



CASSELL
JUNIOR HIGH
FIRST QUARTER
PARENT LETTERS
2023 = 2024



JR. HIGH POSITIVE BEHAVIOR PROGRAM

Purpose: It is the goal of the Middle School Team to promote positive behaviors in order for students to be as successful as possible. These positive behaviors align with Cassell School's vision of being respectful, responsible, safe, and kind at all times.

Positive Behavior Incentive System

- **Student Incentive Record:** Student will carry a sheet for the month in their planners to all classes. The goal is to keep the sheet "clean" each week to be on GOLD for the following week.
- **Students are given a total of 100 points per week (20 points per day). Expectations are broken into five categories, and a student will have four points in the following categories (aligned with the student handbook):**
 - Demonstrate respect and kindness to others and property.
 - Come prepared for class.
 - Remain focused and work throughout the period.
 - Demonstrate respect by using the number system to ask permission.
 - Follow all directions by all faculty.
- If a student is unable to follow a certain expectation, "one point" will be taken from them by a faculty/staff member. Please note: no warnings will be given.
- Based on weekly averages, students will earn a gold, silver, or bronze level.

Student blue cards with daily records of behavior can be found in the student planner. **Please ask your child for their blue card regularly as that is our main communication with parents regarding middle school expectations in all classes.**

GOLD

Weekly Average: 100%
(no points/tallies taken away)

Incentives:

- Extra privileges and trust
- More independence
- Random surprises
- Daily walk/Weekly free time/prizes
- Out of Uniform Shirt (no hoodies) on Mondays

SILVER

Weekly Average: 90% - 99%

Incentives:

- Typical privileges and trust
- Silver status is the average expectation of Jr. High Students as they grow, learn, and increase their preparation for high school!

BRONZE

Weekly Average: 89% or below

(More than 10 tallies circled for the week or all 4 tallies circled in one category for the week)

Bronze Status Parent Communication

As an effort to teach independence and preparation for high school, students on Bronze will email their parents and all teachers to explain how they earned Bronze and what changes they intend they make so it does not occur again. Parents who have questions may reach out to their child's homeroom teacher

Consequences

- Loss of privileges (including Gold/Silver status privileges, chromebooks, free time)
- Unable to participate in after school, Cassell-sponsored extracurricular activities or Cassell sports practices, games, for the following week - *this includes any playoffs or championship games*
- Increased supervision while on school property (front of the line, seat changes as needed)
- Independent lunch and recess (supervised)
- Adult supervised bathroom visits (adult will remain in the hall, emergencies will be handled as needed)
- If most or all tallies are related to missing classwork/homework, students must attend the Wednesday homework help sessions
- Loss of Honor Roll status regardless of grades for that quarter

2nd Bronze offense in one school year: Junior High team and parent meeting

3rd Bronze offense in one school year: Meet with administration

4th Bronze offense in one school year: MTSS behavior plan

(8th graders will risk graduation and end of year activity privileges)



Welcome to Jr High Science 2023/2024: Quarter 1

ecloney@cps.edu

Email me at any time if you have any questions or concerns.

The following inclusion teachers will be working with us in the science lab:

Mrs. Snyder (cbomalley@cps.edu)

Mrs. Roche (lzroche@cps.edu)

Mrs. Reilly (acreilly@cps.edu)

Missing work? When a student is absent, there will be a missing assignments sheet in their mailbox. The student needs to make up the assignment within two days. After two days, points will be deducted. Absent work is not provided to students in advance.

Msg will show up for the assignment in ASPEN until the assignment is turned in.
Grading Categories and Weights: Exit=5%: a short assignment that is given to conclude in-class work (Exit work **can not** be made up if absent.);

Formative = 65%: classwork, homework, quizzes, research, and mini-labs;

Summative = 30%: Exams and full project conclusions.

Gradebook codes: Msg=missing, Exc=excused, Inc=student still working,
0=actual grade on assignment.

Positive Incentive Program:

Go for the Gold (See attachment for all junior high classes, as well as your child's planner.)

Hello, and welcome to the 2023/2024 school year, and welcome to Jr. High Science at Cassell.

