

September 17, 2009

Dear Parent/Guardian:

My name is Mr. Sisson and I am excited about working with your child this year. This is my 37<sup>th</sup> year in education and my 19<sup>th</sup> year with this staff. I am as eager to help your child be successful this year as I was to help children in my first year of teaching. I received a bachelor's degree from California University, San Diego and Master's in Sacramento. I continue to take classes on an ongoing basis to update my knowledge and skills. I share this information with my students so that they know that I, too, am a learner.

It is a very important time of life for middle school students, and I believe that the success they experience here will support their future successes. Your child will be learning effective reading, writing and communication skills needed for success in any endeavor.

In an effort to make it easier for you to help your child succeed I offer the following syllabus, which explains what we will be doing this year. I hope it will help you understand what is expected in my class and provide you with important information about contacting me and monitoring your child's progress. If you have any questions please call me. Phone numbers and conference information are at the end of the Syllabus. Please make sure your child gets a good night's sleep on school nights, has a positive home environment with a quiet place to study and read, as well as a nourishing breakfast before school.

I am looking forward to being a partner with you and your child. We all need to work together to bring about the best possible results. Our mottos at Aki are "Reaching Excellence Together", "Success is the Only Option" and "Everyone learns ....No Excuses".

Sincerely,

Mr. Sisson  
Sixth Grade Social Studies, Language Arts and Reading Teacher  
Aki Kurose Middle School Academy  
Room 102 – Phone: (206) 252-7771

**Sixth Grade Social Studies Curriculum Syllabus  
2009-2010  
Mr. Sisson, Educator**

**Overview of Social Studies Curriculum**

This class will focus on Eastern Hemisphere studies, concentrating on both ancient and modern civilizations of Africa and Asia. We will also study two early societies in South America. The approach of study will be through research, readings, simulations, art, guest speakers and possibly field trips. Textbook reading will be used as a part of the research materials. Projects and oral presentations will aid students in cooperative work and public speaking. Use of maps and the globe are tools used as a part of map reading curriculum. Technology skills will be strengthened through computer activities. Students will be required to reference newspapers for supplementary reading. Mathematics and science skills will also be integrated into the curriculum.

**Grade Level Expectations**

Standard 1 – The student uses maps, charts and other geographic tools to understand the spatial arrangement of people, places, resources and environments on Earth’s surface.

Standard 2 – The student understands the complex physical and human characteristics of places and regions.

Standard 3 – The student observes and analyzes the interaction between people, the environment and culture.

**Methods of Instruction**

1. Information will be presented with up-to-date, accurate social studies and technology content that will prepare students for future challenges.
2. Information will be clearly organized and presented in a matter which takes into account individual learning styles in both individual and group work.
3. The content will be presented in an integrated manner relating social studies to what the students are learning in mathematics, language arts, science and other subjects.
4. Learning will also include “hands-on” activities helping to build creative thinking and problem solving skills by “doing.” Textbooks, lectures and other media will be used to instruct students.

**Social Studies Performance Goals**

1. To acquire social studies information.
2. To provide and communicate social studies information
3. To make sense of the environment they live in through the information that acquired.
4. To use the information in real-world ways.
5. To demonstrate good citizenship qualities.

**Eastern Hemisphere Content**

1. Identity
2. Map and Globe Skills

3. Timeline Skills
4. Early Human development
5. Ancient Egypt, Greece, Rome
6. Southeast/Middle East
7. African Cultures
8. Native American Cultures
9. Current Events

### **Grading Policies**

#### **Academic Grade**

- The grade will be based on student's in-class work, homework, group and individual projects, presentations, and written assignments
- The following scale will apply:
  - 90-100% = A
  - 80-89% = B
  - 70-79% = C
  - 55-69% = D
  - Below 55% = E

#### **Effort Grade**

- This grade will be based on the following:
  1. Participation in class and group activities.
  2. Homework being turned in on time.
  3. The student putting forth his/her best effort on all assignments
  4. Being on-task in class and engaged in learning.

#### **Citizenship Grade**

- This grade will be based on
  1. How well a student cooperates with the school-wide, team and individual classroom expectations.
  2. The amount of respect a student shows for themselves, others their property and their right to learn.

#### **Late and Make-up Work**

- Students may have as many days to make up work as they were out ill.
- Other late work will be accepted for a grade up to one week after the assignment is due but the work will be marked down for lateness.
- All assignments must be submitted. No credit will be given after the allowed week.

#### **Homework**

- Class activities and directions will be posted on the overhead and students are required to write them in their planner everyday. Unfinished class work is expected to be completed at home and turned in the next day. There will be one long range assignment to be completed at the end of the second semester. During the second semester each student will be assigned a weekly project related to the long-range assignment. .

**I am looking forward to working with your student. If you have questions or would like to set up a conference please call me at school at (206) 252-7782. I may be reached by telephone before school from 7:15-7:30 AM, during school from 10:15-11:00 AM, or after school from 2:15-2:45 PM.**

**Let's have a great year together!**

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**Please cut, fill in, sign and return to indicate that you have received this syllabus. Your child will receive a grade when this is returned. Please include your e-mail address and telephone so that we can check in with each other to help your students stay on track. Thank you for your support.**

Student Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Best hours to contact you by phone \_\_\_\_\_