

Mrs. Reber

Contact.

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English, Language Arts—Sixth Grade

I have **high expectations** of my students, both academically and behaviorally. To this end, I do my best to challenge them while maintaining an atmosphere of mutual respect. This year, as we explore wonderful literature and authors, the students will grow to be stronger readers and writers. Students will each develop a **writing portfolio** which they will fill with writing all year long, making progress along the way. They will explore many forms of writing including poetry, letter writing, personal short stories, essays, and more. The students' goals are to meet the quarterly expectations set for the portfolio. This quarter's portfolio will include 3 free-verse poems and a personal narrative. Many students will easily surpass this expectation, writing additional poems and personal narratives. The students will also spend this quarter making connections to their self-selected reading books and activating background knowledge in order to better understand and relate to the text.

I hope that you will join me as a partner in your child's education. Here are a few ways you can help at home:

- My goal is for each child to set individual reading goals and to spend time reading at home each day. This includes holidays and weekends. Please encourage your child to complete this reading time. He/She can accomplish this by reading with you, to a younger sibling, or independently before going to bed. Books are available in the classroom and at our school library, and I would be glad to provide recommendations if you would like. This reading is on the honor system, so I am not asking that you sign and return anything. Literacy development is directly linked to the amount of time a child spends reading books he/she enjoys!
- Your child will be a busy writer, producing many pieces this school year. Please encourage your child **to write at home** (in his/her writer's notebooks) or to write down details of experiences that they have outside of school. These experiences often become the topic of their writing, and by jotting down a few notes they are better able to recall information when back in the classroom. Also, we will be commemorating our writing accomplishments quarterly with a **Celebration of Writing**. This is an opportunity for you to come in and enjoy listening to your child and others share their writing. Look for invitations to be coming home in a few weeks!

I hope that you will email me at kreber@usd116.org whenever you have a question, concern, or comment. I look forward to hearing from you and being your partner in education!

Units of Study (In chronological order)

- Reading and Writing Workshop setting
- Our ELA curriculum relies heavily on independent reading, which we will be encouraging throughout the school year
- Short Story (genre studies, literary analysis, plot arc, traits of good readers/writers)
- Novel Studies/Literature Circles
- Text Performance
- Narrative Non-Fiction

- Poetry Analysis and Poetry Writing
- Independent Student Choice Study

Materials and Resources.

- *Elements of Literature* published by Holt Rhinehart Winston
- *Units of Study in Argument, Information, and Narrative Writing* by Lucy Calkins
- *Naming the World: A Year of Poems and Lessons* by Nancy Atwell
- Assorted novels of student choice
- Composition Notebooks and Folder
- Student Planner
- Pen/Pencil
- Recommended, but not required: post-it notes and highlighters

Assessment of Student Learning.

Various assessments will be issued throughout the year in order to show their understanding of learned concepts. This may include various types of tests, projects, essays, speeches, and more.

Projects, tests, quizzes, and other formal assessments will make up 60% of the student’s grade. All other assignments and learning activities, including homework and in-class work will make up the other 40% of the student’s grade.

Below is the grading scale that will be in use for the 2016-2017 school year.

Letter Grade	Percentage Range	Descriptor*
A+	100-99	Exceeds all grade-level content standards.
A	98-94	Exceeds most assessed standards while meeting all assessed standards.
A-	93-90	Exceeds some assessed standards while meeting all assessed standards
B+	89-87	Meets all assessed standards may exceed some.
B	86-84	Meets all assessed standards.
B-	83-80	Meets most assessed standards.
C+	79-77	Approaching standards in most assessed areas, may be meeting in some.
C-	76-70	Approaching standards in most assessed areas, not meeting some assessed standards.
D	69-60	Below assessed standards.
F	59-1	Significantly below assessed standards.
NG	0	Work not submitted

*Missing work, incomplete work, or zeros may significantly distort a student's grade percentage resulting in descriptors being inaccurate.

Grades are issued on a regular basis informally; also, they are formally announced once at mid-quarter and once at the end of the quarter. Mid-quarter grades are just to give an idea of how well the students are doing; they will not be listed on the official report. Parents may also monitor their student's grades by utilizing Skyward Family Access. For families that do not have Internet access, a computer is available in the UMS Community Center in order to access Skyward. Skyward will be updated at least weekly. This update will occur by 11:00 AM on Thursdays (when school is in session) in order to comply with our athletic/activity eligibility requirements.

Additionally, a Friday Folder will be sent home at the end of each week. It will show the missing assignments from team classes (not electives) for that particular week and will also indicate if your student is in danger of failing any team class. If a student is receiving an F in class and Friday Folders are not being returned, you will be notified by phone or email. If no contact is made after three attempts, you will be notified by mail.

