



SOUTH MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS LETTER

October 14, 2026

PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE

Dear SMS Families,

Over the past few weeks, our school community has continued to build on our strong start to the school year. Our students have been working diligently in their classes, adjusting well to daily academic expectations, and actively participating in schoolwide learning opportunities.

A key takeaway from this past month is that consistent attendance, active student participation, and strong communication between families and teachers make a significant difference in student success. When home and school work closely together, our scholars feel supported and capable of achieving their full potential.

Thank you for your ongoing partnership and commitment to our SMS community as we keep moving forward together.

Warm regards,
Mr. Roderick Phoenix
Principal, South Middle School

UPCOMING EVENTS

- OCTOBER 1-31- NATIONAL BULLYING PREVENTION MONTH
- THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15- SMS RECEIVERSHIP PUBLIC HEARING- 4:30PM- 5:30PM
- THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15- HISPANIC HERITAGE NIGHT- 5:30PM-7:30PM
- TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20- NECSD
- WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21 - CONVERSATION WITH THE PRINCIPAL- 7:30AM
- THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22 - 1/2 DAY FOR STUDENTS; 1/2 DAY STAFF DEVELOPMENT- SMS DISMISSAL- 10:15AM
- FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23- SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31- RED RIBBON WEEK
- WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28- SMS PICTURE DAY
- WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28- NECSD AND CITY OF NEWBURGH TRUNK OR TREAT- 6:00PM
- THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29- RED RIBBON WEEK: TEAM NEWBURGH AT SMS
- THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29- SMS HAUNTED HOUSE- 5:00PM- 7:00PM



PARENT SURVEY

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

CLICK ON THE LINK BELOW:

[SMS FALL FAMILY SURVEY 2026](#)



**EVERY
GOLDBACK**
every day



SOUTH MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS LETTER

October 14, 2026



Public Hearing | South Middle School Receivership

South Middle School will be holding a public hearing for our receivership status and a review of our continuation plan on Thursday, October 15, from 4:30 PM to 5:30 PM.

South Middle School
33-63 Monument Street, Newburgh
[Video link](#)

Thursday, October 15
4:30pm - 5:30pm



We are inviting all parents to join the SMS Parent Teacher Group(PTG). If you are interested please contact:

Email Address
southptg2223@gmail.com

Remind App Code
Text @southmsptg to 81010

HOW CAN WE HELP YOU?

SOUTH MIDDLE SCHOOL
33-63 Monument Street
Newburgh, NY 12550
845-563-7000

PRINCIPAL
Mr. Roderick Phoenix
rphoenix@necsd.net

ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS AND DASA COORDINATORS
6th Grade- *Mr. Beckner Joseph* bjoseph@necsd.net
7th Grade- *Ms. Erika Berrios* eberrios@necsd.net
8th Grade- *Mrs. Takisha Reid* treid@necsd.net

SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER
Ms. Janell Sims- jsims@necsd.net
845-563-3033
Ms. Julissa Hernandez- jhernandez@necsd.net
845-563-7013

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST
Kisha Brown- kibrown@necsd.net
845-563-7016
Leslie Quijada lquijada@necsd.net
845- 563-7010

SCHOOL COUNSELORS
6th Grade- *Mr. Kareem Donaldson* kdonaldson@necsd.net
845-563-7021
7th Grade- *Ms. La'Shawn Martinez* lmartinez@necsd.net
845-563-7016
8th Grade- *Ms. Latoya Lewis* llewis@necsd.net
845-563-7018

ATTENDANCE
845-563-7046

HEALTH OFFICE
845-563-7022

PARENT INVOLVEMENT COORDINATOR
Mr. William Morgan wmorgan@necsd.net
845-563-3414

MCKINNEY-VENTO LIAISON (Families in temporary living situations)
Ms. Kori Rogers krorgers@necsd.net
845-568-6846

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OUR SCHOOL PLEASE VISIT NEWBURGHSCHOOLS.ORG



SOUTH MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS LETTER

October 14, 2026

Conversation with the Principal



REMINDER: JOIN US THIS MONTH!

Please join us for our monthly **Conversation with the Principal**. These sessions are a great opportunity to connect, ask questions, and discuss important updates regarding our school community.

