminar class in which they can pursue an area of passion. They work independently yet in collaboration with the TAG teacher on a project. Examples of past projects include; writing a novel, genetic research, writing a musical and solar system research. In addition, TAG

students can choose to participate in affective discussion groups that meet before and after school or during lunch which give students the chance to spend informal time with other TAG students. They have discussions facilitated by our *Student Success Liaison* that focus on issues often faced by TAG students such as perfectionism and friendships.

What Makes Manhattan Middle School an ESL site?

The Manhattan English as a Second Language (ESL) program serves the South Boulder area. It provides special instruction and support to students from diverse language backgrounds. Manhattan's proximity to the University of Colorado attracts students from all over the world, giving our school an international flavor unique to Boulder. Our ESL Language Arts program focuses on developing students' English language skills in the areas of speaking, listening, reading and writing. At the intermediate and advanced levels, emphasis is placed on the literacy skills of reading and writing with a focus on reading strategies and grammar.

How does Attendance Work at Manhattan Middle School?

Students are expected to be in attendance every day school is in session. We understand, however, that there are times when students must be away from school. When your child is absent, a parent/guardian must call the school by **10:00 am** to excuse your student. Manhattan Middle School complies with Colorado State attendance laws.

Excused absences include:

1. Temporary illness or injury.
2. Extended absences due to physical, mental or emotional disabilities.
3. Emergency, serious illness or death in the family.
4. Medical and dental appointments which cannot be scheduled outside regular school day.
5. Absence directly related to the primary handicapping condition of an identified disabled student.
6. Religious observances.
7. An absence resulting from participating in a work-study program under the supervision of a public school.
8. When school is closed due to extremely inclement weather. The following are the radio and television stations you may refer to for school closures. School closure information can also be found at the Boulder Valley School District web site: **www.bvsd.org**.

Radio stations

KOA 850 AM
KRCN 1060 AM
ONDA 1150 AM
ALICE 105.9 FM
KBCO 97.3 FM
KGNU 88.5 FM
KOOL 105.1 FM
KOSI 101.1 FM

Television stations

KWGN-TV Channel 2
KCNC-TV Channel 4
KMGH- TV Channel 7
Bldr P.A.-TV Channel 8
KUSA-TV Channel 9
KDVR-TV FOX 31 News
BTV54
BV22

Students may not leave campus during the school day unless picked up by a parent or guardian. If you are going to pick your child up during the school day, please send a note with him/her that can be presented to the main office upon arrival. Your child will be given a pass stating the time in which he/she should leave

class to meet you. Upon the student's return to school s/he must obtain an admit slip from the office. Makeup work arrangements are the responsibility of the student. Students must make arrangements with each of his/her teachers within two days of the return to school to make up his/her work.

Pre-arranged absences should be made by a parent note or phone call to the office as far in advance as possible. Tardiness is considered an unexcused absence and is subject to consequences from time and work missed. If a student is late to school, s/he should report to the office for a pass to go to class.

What is the Daily Schedule at Manhattan?

Manhattan Middle School runs on a modified block schedule.

Day of the Week	Periods	Approximate Meeting Time
Monday, Tuesday and Friday	1-7	50 minutes
Wednesday	2,4,6	90 minutes
Thursday	1,3,5,7	90 minutes

Daily Schedule

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday	8:40 am - 3:44pm
Wednesday	9:55 am - 3:44pm
Extended Day (see below)	7:40 am - 3:44pm

What is Late Start and Why is it Part of our Schedule?

Manhattan Middle School is deeply committed to the professional growth of its faculty and staff. As a result of this commitment, a weekly time has been imbedded in the school's calendar for such purposes. Every Wednesday morning teachers meet in Professional Learning Communities to further their professional development. During the teachers' professional development time on Wednesdays, students are welcome on campus beginning at 8:30 am under the supervision of the YMCA. The YMCA program is offered to families free of charge and sign up forms are available at registration and at the main office.

What is Extended Day?

On Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, period zero is an extra class period before the regular school day. 7th and 8th grade students who have a full arts focus schedule may use the extra period to take a foreign language, if they choose.

What is Tutor Time?

Tutor time is a 30-minute period on **Wednesday afternoons** that is used as a traditional "study hall" period. More importantly, it is a weekly time when students can connect with any of their teachers for extra help and to make up tests or assignments. In addition, we often conduct all-school assemblies during this time.

How are Drop Off and Pick Up of Students Handled at Manhattan?

