



Barack Obama Academy of International Studies

515 N. Highland Avenue | Pittsburgh, PA 15206
Phone: 412-529-5980 | Fax: 412-622-5983

September 2016

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Welcome back to a new school year. I will be your child's 8th grade Social Studies/Individuals and Societies teacher and look forward to a great year of learning. We will study U.S History from Colonial times through the Civil War/Reconstruction times.

I would appreciate your assistance in establishing a schedule for nightly homework every Monday through Friday. Written questions, maps, interviews, charts, political cartoons, re-writing or writing of notes, researching for future projects, and studying for quizzes and tests are a few of the assignments that will be coming home in the agenda book. Please make sure you see assignments written in this book. The agenda book is also needed in school to travel to the restroom and locker if they forget something and need to leave class. The agenda book is a tool to keep record of work due and for sending notes to and from home. This book should not be ripped, torn, lost or forgotten.

Every night there should be at least twenty minutes of work being reviewed or completed. Home discussions regarding current events would be instrumental to make connections as we explore U.S.History.

Please note **if** a written assignment does not come home on a Monday through Friday because of a test day; it is your child's responsibility to study their notes along with the spellings of important people, places, and events every night. All written **homework** is assigned on **Day 1** and is to be completed for the next **Day 1** on their class schedule.

The notebook requirement is a one inch binder with a pocket folder. They should also need four tab pages to separate warm ups, class work, homework, and projects. They will need pencils or blue or black eraser mate pens, a red pen, and a ruler. Glue sticks, crayons, markers, and colored pencils will be needed for class projects. There is a small supply of these items to use in the classroom, but your child may want their own art material when completing an assignment. Your child should also have a flash drive or jump drive of 3 gigabytes for the computer to save any printed work for projects throughout the year.

Our school is certified to offer the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (IBMYP). We develop holistic learning and international mindedness in students by actively engaging students in each subject in the six Global Contexts. These areas serve as "lenses" through which students explore ideas, investigate connections across and between subject areas, and apply their knowledge to real world problems.

The Global Contexts are:

Scientific and Technical Innovation: How do we understand the worlds in which we live?

Identities and Relationships: Who am I? Who are we?

Personal and Cultural Expression: What is the nature and purpose of creative expression?

Fairness and Development: What are the consequences of our common humanity?

Orientation in Space and Time: What is the meaning of what and when?

Globalization and Sustainability: How is everything connected?

The grading procedure for Social Studies/Individuals and Societies is based on class participation which includes bringing the binder, the agenda book, the writing tools, and then completing and contributing to the daily work and discussion for class work. The notebook binder needs to be neatly completed and orderly for daily studying and overall success. The homework is a good review practice for knowledge and understanding. Tests, quizzes, participation, and writing/projects make up the remaining points for your child's grade.

A research/writing project will be given during each report card period and the students will need to work at home and visit libraries for proper completion. Students in eighth grade should have detailed paragraphs written in their own words.





Barack Obama Academy of International Studies

515 N. Highland Avenue | Pittsburgh, PA 15206
Phone: 412-529-5980 | Fax: 412-622-5983

Your child will receive all the requirements needed in a checklist or rubric style with the due dates. They will be given time to research in and out of school for these reports or projects.

The Pittsburgh Public Schools grading scale is as follows for each assignment:

- 90-100% is an A,
- 80-89% is a B,
- 70-79% is a C,
- 60-69% is a D.
- 60% and below is an E.

The IB MYP criteria assessment for Humanities focuses on 4 areas. The four areas are:

- A. Knowing and Understanding
- B. Investigating
- C. Communicating
- D. Thinking Critically

The IB programme also works to develop 10 specific attributes to assist students in becoming responsible members of local, national and global communities. The attributes are aimed at having students become more reflective, open-minded, balanced, knowledgeable, caring, principled, and act as thinkers, inquirers, communicators, and lastly being a risk-taker for learning in new ways. These attributes fit in well with our school motto:

“Nothing in life is so complicated, that it cannot be achieved by discipline and hard work.”

Managebac.com

I want to share information for the expectation of your child at Pittsburgh Obama. Your child has been responsible since sixth grade for completing 30 hours of Service and Action for the school year. This entails extracurricular sports/activities and service in or out of school. If your child volunteers at a day care, church, library, school, scouts, community or any event helping others that is a service.