Assignment Completion

Homework. UMS acknowledges and affirms that students learn best when they are focused and on-task in class and carry that learning experience home for continued practice and reinforcement. This practice comes in the form of homework. Homework is assigned in class and the due date will be determined by each individual teacher.

Frequency*	The goal is that all students <u>will</u> receive homework Monday-Thursday in at least one class, but not all. Some teachers may also choose to assign homework on Fridays. Minimally, each student should complete silent reading of at least 30 minutes per night.
Is it graded?	The intent of this homework is for a student to practice, reinforce, or experiment with in-course content. Whether homework will be graded or not depends on the teacher assigning the work, as well as the nature of the homework assignment.
Is it accepted late?	Maybe. It will be subject to teacher's discretion.

*If a student has a Homework Connections class or attends Homework Lab, homework may be completed before going home.

Make up work due to absence In general, if a student is absent from school for any reason, the student is given one full school day to make up work that was assigned or given on the day of the absence. For example, if a student is absent on Monday when homework was given and the homework was due on Tuesday, if the student returns to school on Tuesday, the homework for this student is due on Wednesday.

During an extended absence (three days or more), parents may call the Office to request homework assignments before 10:00 AM. Assignments for students will be available for pick-up in the Office at the end of the following school day. If assignments are not requested prior to the student's return to school from an absence, it becomes the student's and/or parent's responsibility to contact each of the student's teachers to determine what assignments need to be made-up and the deadline for turning them in. A student will have at least one day to make up work for each day of absence

It is not the responsibility of the teacher to re-teach content to students who are absent. Teachers will make every effort to make sure that a student is able to complete the work. Labs or class participation may not be able to be made up.

In PE, band, or strings, a student's absence may result in an incomplete grade (zero) in the categories of In-Class Work and Daily Homework. In order for students to recoup the incomplete grades, the student must make arrangements with the teacher to make up the lost time before or after school, provide evidence of completing an alternate activity outside of school, or complete an alternate assignment.

Placement in Alternative Day Assignment or removal from class to Refocus is not considered an absence, and all work must be completed and submitted at the regular time as long as that work is provided to the student. If the work is not provided to the student to complete, the absence will be treated as a regular absence with one full day of school to make up the work that was assigned during the absence.

Late work Individual teachers may determine whether students may submit late work, e.g. in class or daily homework not submitted by the due date, in his/her classes. Teachers are not required to accept late work. Individual late work policies will be stated clearly in each course syllabus and posted on the teacher's website.

Re-dos Because the goal of grades is to reflect student progress or performance in a course related to course standards and objectives, the goal is that all students will meet standards or approach meeting standards. Therefore, if a student receives a D or F in the category of "assessment" the student will be given at least one opportunity to redo the work. Individual teachers may determine the parameters for redoing the work and how that work will be scored, and teacher's individual policies will be stated clearly in each course syllabus and posted on the teacher's website. Re-dos may not apply to assessments that cannot be replicated (e.g. concerts), and redos may be required to be completed outside of regular class time. A teacher may require additional work or demonstration of standards prior to allowing or in lieu of a redo.

Extra Credit Because the goal of grades is to reflect student progress or performance in a course related to course standards and objectives, the emphasis of graded work is on the work that is assigned and assessed as part of the regular class. In light of the above "redo" policy, extra credit is not permitted in any classes. However, this does not mean that additional work cannot be submitted to demonstrate knowledge of a standard that was not previously met.

Course Behavior Expectations.

This class follows the school-wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports also known as the Tiger Roar. A student is expected to:

- Be Responsible.
- Be Respectful.
- Be Safe.

On team Dynamic, we follow the same set of expectations across all classrooms. Students will take part in a color system. A detailed description of this system is included below:

Dynamic Team Expectations:

1. Be prepared for class everyday.
2. Raise your hand before speaking.
3. No personal food/drink in class.
4. Leave your workspace neat and tidy.
5. Bring independent reading book to class everyday.

Color System:

Positive Explanations and Consequences:

**Students will move up in color order for consistently following expectations and/or going above and beyond in their behavior in class.

1. Pink – Visual warning
2. Purple – Tiger Ticket
3. Blue – Prize or an additional tiger ticket

Negative Explanations and Consequences:

**Students will move up in color order for not following team/classroom expectations. They will have one warning prior to the color system.

1. Yellow – Visual Warning
2. Orange – Reflection Time (refusal to adequately reflect will result in a lunch detention/discussion with teacher)
3. Red – Referral, parent phone call and possible removal from class

