

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the new school year! I'm reaching out to share one of the most important expectations of students this year: to develop an at-home reading life. Though I do not assign homework, students will be expected to read at home as many nights a week as possible. However, if students do not feel a passion for reading and haven't been readers in the past, they may opt instead for texting, social media, video games, TV, etc. That said, my goal is **to get the right book into students' hands** so that "book love" can ignite and grow.

In addition to encouraging students to utilize the middle school's library and the public library, I also try to get the right books into kids' hands by offering a variety of texts in my classroom library. Research shows that access to books is a huge factor in motivating teens to read. Students who are surrounded by books at school (and at home) read more, and those who read more, read better. Through the years, I have discovered that a well-stocked classroom library has increased the amount of reading my students do.

Because I work with middle school students, I want you to know I am sensitive to having appropriate reading material in my classroom library. Yet, what is considered "appropriate" may vary from one parent to another. The selections in my classroom library, just like any public library, range from elementary-level to university-level reading materials. I ask you to remain aware throughout the year to the books your child has chosen to read and assist in determining their appropriateness. In addition, I want to emphasize *the books in my classroom library are checked out on a voluntary basis only*.

While students will have time to read books of their choice during class, it is my hope that students also nurture their reading life at home. Here's how you can help: 1) Help students establish a routine for reading. This may start with 2 nights a week for 10-15 minutes and then gradually increase. 2) Talk to your kids about what they're reading and how it's going. Ask them about the characters and plot and what they think might happen next. 3) Acknowledge to your children the importance of reading, that it will build their vocabulary, ready them for the world of work, and prepare them for "hard" reading that is to come (e.g., insurance forms; cell phone contracts, etc.). 4) If students forget their independent reading book at school or resist reading it at home, offer other options, such as a magazine or newspaper.

I look forward to getting to know my students this year and to encouraging them in their reading lives. If you have questions or concerns, feel free to contact me at any time.

Thank you for your support,

Mrs. Anne Moege