Dear Parents, August 19, 2016

Welcome back to St. Mark’s School! I am excited to begin a new school year working with your child. In the hopes of streamlining the course information for your student, I have compiled the attached documents for the subjects I teach. We have reviewed this once in class. Please review again together and return this letter signed by both parent and student to indicate your receipt of the syllabi. This signed page is worth 5 points.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don’t hesitate to contact me at [awolbach@stmarksboise.org](mailto:awolbach@stmarksboise.org).

I have read, I understand, and I agree to the St. Mark’s 6th Grade STEAM and GRITT syllabi.

Student’s Name (Please Print):\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Student’s Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent’s Name (Please Print):\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent’s Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent’s e-mail:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Instructor Information:**

Instructor: Mrs. Alissa Wolbach

[awolbach@stmarksboise.org](mailto:awolbach@stmarksboise.org)

www.stmarksmiddleschool.weebly.com

**Course:**

6th Grade STEAM

Course Length: year round, 1-2 days 45 min. periods/week

No Text

**Materials Needed:**

* Quad Ruled Composition Notebook
* Blue or black pens
* Calculator
* Scissors

**Course Description:**

STEAM is the acronym for science, technology, engineering, art and math. STEAM education is at the heart of today’s high-tech, high-skill global economy. For America to remain economically competitive, our next generation of leaders – the students of today –must develop the critical-reasoning and problem-solving skills that will help make them the most productive in the world.

STEAM education engages students in activities, projects, and problem-based learning, which provides hands-on classroom experiences. Students create, design, build, discover, collaborate and solve problems while applying what they learn in math and science.

Additionally, there will be time set aside in this program for work on typing and keyboarding skills. There will be weekly homework that goes home to be completed and returned. The goal is for students to be working on becoming more fluent in typing in preparation for high school and beyond.

**Course Overview: Semester 1**

The first semester’s curriculum will begin with defining what engineering is and exploring the engineering design process. From here, the class will be introduced to Future Cities, applying what they have learned regarding the design process to the Future Cities design and building project. Students will be hard at work developing skills in the areas of technology, project management, teamwork, and engineering.

**Course Overview: Semester 2**

6th grade students will use the 2nd semester exploring climate and weather with hands application including weather making and weather tracking. In addition, students will have an opportunity to explore robotics and then assemble a six-foot working roller coaster.

**Course:**

6th Grade Gritt

Class Length: 1 45 min. class period/week

Text: No Text

**Course Description:**

**Goal 1:**

The idea of Grit was developed by psychologist Dr. Angela Lee Ducksworth and is a person’s ability to persevere through a challenging situation or goal over a long period of time. This course is going to help students understand how they can develop grit and use it in their everyday lives. We will investigate grit, people in their lives who have displayed grit and how they can use grit in school, home, and in other activities.

**Goal 2:**

This school year we will also focus on developing effective leaders. Students will be taught to reflect upon and practice Stephen Covey’s *7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. This program empowers young people to make positive, effective, and responsible choices by introducing and reinforcing the 7 Habits, a set of leadership and life skills. Below is an introduction to each of the 7 Habits that we will be focusing on this year.

**Goal 3:**

The final goal of this course is to help the 6th grade students who are new to middle school to learn to organize themselves so they can be as successful as possible. We will also focus on study skills and strategies for students to utilize this year. Study time, tutoring and overall assistance to the students will be provided in this class.

**Course Overview:**

**Habit 1: Be Proactive (September/October)**

To be proactive means to take responsibility for your choices and behaviors.

Habit 1: Be Proactive, is the key to all of the other habits; that’s why it comes first. Be Proactive says, “I am the leader of my own life. I am the leader for whether I’m happy or sad. I am the leader of how I react to other people or situations. ”Talk to your children about how they are the leader of taking care of themselves, taking care of their things, reacting/not reacting to other people’s comments, and planning ahead.

**Habit 2: Begin with the End In Mind (November)**

Begin with the End in Mind means to think about how you would like something to turn out- before getting started. Reading a recipe before cooking or looking at a map before leaving on a trip is beginning with the end in mind. For children thinking about what they want a picture or a project to look like before starting or looking at the cover of a jigsaw puzzle before putting it together is to begin with the end in mind.

**Habit 3: Put First Things First (December)**

Put First Things First means to decide what is most important and to take care of first. Thinking about what needs to be done tomorrow or by the end of the week can be overwhelming, especially for children. Through practice, children can learn to think of which things are the most important and take care of them first. This allows children (and adults) to be less stressed. For example, if children can tell you they need a piece of poster board on Thursday or cupcakes on Monday, everyone is able to better prepare. Put First Things First becomes an important skill as your child advances grade levels.

These first three habits give students the strong foundation to be leaders of themselves and their choices.

***Habit 1: Be Proactive***

***Habit 2: Begin with the End in Mind***

***Habit 3: Put First Things First***

**Habit 4: Think-Win-Win (January)**

Think Win-Win is the first of the three habits that address relationships. They teach us how to better interact with others. Think Win-Win is the belief that everyone can win. It’s not you or me, it’s both of us. It’s a belief that there are enough good things for everyone. It’s being able to be happy when good things happen to other people. To be able to Think Win-Win, it is important to be strong in Habits 1, 2, and 3.