This year I will be teaching 6th - 8th grade science. I'm looking forward to an exciting, challenging year filled with many activities, labs, and engineering projects with all students.

I'm excited to continue using a program with all science classes this year: *Science Career Adventures*. This program will not only allow the students to explore hands-on challenges but will also introduce the students to many, many careers in science!

The NGSS standards that will be covered during the first quarter are....

6th, 7th & 8th: Scientific Method and Design Process:

NGSS: MS-ETS1: Engineering Design; Scientific Method: Science and Engineering Practices

The students will be using the scientific method and design process while actively engaging in our middle school program: Science Career Adventures and a variety of other lessons, labs, and activities.

6th: MS-LS1-1.

Conduct an investigation to provide evidence that living things are made of cells; either one cell or many different numbers and types of cells.

MS-LS1-2. Develop and use a model to describe the function of a cell as a whole and ways parts of cells contribute to the function.

CC: Cause and Effect relationships. Practices: Constructing Explanations and Designing Solutions

7th:MS-LS2-2.

Construct an explanation that predicts patterns of interactions among organisms across multiple ecosystems.

MS-LS1-4. Use arguments based on empirical evidence and scientific reasoning to support an explanation for how characteristic animal behaviors and specialized plant structures affect the probability of successful reproduction of animals and plants respectively.

CC: Cause and Effect relationships. Practices: Patterns (Populations, adaptations, invasive species)

8th :Matter and Its Interactions: MS-PS1-1:

Develop models to describe the atomic composition of simple molecules and extended structures. Practices: Developing and Using Models; Analyzing and Interpreting Data; CC: Scale, Proportion, and Quantity; Patterns; Cause and Effect.

Science Processes/Scientific Method:NGSS:

1.Asking Questions and Defining Problems; 2. Developing and Using Models; 3. Planning and Carrying Out Investigations; 4. Analyzing and Interpreting Data; 5. Using Mathematics and Computational Thinking; 6. Constructing Explanations and Designing Solutions; 7. Engaging in Argument from Evidence; 8. Obtaining, Evaluating, and Communicating Information.

8th grade students: Science Fair: 8th grade students will start the year practicing measurement and the steps of the scientific method. The 8th grade science fair will be held in December.

IMPORTANT!!! Is your child interested in Cassell's Farm Club? Email me if interested:
ecloney@cps.edu

IMPORTANT! PLEASE UPDATE THE EMAIL YOU HAVE LISTED IN ASPEN. I SEND MANY MASS EMAILS TO PARENTS WITH UPDATES.

THANKS FOR ALL YOU DO:) Mrs. Elaine Cloney

Writing Parent Letter 2023-24 Quarter 1



Writing - Mrs. Nichols

dcnichols@cps.edu

Mrs. Reilly

acreilly@cps.edu

Mrs. Roche

lzroche@cps.edu



Welcome!

Welcome back for another exciting school year at Cassell!

The students will start the year by learning the Writing Process. During Writer's Workshop the students will create:

A personal description, a friendly letter, and autobiographical incident in 6th grade.

An autobiography, a speech, and a story in 7th grade.

A personal narrative, a character sketch, and a compare-contrast essay in 8th grade.

By the end of 1st Quarter, Students Will Be Able To:

- Write routinely over an extended period using the writing process.
- Write a narrative using dialogue, transitions, events, characters, and descriptions.
- Use sensory language to describe an event.
- Use a variety of transition words appropriately in writing.
- Write following Standard English conventions.

High Expectations: Cassell School holds ALL students to high expectations including academic performance, attendance, and behavior. Please review the middle school behavior policy, "Go For The Gold", with your child.

Grade Categories:

Collaborative (Group Work, Class Contribution) 10%

Formative Assessment (classwork, homework) 50%

Summative Assessment (chapter tests/quizzes/final projects) 40%

*class contribution assignments, such as warm-ups and discussions, may not be made up if missed because of an absence.

Gradebook:

Aspen Gradebook is updated weekly so please check your student's progress (even better- ask them to check it!)

