August, 2015

Dear Student and Parent/Guardian:

Welcome to Art Elective for 9th/10th grade at Obama. The following information will assist you in having a productive and successful semester. This letter is posted on the Obama website where you can view it for reference throughout this semester.

COURSE DESCRIPTION
IB Visual Arts courses value the **process** of creating artwork as much as the finished **product**; the two elements combined tell us what students have experienced, learned and attempted to convey. Art Elective for 9th/10th grade is a high school level visual arts survey course which lasts for one semester. The aims of this course are to enable students to investigate various forms of visual arts in a variety of media, engage in producing, appreciating and evaluating works of art, and build confidence in responding visually and creativity to personal and cultural experiences. A variety of strategies are used to engage the students: observation, experimentation, practice and development of techniques, expression of ideas, reflection on existing artwork, and reflection on one’s own ongoing artistic development. Intercultural awareness is woven into the curriculum as students learn about and discuss art and artists from a variety of cultures working in numerous media.

NECESSARY MATERIALS
Every student is **required** to purchase a sketchbook for use as an Arts Process Journal. These sketchbooks are available for purchase in the classroom for $5. Students may continue to use a sketchbook that they may have purchased previously from the school and which meets the size and binding requirements (5.5 x 8 inches, hardbound).

The Arts Process Journal is a visual and narrative record of the investigation, production, reflection and critical responses of each student during this semester. This document will clearly show a progression of the creative process as the student moves through each project. The Journal, a pencil with an eraser and a black or dark blue pen are required for class every day. Other art supplies that are useful to have at home include drawing pencils of varying degrees of softness, assorted colored pencils, erasers, ruler, scissors, and a glue stick. It is also highly recommended for students to have access to the Internet and a printer either at home or at a local library.

IB MYP ASSESSMENT CRITERIA
The International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme assesses students based on four assessment criteria in Visual Arts:

A: Knowledge and Understanding
B: Developing Skills
C: Thinking Creatively
D: Responding
Throughout this semester class, students will be assessed according to these four criteria either in part or in whole, depending on the assignment. Students will receive a rubric explaining the specific expectations prior to completing the assignment.

GRADING SCALE
The student’s grade will be based on four categories as set forth in the PPS Arts Grading Scale:

- Practical 40%
- Theory 40%
- Participation 10%
- Assessment 10%

All assignments (including the due date, points assigned, and the grading category above) will be posted in the grade book (eSchoolPLUS). Assignments and grades will be available for parents to monitor through the Home Access Center (HAC).

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

EXTRA CREDIT
There will be no opportunities for extra credit. Students should make every effort to utilize class time and homework time appropriately to complete all assignments and achieve the highest grade possible during the report period and not rely on extra credit to boost their grade.

MAKE-UP WORK
Students who are absent are expected to make-up lost studio time during appropriate time periods such as QRT or afterschool (with permission). If you miss a test or quiz due to an absence from school you have the same number of days you were gone to make up the test. Students who begin to miss significant class time due to school activities should meet with the teacher to see if additional arrangements need to be made.

HOMEWORK
Homework assignments are to be completed in the Arts Process Journal and typically relate to the ongoing studio assignment. Regular assignments are clearly articulated and posted in the classroom. Students are also expected to regularly create self-initiated entries in the Journal. The self-initiated entries may include reflections on daily studio work, new vocabulary, gallery/museum visits, sketches of ideas for studio work, artist research, cultural research, connections to other subjects, drawing from life, media experimentation, etc.

LATE WORK
Studio assignments are due on the date assigned unless a specific extension is granted. Due to the nature of art-making, extensions may be granted but only to students who have excellent attendance and participation. There are no extensions for students who fail to use class time properly or who have numerous absences and have not made any attempt to make up lost studio time. My policy is 10% off
for every day that the assignment is late.

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS
It should be self-evident that learning and art-making take place best in an orderly and clean studio. Student must do their part in this regard. Please take care to follow these procedures daily:

- Report to class on time. Late students will be expected to present a signed agenda book. The school-wide tardy policy will be followed. Any student reporting to class tardy more than four times during one report period will receive a U in citizenship.
- The “NO TOUCHING” rule is paramount. If the project is not yours, don’t touch it. If you have not learned what something is or how to use it, don’t touch it. You can easily harm someone else’s work, damage expensive equipment, or hurt yourself or someone else.
- Students are to get their work out promptly upon entering class and obtain the necessary tools & materials for the current assignment.
- Be seated and read the daily objective (What/Why/How) on the board. Complete the warm-up.
- Bring your Journal to class daily as well as the required art supplies.
- Wait until daily announcements, instruction, and expectations have been discussed before seeking individual assistance.
- Do not seek individual assistance every day. Your studio work is YOUR work, not mine.

Experiment and learn. Do not waste studio time.
- Stay in your assigned seat unless additional materials are needed. Obtain materials quickly and quietly without disturbing other students.
- Take care of personal needs before class.
- Do not bring food or beverages into the studio.
- Personal grooming is to be done outside of class.
- All electronic devices are turned off and out of sight.
- Leave all tables and stools in their proper position.
- Leave the room clean and orderly. Proper clean-up procedures must be followed daily, including putting all materials, tools, and work in their proper place; brushes, palettes, etc. must be cleaned according to instructions; and the table must be cleaned.
- When you have finished cleaning up, return to your seat a work in your Journal or wait quietly for the bell.
- Respect the studio and your classmates.
- Conversations may be permitted during studio time but voices must be kept at the “indoors” level. Be respectful and do not disturb others.
- Complaints or concerns about grades, policies, etc. are handled on an appointment basis. This gives me an opportunity to adequately hear your concerns and handle them appropriately.

When these rules are not followed, the following consequences might be applied in part or whole:
- Verbal warning
- Loss of class participation points
- Written warning
• Written assignment
• Lunch or afterschool detention
• Phone call or written communication to the home
• Student/Teacher conference
• Teacher/Parent conference
• Referral to the office

CONTACT INFORMATION
The best way to reach me throughout the year is by e-mail at dhetrick1@pghboe.net. I typically respond to e-mail the same day. Voicemail can be left at 412-529-8759; I typically respond to voicemail immediately after school. I can also be reached by leaving a message at the Obama main office: 412-529-5980. Please allow 24 hours for me to return your call.

I look forward to a wonderful year with you!

Sincerely,

Ms. Donna Hetrick
IB Visual Art Teacher

Approved: Ms. Aisha Robinson, Director