

Happy New Year! We at Milford Middle School are looking forward to the possibilities and challenges that the New Year may bring. We hope that all families had a restful and peaceful winter recess.

As students move through the middle school, one of our goals is to provide them with more and more opportunities to acquire independence and responsibility. This will assist them to be prepared for the high school and beyond. The school and your child's teachers provide many opportunities to do just that. Students are required to write down their assignments daily in their Agenda books and they also have access to their team and teachers webpages to check on their assignments.

PowerSchool, our Student Management and Grading System, has provided students with even greater opportunity to be self-monitoring of their progress throughout the school year. All students, as well as all parents, have logins and passwords to PowerSchool. Some teams require that students check PowerSchool every week or every couple of weeks to help them see their progress in class.

PowerSchool is another link in this chain providing another level of communication between home and school. However even with all of the positives that PowerSchool has to offer, it can also have a negative effect if students begin to check it too often and begin to put undue pressure on themselves. Home and school should work together to help students reach their goals and to develop the responsibility necessary to help them be successful. Weekly check-ins are great, daily check-ins are not. Grades are usually updated once a week for assignments and two weeks for tests/projects. Please speak with your child if you see them becoming obsessive with PowerSchool. We want students to take ownership of their education in a healthy way. Like all good things, PowerSchool is best in moderation.

We have begun to see a return to our normal New England winter with temperatures falling into the single digits in the morning. We allow students to enter the building if the temperature falls below 20 degrees Fahrenheit (we do take into account wind chill). We base our decision on the Middle School's weather station located on top of the building. Parents have access to the same weather information on the middle school's website and at [www.wunderground.com](http://www.wunderground.com)

Another reminder that as the weather continues to get colder, students should be reminded to wear warm clothes to school. Please make sure that your child is dressed appropriately for the cold weather. If there is a problem with appropriate winter clothing due to a hardship or other issues, please call the school and we will try to assist in procuring appropriate winter dress. All inquiries will be held confidential.

It is winter and with winter comes snow and the possibility of snow days, delayed openings and early dismissals. It is important that the main office has your most recent emergency contact information and that if it changes the information is updated quickly. The School district sends out "No-School" and "Snow day" announcements through Global Connect, an automated phone messaging service. The District receives the parent contact phone numbers through each school's current parent data. It is equally important to have your emergency contact information up to date in case we cannot contact a parent or guardian directly. Please be sure to speak with your children about what to do in case of an early dismissal, while rare, they have taken place in the past.

Best Wishes and Happy New Year!