

**LAWTON C. JOHNSON  
SUMMIT MIDDLE  
SCHOOL**

**GUIDANCE  
AND  
COUNSELING  
PROGRAM**

**2020 - 2021**

***Parent Involvement***

A student's middle school years are a time when close contact between home and school is vitally important and counselors serve as a liaison to facilitate communication. Parents are encouraged to keep counselors informed of important issues at home that might affect their child's performance. Often the counselor can help a student cope with stressors that may negatively impact their performance and success in middle school. In addition, the counselor can share important information with teachers in a way that respects family privacy and, at the same time, enables teachers to provide a supportive environment for the student.



***Additional Guidance Services***

- Present 6<sup>th</sup> grade Parent Orientation
- Offer orientation groups for 6<sup>th</sup> graders and all students new to the school
- Prepare student schedules
- Facilitate Parent/Team conferences, when necessary
- Monitor student academic progress
- Collaborate with school administrators regarding student issues
- Provide information, support and serve as a resource for teachers
- Provide classroom guidance experiences
- Interface with community groups and agencies to help better serve our students
- Develop and coordinate grade level Advisory lessons and activities
- Introduce career explorations in 8<sup>th</sup> grade
- Provide transition counseling and programs for students

If you need additional information, please call your child's counselor at 908-273-1190.

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Student Assistance Counselor  
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## **Guidance and Counseling for Middle School Students...**

Middle School counselors are experienced in working with early adolescents as they deal with the important decision of their preteen and early teen years. Counselors assist these students to achieve a happy and successful school year. Common topics for guidance and counseling include:

- helping students make decisions about friends, relationships or other concerns;
- helping students develop positive self-esteem;
- helping students cope with the many challenges and personal problems they face on a day-to-day basis;
- helping students choose courses and levels to enhance their educational progress;
- motivating students by counseling and providing tips on study skills and organization;
- exploring career options.

Counseling is a process which can help all students because it provides them with ...

- a chance to explore feelings about their concerns;
- a trusting, confidential environment to discuss problems;
- a time to think out loud;
- the opportunity to explore new ideas which might help them cope.

When students reach the middle school years, they are often in the process of developing their own independent identity. This usually causes them to stop talking openly with their parents; they may even become rude and obnoxious to those who love them the most. As counselors, we have the opportunity of working with these middle school students when they are in their more mature selves. Hence, we are in a position to help them explore appropriate choices for the decisions they must make. While we provide students with a confidential setting, we do consider the importance of keeping parents up-to-date on all important issues—we find a way to maintain the student's trust while we work with parents.

**Group Counseling:** Each year, counselors address selected concerns initiated by students participating in counseling groups. Areas in which group counseling has been provided include:

- building self-esteem;
- underachievement;
- children in families affected by separation/divorce;
- students at-risk of serious school problems or failure;
- assertiveness;
- students in homes affected by addiction/alcoholism.

**Middle school students and their parents are invited to contact their counselor about...**

### **Academic Concerns:**

- failing courses;
- underachieving;
- behavioral problems in classes;
- difficulties with teachers;
- test-taking problems;
- placement in ability grouping.

### **Family Issues:**

- divorce/separation in the family;
- death/illness in the family;
- stress related to a family crisis;
- discipline in the home;
- family support for academic success.

### **Personal Problems:**

- anything that creates stress;
- concerns about peers or peer groups;
- questions about alcohol, drugs, sex;
- feelings of depression/agitation.

Whatever the case, the counselor will work with the student and their family to help them sort out what is going on, how they feel about it, and what they might do to make things better.