Orientation Handbook

Informational booklet for Parents and Students

2020-2021

Sarah Banks Middle School
1760 Charms Rd. Wixom, MI 48393
248/956-2200 (phone)
248/956-2205 (fax)
Twitter: @BanksMiddle
SBMS Online – www.wlcscd.org/banks

“We Are Banks!”
Mission Statement

We Believe:

- We have been entrusted with providing a warm, friendly environment where students feel supported and secure.

- Our learning community will foster positive relationships based on mutual respect where open communication establishes trust and unity.

- Learning is a life-long process.

- We welcome the opportunity for students, staff, and the community to experience empowerment through responsible decision making.

- Self-evaluation is essential to becoming a responsible and disciplined learner.

We Promise:

- We promise to put students first, by promoting respect, honor and dignity throughout our school.

- We promise to value and encourage the opinions and ideas of staff, students, parents and families within our learning community.

- We promise to teach purposeful lessons with real-world applications that students can connect to their life experiences.

- We promise to encourage students to grow academically and socially by modeling responsibility, demonstrating self-discipline, and expecting one’s personal best.
School Information

Attendance Hotline
24-hour recording/message service to report student absences after school hours.

Administration Office
To reach Administrators and for general information.

School Event Hotline
Updated daily with after school events

Counseling Office
To reach Counselors, questions on scheduling, and report cards.

Transportation
For general bussing information and bussing questions.

Secretarial Staff
Mrs. Sheri Collins: Attendance Secretary
Mrs. Sinah Kostik: Counseling Secretary
Mrs. Virginia Donn: Administration Secretary

Counselors
Ms. Suzanne Ickes: suzanneickes@wlcsd.org, 956-2218
Mrs. Wendy Turner: wendytturner@wlcsd.org, 956-2216

Administration
Mrs. Michelle Kalhorn, Principal: michellekalhorn@wlcsd.org, 956-2232
Mr. Kevin Francis, Assistant Principal: kevinfrancis@wlcsd.org, 956-2231

School website: www.wlcsd.org/banks
Twitter: @BanksMiddle
A Blue Ribbon School

Established in 1982, the Michigan Blue Ribbon Exemplary School Program recognizes schools that demonstrate a strong commitment to educational excellence and significant academic improvement over five years. Schools must complete a comprehensive report of key criteria for school effectiveness that serves as a basis for an extensive assessment of their building and programs.

The Michigan Blue Ribbon is an award to schools based on academic achievement, accreditation, school organization and culture, student focus and support, curriculum, quality teaching, and family and community partnerships with the school.

Sarah Banks Middle School received Michigan Blue Ribbon Exemplary School status in May 2004.

AdvancED Accreditation

Accreditation is a voluntary method of quality assurance developed more than 100 years ago designed primarily to distinguish schools adhering to a set of educational standards. The accreditation process is also known in terms of its ability to effectively drive student performance and continuous improvement in education.

The process is a catalyst for transformative excellence, and AdvancED’s accreditation process is designed on a standards-based framework to feed continuous improvement and transform education on a global scale. Education providers of all types around the world use AdvancED Accreditation.

District Accreditation

System leaders engaged in AdvancED System Accreditation will:

- Take stock of themselves in relation to a set of research based standards.
- Establish a vision, assess their current reality, implement an improvement plan, monitor progress, and evaluate results.
- Enhance best thinking with the insights and perspectives of an external review team.

Walled Lake Schools is fully accredited by AdvancED

Source - [http://www.advanc-ed.org](http://www.advanc-ed.org)
Who was Dr. Sarah G. Banks?

☐ Dr. Banks was born in Walled Lake, Michigan in 1839.

☐ In 1873 she was one of the first women to graduate from the University of Michigan Medical School.

☐ Dr. Banks was the second female physician in Detroit.

☐ Dr. Banks traveled out West on her own to provide medical care for her patients.

☐ Dr. Banks was associated with the early leaders of the national women's suffrage movement.

☐ Her family home became an ‘underground station’ of the Underground Railroad for runaway slaves looking for freedom in Canada.

☐ Dr. Banks cared about her community. She established one of the first supervised playgrounds for children in the city of Detroit.

