

August 2017

Dear Students and Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to eighth grade at Vernon Center Middle School. We hope you have been enjoying your summer and are looking forward to the new school year.

You have been assigned to team 8A. The teachers on your team include:

- Mrs. Cockerham – Special Education
- Mrs. Zorca – French and Spanish
- Mr. Miller - Social Studies
- Ms. Roggi - Mathematics
- Mr. Savignano - Language Arts
- Mrs. Skoronski – Science

While adolescence may be a challenging time for students, our team is prepared to provide a positive classroom experience with a focus on common and consistent expectations for mutual respect and cooperation. Students will belong to a community which shares common goals and whose members are encouraged to be supportive of each other. Appropriate and respectful behavior is expected and no student will be allowed to disrupt or interfere with the education of others.

Organization is very important in middle school. As you prepare to purchase school supplies, please consider the following suggestions. Since students will be using school laptops, we suggest only one binder with dividers for each class. Talk to your child about the best organizational plan for him/her before you make your purchase. A plan book/agenda will be provided by the school so you do not need to purchase an assignment pad.

Additional items that your child may/will need include:

1. Subject dividers
2. Loose leaf notebook paper
3. Pencils, erasers, blue or black pens, red correcting pens, and colored pencils.
The following types will not be accepted in class: metallic ink pens and light colored pens.
4. A pencil case that fits into your binder
5. 1-subject spiral notebook for math
6. A calculator, a dictionary, and a metric ruler or their equivalents will be needed for home use
7. Grade appropriate reading book(s) for SOAR

We'd also like to remind you to continue with your summer reading. Remember to read your summer reading book and bring it to school on the first day. A follow-up assessment will accompany this assignment.

Affixed to this letter is a label indicating your homeroom assignment for eighth grade. The last two numbers of the assignment indicate the room number. Grade eight students will report directly to their homeroom listed on the label at the 7:32 a.m. bell on the first day of school.

As parents you have access to the parent portal for ASPEN. You can track your student's progress on assignments throughout the year. Your ASPEN password should remain the same. If you have any issues with accessing ASPEN, please contact the guidance department at VCMS.

During the course of the year, the 8A teachers will respond promptly to any email message from a parent; please feel free to contact us at any point once the school year begins. Our email addresses are: melanie.cockerham@vernonct.org, gabriela.zorca@vernonct.org, keith.miller@vernonct.org, jennifer.roggi@vernonct.org, michael.savignano@vernonct.org, and alicia.skoronski@vernonct.org.

Finally, in order to prepare students for the rigors of high school, VCMS is implementing a schoolwide release of responsibility rubric for each grade. The expectations in the areas of **Grades and Self-Assessment** and **Extra Help** are defined below:

	First Trimester	Second and Third Trimesters
Grades and Self-Assessment	Students evaluate grades themselves from Aspen to be discussed at regular intervals with their homeroom or advisory teacher throughout the trimester – they take initiative at appropriate times to ask about missing work.	Students responsible for all grade information via Aspen/Google Classroom.
Extra Help	Students are recommended to sign up for extra help, but must sign up themselves. (Teachers no longer sign up students for extra help).	Students self-assess and sign up for or request extra help.

We hope that you enjoy the remainder of your summer break. We are looking forward to the new school year.

Sincerely,

The 8A teachers