
BACK TO SCHOOL

GRADES 7-8

PARENTING
CLASSES

Communicating with Teachers and Administration

Approaching Teachers and Administration

- Partner with your teacher to lead and love your child.
- Remember that you represent Jesus.
- If you're emotional, wait before writing or speaking.
- Be respectful and listen — teachers are people, too.
- Start with something positive before bringing your concerns.
- Ask clarifying questions about resources used in class.
- Collaborate with the teacher — you're a team.
- Summarize and clarify next steps.
- Focus on a solution.

Participating in Local Education

- School Board meetings
- Follow Riverside Unified School District Facebook page.

7th and 8th Grade Development

How does your child learn?

- Have a greater ability for complex thought
- Are better able to express feelings with words
- Have developed a stronger sense of right and wrong
- Learn more through their own experience
- Justice and equality are important issues.
- Have a desire to explore the world beyond their own community

Emotional Development

- Experience a wider range of changing moods
- Might come across short-tempered
- Feel a more intense sadness at times, which is different from depression
- Feel stress from more challenging school work
- Seek privacy to work out personal thoughts and emotions

Relational Development

- Show more interest in peer group influences
- Express less affection toward parents
- Become interested in activities involving individuals of the opposite sex
- Seek acceptance and trust from others
- Strive for independence, and also want and need adult approval

Identity Development

- Show more concern about body image, looks, and clothes
- Focus on themselves
- Shift between high expectations of self and lack of confidence in self
- Question authority and family values to think independently
- Compare themselves to others

Parenting Tips

Following are some things you, as a parent, can do to help your child during this time:

- Be honest and direct with your teen when talking about sensitive subjects, such as drugs, drinking, smoking, and sex.
- Meet and get to know your teen's friends.
- Show an interest in your teen's school life.
- Guide your teen to make healthy choices by encouraging them to own their decisions.
- Respect your teen's opinions.
- Take into account your teen's thoughts and feelings, so that they know you are listening.
- Be clear and consistent about goals and expectations, and allow your teen input on how to reach those goals.
- Allow your teen to have freedom with boundaries.

Faber, Adele, & Mazlish, Elaine. *How to Talk So Teens Will Listen & Listen So Teens Will Talk*. William Morrow Paperbacks, 2016.

Tripp, Paul David. *Parenting: 14 Gospel Principles that Can Radically Change Your Family*. Crossway, 2016.

Curriculum

Middle School Curriculum

What questions should parents ask?

1. What types of outside reading will be covered this year?
2. How does this help you teach the CA Standards?
3. What can we do to help our children be ready for middle school and beyond?
4. How can we challenge our child to do his or her best?
5. How can we support you to help our child?

English Language Arts Standards

- Outside novels may be used by teachers.
- Themes of Justice, Equity, Racism, and Change are explored throughout the school year.
- Teachers have discretion to present and augment materials as they find appropriate and may stress different features of the materials depending on their point of view.

History Standards

Grade 7

- Non-Christian religions explored
- Framework encourages case-studies and deeper exploration of the exchange of ideas, goods and technologies
- Medieval to Early Modern Times
 - Roman Empire
 - Islam
 - China
 - India
 - Sub-Saharan civilizations of Ghana and Mali in Medieval Africa
 - Japan
 - Europe
 - Meso-American and Andean civilizations
 - Renaissance
 - Reformation
 - Scientific Revolution

Grade 8

- Focuses on founding of United States
- Themes of freedom, equality, and liberty explored
- Essential questions: (1) What did freedom mean at the nation's founding and what does it mean today? (2) Who is considered an "American?"
- Colonial America to Reconstruction:
 - American Revolution
 - The Constitution
 - The New Nation
 - The West
 - The North
 - The South
 - The Civil War and Reconstruction
 - Industrialization

Next Generation Science Standards

Developing the understanding that science is an interconnected discipline

Grade 7

- History of planet Earth is a core idea – Tectonic processes – System interactions
- Human impact on planet is a major concept (i.e. Climate Change)

Grade 8

- Biological concepts discussed – Heredity is major concept
- Theory of Evolution explored – Fossil record – Natural selection – Adaptation – No comparison between Evolution and Creationism
- Scientific Age of Earth explored
- AB 329 (Sexual Health Education)
- In RUSD, will be presented to all 7th grade students in the 4th quarter of the school year
- Topics will be presented for 1 week
- Parents or guardians must be notified that their student will receive sexual health and HIV prevention education and be allowed to view the materials prior to instruction IN PERSON.
- In RUSD, parents or guardians may remove their student from the instruction by submitting a request in writing.
- Sexual Education Themes Covered: Understanding Change, Exploring Friendships, Bullying and Abuse, Human Trafficking, Preventing Unplanned Pregnancy, Teen Pregnancy: Choices and Responsibilities, Myths and Stereotypes about HIV Infection, HIV/AIDS Epidemic, Preventing STDs, Recognizing and Reducing Risks, Media and Peer Pressure, HIV/STI Testing and Community Resources, Goal Setting