Go on our school’s website under PROGRAMS and click on IBMYP. On the left side click on: Service and Action Hours, and then scroll to the bottom of the page where a large gray and blue button appears with the letters MB. This will take you to our managebac.com site to fill out the required hours. Your child enters his/her school user name and password (Passwords will be distributed in September).

Students will complete the prompted questions and conclude with a reflection before hitting the submit button. Your child will have a teacher check for hours once a month and mark it as completed or if it needs more details. I will explain it in class to the children, but wanted you to know how to visit it for assistance at home.

As a whole, your child will be graded on the above areas in the following way every quarter:

- 10% homework,
- 20% participation,
- 25% class work
- 20% notebook/writing,
- 25% Assessment (tests and quizzes, and projects)





Barack Obama Academy of International Studies

515 N. Highland Avenue | Pittsburgh, PA 15206
Phone: 412-529-5980 | Fax: 412-622-5983

There will be **no** extra credit assignments.

This is an important year for your child to prepare for high school. Focusing on details is very important this year for any work. Please discuss current events with your child to have him/her aware of global news and the impact people have on our earth/world.

If your child is absent for a day, he /she needs to make up work the next day after returning. If it is a long absence, he/she will have a week to make up the work. Please be aware that all missed work must be given to me **two weeks** before the close of grades. Homework slips are signed and kept with the teacher if the work was not completed on time. Your child will lose points for every class day that the work is not turned in. It is imperative that your child be organized for our daily class periods. There is a homework chart with all assignments kept on the wall for any missed days. There is also a designated area for 8th grade to place all turned in work to be graded and to pick up any missed classroom work.

My discipline policy is quite simple, come to class prepared, polite, respectful, punctual, and ready to learn about our U.S. History. Your child will be given a warning to get on task and after 3 warnings; a lunch detention will be assigned to discuss how he/she can become more focused daily. I will make a phone call home or at work if problems continue to create a support plan for your child. If you prefer an e-mail message, please note that on the portion to be returned to me. Please update me with any change of phone numbers or e-mail addresses. I will write a note in the agenda book also with concerns or positive comments from time to time, so be sure to view the agenda book.

We know the middle school years can be difficult, but when proper planning is designed for day and night procedures, success is always around the corner. Coming to class on time and prepared is important. If your child is tardy without an excuse more than four times, he/she will be assigned a week of lunch detention from a referral sent to the office. I will call or e-mail you if this occurs with your child before the fourth time.

The school requests that **no** candy, sunflower seeds, food in general, lotions, or sprays be used in the classroom and **no** phones may be on or out during class time. Coats and hats/hoodies are not to be worn in class, my classroom is air conditioned, so a sweater or sweatshirt should come to class with your child if he/she were to get cold. I know this is a long list of things to remember, but if we all work together in a united effort; the year will be productive and pleasant for everyone.

I look forward to a great school year with your child.

Feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns through notes in the agenda book, school phone (412-529-5980), school phone message 412-529-8109, or e-mail me at kbruno2@pghboe.net

Thank you,

Ms. Karen A. Bruno
Humanities Teacher



Barack Obama Academy of International Studies

515 N. Highland Avenue | Pittsburgh, PA 15206
Phone: 412-529-5980 | Fax: 412-622-5983

I have read this with my child and understand the requirements for this class. Please ask your child to return this part of the form to **Ms. Bruno in Room 132** to ensure helpful communication this school year.

This letter can be found on the Parent's Corner of our website for reference again.

Thanks for our future team work this year! **This is a HW assignment grade for returning the bottom portion.**

Student's Name _____

Section 8- ____ Homeroom Teacher _____ Homeroom Number _____

Parent/Guardian Name _____

E-mail address _____

Current home phone _____

Current cell phone _____

Work Number if permitted to call/times _____

***Please notify me when any above information changes for great communication between parent and school.**

Student signature _____

Date : _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Date: _____

Principal Approval _____

If there is anything I should be aware of while teaching your child, please document it on the back of this paper. (Allergies, fears, difficulties.....)

