

WVATC TIP SHEET:

WV Autism Training Center

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How to

Transition from Elementary to Middle School



Request a private tour of the school.

Most schools offer an orientation for new students; however, this can be very overwhelming for someone with autism. You can email or call the school principal to request a private tour of the new school.



Attend the new student orientation event.

In addition to touring the school privately, attend the open house or orientation the school offers. This will be a chance for you to meet the teachers and see where your child's classrooms are located.



Teach your child to use a combination lock.

One of the most challenging tasks for all students is learning how to use a combination lock for their locker. You can purchase a combination lock at Dollar General, Wal-Mart, or other stores. Over the summer, teach your child how to use the lock. It's okay that the purchased lock will have a different combination from the school lock because students get a new lock and combination each year.



Ensure that you and your child know what bus they ride.

It's very common that the bus that your child rides changes when they go to middle school. Bus routes are usually found on the Board of Education's website under the transportation tab. If you cannot locate this information online, call or email the principal the day before school starts and ask them what bus your child will ride.



Contact your child's teachers.

During the second week of school, email your child's teachers. All contact information, including email addresses, can be found on your child's school website. Take this opportunity to introduce yourself and your child. Include any information that will be helpful for the teacher to know. If your child has one, you can also ask if they have reviewed the IEP or 504 Plan.



Prepare for a new start time.

Some secondary schools start at a different time than elementary schools. If your child's middle school starts earlier, you can start waking up your child at the new time 2-4 weeks before school starts. Don't forget to make new visuals with the adjusted time.

