

Dear Sixth Graders & Parents,

Welcome to 6th Grade at The Franklin School of Innovation! It takes courage to begin any new endeavor and this one is no exception. You and your child are entering a place that is growing, expanding, changing, and always learning. Each one of us is an integral building block for the culture we all envision and, while that is exciting, it is also a big responsibility for students, parents, and teachers alike. The sixth grade team wanted to introduce ourselves, our classes, and a few expectations we have for our grade-level.

**From students**, we expect a willingness to grow, to realize that no matter what your past school experience has been or where you are on the academic continuum, there is always room for us all to learn and become better people. We expect students to treat our people and our spaces with respect. We expect students to strive to be visible and valuable in and out of class and to be ever mindful of their own contribution to our growing culture. We are all responsible for what kind of school FSI ultimately becomes.

**From our parents**, the biggest thing we can ask for is patience. As with any new endeavor, the ability to be flexible and adjust on the fly is invaluable. Please assume best intent from us. Our team is made up of people who are deeply invested in every child in our care. We want exactly what you want--namely, the best learning and growing environment your child can have. Teachers, students, and classmates spend an awful lot of time together over the course of a school year. If there are conflicts, concerns, or needs (and there will be), please approach us as teammates in raising and educating your child. Our respectful cooperation is the best example we can present to our kids.

**From your teachers**, you can expect us to come to know your child well on an academic and a personal level. You can expect us to make decisions based upon your child's best interest. You can expect us to help them, to guide them, to encourage them, to model the things we ask of them, to build them up, to communicate, to push them to do more than they ever thought they could. And, most of all, you can expect us to love them. Every now and then it may look like tough-love, but it's always love. Our goal for every student is that they will be a better person for having been a member of our 6th Grade CREW.

We have all landed in a great place together and we look forward to helping this be your child's best school year yet. After we get settled into the year, we will be sending information on how you can access classroom info and assignments. In the meantime, here are some basics to get you started for each of your child's core academic classes:

### **English-Language Arts with Mr. Freeman**

In Language Arts class this year, students will read a lot, write a lot, talk a lot, and think a lot. We will work through at least two Expeditionary Learning modules--extended units of study centered around a novel and other related texts. Our first module will begin a week or two into

All best, Tony Freeman, Charlie Keller, Elizabeth Post

the year and students will be given a copy of the book, *The Lightning Thief*, by Rick Riordan, and will be student's to keep, annotate, make notes in, etc. Normally, students will read a selection for homework and be ready to do work relating to that selection in class the next day. We'll discuss the procedures in class and I will send a heads-up when we are ready to start. Beyond the modules, we will do other projects throughout the year with plenty of info to come as we go along.

### **Science with Ms. Post**

In science this year students will explore a range of physical, earth and life science topics as a lens through which to learn the process of scientific inquiry. By the end of this course students will know basic principles of ecology, geology, chemistry, waves, astronomy and more. Units and lessons are designed to help students experience the power of scientific discovery through hands-on learning, inquiry, and critical thinking. The course will address the North Carolina Essential Standards for 6th grade science. Students will be evaluated based on in-class work, projects, tests and quizzes.

### **Math with Mr. Keller**

Sixth grade math expands upon previous knowledge while introducing and developing new "middle school" concepts. The curriculum includes concepts of rate and ratio, number system operations, expressions and equations, geometry, and statistics/probability. A great deal of this material is new to students entering sixth grade. Therefore, we encourage parents to be involved with their child's work and maintain active communication with the instructor. The overarching goal of this course is to integrate Common Core into the realm of Expeditionary Learning so that students are ready to tackle problem solving in the real world. Projects and activities follow the EL model by focusing on real-life application, collaborative learning, and integration of multiple subject areas through various expeditions. The instructor aims to support a variety of learning styles in the classroom by offering multiple means of material presentation and student engagement. Critical thinking, problem solving, and creative input are highly encouraged in this course.

### **Social Studies with Ms. Post, Mr. Keller & Mr. Freeman**

Students in sixth grade will study the ancient world. We will focus on geography by using the themes of location, place, movement, human-environment interaction and region. An exploration of these themes will help them to understand the emergence, expansion and decline of civilizations and societies from the beginning of human existence to the Age of Exploration. Students will be provided with a copy of the book, *A Little History of the World*, by E.H. Gombrich. We will use this text as a base for our studies throughout the year. Students will be evaluated based on classwork, projects, and we will utilize CNN Student News for a weekly current event grade.

**Finally**, thank you for choosing to entrust our team with your child's education. We can't wait to get to know them and to watch them grow. Please feel free to be in touch with us as needs arise and we will do the same. It's going to be an exceptional year.

All best, Tony Freeman, Charlie Keller, Elizabeth Post