The safety of the student body at Manhattan is of utmost importance. Therefore, we ask that you carefully follow the drop off procedure. The student drop off area is located in the front of the school. (We encourage students at MMS to take the bus, ride their bike or walk to school.) Please drive slowly and

cautiously. When you pull into the drop off area, pull as far forward as possible and let your child depart from the right side of your vehicle. There is no parking or leaving of your vehicle while in the drop off zone. Parents are welcome to park in the parking spaces within the lot if needed. Please do not double park. Please yield to students crossing the parking lot on foot, bicycle or skateboard.

When are the Scheduled Meals at Manhattan?

To accommodate all the students comfortably at lunchtime, the school has divided the lunch periods into two sections. The cafeteria is open at 8:15 am for breakfast and again at lunchtime. 6th and 7th grade students attend the first lunch period and 7th and 8th grade students attend the second lunch period. Lunch runs in half-hour segments any time between 11:30 am and 1:15 pm. Students can purchase breakfast and or lunch from the Manhattan Middle School cafeteria. More information on monthly menus, prices and reduced lunch can be accessed at <http://bvsd.org/food/Pages/default.aspx>.

How Do Students Purchase Lunch?

There are two ways to pay for purchases made in the cafeteria:

1. Using cash at the time of each purchase
2. Through your child's account. Each child has an account automatically set up through his/her student number. Funds can be deposited into each child's account by cash/check or online through, <http://mypaymentsplus.com/default.aspx>.

Where Can Your Student Eat?

Food in the classroom is permitted on a teacher-by-teacher basis. Unless a teacher has determined otherwise, food may be eaten in the cafeteria or the courtyard only. Manhattan is an *Ecocycle Green Star School* meaning that we ask students to compost and recycle as many items as possible at our waste station in the cafeteria. In addition, all cafeteria dishes and utensils are reusable, thus greatly limiting our trash output.

Use of Microwave/Refrigerator

The students have access to microwaves and hot water, both located in the cafeteria. Students do not have access to a refrigerator at school.

What is the Free and Reduced Lunch Plan?

Children need healthy meals to learn. The Boulder Valley School District offers healthy meals every school day. Your children may qualify for free meals or for reduced price meals. In many cases, the eligibility for these funds and programs is linked to whether or not your child is currently eligible for free or reduced price meals in the Federal School Lunch (and Breakfast) programs. The application process for Free and Reduced meals is now centralized at the Food Service Office. The application form is specific and requires being completed in black ink so it can be scanned. Therefore, the application cannot be made available online. Any interested person can pick up an application at school or in the Food Service Office. For questions and assistance, contact LoLa Campos at 720-561-5942. More information can be found at www.bvsd.org.

What Happens if a Student is Sick or Injured at School?

The health room is available to students who are ill or injured, or have a health concern requiring immediate attention. Students need a pass from a teacher to come to the clinic except in an emergency. It is important that the correct information is on the student's emergency card in case it becomes necessary to contact a parent/guardian.

If a student needs to take medication of any kind, including nonprescription products such as Ibuprofen, the following three items are required per Board policy:

1. A signed copy of the "Parent's request for Giving Medicine at School and Release Agreement", which is available from the doctor or the school;
2. A doctor's written order for the medication to be given;
3. Medication with the pharmacy label including the student's name and designated dosage, or original packaging for over the counter medications.

What do the School Counselors do?

Counselors are available to assist students with both social/emotional and academic needs. Counselors meet with groups of students, conduct classroom and other small group activities, and consult with teachers and parents. Counselors also assist students in learning effective study skills, resolving conflicts with peers, family or teachers, understanding themselves and others, making educational plans, scheduling, and understanding test scores.

What is an Intervention Specialist?

The Intervention Specialist is a counselor from the Mental Health Center of Boulder County and the Health Department with a "home base" at Manhattan Middle School. The interventionist's job is to help students, and sometimes a student's family, deal with some of the problems or concerns they might be having. The intervention specialist can help with difficulties that involve getting school work done, getting along with others, making new friends, relationship problems, family problems, worries and concerns, trouble obeying laws and rules, substance issues, sexuality, anger management, and depression. The intervention specialist may meet with students either informally or at the request of a teacher, school counselor, or the student him/herself. Other times the intervention specialist leads student support groups, provides prevention activities and crisis assessment and, provides consultation to parents and teachers.

What Kinds of Events Happen at Manhattan Middle School?

Extra-curricular Activities

Manhattan offers many opportunities students to be involved in extra-curricular activities. For a current list of clubs and activities, please see the Manhattan website.

Birthdays

Typically, students do not celebrate birthdays during class times. One of the birthday traditions at MMS is for friends to decorate the birthday celebrant's locker with temporary decorations such as streamers and cards.

Dances

School dances are held two times per year. They are planned by the students and held during the last few hours of a school day.

Teacher Appreciation Events

The MMS PTO, with the help of many parent volunteers, expresses their appreciation for all our staff members by supplying dinner during evening conferences, an annual breakfast or tea at the end of the school year, and with other celebratory events throughout the year.