Fun Facts at Sarah Banks Middle School

- Founded: 1998
- Nickname: Bulldogs
- Number of Students: ~750
- Number of Teachers: ~30
- Total number of Staff: ~55
- Size of Building: 144,000 sq. ft.
- Number of computers: ~415
- School Colors: Blue & Orange
- Foosball Tables: 1
- Air Hockey Tables: 2
- Number of Students in 1998: 630
- Elevator: 1
- Mascot: Bruno
- Bruno’s Brother: Bosco
- School Motto: 2019-2020 - “Looking Ahead”
5 Pillars of Success at Sarah Banks

**Pride** and elation for reaching one’s goal, or a sense of accomplishment. The ultimate trait is pride in one’s self.

**Respect** learning. Education is an opportunity you can’t afford to lose. Its power is tremendous.

**Tolerance** is the practice of recognizing and respecting the beliefs of others. Build relationships and seek positive role models.

**Determination** keeps you moving towards your goal. Never give up. To reach success, you must persevere and overcome obstacles.

**Excellence** is your goal. We are what we repeatedly do. ‘Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.’ - Aristotle
Counseling Department

Our middle school guidance program is designed to meet the unique social, personal, and academic needs of the middle school youngster during this crucial period of transition and development. Counselors assist students in the areas of decision-making, peer relationships, educational planning, and investigation of career options. Students may request to see their counselor by signing up via iPad in the Counseling Office. Counselors then send for those students as soon as possible. Counselors also work closely with parents, administrators, and classroom teachers. As a team, they can be a tremendous support for students. Parents wishing to see a counselor may call the Counseling Office and request an appointment to discuss any concerns, questions, or suggestions they might have.

In addition, the counselors maintain relationships with local service agencies and provide referrals when necessary. Every spring counselors help transition students to the next grade, including incoming sixth-graders and their parents.

Contact our Counseling/Guidance at 956-2220

Ms. Ickes - suzanneickes@wlcsd.org

Mrs. Turner - wendyturner@wlcsd.org

SBMS Counseling Department via the link on the Banks’ homepage - www.wlcsd.org/banks
Developmental Characteristics of the Young Adolescent

Psychological Characteristics
- Is often erratic and inconsistent in behavior.
- Is highly sensitive to criticism.
- Is moody, restless, and self-conscious.
- Is optimistic and hopeful.
- Is looking for identity and acceptance from peers.
- Believes he/she is immortal.
- Believes his/her feelings are unique.
- Desires independence.
- Seeks both adult and peer role models.
- Needs frequent success.

Social Characteristics
- Displays rebellious behavior toward parents and authority figures.
- Experiences conflicting loyalties to family and peer groups.
- Is confused and frightened by new social and school settings.
- Confronts moral and ethical questions head-on.

Intellectual Characteristics
- Displays wide range of intellectual development and learning styles.
- Is intensely curious.
- Prefers active over passive learning.
- Is willing to learn things he/she considers to be useful.
- Begins to understand how to think, remember, and learn effectively.
- Is distracted from academic concerns by psychological, social, and physical concerns.
- Is moving from concrete to abstract thinking.

Physical Characteristics
- Shows widely varied levels and rates of growth and maturation.
- Appears restless or listless because of changes in metabolism.
- Has great variation in eating habits.
- Begins risk-taking behaviors.
Athletics

THE TOTAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE STUDENT IS THE FOCUS OF A RESPONSIBLEATHLETIC PROGRAM. SUCCESSFUL PROGRAMS PROVIDE FOR PHYSICAL, MENTAL, SOCIAL, AND EMOTIONAL GROWTH.

Fall Sports (August-October)
- 7th/8th Grade Boys’ Soccer
- 7th Grade Girls’ Volleyball
- 8th Grade Girls’ Volleyball
- 7th/8th Grade Football – Combined with Geisler
- 6th/7th/8th Grade Cross Country*

Winter I Sports (November-January)
- 7th Grade Boys’ Basketball
- 8th Grade Boys’ Basketball
- 7th/8th Grade Swimming

Winter II Sports (January-March)
- 6th/7th/8th Grade Wrestling*
- 7th Grade Girls’ Basketball
- 8th Grade Girls’ Basketball

Spring Sports (April-June)
- 6th/7th/8th Grade Track and Field*
- 7th/8th Grade Girls’ Soccer

Student-Athlete Eligibility Requirements
- Academics: must have a weekly GPA of 2.0/above and cannot be failing more than 2 classes.

