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June 2, 2009

Dear Students and Parents of the Sixth Grade,

As you are reading this letter, you must be asking yourself, “Where has the 2008-2009 school year gone?” Indeed ladies and gentlemen, you are now members of the middle school, and I am excited to share in the sixth grade experience with you. The summer season is quickly approaching, but, before you know it, that infamous first day of school will be here. In efforts to help you be prepared for that late August day, let me give you a sneak peak of the expectations and goals for the upcoming school year. Please use the following information to guide you through your summer work. As your homeroom teacher, I expect that you will work hard in all that you do both in and out of the classroom. The sixth grade year will be a time for growth and change, so start preparing with a spirit open to such change and adaptations. One of the biggest adjustments in the middle school is the number of teachers and the increase in the homework. I will help to prepare for this as you transition to middle school and, eventually, to high school and the years to come. You are now on your path of great change and growth, but do not worry one bit because we will get off to a strong start in this upcoming school year.

Well, to get things started, this summer you will be engaging in some reading. You are required to read one novel and will be able to choose two or three others to fulfill your requirement, which is a grand total of 650 pages. You are required to read Hatchet by Gary Paulsen and then choose two or three others, depending on the amount of pages for each to reach your 650 pages requirement. Your page requirement includes what you will have read with Hatchet, in addition to your other novels of choice. Please remember that your summer reading is based on the amount of pages and not the total number of books read. Also, keep in mind that you need to choose novels that are age-appropriate and, if possible, award winning. In choosing these types of novels, you are giving yourself a head start in reading and working with the type of literature you will have in the sixth grade.

Upon completion of your reading, you are asked to write a 300 word essay. Your essay should compare the main character, Brian, in Hatchet with the main characters of the other novels you will have read. Discuss how Brian and the other main characters changed and grew throughout the novels. Discuss the challenges or obstacles each character faced and the resolution(s) to those conflicts or problems. This essay does not have to be typed, but please if you are going to handwrite it, be sure that it is done in your neatest cursive. This is due on the first day of class on August 26, 2009.

Reading books will always keep your mind ready and sharp, but some other suggestions are to maintain and/or improve your math and English grammar/punctuation skills. Squeeze some math games in between your favorite television shows or practice some English grammar/punctuation before you head outside to play with your friends. Anything you can do to help yourself this summer will be to your advantage in the upcoming year.

Have a great and enjoyable summer vacation. Be sure to have a good time and rest up. Your supply list is attached. Please have all your supplies ready to go on the first day of school. I am eager and ready to see all of your smiling faces at 8:00 a.m. SHARP in the sixth grade line for the 2009-2010 school year. See you soon!

Looking forward to a great year,

Ms. Rivera, Sixth Grade Homeroom