September, 2016

Dear MYP Parents and Students,

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you and your child to English 1 CAS/MYP at Obama Academy 6-12. This letter is designed to introduce you both to the course and discuss what is expected of the student and what the student can expect from the class.

Course Description
This class will foster reading and writing skills through the student’s exploration of “self” “other” and “his or her place in the world/community”. The primary objective of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program in language and Literature is the development of critical thinking skills reflected in both written and oral communication. We will achieve this objective throughout the course by writing and analyzing various genres. Some course materials we will explore, but will not be limited to include:

- To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee (Summer reading)
- Go Set a Watchman by Harper Lee
- Selections from The Illustrated Man by Ray Bradbury along with various short stories
- selected poems from Perrine’s Sound and Sense and Crossing the Danger Water, Deirdre Mullane, ed.
- The Odyssey by Homer
- A Midsummer Night’s Dream by William Shakespeare
- Macbeth by William Shakespeare
- The Metamorphosis by Franz Kafka

Academic Expectations and Responsibilities
The CAS Program:
The program has been designed to meet the special needs of gifted students for individualized, accelerated, and enriched learning. CAS students will be expected to:

- complete the summer reading component.
- pass quizzes and tests at an 80% mastery level or above.
- complete all assignments and projects.
- define and apply key literary terms.
- analyze and interpret material presented in class and through reading.
- respond orally and in writing to material presented in class and to independent and assigned reading.
- pass District, State, and benchmark assessments at the proficient or advanced level.
- comprehend, explain, analyze, apply, and evaluate concepts and ideas presented in a variety of media.
- write for a variety of purposes.
- participate in class discussion.
- prepare and present formal speeches.
- research a variety of topics, using primary and secondary sources and verifying the accuracy of information.

Materials
Three ring binder (clear view cover), post-it notes, index cards, pens
Class work, Homework, Late work

In this class you will be responsible for a portfolio (a three ring binder with a clear cover) in which you will keep all of your class work. A reader's/writer’s journal is mandatory and will be used daily whether in class or for homework. Homework is also given daily in various forms, including lengthy reading assignments. Summative Assessments at the end of each unit are not always the typical formal essay. You will develop scrapbooks, perform scenes, and even participate in a tea party. No matter the assignment, it is expected to be submitted on the given due date. To be regarded “on time”, work must be completed and submitted by the beginning of the period on the day it is due. Printing assignments during class time or having a flash drive is not considered “on time”. Unfinished homework is not accepted. Short homework assignments will be stamped “on time” only at the beginning of the period and are not accepted if late. Larger assignments may be turned in late with a 5% penalty for each day late. In the case of excused absences, your work is due upon your return. Work due on the day of an unexcused absence receives a zero. Missed assessments must be completed no later than one day from a student’s return. Please make an appointment with me for the morning or after school, otherwise the missed assessment results in a zero, this includes daily reading quizzes. There will be no opportunities for extra credit, so please take your work seriously. Plagiarism, in any form, will not be tolerated and the school’s plagiarism policy will be enforced.

Grading Guidelines/IBMYP Assessment Criteria

You can expect formative and summative assessments throughout the course. Writing (portfolio work and culminating projects) is 20% of your overall grade, class work 25%, participation 20%, assessment 25%, and homework 10%. All culminating projects will be graded using the MYP Language and Literature Criterion: Analyzing, Organizing, Producing Text and Using Language. The grading scale used is as follows:

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

Behavioral Expectations

Class behavior is to be reflective of your own high standards and the expectations of your parents/guardians, administrators, and teachers (classroom rules are posted and will be discussed). Be present: the attendance policy in effect for this class will be the policy established by the Pittsburgh Public School system (information on this policy is provided in your student handbook). If you are absent for a legitimate reason, present your signed excused absence slip to me upon your return to class. Be prompt: arrive to class and be in your seat when the bell rings. Be prepared: have books, paper, writing utensils and an open mind every day. Be an active learner: participation is vital in this class; let your voice be heard.

You will be expected to assume major responsibility for your achievement and development in this course. If you have any problems or concerns, please do not hesitate to meet with me or email any questions or concerns to kmckrell1@pghboe.net. Remember that questions are at the heart of learning! Teachers are here to help. I am looking forward to an enjoyable and productive year with you.

“Nothing will work unless you do.” ~Maya Angelou

Sincerely,

Ms. K. McKrell
Obama Academy 6-12
(412) 529-2053
English/Theatre Arts Teacher
Musical Director

Approved: ______________________________________(
(Thurman S. Wilson, Asst. Superintendent, Principal)

We are an equal rights and opportunity school district. | Parent Hotline: 412-622-7920 | www.pps.k12.pa.us