

WELCOME TO MRS. SIDEBOTHAM'S CLASS

August 18, 2011

Dear Students and Families,

Welcome to my classroom! I'm excited about the opportunity to get to know you, and I'm looking forward to a happy and productive school year.

Curriculum areas we will focus on this year include:

6th Grade Science* - Earth Science

7th Grade Science* - Life Science

8th Grade Science* - Physical Science

7th Grade Language Arts* - Vocabulary, Spelling, Grammar, Writing, and Literature

My grading policy:

Grades will be weighted following the guidelines set by the Diocese. I will inform you of the weights as soon as we receive them from the Diocese and have had a chance to discuss them as a Junior High Team. Please note that the grading scale has also changed to align with the new Diocesan scale. The grading scale is as follows:

Percentage	Letter Grade
93-100	A
90-92	A-
87-89	B+
83-86	B
80-82	B-
77-79	C+
73-76	C
70-72	C-
67-69	D+
63-66	D
60-62	D-
59 and below	F

Please see the Junior High Policies for procedures for the team report card grades for **Homework, Conduct, and Effort**. In lieu of a cumulative final exam at the end of the year, each class will experience **Cumulative Exams** at the end of every trimester. PLEASE KEEP ALL CLASSWORK, HOMEWORK, NOTES, TESTS ETC... UNTIL THE END OF THE YEAR. Students will need them to study and may be able to use them during the exams. Each year will increase in difficulty and have an increasingly higher impact on final grades as students progress

through junior high. This will help students prepare for midterms and finals as a regular part of their high school experience.

My homework policy:

If a student is **Absent**, he/she will have the same number of days to make up any work that he/she missed as the number of days absent with no penalty.

Missing Assignments will be noted, however, there is no written MA given out in junior high. In addition, missing assignments do affect the overall homework grade on the report card (see Junior High Policies).

Late Work will only be accepted one day after the due date. If the assignment is not turned in before the one-day deadline, it will be counted as a zero. Each late assignment does count as a missing assignment and will affect the overall homework grade on the report card (see Junior High Policies).

Parent Signatures are required on all major tests, projects, papers, and lab reports. These are due the day after the assignment has been handed back to the students. Signatures are worth 1 point when turned in on time and will be part of the Homework category. This is an easy way to boost your grade over the period of a trimester and essential to make sure parents are informed about student work. (Don't forget to check School One on a regular basis to stay informed too!)

Classroom Procedures:

Bathroom use should be limited to before school, recess, lunch and after school. Of course, there will be the occasional emergency. Students will need to talk to me first and sign themselves out and in.

Uniforms are to be worn correctly every day in every class. The guidelines are located in the Parent/Student Handbook. When a student is out of uniform they will receive a Uniform Violation Form which must be signed by a parent and returned the next day. The Uniform Violation Form must be carried from class to class to avoid receiving multiple violations. Four violations will result in a detention (That can happen before lunch. Don't lose your form!).

Lockers will be assigned to all returning students on the first day. New students will be assigned lockers as soon as they return the locker fee and agreement. Please feel free to personalize your lockers with magnets and shelves. No tape, glue or stickers please. Students may visit their lockers before school, recess, lunch and after school. Passing period should not be a time to routinely visit your locker. Students will not be allowed to go to their lockers during class time.

Backpacks will be stored in lockers or outside the classroom. Students will not be allowed to leave the classroom to retrieve items from backpacks.

Required Items for daily use include: assignments due, independent reading book, stocked portfolio, red pen for correcting, text books, highlighter, pens and pencils.

Headings will be located at the top right hand of the page and will include your full name and student number, the date, subject. In the center of your paper you must write the individual assignment. Papers without names will not be given credit and will be placed in the No Name tray. You may retrieve them for credit.

Textbooks must be covered by the end of the first full week of school. Lost or severely damaged books will be billed to the family. Textbooks must be returned at the end of the year.

Testing Procedures are strictly followed. Headings must be complete. A paper without a name will not receive credit. If a test is not legible, it will not receive credit. **I have ZERO TOLERANCE for cheating.** Any action that can be perceived as communication with another student including gesturing, looking at another's paper, or talking will result in an automatic zero on the test. I have no problem asking students to show me their socks, pants or skirt hems, shoes etc... to find cheat sheets. Please don't try it. A zero is not worth it.

Junior High Team Policies:

Please see the Junior High Policies for procedures involving issuing and returning disciplinary forms, passing period and passing period violations, as well as the team homework, conduct and effort report card grades.

Class webpage:

I will be working on the class webpage during the first few weeks of school. Things you will find on the webpage include important school event dates, fun links to relevant sites, my biography, newsletters, and classroom policies.

Contacting me:

Along the same lines of preparing students for high school, it is important that we practice having students take responsibility for their education. Students should approach me first with any questions or concerns. If, as a parent, you still have questions, the best way to contact me is through email midebotham@stcatherinemh.org . I am also available by phone or conference. Conferences will be conducted with the student present. I am always happy to talk to you about your child but it is best if I have some notice so I can double check grades, missing assignments, etc... before we speak. I will be sending out regular newsletters, which will also be posted on my web page. Grades will be available online through dsj.schoolone.com throughout each trimester.

Please send me an email with I READ IT! in the subject line by Tuesday, August 22nd to let me know you have read this welcome letter. Thanks!

Once again, welcome to my classroom. Let's work together to make this the best year ever!

Sincerely,
Melissa Sidebotham
"Mrs. S."