Back To School Night

Parents are invited to Back to School Night early in the school year. Back to School Night is an opportunity for parents to meet their child's teachers and principals, experience a typical day at school, and learn about the curriculum in each of their student's classes.

Arts and Academic Festival

The Arts Festival held in December is a celebration and exhibition of the arts and academics at Manhattan Middle School. Art exhibits, ensembles, performances by dancers, singers, musicians and actors will all be a part of this festival. Academic areas will participate by displaying work and honoring the culmination of learning units.

Plays and Musicals

Manhattan Middle School puts on two major theatrical productions.

What Athletic/Sports Programs are Available to Students?

Every middle school in BVSD offers the same athletics program. An athletic physical, signed athletic code and an insurance waiver are required to participate in intramural or interscholastic sports. A new physical is required every year. The sports offered vary by grade and season and include track & field, volleyball, football, soccer and basketball.

What is the Dress Code at Manhattan?

Students are expected to dress in a manner that:

1. Is not disruptive or distracting to the learning environment.
2. Does not indicate affiliation with or admiration of negative social influences such as gangs, cults, substance abuse, or sexual degradation.

Therefore, the school **will not allow**:

1. Clothing, jewelry, wallet chains, emblems, symbols, signs or other items which may be considered gang, alcohol, cigarettes, drugs, etc.) or inappropriate language;
2. Bare midriff tops or tops with exposed undergarments, skin or any other immodest or revealing clothing.
3. Bare feet. Shoes must be worn at all times.
4. Sunglasses worn in the classroom.

Hats, caps, bandanas and visors may be worn in building common areas. The wearing of hats in the classroom is left to individual teacher discretion. Students who are not dressed appropriately will be asked to change.

Manhattan Middle School Logo Attire

Students may purchase Manhattan School sweatshirts and t-shirts from the student store. Hooded sweatshirts, zip hoodies, and t-shirts are available for sale. The student store is open most days after school. Students can also purchase attire during special events at Manhattan, such as registration and the Winter Social.

Physical Education Uniforms

Students in physical education classes are encouraged to purchase a uniform. The uniform consists of a shirt and shorts with the Manhattan logo. The uniform can be purchased for a minimal fee from your child's physical education teacher. Students are responsible for the care and washing of their uniform. Students must wear their uniform for each physical education class. Students can store their belongings in their P.E.locker.

Halloween

Students are welcome to wear their costumes to school on Halloween. Costumes must adhere to the same criteria of the regular school dress code and may not contain real or toy weapons. Students may not wear masks or any article that covers their face.

What are the Requirements for Students to be on the Honor Roll?

Students must have at least a 3.5 grade point average for the current semester to be on the honor roll. Congratulatory cards are sent to each student on the honor roll and a bulletin board in the school hallway is dedicated to recognizing these students.

What are Homework Expectations?

Homework is a regular expectation at Manhattan Middle School. Although homework may not be assigned in every subject every day, students may assume an average of 45-90 minutes per night. At the middle school level, the role of parents is to provide periodic consultation rather than constant supervision.

When are Report Cards Sent to Parents?

Final semester report cards are mailed to parents after 18 and 36 weeks of school. Quarterly "in progress" grade reports are given to students after nine and 27 weeks. Mid-quarter progress reports may be sent home when students are achieving at a level below their grade level standard. In addition, parents/guardians may track their child's grades through Infinite Campus. To obtain your IC password and instructions on how to use Infinite Campus, contact MMS Registrar, Anita Krol at 720-561-6335.

When are Parent/Teacher Conferences?

Conferences are held in October and February. Conferences are "arena style" meaning that they are held on a first-come-first-served basis in the gym. Parents do not need an appointment to attend conferences and may arrive at any time during the conference times. Conference dates are posted on the Manhattan website. Manhattan is currently looking at an online sign-up system to allow parents to better schedule conferences.

What Academic Support Programs are Available?

Homework Club

Homework club meets every day Monday-Friday after school from 3:45 - 4:45 pm. Staffed by tutors, these professionals help students in all subject areas and provide a space for students to complete their homework before school. Meets in Ms. Studer's room, #128.

Response to Intervention (RtI)

This intervention program helps students who are struggling with academic, behavioral or emotional needs (and are not identified as a Special Education student). A three-tiered program of interventions comprise RtI and is used by the teachers to help support struggling students directly in the classroom. RtI is managed by the RtI Team, which is comprised of administration, teachers and counselors. The team meets weekly to talk about students and gather/analyze data on individual students who may need support.

