

Dear Parents,

Unbelievably, summer is already over! I know that your child is in their last year of elementary school, and I hope to make it great for them.

Most of you know who I am, but for those of you who don't know, my name is Scott Rossen. I am beginning my 26<sup>th</sup> year of teaching. This is my 15<sup>th</sup> year at Rhodes, and after a four-year hiatus, it will be my fifth year teaching 6<sup>th</sup> grade.

About half of students begin middle school in 6<sup>th</sup> grade. This year, I will make it my goal to blend the benefits of elementary school with the rigor of middle school in our class. Being in a self-contained classroom, I can offer more cross-curriculum work. This will allow students to learn more in-depth about science and social studies while developing their reading and writing skills.

Here is a quick run-down of 6<sup>th</sup> grade standards:

- Writing: Students will learn how to make and support claims with evidence.
- Reading: Students will improve at using text to provide an analysis of a topic.
- Math: Students will progress toward becoming proficient in algebra and algebraic concepts.
- Science: NGSS is the science standard. It calls for a more hands-on approach to science and has an array of topics that we will learn about. The Discovery Unit is used in 6<sup>th</sup> grade and the junior highs in our district.
- Social Studies: Students will learn about ancient civilizations and how they have helped develop our world. Throughout the year, students will create their own civilization to show the parallels between all of our world's cultures and histories.

In addition to regular curriculum work, we will involve ourselves in many other enriching activities. These include the following:

- I want to make service an emphasis of our school year. We will continue supporting the Rhodes recycling program and collecting soda tabs for the Ronald McDonald House. In addition to this, I have set up days for us to volunteer in the community.
- We have multiple field trips planned for the school year. We are going to camp for the first week of November. This meeting will be on Tuesday, August 13<sup>th</sup>, at 6:00. We also plan on adding a handful of other field trips.
- Our class will participate in the district science fair, which will take place towards the end of winter. I will give you the necessary information when the district solidifies the date.
- Literacy circles will be an essential part of your child's learning. We will read different novels throughout the year.
- My goal is to promote higher-level thinking regularly for my students. I try to achieve this through Bloom's taxonomy, the Icons of Depth and

Complexity, and CGI. As much as possible, I will try to make connections between reading and writing and social studies and science.

- Implementing NGSS in class will lead to the teaching of higher-level science concepts. This will be tied into Engineering Fridays throughout the year.
- I will email out "blasts" on a regular basis to help keep you informed of what is taking place in our class. Email will be my primary way of communicating.
- I will constantly look for ways to blend computer usage with traditional pencil paperwork. Students will turn in most of their writing using Google Drive or Office 365. It allows for quick feedback and easy organization. Students will also use their Google Accounts to work on Google Maps weekly. Daily math homework will also have an online component.
- NewsELA will also be used for weekly homework assignments. This is a great way to use comprehension in the classroom through non-fiction. I will also use podcasts to help with listening and speaking skills.
- I will have a secure place in the classroom for students to store their phones if they wish.

Mr. Rossen:

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