

TAKING GOOD “STUDENT LIFE” PHOTOS

What are student life photos? They’re photos of students doing things at school (or out of school) that aren’t sports, or clubs, or academics. They are pictures of students living life!

The number one rule of student life photos is **NO POSED PHOTOS** ! We don’t use pictures of people looking at the camera, or who are obviously making a silly face. This rule seems to be especially difficult with student life photos, because when we take photos for Facebook or Instagram or our own scrapbooks, we tend to take posed pictures of people looking at the camera and smiling. Not for yearbook! Just like with academics photos, if someone won’t stop looking directly at the camera, tell them firmly but politely that you can’t take a picture of them unless they get back to work and ignore you. A long lens can sometimes help with this, because it’s harder to tell who you’re shooting.

THE TECHNICAL STUFF

Check to make sure you have a SD card in the camera before you leave the room!

LOOK FOR EMOTION, ACTION OR REACTION. Every photo should have one or more of these elements!

Get close! You either physically have to get close to your subject, or you need to bring a telephoto lens. Otherwise, you aren’t going to be able to see the emotion, action, or reaction.

In most cases, use the AV mode (shutter priority): Unless you are using a tripod, do not ever take pictures with a shutter speed less than 1/160. This will eliminate shake.

SHOOT HORIZONTAL AND VERTICAL PHOTOS! Turn the camera! This gives the page designers options.

If you don’t want to use flash, you need to take a f2.8 lens so you can get enough light without it.

After the first photo, check the image. This is your chance to make sure things are the way they are supposed to be. There is very little worse than a SD card full of images that are unusable because of technical issues.

Is it too dark? Is it too light? If so, adjust either the ISO setting or the shutter speed.

Is the image blurry? If so, adjust the shutter speed.

Stay long enough to become invisible. Very rarely can you take good photos if you are in a room for 2-3 minutes. You need to spend enough time in the room so that the kids (and teacher) forget that you are there and relax.

THE COMPOSITION STUFF

Good composition can help transform what might be a ho-hum subject into an interesting, memorable photo. Even though these photos may depict a more casual, relaxed part of a high school student’s life, they still need to be well-composed and technically excellent!

- **RULE OF THIRDS!!** Use your viewfinder to set this up as you are taking pictures!
- Leading Lines can add interest
- Framing can add interest, too.
- Angle UP (from beneath the subject looking up, like kneeling or sitting on the ground)
- Angle DOWN (from above the subject looking down, like standing on a chair)
- Try to avoid a distracting background (shallow depth of field can help if you can’t move to get an angle with less distraction)

PHOTO IDEAS

What kind of student life photos could (and should) you be taking? Anything that portrays typical moments in the life of a student! We want to capture the experience of being a student at MSHS in the 2013-2014 school year!

- Eating lunch in the cafeteria (or wherever students gather to eat)
- Putting things in a locker, or taking them out
- Waiting for the bus, riding the bus, being dropped off or picked up before or after school
- Walking in the hallways
- Working in the library
- Sitting and chatting in the commons before or after school
- Youth group meetings, scouting...
- Groups standing and chatting