When: Wednesday, October 21, 2026

Every 3rd Wednesday | 7:30 AM – 8:30 AM

Location: South Middle School

October Topic:

Understanding Receivership & Our Continuation Plan

Our October meeting will focus on explaining South Middle School's Receivership status and walking through the key components of our district Continuation Plan. All parents and guardians are strongly encouraged to attend!

SMS Conversation with the Principal 2026- 2027	
Event Date	Time
October 21, 2026	7:30am- 8:30am
November 18, 2026	7:30am- 8:30am
December 16, 2026	7:30am- 8:30am
January 21, 2027	7:30am- 8:30am
March 17, 2027	7:30am- 8:30am
April 21, 2027	7:30am- 8:30am
May 19, 2027	7:30am- 8:30am

*Held 3rd Wednesday of the Month(except for the month of February)-

7:30am- 8:30am (sessions can also be held during School dances)

* If there is a delay or school closure, Conversation with the Principal will be canceled that month.



RED RIBBON WEEK CELEBRATION

NEWBURGH GOLDBACKS

TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

FAMILY HERO NIGHT

AND RESOURCE FAIR

TUESDAY
OCTOBER 20, 2026
5:00 PM – 6:30 PM

📍 **BOE (Board of Education/
Newburgh Free Library Building)**
124 Grand Street
Newburgh, NY 12550

**Join us for a night of family fun, resources,
and important information about Drug Awareness!**

**DRESSING IN
SUPER HERO COSTUMES
AND T-SHIRTS
IS ENCOURAGED!**

WHAT TO EXPECT:

- ★ Community resources and support services
- ★ Information about drug prevention and healthy choices
- ★ Fun activities for the whole family
- ★ Giveaways and more!

REAL HEROES MAKE HEALTHY CHOICES!

**Visit newburghschools.org for more
information about Red Ribbon Week
and other events and happenings.**

If you have any questions feel free to reach out to the Family and
Community Engagement Team at dwhitehead@necsd.net

RED RIBBON WEEK
LIVE DRUG FREE



NEWBURGH ENLARGED CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Let's Clear The Air

ANTI-VAPING WORKSHOPS

For parents & guardians across the district
In collaboration with Team Newburgh



ALL SESSIONS: 5:30pm - 7:30pm



01 Under Your Radar

Wednesday, October 21, 2026
NFA CTE Campus | 300 West Street

Explore vaping trends, other substances, and myths versus facts. Take part in an activity to identify vaping devices and drug paraphernalia.



02 Behind The Cloud

Thursday, October 22, 2026
NFA North Campus | 301 Robinson Ave.

Discover how companies target youth through marketing, social media, influencers, and celebrity promotion.



03 Vaping Decoded

Monday, October 26, 2026
NFA Main | 201 Fullerton Ave.

A hands-on, conversation-based session:

- **Learn current terminology**
- **Behavioral and Physical warning signs**
- **How to start a conversation - What to say if your child admits to vaping?**
- **School and Community supports for quitting**

Let's learn and start the conversation.

Scan the QR code to register for the workshops.





EMPIRE STATE AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM FOR MIDDLE SCHOOLERS

Empire MIDDLE SCHOOL is currently available to scholars in grades 6-8 attending the following schools: Meadow Hill Global Explorations Magnet School, Temple Hill Academy, and Heritage Middle School. More information to come for students attending South Middle School.

The programs will be offered on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. Middle schools will offer programming for 1 hour each day. There will also be upcoming opportunities for programs on Saturdays, including Regents Review, academic support and enrichment programs based on interests.

Transportation will be available for scholars participating in NECSD After School Programs. Start dates for programs are still tentative. If these dates change, information will be provided as soon as possible.

For the 2026 -2027 school year, After-School Programs will be offered:

- ★ Fall Session: October 20, 2026 - November 19, 2026
- ★ Winter Session: December 1, 2026 - February 25, 2027
- ★ Spring Session: March 2 - May 27, 2027

After school programs will begin immediately after regular dismissal time and an after-school snack will be available.

The following are the TENTATIVE enrichment and academic programs to be offered at **South Middle School** on WEEKDAYS (2:30-4:30 PM):

- ◆ Arts and Crafts
- ◆ B.R.O.S. - Building Resilient Optimistic Scholars
- ◆ Drama
- ◆ Gardening
- ◆ Gaming
- ◆ History at the Movies
- ◆ Sports Clinics

Please register using the online form. Students also brought home paper version if you prefer to register that way.

[2026- 27 MS PROGRAM REGISTER NOW](#)