



June 2025

Dear Parents/Guardians of Incoming 8<sup>th</sup> Graders:

We, as teachers, feel that reading for both understanding AND enjoyment is a major factor in your child(ren)'s success as a student. Good readers read often, and reading in a consistent manner over the summer months (at least twenty minutes a day) will keep their reading in great shape!

The adoption of the NYS Next Generation Learning Standards has reinforced the expectation that every child read twenty-five "just right" books, independently, each and every year. The commitment to read at least two books this summer will ensure that each of our students is well on his/her way to reaching this expectation before school even begins in September.

We are assigning Lois Lowry's *The Giver* as a mandatory read for all incoming 8th graders (1 of the 2 required). We ask that the other book be **nonfiction**. Be assured your child(ren)'s current English teacher, the 8th grade English teachers, the current 8th graders, as well as our Library Media Specialists, have shared our collective ideas and knowledge to help create a list of books that are of a personal interest to this age group, as well as reading level-appropriate. An extensive list of suggested titles will be available on the Blind Brook website.

When we return in September, our classes will begin the unit on *The Giver*. Students will also be asked to design a project for their required nonfiction reading. These will become a classroom resource for students to share and refer to when choosing a reading selection.

We realize the summer is long, and books that are read early in the summer may not be as fresh in one's mind in September; therefore, students are encouraged to take notes on the books they are reading. Incoming eighth graders should concentrate their notes on developing themes in the books, and how the author uses the book to convey these ideas. Notes do not need to be written in complete sentences, but they should be thorough. These notes will help to develop a quality book review, as well as help your child to recall key information as we journey through our work with *The Giver*.

For notes, students may:

- Use "stickies," or Post-its, to mark important information in the books.
- Use any additional note styles...note (index) cards, charts, etc. he/she likes.

We are looking forward to an exciting new school year...have a great summer!!!

Your future English teachers,

Mr. Donoghue & Ms. Treacy