

Hello 7th Grade Families,

I am excited to be returning to Saint James this week and continuing the rest of the school year with the students! Mrs. McCarthy has done a fantastic job subbing and I am so very grateful for her dedication. Please be patient with me as I transition back to work and get into the swing of things. With a little focus and hard work, I am confident we will be back on track in Social Studies by the time we return from Thanksgiving Break. I apologize ahead of time for the long email, but I want to catch you up on where we are at in class at this point in time.

This week, the students are finishing up [Chapter 8, A New Nation](#). George Washington's administration faced the huge task of making the new government work. The Constitution had created the office of the presidency, but Washington established many procedures and customs. President Washington set many examples that presidents still follow. These include creating a cabinet, directing foreign affairs, and serving as chief legislator.

Students will begin by examining the early challenges that the new government faced, including the Whiskey Rebellion and foreign affair issues with France, Britain, and Spain. They will then develop an understanding of how political parties took root in America, their basic philosophies, and their causes and effects. We will also explore the presidency of John Adams. Finally, students will develop a political party recruitment flyer based upon their studies of the first political parties.

We will then move on to [Chapter 9, The Jefferson Era](#). In 1801, the Democratic-Republican Party took control of the nation's government. The Federalists - the party of Alexander Hamilton and John Adams - were now on the sidelines and played the role of critics to the Democratic-Republican administration. Politicians today operate within the party system that took shape at that time. While the two main parties have changed, each still works to win votes and gain power. If the people vote to change the party in power, the newly elected representatives take office peacefully and the government continues.

After discussing the controversial election of 1800, students will begin exploring the concept of Manifest Destiny in which Americans believed it was their destiny to spread westward and control all of the land from sea to shining sea. We will take a look at the Western Territory and the Louisiana Purchase. Students will then discuss the rising conflicts during a time of expansion and the effects of the Embargo Act of 1807. Finally, we will analyze the War of 1812, how it changed our nation, and the spirit of patriotism it inspired.

On Fridays, we will continue our unit on [Geography](#). We will be starting to discuss the Five Themes of Geography and the students will participate in the National Geographic Geography Bee as well.

Please let me know if you have any questions along the way. I look forward to having the chance to meet all of you in person throughout the school year. Enjoy the rest of the week!

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Mrs. Esquivel