September 2016

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Bonjour et bienvenue à la classe de français! Hello and welcome to French class at the Barack Obama Academy of International Studies. My name is Madame Hayllar, and I would like to tell you a little bit about myself. I began learning French as a middle school student in Pittsburgh Public Schools, and I’ve never stopped. As a high school student, I travelled abroad twice on school trips. My junior year in college, I spent a semester abroad in Angers, France. I have taught for several years in districts around Pittsburgh, and it means a lot to me return as a teacher for the district that nurtured me as a student.

Please review this letter carefully, as it outlines my course, my expectations, and my procedures. In French 6-8 we will work on developing fundamental skills in French. This includes, but is not limited to: a variety of thematic vocabulary, basic grammatical structures and conventions, and conjugations of verbs. While all four domains (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) are developed, emphasis is placed on speaking. The primary goal is for students to feel comfortable communicating in French.

A student in International Baccalaureate Middle School Programme (IBMYP) will be expected to use their knowledge of French to:

- Communicate information, ideas, and opinions
- Understand and appropriately use structures and vocabulary
- Provide and request information in both spoken and written contexts
- Engage actively in oral production using comprehensible pronunciation and intonation
- Take part in formal and informal exchanges related to the areas of interaction and to cultural and international issues

**Course Materials and supplies:**

Students will be using the Discovering French Nouveau series in addition to other materials from various French speaking countries. We will practice our speaking, reading, writing, and listening skills every day.

Students must bring a binder with them to class every day to transport assignments, papers, and for keeping a class notebook (le cahier). The notebook will be organized in class and will be subject to periodic checks for completion.

Every day, students will bring their binders, their assignments, their agenda books, and a pencil. If students come to class unprepared, it will affect their participation grade.
**Homework:**

Homework will be assigned several times a week and should take 10-20 minutes to complete. Even on days when there is no written homework, students should look over their vocabulary and other notes for at least 10 minutes a day. Unless specified otherwise, homework is due the next class period. On most assignments, there will be the opportunity to correct errors and resubmit for an increased score. Late homework will be accepted at a 20% deduction for every day late. Homework marked late or incomplete cannot receive full credit.

This year, we are partnering with a local company, Duolingo, to help enhance students’ language skills. Their website is www.duolingo.com, but they also have a free app that I am strongly encouraging students to download to their smartphones if that option is available to them. I will also be using the Remind app to send out reminders of upcoming due dates and events.

**Absences, Make-Up Work, Tardies:**

If a student misses class, they are expected to check the assignment book on the front table to see what lessons they missed. They should then check the appropriately marked drawer and get any handouts they missed. Students have one day to turn in make-up work from an excused absence. For example if a student is absent on Monday and returns the next day, s/he has until Thursday to submit missed work.

Students may not use class time to make up missed work, including tests and quizzes. Students should make arrangements to make up tests and quizzes with me before or after school, or during their lunch. Being absent the day before or the day of a pre-announced test or quiz does not excuse you from taking the quiz the day you return. If the absence is unexcused, no make-up work will be given.

Students are expected to arrive on time to class. If a student arrives late without a note from a teacher, the tardy will be recorded. After three class tardies, the student will receive a phone call home. Four tardies will result in a lunch detention.

**Grading:**

All French courses will use IB MYP rubrics to assess students’ growing ability (based on achievement levels 1-8) in the following fields:

- Comprehending spoken and visual text
- Comprehending written and visual text
- Communicating in response to spoken, written and visual text
- Using language in spoken and written form
All Language Acquisition courses at the Obama Academy will use the same grading scale.

**Participation and Classwork** - 20% - This includes Warm Ups and any other assignments given and collected in class, raising hands to answer questions, completing pair work, speaking French in class, following along with in-class activities, etc.

**Written Assessments** - 30% - These include vocabulary and grammar quizzes, quick writes, unit tests and projects that are not presented in front of the class.

**Homework** - 10% - This includes any homework assigned in class, as well as quarterly binder checks.

**Speaking and Listening Assessments** - 40% - These include unit speaking tests, class conversations, presentations, etc.

No extra credit assignments will be given.

**Academic Integrity:**

No copying or cheating is allowed. Any copying or cheating will result in a zero for all parties involved, as well as a conference with the students and further punitive action, if deemed necessary. The use of online translators is strictly forbidden and very detectable. If a student uses an online translator, it will result in a zero on the assignment.

**Class rules:**

The rules of the classroom are as follows:

1. Listen to the teacher and other students.
2. Respect the teacher, other students, and their possessions.
3. Speak French!
4. No food or drinks in class.
5. Raise your hand to speak or leave your seat.

Failure to follow the rules will result in a verbal warning. After three verbal warnings in class, students will be assigned a lunch detention with me. If more than three lunch detentions are assigned, or for more serious infractions, further disciplinary actions may be pursued.
**Contacting me:**

I am always happy to hear from parents and guardians of my students. If you ever have any questions or concerns, the best way to reach me is by email: mhayllar1@pghboe.net. You can also call or text me directly at 412-515-7985.

I look forward to working with you and your child this year.

Amicalement,

Melanie Hayllar  
Middle School French Teacher

Approved: ____________________________, Principal