Concerns as a Parent

1. Social Media
2. Dress Code
3. Locker Rooms
4. Counselor interactions
5. LGBTQ+ Messaging

How to Find Success

1. No social media or smart phones if at all possible.
2. Talk to your child's 7 teachers early and often throughout the school year.
 - a. Over the phone
 - b. Email as secondary option. Email allows a paper trail for conversations.
3. Check grades daily online.
4. Get help for your student via teacher tutoring ASAP if they are earning a C or lower in any class.
5. Call the school's Principal or Assistant Principal to introduce yourself and your family.
 - a. Let them know that you would like to be involved so that you can help support the school.
 - b. Let them know that you are an involved parent who would like to be a teammate with the school.
 - c. You would like to be notified any time your child is in trouble, is awarded, is counseled in the office by Principal, AP, SEL staff, and/or counselor.
6. Talk with your kids daily about what they are going through and how to navigate these things because they WILL BE introduced to areas of concern.
7. Have your kids plugged into the youth group so that their friends are people with similar core values.
8. Pray with your kids and for your kids.
9. Remind your kids that teachers are great, but also regular people who make mistakes and they may not be Christian.
10. Prepare your kids with the idea that people are going to claim Christianity, but also be compromising on certain issues. Teach them biblical truths that provide a firm foundation on black and white issues.
11. Remind your child that they are going to be different because that is the path that Jesus has placed us on.
12. Talk with your kids about other kids being mean/bullying.
 - a. There are very little consequences that are being given for bad behavior due to changes in Ed Code 48900.
13. Talk with your kids about what to expect in terms of the LGBTQ+ support on campus so that they are not confused by the messaging given out by schools, teachers, counselors, or administrators.

Resources

English Language Arts Standards - Grades 6-12

Literacy in Content Areas Standards - Grades 6-12

Executive Summary of New CA History/Social Science Framework

Grade 7 Standards - May 2000

Grade 8 Standards - May 2000

NGSS Standards Grade 7

NGSS Standards Grade 8

RUSD Middle School Sexual Education

RUSD Main Webpage for AB329

RUSD FAQ Webpage for AB329

State website for AB329

RUSD Dress Code

<https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/Policy/ViewPolicy.aspx?S=36030406&revid=WhlpKuahAPq7hGslshff5CI1Q==&PG=6&st=locker%20room&mt=>

ExactCA Ed. Code regarding discipline, suspension, expulsion

Biblical Response

Be a Safe Place – Allow your kids to have doubt and express their feelings. You may be freaking out on the inside, but be a good listener and ask good questions. Be a safe place for them to talk and express concerns.

Gender/Sexuality – It is important to continue to discuss God's design in gender, relationships, marriage, and sex. God has a plan for sex and it is GOOD, within the boundaries he has created.

- Genesis 1:27, 31 – God created us male and female, in His image... and He said it was "VERY GOOD"
- Genesis 2:23-24 – God's design for marriage is one man and one woman.
- Matthew 19:4-5 – Jesus refers to Genesis 1 & 2 and reinforces that marriage is only between a man and woman.
- Romans 1:18-32 – When we reject God and His rule over us, we turn to things that are not honoring to Him.
- Proverbs 4:23 – Above all else guard your heart.

Identity – In Jr. High, our kids are searching for identity... for a place to belong. Showing your child that they can anchor their identity and value in Jesus will help them navigate this new season.

1. Genesis 1 – created in God's image
2. Psalm 139, John 3:16 – We are uniquely and lovingly designed by a Creator. He knows us and loves us. God loves us so much He sent His Son to save us.
3. Ephesians 2:4-9 – God loves us not because of the good things we do...He loved us when we were far from Him.
4. 2 Corinthians 5:17 - In Christ we are a new creation.
5. Romans 8:31 – God is for us!
6. 1 John 1:9 – If we confess our sins, He will forgive us.

Sharing the Gospel – Our kids who are believers in Jesus should know how to share their faith with others.

1. God created everything. He loves us and desires relationship with us – Genesis 1, John 3:16
2. We have all sinned and are separated from God – Romans 3:23
3. Jesus died in our place to bring us back to God – Colossians 1:21-22
4. If we confess and believe Jesus, we will be saved – Romans 10:9
5. They can share their own story (testimony).

The Bible

1. God's Word is true and is useful in every area of life – Psalm 119:160, Titus 1:2, 2 Timothy 3:16
2. There are blessings to following God's ways – Proverbs 3:1-6
3. God's love letter to us – it is personal and God reveals Himself to us.
4. We can lead our children in reading their Bible independently.

Creation

1. God created everything from nothing. It was perfectly created and without sin – Genesis 1
2. Jesus was there at creation and still holds all things together – Colossians 1:16-17
3. All creation points to a Creator – Psalm 19:1-4

Technology

1. Help keep your kids accountable in technology.
2. Know what your kids are watching and who they are talking to.
3. Talk about boundaries and limits (for parents and for kids).
4. Pornography is addictive and damaging – talk with your kids about it!

Action Steps

1. Make sure you are in a healthy place. (We can only lead our kids as far as we have gone.)
2. Talk with your kids about technology, boundaries, and sex.
3. Figure out a Bible reading plan with your children.
4. Plan time to be present.

Resources

Big Picture Weekend – October 6-8

Message from Daniel Bishop
on Gender and Culture –
<https://thegrove.cc/counterculture-gender>

Sean McDowell on Gender podcast –
<https://www.christianparenting.org/podcasts-post/talking-to-your-children-about-sexuality-and-gender-identity-with-dr-sean-mcdowell/>

The Center for Faith,
Sexuality & Gender –
<https://www.centerforfaith.com>

Crouch, Andy, and Amy Crouch. *The Tech-Wise Family: Everyday Steps for Putting Technology in Its Proper Place.*

Richards, Lawrence O. *It Couldn't Just Happen: Knowing the Truth About God's Awesome Creation.* Tommy Nelson, 2011.

<https://www.icr.org/created-by-God> -
Articles that point to a Creator and
creative design (Institute for Creation
Research)

Reinke, Tony. *12 Ways Your Phone Is Changing You.* Crossway, 2017.

Earley, Justin Whitmel. *Habits of the Household: Practicing the Story of God in Everyday Family Rhythms.* Zondervan, 2021.

Study the Story of the Bible With Free
Tools (bibleproject.com)