**Fitzgerald**

Dear Parent,

I thought I would send home a note prior to conferences to remind parents of our grading in social studies this year. As conferences are early, only two weeks after curriculum night, I am still finishing grading quizzes, notes, and discussions that came in as our work got up to speed last week. These grades will all be returned Friday or Tuesday and even more will be posted by conferences in two weeks. Parents should feel free to email, call, or come to the next conferences, if they want more information. But of course I would be happy to see anyone tonight who has more general questions.

Virginia Fitzgerald

**Grading**

All graded work will be within seven skill areas: discussion, data displays, notes, reflecting information learned on tests and quizzes, working with primary sources, and writing. Each skill area will be introduced one-at-a-time at the beginning of the year. As it is introduced, students will together brainstorm qualities that would lead to success in that skill and then focus and organize their brainstorm into a list of the five qualities necessary for success in that skill. All work in the skill areas will be in grade-level content expectation topics. So students will be learning the information as they develop the skills they need for future success.

Every example of work will be assessed on a 10 point scale based on whether the work demonstrates the qualities of success in that skill area. The qualities that are lacking will be indicated as the qualities the student should work on to improve in that skill area. The students have a folder in the room to keep their returned work and the grading sheet that notes the qualities they are currently working to improve.

10 - mastery/above and beyond - all qualities shown

9 - excellent - 4 of 5 qualities shown

8 - good - 3 of 5 qualities shown

7 - basic - 2 of 5 qualities shown

6 - below basic expectations - 1 of 5 qualities shown

5 - not currently demonstrating this skill or no qualities shown

Grades will be posted on MyRCS, which has this note as to the above scale so students and parents can assess current progress. But the class grade will not be averaged mathematically by the program. Parents will thus see n/a, for not available, on the Thursday emails but can see all individual grades by clicking on the class in the email and entering MyRCS directly. At marking periods, students will self-assess, take their assessment home to share with their parents, and return this self-assessment to me.

The assessment will allow them to

* note the qualities they have mastered and those they are working on in each area,
* state what level they believe they should currently be assessed at in each skill area,
* and what final grade they believe is reflected by their level of success in the skill areas.

I will then take this self-assessment shared with parents into consideration when I set their marking period grades.

If a trend toward improvement in a skill area or in skills overall can be perceived, achieving a greater number of the sought after qualities than at first were achieved, this trend will be acknowledged. If the number of qualities demonstrated in a skill fluctuates or the overall performance based on different skills varies, the average will be considered.

Students will not retest or redo work for a higher grade, though they may do so for their own goals, as students can improve their grade by focusing on achieving the qualities needed in future work.

Please see the website for the grading sheets listing the qualities necessary for success in each of the skill areas we have developed so far.