

January 16, 2020

Dear 8th Grade Families,

First Semester Reports

The first semester for 7th and 8th graders ends tomorrow, January 17. As you may know, our middle school students do not take final exams at the end of the semesters, but they/you will receive a comprehensive set of comments as well as department-specific check boxes that will indicate your child's first term strengths, challenges and progress. These reports will be written soon after the semester ends and will be mailed home by Monday, January 27. Please be sure your child reads the reports, as they are thoughtfully written and provide specific information that is intended to highlight your child's strengths and progress and to offer suggestions for improvements during the second semester. Your child's advisor will receive a copy of the semester report, will spend time reviewing it with your child, and will contact you to discuss any questions or concerns you may have about the information included in the report.

Second Semester

In observance of the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday, there will be no classes on Monday, January 20. Classes will resume on Tuesday, January 21, the first day of the second semester. With the change in semesters, students will switch between the following courses: Chemistry and Physics; 2D Art and 3D Art; Family & Consumer Science (FACS) & Industrial Technology (IT); and Acting and Debate. Full-year courses will not change.

Free Periods after Spring Break

As the 8th graders mature academically, socially and emotionally, it becomes increasingly more important that we provide them with opportunities to exhibit their ongoing development and growth. One way we do this is by lifting the study hall requirement after spring break. Students who exhibit academic responsibility, organization, respect for themselves and others, self-control, integrity, honesty, etc. will be given the option of getting out of some or all of their study halls in exchange for free periods. During free periods, 8th graders will be able to make choices about how and where to spend their time. These free periods may be taken away if students show that they are unable to handle this type of freedom and responsibility. Before we begin making decisions about releasing students from study halls, I will solicit feedback from teachers and advisors about their observations of the 8th graders. Considering the input from the faculty, Maggie Doyle Ervin (incoming principal) and I will make decisions about whether individual students will be released from none, some or all of their study halls. Please remind your child that the work habits, behaviors and attitudes exhibited now may influence our decision to grant free periods in the spring.

8th Grade Curriculum Night – Save the Date!

On Tuesday, March 31, from 7 to 8:45 pm, you are invited to hear detailed information about our 9th grade program and the entire high school curriculum. This is a program you won't want to miss – please mark it on your calendar today! More details will come soon...

As always, please don't hesitate to contact me with questions or concerns.

Warm regards,

[Julie Harris](#)

Principal, Grades 7 & 8

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