Sport Physicals
All students participating in athletics during the school year MUST have a Sports Physical on record at the school prior to the beginning of each session. Sports Physical Forms are available in the main office, or on the school website. MHSAA (the state athletic association) requires that all physicals must be dated after April 15.
School Information

Throughout the school year, we may update policies and procedures as needed. Look for updated information distributed via The Banks PEN, Family Access, and the Banks school website.

ATTENDANCE
Students who attend school regularly usually do well academically. If a student is absent, a parent should call in absences to the 24-hour Attendance Hot Line before 9:00 a.m. If parents are unable to call, please bring a note explaining absences when returning to school. Notes go to the Attendance Office so our records will indicate an excused absence. If we do not receive a note or a phone call from parents, an absence will be unexcused. Excessive absences may result in disciplinary action.

- **EXCUSED ABSENCES** are given for personal illness, illness in the home that necessitates the student's help, death in the family, and medical appointments that must take place during the day. Excused absences allow students to make up and receive credit for work within a reasonable length of time.
- **ADVANCED EXCUSES** If you know in advance that a student will be absent, notify the Attendance Office and obtain assignments from teachers. Please allow two school days when requesting homework assignments. Students are responsible for making up missed work.
- **ABSENCES DUE TO FIELD TRIPS OR ATHLETIC CONTEST(S)** When students know they will be involved in an event, arrangements should be made with the teachers concerning assignments and work that will be missed.
- **UNEXCUSED ABSENCES** are given for failure to contact the school by phone on the day of an absence or failure to bring a note from home upon returning to school.

Please note that families may receive attendance letters from the school after multiple absences, whether excused or unexcused. If there is a pattern or multiple absences, we will request documentation from a physician.

BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE (BYOD)
Students in all grades will be allowed to bring any laptop that meets minimum requirements or any brand Chromebook. More information is available on school website.

CELL PHONES
Students are NOT permitted to use their cell phones during school hours. The only exception to this is when a classroom teacher specifically requests that students bring their phone for an educational activity. Phones may be confiscated if they are used outside of the exception to classroom use invited by a teacher.

CLINIC
The clinic is located in the Attendance Office. A student who feels ill should report to class and obtain a pass to the Clinic. If a youngster becomes ill to the extent that it is necessary for him/her to be excused from school, every effort will be made to notify a parent or guardian.

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES/CODE OF CONDUCT
We believe in the development of each student's potential for learning in a positive and orderly school environment. To help each of our students reach that potential, it is necessary for our school to be free of disruptions that interfere with teaching and
learning activities. Students, parents, and staff are asked to assume a responsible role in promoting behavior that encourages learning and develops individual potential. Just as disciplinary procedures are necessary in order to protect the rights of each member of the school community, effective student discipline can only be achieved if there is cooperation and shared commitment among students, parents, and staff. The district’s Student Conduct Code is an official declaration of policy of the Walled Lake Board of Education and provides the guidelines for our progressive discipline procedures. Parents and students should review and be aware of all provisions.

DISTRICT SOURCES OF INFORMATION
Learning is a school district newsletter published and mailed to all homes in the district. This publication provides a schedule of all card marking periods, teacher conference dates, half-days, and vacation days. The WLCS website at www.wlcasd.org is also a useful resource for district news and updates.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION FORM
It is necessary for each parent/guardian to provide the school with information how a parent/guardian may be reached in an emergency. A medical/emergency form must be updated online via Skyward Family Access (using parent ID only). Parents are urged to notify the office of any change in this information during the year.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS
During the school year, it may become necessary to close schools due to freezing temperatures, snow, ice, or equipment failures. All official emergency school closings will be available on the WLCSD website and will be sent via our skylert messaging system. Please refrain from calling the Walled Lake Consolidated Schools Educational Services Center and/or the Transportation Department. You may also consult local media stations for a complete list of school closings.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS (EL)
English as a Second Language is a modified English program designed to provide additional support for our bilingual students. Tutorial assistance is also provided as part of the program.