Homework Assignment Link

Parents can visit the Manhattan website homepage and click on "homework" tab in the middle of the page to access nightly homework assignments for their student's classes.

Parent Portal via Infinite Campus

Parents can access a teacher's gradebook via the *Infinite Campus Parent Portal link* on the BVSD homepage. Parents can check grades, assignments and other information about their student. This is available to all parents with a student in BVSD.

Grade level Team Meetings

Each grade level meets consistently with the counselors and administration to discuss students. Parents are encouraged to contact a counselor to have their student discussed if the parents are having any concerns, questions or simply want to give teachers a "heads-up" about events in the lives of their child.

Individual Teacher Help

Students are encouraged to talk with their teachers and arrange for individual help at a mutually agreeable time. All teachers make themselves available to assist students and students are encouraged to take initiative and consult with their teacher{s} on an as needed basis.

What Social/Emotional Programs are Available?

360 Programs

This is a mentorship program which matches 8th grade students with a group of 6th grade students to assist in the transition to middle school. Team building, academic Support/success strategies, social support and other topics are all covered as a part of this year-long program. The 360 Parent Mentor Program is a program matching 6th grade parents with "seasoned" 7th and 8th grade parents at Manhattan. Community building and helping keep parents connected to MMS is important to this program.

Counseling Services

The Manhattan counseling center is staffed with two counselors who serve to support student's academic, social and emotional needs. Students are encouraged to drop in to the counseling center when they are in need of support in any of these areas. This is also a great place for parents to start when they have concerns or need information disseminated to a grade level team.

Student Support Groups

These small (6-10) groups focus on specific issues, which are common to the students. Past groups have included Grief/Loss, Boys/Girls Social Skills, Divorce and other topics.

TAG Program

Our TAG students are supported in small discussion groups and an advisory class led by our Student Success Liaison. These groups focus on issues specific to the needs of our large TAG population. The focus of the groups is to increase social and emotional well-being. Students are provided the opportunity to work with their cohort of Talented and Gifted peers, share their experiences and learn from each other.

How are Lockers Assigned?

Students are assigned a hall locker and a gym locker; students provide a lock for their gym locker only. Hall lockers are assigned before school starts. Students can pick up locker assignments and lock combinations at registration in August. Gym lockers are assigned only if the student is currently in gym class. Lockers are school property and should be treated as such. The school maintains the right to periodic inspection and may search lockers if there is reason to believe they contain stolen, hazardous, inappropriate items or school property. The school is not responsible for items taken from lockers. Students are responsible for maintaining the condition of their lockers. Any student who damages their own or another student's locker may lose the privilege of using a locker for part or all of the school year.

What are the Students' Responsibilities for the End of the School Year?

All students have the following responsibilities at the end of the school year:

- **Hall Locker** must be emptied. Additional recycle barrels for white paper will be available during the last week of school; students are highly encouraged to recycle what they are not taking home.
- **Gym Locker** must be emptied and the combination lock removed. Any leftover articles of clothing/shoes will be removed and donated to a local charity the day after the last day of school.
- **Text Books and Library Books** -all textbooks must be returned to the appropriate classroom and all library books must be returned to the library. Students should check with their teachers and the librarian ahead of time to make sure there are no missing books.

How can Parents get involved at Manhattan Middle School?

Parent volunteers offer a huge resource and support base for the school while showing their children the importance of participating in the larger community. The school isn't the only one to reap the benefits of your involvement. By offering some of your time to the school, and by interacting with teachers, administrators, and other parents on a regular basis, you can gain a firsthand understanding of your child's daily activities and some insight into the trends and fads of school life that will help you communicate with your child as he or she grows and changes (all without intruding on your child's privacy or personal space). We love to have parents volunteer at Manhattan and we depend on our parent community to enhance programs and life at school.

Volunteer Sign-Up

A volunteer sign up form will be included in your registration packet.

Please be sure to fill out the form and return it to the school. You will be contacted throughout the year as volunteer opportunities arise. All volunteers in BVSD are required to sign a district volunteer agreement form and under go a background check.

Guidelines for in Class Volunteering

We thank you for volunteering in Manhattan classrooms! Teachers truly appreciate having parent volunteers to help in their classes. Classroom volunteers are there to enhance the learning experience of the entire class and to be of help to the classroom teacher. While in classrooms, you may be privy to special information and it is of utmost importance that you use your discretion at all times.

Magic Phoenix/Fundraising

The Magic Phoenix is the MMS annual fundraising event. Our PTO has chosen to replace many small, volunteer labor-intensive fundraising events with one large fund drive in the fall. In the fall, families are issued a teacher "wish-list" and a request for donations of any amount they are able to give. Donors may contribute to a specific teacher or program or give an unrestricted amount to be used as the school sees fit.