September, 2016

Dear Parents/Guardians & Design Students:

Welcome to the 2016-2017 school year! I am writing to introduce myself, in case we haven’t met, as well as provide you with the framework and expectations for my IB MYP Visual Arts classes. My name is Ms. Karin Coyne and I am your child’s art teacher at Pittsburgh Obama. I am looking forward to working with your child and guiding him/her through the new experience of learning in a rigorous, NON-COMPUTER-BASED technology design classroom. I have seen the results and know well the expansive possibilities that the IB MYP curriculum offers our students.

The following information will assist you in understanding expectations for the course and in having a productive and successful year:

The Technology Design course will use a Project-Based Learning instructional approach. With project based learning, students complete technology design projects primarily as groups that focus on problem-solving tasks. Students develop critical thinking skills as they complete theme-related activities using the four steps of the IB Technology Design Cycle and their shared strengths in the context of a group. Intercultural awareness is woven into the projects as students learn and discuss, using the practical and creative thinking skills needed to solve problems. Students will use of their own ingenuity and ability to experiment, make mistakes, plan and execute a project.

The International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (IBMYP) assesses students based on the assessment criteria in Design:

- Inquiry & Analyzing
- Developing Ideas
- Creating the Solution
- Evaluating

This process allows the designer to go from identifying a design opportunity to the testing and evaluation of a solution. This process leads to the creation of a final solution to solve a problem. Throughout the school year, students will be assessed according to the above criteria either in part or in whole, depending on the assignment. Students will receive rubrics explaining the grading scale prior to completing the assignment.

**Necessary Materials:**

- **Process Journal** - Book of drawing paper
- **Pencil/pen** – to complete class assignments
- **Agenda Book** - to travel during our class time

**Process Journal**

Each student is asked to purchase a Process Journal (PJ) either at school, from me, for $5.00 or from another retailer; the PJ which is an integral component of IBMYP Design. (If you are experiencing financial difficulties, please send a note requesting that the school provide a book for your child.) This Process Journal will contain your child’s progress through the different stages of the design cycle.
process. They will experiment with ideas, research topics, compile sources, brainstorm issues, sketch possible solutions, revise, and evaluate their own and their group work.

**Grading Scale:**
All work is graded on a percentage basis, but is weighted according to the type of assignment.

- Theoretical (Tests/Quizzes): 35%
- Practical: (Classwork & Project) 35%
- Participation: 20%
- Homework: 10%*

90-100% = A    80-89% = B    70-79% = C    60-69% = D    59%-0% = E

**Make-Up Work:**
*Class work is not accepted late, unless* a child is *legally absent* from school on the day it was assigned. If the student is absent one day, he or she has one day to complete the missing work; if absent two days, two days for make-up, etc.

**Absences due to school activities** - Students missing class due to school activities are expected to get all assignments for the day before leaving for the activity and to turn them in **ON THE DUE DATE**. For quizzes/tests that are missed, students will need to speak with the teacher to make arrangements.

**Extra Credit**
*NO EXTRA CREDIT.* Students are expected to complete given assignments. If there is something coming between your child and their progress, please talk to me about it; I’m flexible and really just want your child to be successful.

Please remind your child to use his/her in-class time efficiently. Your child’s grade will largely reflect his/her effort and progress. My philosophy and teaching approach emphasize the importance of engagement in the process over the value of the final product. If a student works hard, they will succeed in my class! I expect your child to come to tech class on time and ready to work. I demand that your child treat everyone in my classroom with respect. I also expect your child to follow the rules and procedures of the classroom, which has been clearly outlined to all students and posted in my classroom. Please don’t hesitate to contact me by telephone at the school at (412) 529-7252, by cell phone at (412)841-1253, or by email at kcoyne1@pghboe.net with any questions, comments, or concerns. I look forward to hearing from you and working with your child this school year.

All the Best,

Karin Coyne
IB MYP Visual Arts and Technology Design Teacher

Approved: Ms. Aisha Robinson, Director