EVENING PROGRAMS
Throughout the school year many programs are scheduled for parents during the evening. These may include athletics, band/orchestra concert, plays, and vocal performances.

FIRE AND ALERT/LOCKDOWN DRILLS
Fire, alert, and lockdown drills are conducted throughout the school year in accordance with the Michigan School Code. All procedures are discussed with students and directions are posted in each occupied room of the building for student reference.

HOMEWORK STUDY HABITS
During middle school years, students will have work to do outside of class. If time is used wisely and good habits are practiced, students will still have time to relax
and have fun! Here are some helpful study hints:

- Make the best use of class time by listening and working.
- Be neat and accurate in your work.
- Review often
- Stay organized
- Utilize a planner daily

Students can expect 30—90 minutes of homework per night, depending on unit of study, benchmark assessment preparation, and special projects. Please contact your child’s teacher to discuss any issues related to workload and homework.

**IMMUNIZATIONS**

Students must have a complete immunization record or parent waiver on file. Please be sure this information is up-to-date before school starts. Questions regarding immunization may be directed to the Public Health Nurse. *Students not up-to-date on immunizations or having an immunization waiver will be excluded from school, by State Law, in October.*

**LEAVING THE BUILDING OR GROUNDS**

Students are NOT to leave the building or school grounds once they arrive unless they have been signed out in the Attendance Office. Students found off the school grounds may face disciplinary action.

**LOCKERS**

Each student will be assigned an individual locker with a built-in combination lock. Keeping your locker combination confidential will help maintain locker security. Lockers must be kept clean. Students must provide their own combination lock for their gym locker. Lockers are approximately 8” wide x 70” tall x 11” deep, with one shelf and coat hooks.

**LOST AND FOUND**

Lost and found articles will be displayed in the Cafeteria, with small items i.e. jewelry, money... being held in the attendance office.

**LUNCH PROGRAM**

All students are required to eat their lunch at school in the cafeteria, unless other arrangements are made by teachers, staff, or administrators. Three lunch periods of thirty minutes each will be provided. Each grade level will eat separately. No food items are to be taken outside of the cafeteria. Only bottled water may be consumed in halls and classrooms. Students may bring a lunch from home or purchase a lunch in the cafeteria. A variety of foods are available for purchase, including salad items. Milk, lemonade, cookies, chips, fruit, and other snack foods are also available. Lunches may be prepaid. As a participant in the Federal Lunch Program, WLCSD students may be eligible for free or reduced lunch prices. Information and applications are available in the main office. Only applications for the current year are valid. Please contact our Kitchen Manager, Ms. Frost at 956-2235 with lunch related questions.

**MEDIA CENTER**

The Media Center is filled with books, magazines, and computers. Students are guided and encouraged to use all types of informational sources. Students may obtain books from the Media Center by presenting their student identification card and checking out materials with the Media Center staff. The loan period is for two weeks. Students are held responsible for lost or overdue books.
**MEDICATION**
All medication taken by a student at school must be kept in the Attendance Office. The prescription as well as non-prescription medication must be accompanied by a doctor’s written authorization with the same dosage and contents as on the medication container. Please pick-up authorization forms in the Attendance Office or the Main Office. Medication will be dispensed under adult supervision. Medication must be brought to school and picked up from school by the parent/guardian or an adult designee. Students are not allowed to carry the medication to or from school. The school will verify the amount of substances brought to school in the presence of the parent/guardian.

**OPTIONS ROOM**
An in-school Options/Responsibility Room provides a much-needed step in our progressive discipline procedures. Students will go through the Options/Planning Room process when they are unable to solve behavioral issues within the classroom environment. The student, along with a trained staff member, would develop plans for improving behavior, or working through the behavior, that caused the student’s removal from the classroom. It is important to note that bus violations, serious Level II, and Level III infractions will NOT be handled through the Options/Planning Room.