Grade codes used in Aspen are as follows:

INC= Incomplete

EXC= Excused

O= assignment was attempted but no credit was given

MSG= Missing (assignment was never turned in on time)

Homework Protocol:

Writing will be worked on in school. Homework will be assigned if absent.

Missing Assignment Protocol:

Students' grades will be affected if missing assignments do not get turned in.

Loving **E**very **G**rowth **O**pportunity



Welcome to Middle School Social Science Room 122, Quarter 1

Dear Parents

*Welcome to the 2023-2024 school year. We are excited to welcome your child and support them on their educational journey. We remain steadfast in our continued commitment to academic excellence, innovative practices, school safety, and inclusive excellence. We are committed to partnering with you to ensure safe, healthy spaces that affirm the identity of each and every student and leveraging the assets they bring. We do this in service of safe and welcoming spaces for all students to learn in. Working together as a team always creates a positive experience for your child. Our theme this year is again **LEGO, Loving, Every, Growth, Opportunity**. Let's continue to instill that mindset in our students together.*

We are looking forward to an exciting year filled with many activities and projects. We are also thrilled to have the students back in school.

We are using the Social Science series myWorld Interactive this year. This program not only allows students to explore history but will also engage students through civic involvement and literacy. Students will learn about their world while covering the core social studies standards.

***6th Grade: World History**.....explores world history, global turning points and historical narratives.*

Mrs. Reilly will be joining our class each day, as the inclusion support teacher.

***7th Grade: World Geography**.....helps them develop global competencies for active, informed citizenship. Units emphasize project-based learning to explore the world's places, systems and cultures. Mrs. Roche will be joining our class each day, as the inclusion support teacher.*

***8th Grade: American History**.....emphasizes active inquiry and strong literacy connections, while learning about American History and citizenship. A civics component, including a Constitution Test, will be provided during 2nd semester. Mr. Connelly will be joining our class each day, as the inclusion support teacher.*

Absences: Work will not be given out in advance. When a student returns, they'll have 1 extra day for each day of absence to complete missing work. Please make sure you are here and on time. Tardiness affects attendance.

Homeroom (8th grade) Student Special Schedule: M-P.E, T-P.E, W-Theater, Th-Art, F-Art

Assignment Weights: Assessments 60% and Assignments (projects, lesson checks and group activities) 40%

Breakfast: Breakfast is served before school starts at 7:45. Class begins at 8am. (No sliding entry time.)

Thanks for all you do. Please feel free to contact me with questions, concerns, or feedback at: bhmccarthy@cps.edu.

Sincerely,

Ms. Bonnie McCarthy (6th-8th Grade Social Science Teacher)

Mrs. Linda Roche (7th Grade Inclusion/Co-teacher)

Mrs. Aishling Reilly (6th Grade Inclusion/Co-teacher)

Mr. Ethan Connelly (8th Grade Inclusion/Co-teacher)

Reading

Ms. Cohan Rm 119

atcohan@cps.edu

Inclusion teachers:

Mrs. Reilly acreilly@cps.edu (6th)

Mrs. Roche lzroche@cps.edu (7th)

Welcome back! Once again, our school theme is LEGO- Loving Every Growth Opportunity. Our ultimate goal this year is to have every student engaged in reading, in and out of school. We will be encouraging that growth in many different ways during the school day and hope you will continue the growth opportunity at home.

Homeroom Procedures (for 119 students):

Breakfast is served at 7:45, please enter the rotunda doors. Otherwise, line up at the door closest to Homan Ave. Entry is at 8:00 sharp! Dismissal is out the same door at 3:00. Remember phones are not allowed on campus. All staff are trained to confiscate any phone that is visible on school grounds and send it to the office for a parent to pick up. More information will follow via email regarding graduation, trips, and 8th Grade contracts so please make sure your email is always updated in Aspen with Mrs. Pienta or Ms. Rau in the main office.

