

Hello Parents and 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 thirteen years now and love sharing my passion for history with my students.

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 added please let me know. All Social Studies Newsletters will be posted on my school website. You can find that web address below my email signature. Homework assignments, notes, and other materials will be posted on the students' Social Studies Google Classroom.

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 Media Literacy and Political Science.

The students also review 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.

Students were introduced to a website link with an online version of the textbook. That link can be found on their Social Studies Google Classroom. Each student also had the option to take home a copy of the textbook that they can leave at home for the entire school year. If you would like your child to have an actual textbook at home, please let me know.

In class last week, I shared with the students my procedures and expectations, and we read through the class agreement form. We also discussed 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. We also reviewed the three Themes of U.S. History and the Pyramids of Love & Hate that we will make connections to throughout the year. All of this information can also be found on the students' Social Studies Google Classroom.

I will soon be inviting each of you to join your child's Google Classroom so you can receive regular updates about their class and work. 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 and I am looking forward to a wonderful school year with you and the students!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Esquivel