

J.E. Cosgriff Memorial School

**7th Grade Social Studies**

**Ms. Rima McComas**

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**Dear Parents and Students:**

I am excited to join the J.E. Cosgriff family as the new 7th grade social studies teacher. Prior to joining the faculty of J.E Cosgriff, I received my B.A. degree in Criminal Justice and International Relations from Gonzaga University in 2015. I most recently graduated from American University with a Master’s of Science in Counterterrorism and Homeland Security Policy earlier this year. I have been teaching and tutoring for the past six years on and off, mostly in reading, and have received certification in Next and Higher Steps from the University of Utah Reading Clinic.

The goal for 7th grade social studies, emphasis on world geography, can best be summarized as understanding the interconnections between both physical and human geography. To help achieve our common goal, I have included our classroom rules on page three. Students, please review the content of this letter with your parents, add your signatures and ***bring the signature page only to class on Monday September 11th*.** Please keep the cover letter so that you can refer to the grading and missing work policies in the future.

# 7th Grade Social Studies – World Geography

Geography is the study of physical and human characteristics of the Earth’s people, places, and environments. The goal for my students will be to establish a foundational geographical skill set, which will include map reading, climate predictions, and how to make inferences and draw conclusions about environmental problems. While much of building geographical knowledge requires the memorization of places on the Earth’s surface, I will also work to integrate concrete activities that teach my students about geographical concepts.

The grade weighting for world geography will consist of 50% for homework and in-class assignments, 25% for tests, 15% for map quizzes, and 10% for exit tickets and participation. One late homework assignment per quarter will be accepted with a 20% reduction in score until the Friday following the due date. A late homework pass must be stapled to the assignment to receive partial credit. One late homework pass was given to students the first day of school. No credit will be given for any additional late assignments**.** Make-up work must be completed within one week of returning to school. I do not provide any individual student extra credit opportunities, however, most tests will include a few extra credit points.

Note taking is an integral part of understanding world geography. Students should come to class prepared to take complete and accurate notes. Students must have a binder with dividers that will help them organize and reference their notes and other assignments. The preferred binder is 2 inches with 8-tab plastic dividers.

Standards taught in 7th grade world geography conform to the Utah Core Standards for Social Studies, emphasis on World Geography. The core standards are organized into five strands, which include humans and their physical environment, population distribution and migration, culture, political systems, and economic development.

Parents: It is an honor and a privilege to assist in your children’s education.

Students: “I hope that in this year to come, you make mistakes. Because if you are making mistakes, then you are making new things, trying new things, learning, living, pushing yourself, changing yourself, changing your world. You're doing things you've never done before, and more importantly, you're doing something.” – Neil Gaiman

Sincerely,

Ms. McComas

**Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

(Please Print First and Last Name)

**World Geography Classroom Rules**

1. Be there, be prepared physically and mentally.
2. Walk into the classroom and take your seat immediately.
3. Maintain academic integrity (do your own work)
4. Minimize movement in and out of the classroom.
5. Respect yourself, the teacher, and your peers.
6. Turn off cell phones and electronic devices and leave them in your locker.
7. No food or drink, except water.

**STUDENTS:** I have read the student and parent letter provided. I understand the grading and late work policies. I have read the classroom rules and understand them. I will honor the rules while attending Middle School social studies.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**PARENTS:** I have read the student and parent letter provided. I understand the grading and late work policies. My child has discussed the classroom rules with me. I understand the rules and will support them.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**TEACHER:** I will be fair and consistent in administering the Middle School social studies class classroom policies and rules.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_