Curriculum:

Our Balanced Literacy block consists of vocabulary, sustained silent reading, and lessons based on Common Core Standards. Students will be reading books in our class independently on a daily basis. We will be encouraging them to continue their reading at home each night. Our class library is full of young adult literature, some of which may touch on sensitive subjects or may have curse words. The students are encouraged to borrow books from us, but if this makes you uncomfortable, please feel free to escort your child to the Chicago Public Library, Bookies, or Half Price Books and choose a book together. The rest of the curriculum will be a mixture of Greek and Latin Affixes, comprehension, fluency, and responding to literature. The consumable text, *My Perspective* and novels will be used to facilitate these skills along with the computer based program, IXL.

Core Reading Standards for First Quarter:

- Citing Text Evidence with support
- Close reading
- Critical-Thinking
- Inferencing
- Greek and Latin Affixes
- Sustained silent reading

Novels for the year:

6th Grade

Touching Spirit Bear

Ghost of Spirit Bear

7th Grade

The Outsiders

A Wrinkle in Time

8th grade

The Giver

Monster

Grading:

The school wide system is on a 10 point scale: 90-100 is an A, 80-89 is a B, etc. Aspen will be updated weekly and needs to be monitored by a guardian and the student. Various assignments will be evaluated with a grade using a point system: i.e. a journal entry may be worth 5 points and the student might earn 4 out of the 5 total points. As a schoolwide initiative, a proper heading is mandatory for work to be graded. Also, there are no individual extra credit opportunities, so please encourage your child to do their best and hand in all work on time throughout the entire quarter. A code of "Msg", with a value of zero, will show if there is missing work due to any reason. Absent work needs to be completed within a couple days upon return and late work will be accepted for reduced value up to 2 days late.

Grades will be calculated using these categories:

Assignments, Discussions - 40%

Tests, Quizzes, Projects - 50% and Group Collaboration - 10%

Homework

Time will be allocated during each period for free reading and occasionally a grade will be given for the engagement of this activity. We expect every student to continue reading at home every night for at least 20 minutes. Some students can keep track of their free-read book well enough to take it to and from school to read. However, other students find it easier to keep one book at school and one at home. Please help your child figure out the best routine for them. Homework assignments will consist of nightly reading, weekly IXL assignments, and occasional assignments that will enhance the standard we are working on in class.

Agendas and Absent Work:

Agendas are provided by the school and are a great tool for organizing. Homework is written in every room on the homework chart. If your child is absent, please know there is a secretary in every room keeping track of what they missed and what needs to be completed and handed in. This information along with any worksheets will be placed in their mailbox. Any tests missed due to absence will be on my front board and the student is responsible for finding time to make them up .

Communication

Email us if there are any concerns. You could also write us a note or call the school at 773-535-2640. We will get back to you within 24 hours.

Junior High Math

lebyrnes@cps.edu

Inclusion teacher Mrs. Reilly acreilly@cps.edu (for 6th)

Inclusion teacher Mrs. Roche lzroche@cps.edu (for 7th)

Inclusion teacher Mrs. Snyder cbomalley@cps.edu (for 8th)

Welcome to Junior High Math! I am pleased to be your child's math teacher for the 2023-2024 school year. Our school theme continues, LEGO- Loving Every Growth Opportunity.

***6th Grade Ms. Byrnes' Homeroom Procedures (for Room 115 students):**

Breakfast is served at 7:45- 8:00 every morning in the multi-purpose room. *Please note students start time is 8:00 am. 6th Graders will line up outside the Rotunda doors. Entry is at 8:00 sharp! Dismissal is out the same door at 3:00. Remember cellphones are not allowed on campus. *If you believe it is a necessity for your child to carry a phone to school, an application must be filed and principal approval granted. Anytime on campus that a child's phone is out and viewed by any Cassell Staff Member, it will be confiscated until a parent or guardian can retrieve it from the school office between the hours of 7:40am-3:30pm. Use of a cell phone during school hours will result in disciplinary actions according to the CPS Student Code of Conduct. Please make sure your email address is always updated with Mrs. Pienta to get up to date school announcements and newsletters.

6th Grade Enrichment Schedule

Monday (9:10-10:10) Art

Tuesday (9:10-10:10) Art

Wednesday (9:10-10:10) P.E.