**ORIENTATION FOR INCOMING SIXTH-GRADERS**
A thorough orientation is provided for our incoming sixth-grade students. Middle school counselors visit the feeder elementary schools in early spring to meet students and review our sixth-grade curriculum. An evening orientation program is also held to provide incoming parents with a curriculum overview. In the spring, all incoming sixth grade students will visit Sarah Banks Middle School and participate in tours, hear a presentation, and eat lunch. A Curriculum Night will be held early in the school year to provide an opportunity for parents to follow their youngster's schedule and meet their youngster's teachers. This variety of opportunities and activities is designed to make our new students and parents familiar and comfortable with their new middle school.

**ORIENTATION FOR OUTGOING EIGHTH-GRADERS**
A Parent Informational Night for eighth-grade families is planned by each receiving high school - Walled Lake Western, Central, or Northern. High school counselors visit Banks in the spring to meet students and assist in their course selections for high school.

**PARENT VISITATIONS**
Parents are welcome to visit our middle schools. As in all WL Schools, all exterior doors remain locked during the school day; all entrance is controlled through our Main Entrance only.

**PARENT, TEACHER & STUDENT ASSOCIATION (PTSA)**
The PTSA is an association of parents, teachers, and students who join together to provide the best quality education, not only in the classroom, but also through various enrichment programs and services. Fundraiser monies have been used to provide assemblies, guest speakers, classroom support, and other general building needs. Annual membership dues are set each fall.
Our PTSA encourages parents to remain involved in their youngster's activities throughout the middle school years. Parents are encouraged to become part of this dynamic and growing organization and to attend our meetings. PTSA membership provides an opportunity to have a voice at local, state, and national levels regarding issues of welfare, safety, and educational opportunities for children.

PARENTS TRANSPORTING STUDENTS
In order to provide a smooth flow of bus traffic and eliminate dangerous situations, parents must drop their students off at the parent-drop off loop on the west side of the school. Parents may drop their students off beginning at 7:30 a.m. (school doors remain locked until this time). Please note that the drop off loop is very busy between 7:50-8:00 each day.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION INFORMATION
- Tennis shoes (other than school shoes) must be provided.
- T-shirts will be available for purchase from the Physical Education Department. Students are encouraged to purchase this uniform. For health reasons, the clothes for gym are to be used for gym only.
- Students must provide and utilize a lock.
- Students should take their uniforms home to be laundered each Friday.

PROGRESS REPORTS/REPORT CARDS
Progress reports, which indicate the student's progress up to the date of their preparation, are posted to Skyward during the fifth week of each quarter. Report cards are posted to Skyward on a quarterly basis. To keep abreast of your child’s school progress, remember to utilize Skyward Family Access

SCHOOL PICTURES
School pictures are taken at Banks Blastoff with a re-take follow up for students who were absent or dissatisfied with their original picture, typically in October or November.

SCHOOL WEBSITE
www.wlcsd.org/banks for school news, events, and teacher sites.

SCHOOL YEARBOOK
Students may order/pre-pay for yearbooks during the year. Information will be sent home and posted on the school website.

SELLING OF GOODS
Students are not permitted to sell anything in school.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES
Special Education Services are available for those students who are evaluated by appropriate professionals and identified according to Special Education guidelines. Co-Teaching, Learning Resource Room, and Teacher Consultant services are examples of the services provided based on the individual student's educational plan.
STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES
In order to receive the maximum benefits of the educational experience in Walled Lake Consolidated Schools, students are expected to:

- Accept responsibility for their actions.
- Make a sincere effort to do their best.
- Be well prepared for class.
- Show consideration for the rights, welfare, and property of others.
- Understand and comply with the rules and regulations established by the school.
- Behave in a manner that will reflect credit on self, parents, teachers, and school.
- Respect the authority of teachers and members of our school staff.
- Learn to settle differences with other students without hurting anyone.
- Physically or emotionally.
- Avoid the use of abusive and vulgar language.

STUDENT PLANNERS
Each 6th grade student will be given a student planner free of charge at Banks Blastoff. Students are expected to carry their planner throughout the day and track their daily assignments in their planner. The planner will also be used as the student’s hall pass. Students will be responsible to replace lost planners at their own expense.

STUDENT VISITATION POLICY
Friends or relatives from other schools may NOT visit during the school day. In addition, students who are friends or relatives from other schools may NOT attend after-school student activities.