**Habit 5: Seek to Understand (February)**

Seek First to Understand, Then to be Understood means that it is better to listen first and to talk second. This habit is best when listening is taught and practiced as a skill. Simply put, we have two ears and one mouth and should use them accordingly.

**Habit 6: Synergize (March)**

Habit 6, Synergize, is achieved when two or more people work together to create a better solution than either would have thought of alone. It’s not your way or my way, but a better way.

Think of 1 + 1 = 3 (or more).

How is that possible? Well, 1 person + another person = 2 ideas + many, many more that neither of them would have thought of alone. It’s taking good ideas and making them better by working together, looking for a third alternative. Synergy is a great tool for families.

**Habit 7: Sharpening the Saw (April)**

Habit 7 reminds us that we are more productive when we are in balance; body, brain, heart, and soul. If one area is being ignored or overused, the rest will feel the results. A good analogy for children is a car needing all four tires; as leaders of themselves, they need to take care of all four parts of them.

**Expectations:**

Students are expected to adhere to the St. Mark’s student handbook and classroom rules at all times.

Students are expected to be in their assigned seats with all materials for class within 2 minutes of entering the classroom.

No food or drinks allowed in the classroom with the exception of a water bottle.

Five hall passes will be issued each quarter. The intent of the hall pass is to reward students who manage their time and come prepared to class each day. Passes are intended to be used to go to the bathroom during class time or visit a cubby due to forgotten books or supplies. Each pass is worth 5 extra credit points to be used towards homework each quarter. Passes cannot be pushed forward into the following quarter. Passes will not be re-issued if lost or stolen.

**Instructional Strategy:**

The learning environment will consist of various strategies to facilitate each child’s learning. Traditional lecturing and note taking will be supported and complimented with collaborative group discussions, activities and project-based learning opportunities.

**Participation:**

Students are expected to show up ready and willing to learn, engaged in classroom discussions and projects. Notebooks, writing utensils, and materials needed for class are expected to be brought to the classroom each day. Points will be lost if students have to be re-directed in their learning on more than one occasion, if students are not prepared with their learning materials, or lack engagement in the learning process. 10 points are allocated to each student each day with 1 pt. removed for each offense. These instances will be recorded.

**Engineer Notebook (STEAM):**

Students will be required to keep an engineering notebook, similar to a notebook used by actual engineers. They will record input and information delivered in the way of notes and research, as well as designs, drawing, data, and reflections. I will occasionally perform random notebook checks to ensure students are keeping up their notebooks in an organized fashion and utilizing them appropriately in their learning. Notebooks will be collected each quarter and given a grade based on a rubric I will provide to the students. Periodic self-evaluations and peer-evaluations will be conducted as self-assessment and to provide good feedback to the students.

**Homework:**

All homework is due at the beginning of the next class period unless stated otherwise during class. Homework should be completed to the best of the student’s ability. Some assignments will be graded for completion while others will be graded for correctness.

Homework is assigned to reinforce concepts taught during a lesson. Homework is also used as a tool to encourage students to effectively manage their time outside of school. There will be time in class for students to complete many of their assignments, assuming that students are using their time wisely.

**Late work:** A student will receive a zero in the grade book for an assignment not turned in. If the assignment is not turned in by the due day, a mark of 50% at best will be earned. Work may be turned in late up until the last date of the unit for up to half credit.

**Excused absences:** If a student has an excused absence, make up work will be accepted. The student has the number of days they were absent plus one to hand in make-up work. Students can e-mail, call, or speak with the teacher during times of availability to receive missed assignments. Most assignments and presentations can also be found on the St. Mark’s middle school website found at [www.stmarksmiddleschool.weebly.com](http://www.stmarksmiddleschool.weebly.com). **It is the student’s responsibility to make up missed work due to an absence.**

**School-related absences:** Students absent for school related activities need to obtain their work before being gone. Work missed during a class period is due the next class period.

**Quizzes and Exams:**

Quizzes will be announced at least one class period and exams will be announced at least three class period prior to the actual assessment. Missing the class before a quiz or exam for school activities will not excuse a student from the quiz or exam, although the teacher reserves the right to consider circumstances on an individual basis. Quizzes or exams missed due to illness must be made up within a timely fashion**. Students are responsible for scheduling a time to make up the quiz or exam.**

**Grading:**

* Exams, quizzes, projects: 50%
* Homework, Class Work, Notebook: 40%
* Participation: 10%

**Power School:**

Power School is the computer grading program used by St. Mark’s School. Both parents and students are expected to check Power School regularly. This program is the primary means by which grades and progress will be communicated to parents and students; however, many instances may require communications via email or telephone. Student grades will be updated to the PowerSchool system each Wednesday.

\*Please note, a “blank” for a grade means the assignment has not been graded. A “zero” for a grade means the student did not turn the assignment in.

**I am available before and after school if extra help is warranted. Please make an appointment in advance to ensure I am on campus. If you need to contact me regarding questions or concerns, please do so at my school email address** [**awolbach@stmarksboise.org**](mailto:awolbach@stmarksboise.org)**. The class website is another resource to find missing assignments. The website can be found at www.stmarksmiddleschool.weebly.com.**