Thursday (9:10-10:10) Drama

Friday (9:10-10:10) Drama

Curriculum:

Our math series we will be using is called Glencoe Math! Glencoe Math is designed to fully address the Common Core State Standards. Within each unit, concepts are organized into chapters that align to clusters and build connections among the individual standards.

IXL:

We will also be using a website called IXL. IXL is a comprehensive learning program offering unlimited math practice across thousands of skills-all which are aligned to the common core standards that aligns directly with our Glencoe Math textbook used in class daily.

IXL provides a personalized learning experience, while motivating students through challenge, competition, exploration, and reward. It allows students to explore new topics and strengthen math skills using interactive practice and examples.

One of the best things about IXL is that your child can access it from home. Please encourage your child to share their progress with you. Recommendations are assigned on Thursday's and due the following Tuesday each week. Those recommendations are aligned with the lessons in our textbook. Students are to aim for a smart score of 80 or higher.

Please note those assignments are able to be redone to earn a higher score. Encourage your child to persevere in problem solving and mastering each of those skills. Mastery of these skills will improve a student's overall success in the classroom.*

Also, ask your child to see any tests or quizzes to earn a bonus of 3 percentage points upon a parent signature

The program is adaptive and will adjust based on your child's demonstrated understanding of the material. All of your child's results will be saved, so you can monitor their progress anytime by clicking on Analytics tab. Students should allow about 20-30 minutes per recommendation.

For on-the-go practice, you can download IXL's free mobile apps for Apple, Android, or Kindle and sign in with your child's username and password. I hope you'll encourage your child to use IXL regularly, I look forward to a year of working together to make learning fun!

Homework:

Homework assignments will be written in student planners. It is the student's responsibility to have their planner every day and utilize it as a tool to stay organized. Expect 20-30 minutes of Math homework every night. Daily homework assignments will be from the student textbook, as well as their weekly IXL assignments. Students will have to keep track of their weekly IXL homework aka "recommendations" themselves. Reminders will be given on Mondays that all weekly IXL assignments are due the following day.

First Quarter we will focus on the following:

6th Grade: Ms. Byrnes & Inclusion teacher Mrs. Reilly

- Ratios and Proportional Relationships: Ratios, Rates, Fractions, Decimals and percent's.
- The Number System-Integers, Factors and Multiples, and Rational Numbers.

7th Grade: MS. Byrnes & Inclusion teacher Mrs. Roche

- Ratios and Proportional Relationships: Ratios and Proportional Reasoning, & Percent's.
- The Number System: operations with integers and rational numbers.

8th Grade: Ms. Byrnes & Inclusion teacher Mrs. Snyder

- Real Numbers, Exponents, and Scientific Notation.
- Expressions and Equations: Equations with one and two variables.

*7th and 8th graders should have purchased a calculator during registration for use at school and for home use.

Calculators are available for purchase from the main office for \$15.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Planners and Absent Work:

Daily Planners are provided by the school and are a great tool for organizing. Homework is written in every room on the homework chart. If your child is absent, please know there is a secretary in every room keeping track of what they missed and what needs to be completed and handed in. This information along with any worksheets will be placed in their mailbox. Junior High Students are responsible for making up any activities or assignments missed due to an absence.

Daily planners are also a great way for teacher-student-parent communication. Please ask your child for their blue card regularly as that is our main communication with parents regarding middle school expectations in all classes.

Grading:

The school wide system is on a 10 point scale: 90-100 is an A, 80-89 is a B, etc. Aspen will be updated weekly and needs to be monitored by a guardian and the student. As a school wide initiative, a proper heading is mandatory for work to be graded. Also, there are no individual extra credit opportunities, so please encourage your child to do their best and hand in all work on time throughout the entire quarter. A code of "Msg", with a value of zero, will show if there is missing work due to any reason. Absent work needs to be completed within a couple days upon return and late work will be accepted for reduced value up to 2 days late. A zero will be entered for group collaboration in the event of an absence.

Formative Assessments (Assignments, Exit Tickets) - **40%**

Summative Assessments (Tests, Quizzes, Projects) - **45%**

Group Collaboration (turn-n-talks) - **15%**

Email: lebyrnes@cps.edu

Sincerely,

Ms. Lauren Byrnes