

Hello Parents!

Welcome to a new school year! I wanted to introduce myself to everyone, especially if I have not taught one of your children before or if you are new to the St. James community. For those of you who don't know me, my name is Mrs. Esquivel. I teach both seventh and eighth grade Social Studies. I have been at St. James for twelve years now and love sharing my passion for history with my students. While I am currently on maternity leave, I will return in early November for the start of the second trimester of school.

I will use e-mail on a regular basis when sending out information to all parents, such as details about the unit we are about to study or projects that the students are completing. If you have an additional e-mail address that you would like me to add to my grouping, please let me know. I will also post information on my website. You can find that web address below my signature or on the Class Agreement form sent home with your child.

In 7th and 8th grade, we focus on American History. Seventh grade will begin by studying the development of our new government after the Revolutionary War and then continue on all the way through the Civil War and Reconstruction Era. Eighth grade will pick up their studies with the opening of the Western Frontier and we will work to get as far as possible before the end of the year (usually the 1950s and Civil Rights Movement).

In addition to American History, we will use our Fridays to focus on an additional subject area in the Social Sciences. The 7th grade will focus on Economics and Geography. The 8th grade will focus on News Literacy/Current Events and Political Science.

The students also study the Illinois and United States Constitutions. The seventh graders will study and take the United States Constitution Test in the fall. The eighth graders will study and take the Illinois Constitution Test in the spring. Passing both tests is a requirement for graduation.

Each student will have a textbook assigned to them that they can leave at home for the entire school year. The textbook they have is big and bulky, and can be very heavy to carry between home and school. This should alleviate that issue. There is also a link to an online version of the textbook on the class website.

In class, I will share with the students my procedures and expectations, and we will read through the class agreement form. Please read through the form again with your student and then have your child return just the bottom portion of the form by Friday.

We will also discuss in class the extra credit opportunities I offer to the students. I do not usually add extra credit questions to tests and quizzes. If a student wishes to earn extra credit, they will have to complete additional work outside of class. These are small activities that help to increase the student's knowledge of the world around them and the issues that affect our society.

I am looking forward to a wonderful school year with you and the students! Please contact me if you should have any questions. I hope to have the opportunity to speak with each of you at some point along the way.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Esquivel