

6/19/08

Dear incoming 8th graders,

Congratulations on successfully completing your seventh grade year; the 8th grade team is already eagerly awaiting your arrival in September. We wanted to write you: a) to welcome you and b) to offer some helpful information that should make the opening of school in 2007 that much easier and smoother.

We have to imagine that the beginning of school this past year involved some anxious moments. You had to adjust to new rules and new teachers, and that makes for some serious adapting on your part. What's nice about 8th grade is you've been through and conquered many transitions, so come this fall you'll be at an advantage.

Of course, you can expect us to do some things differently; your favorite example might be that we will allow you to carry backpacks! We feel this helps with your organization as you move from classroom to classroom, especially if your locker is in the high school wing. Of course, it also means that we expect fewer locker trips and better organization. Just like 7th grade, we'll be issuing you assignment pads at the beginning of the school year to help you organize day to day as well as long term assignments. These planners **are required**, and the first one we issue will be free, but those that you need after that will cost a nominal fee. We also post quizzes, tests, and projects on schoolnotes.com (but not daily homework!) as well as important information, updates and reminders, so between this and the planners, you should be able to stay on top of things.

We also want to take a moment to dispel a popular myth that some 8th graders hold, the myth that the 8th grade year doesn't count. It's true that the grades you earn this coming year aren't printed on a transcript that colleges will see. However, your grades as an 8th grade student most definitely determine the kinds of courses and placement you'll see at the beginning of your high school career. *For instance, a B+ is a minimum grade requirement for most honors classes.* While this may not seem like a big deal now, it can be in the spring if you are trying to improve your average to the required grade. In addition, we're hoping to build a foundation of skills, knowledge, and independence in your 8th grade year to set you up for 9th grade when you'll really need to be on top of your academic game. So, to take 8th grade lightly is a recipe for a painful beginning to your secondary education. We encourage you to keep this in mind.

Okay, enough of the heavy stuff, let's talk details. *Please be prepared with the following materials on the first day of school.*

English:

- a loose-leaf binder that contains a healthy amount of white, loose-leaf composition paper and dividers to be labeled in the fall.
- your summer reading books
- pens(blue/black ink), pencils, highlighters, post-its(several colors), white-out

Math:

- a 1 inch three ring binder with three dividers to be labeled: 1) notes, 2) assignments, 3) tests and quizzes. You should supply the notes and assignment sections with white lined paper.

Social Studies:

-a loose-leaf binder for *history only*, divided into the following sections: current chapter, returned work, notes, and all year. The notes section needs either a notebook or lots of lined paper.

- Small reinforcements for the holes in notepaper and handouts will be very helpful. So will some plastic sleeves for the year-round materials.

-a highlighter, a black or blue pen, and white-out. (pencil isn't used in history class).

- an accordian style file folder to store completed units, so you have them for MCAS review. This will be kept in your locker.

Science:

Always have the following in class:

A) A small binder with dividers **or** have 2, two-pocket folders with labeled sections...:

1) "To Pass In" 2) "To Do" 3) "Reference" 4) "Current Unit"

B) Your textbook unless otherwise stated.

C) At least 5 pieces of graph paper, notepaper, and printer paper.

D) A calculator, preferably small and simple, with +, -, ÷, x, $\sqrt{\quad}$ functions.

D) Two #2 pencils, at least three colored pencils, a pen (but not green, that's my color).

Always have the following in your locker:

An accordian style file folder with at least 12 sections for "Old Units".

French & Spanish:

-a notebook, highlighter, pencil and a black or blue pen

No multi-subject binders are acceptable.

Finally, you should have all received a copy of the 8th grade summer reading list, and if you didn't, stop in at Bromfield's main office, and they will supply you with one or check the school's website at psharvard.org; click on **The Bromfield School** and then click on **English Summer** under Departments. Remember, it's important that you read at least one of the books on this list because the first major writing assignment in English revolves around one of these works. If you read more than one, it will be to your advantage.

So once again, the 8th grade team is looking forward to meeting all of you in the fall, and we hope you have a great summer. Rest, relax, play, and keep learning.

Sincerely,

Mr. Clarke, Ms. Brown,

Mrs. McGarty, Mr. Tabor, and

The World Language teachers

P.S. Would you do yourselves and us a favor, and show this letter to your parents when you've finished reading it?

Thanks.