TARDINESS TO CLASS
Students should develop habits of punctuality and promptness to assure being in the classroom on time. Any student who is delayed by an official conference with his last teacher should get a pass to class from that teacher. All students who are tardy to school should go directly to the Attendance Office, sign in, and obtain a pass to get into class. Repeated tardiness may require disciplinary action.

TELEPHONE SERVICE
Students needing to contact home should visit the Attendance Office and use the school phone. Students are prohibited to use their cell phone during school hours for making personal calls.

TEXTBOOKS
Students will be issued textbooks @ Banks Blastoff. No deposit is required; however, if a book is lost or damaged, the student will be expected to pay for it. Please encourage your youngsters to take good care of their textbooks to eliminate the need for a book fine.

TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT
Walled Lake Schools does provide bus transportation for our students and it is imperative that students conduct themselves in the best possible manner. Any conduct that distracts the driver's attention from the road threatens the safety of everyone on the bus. The driver is responsible for the bus and must have the cooperation of all students. When necessary, the driver may initiate disciplinary action by completing the appropriate form. If a bus suspension is necessary, it will
be the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide transportation. Please review the Transportation Code of Conduct. Students are not allowed to ride to or from school on any bus other than their own scheduled bus. A bus pass may be issued in an emergency or in exceptional cases for childcare concerns, but only if both sets of parents sign notes authorizing the change of busses. This should be requested through the Transportation Office. Bus routes and times are established by the Transportation Office. Please call the Transportation Office at 956-3090 if you have concerns about bus transportation. For information on late busses (more than 15 minutes) call the Hot Line at 956-5199.

District-Wide Dress Code

The purpose of the student dress code is to promote learning in the classroom by promoting student safety and ensuring that students, staff members, and members of the educational community will not be distracted, harassed, or intimidated, by student dress. Students are expected to dress appropriately at all times. Inappropriate dress would consist of, but not be restricted to:

- Items that promote drugs, alcohol, or tobacco;
- Items with profane or sexually suggestive writing/pictures/images;
- Items that exhibit involvement in gangs or other organization deemed to be in conflict with school policies and practices;
- Items that conflict with district policy, or state law;
- Non-prescription sunglasses within classrooms;
- Going without shoes;
- Muscle shirts, tank tops, tube tops, mesh shirts, mini skirts, spandex clothing, clothing with bare midriffs, revealing or suggestive clothing;
- Beach clothing;
- Chains, handcuffs, and other metal paraphernalia.
- Yoga-style pants – should be accompanied by a longer shirt
The Mission of the Parent Teacher Association

To support and speak on behalf of children and youth in the schools, in the community, and before governmental bodies and other organizations that make decisions affecting children, To assist parents in developing the skills they need to raise and protect their children, To encourage parent and public involvement in the public schools of this nation.

The Purposes of the Parent Teacher Association

☐ To promote the welfare of the children and youth in home, school, community, and place of worship.

☐ To raise the standards of home life.

☐ To secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth.

☐ To bring into closer relation the home and the school, that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the education of children and youth.

☐ To develop between educators and the general public such united efforts as will secure for all children and youth the highest advantages in physical, mental, social, and spiritual education.

Meeting times/dates are posted on the website in September.
School to Home Communication

School Wide Communication
Curriculum Night
Fall and Spring Conferences
Banks Blastoff – Date is TBD
Family/Student Access
Counseling Website
Hard Copy Letters
Twitter: @BanksMiddle
Email News via Skyward

Daily Communication
Student Planners
Morning Announcements
Classroom Teacher emails
Classroom Teacher posts to Skyward

Regular Updates
School website
Family/Student Access
Email updates via Skyward

Communication Tips
‘Stay informed’

Keep the lines of communication open between you and your child. Ask open-ended questions, which require more than a yes or no answer. For example, you might ask, "What did you do that was interesting today?"

Get to know your child’s administrators, counselor, and teachers.

Participate in school activities, chaperone field trips, attend PTSA meetings, or join a committee.

Maintain copies of the school calendar, newsletters, school notes, class handouts, etc.

Check the school website often as it will contain important school news and information.

Check the website of your child’s teachers on a weekly basis.

Ensure your email address is updated in Skyward

Utilize Family Access on a regular basis