Ms. Ellenwood’s Class Handbook (high school)

Valley Adventist Christian School

2018-2019

Dear Parents,

Hello! Welcome to the 2018-2019 school year at VACS! I’m excited to have your teen in my classroom!

A little about my education: I was born and raised in southwest Washington, and homeschooled through the 9th grade. After that I enrolled in an alternative learning program at a nearby public high school, where I studied several subjects via independent study, and took classes at the local community college for dual high school and college credit. I graduated with honors, and continued to work full time and take classes at the community college. In 2004, I attended Southern Adventist University for my B.A., double majoring in English and Religious Studies, and double minoring in History and Spanish. I spent a year at la Universidad Adventista del Plata in Argentina, traveling and learning Spanish. I graduated from Southern with honors in 2009. In 2011, I came to southern California, and attended La Sierra University, where I earned my Masters in English Literature. Now I am back at La Sierra again, working on my second Masters (in Teaching).   
  
I have been teaching since I was a 16 year-old swim instructor, and have tutored my peers and fellow students since my high school years as well. I worked as a tutor for English and History during my undergraduate degree. My eight years of official teaching experience started in Nebraska in 2009, where I was called as the History and Spanish teacher for the Adventist academy in Lincoln. I lived in Taiwan for the school year of 2010-2011, and taught English to Taiwanese 5th graders. I taught College Writing and Humanities classes for La Sierra University while I earned my Masters between 2011-2014. I continued to teach for the university after my degree was complete, and then spent four years teaching a myriad of high school and middle school classes for Bethel Christian School in Riverside, including English, History, Government, Geography, Speech, Life Skills, Art History, Spanish. And now I am excited to teach for VACS!   
  
As an individual and an educator, I am a huge believer in community and in working to making our world a better place. I love traveling, gardening, cooking, reading, writing, photography, and storytelling in its many forms. I believe God speaks to us through stories from around the world. I encourage questions and self-expression in my classroom. I believe it is our calling as educators and as Adventists to encourage critical thinking in a dynamic world where there is a great deal of information that needs to be carefully sifted through. In my classroom, we will look at different world issues through the lens of a merciful and benevolent God who is a logical and compassionate being. My hope is that my students will see Jesus in my classroom and in the many lessons they learn. I will have your students for their Humanities classes—English (writing and literature), Geography, Bible, and Health, etc. Mrs Matthews, our principal, will be working with them on their Algebra and Physical Science, as well as helping with their PE. We’ll also have classes in Spanish, Gardening, and choir.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. The best way to reach me is through my email. My email address is [mellenwood@vacsonline.org](mailto:kimberlymatthews@vacsonline.org). I check my email at least once a day during school hours and will try to respond as soon as I receive your email. You may also text me via Bloomz.

This handbook should be used as a guide to our classroom. All of the expectations and requirements for the year are found here. Please take a day or two to read through this handbook. At the back you will find forms that are to be signed and returned to school with your student by August 31st. This way I can be sure that each parent has had the opportunity to see our class handbook. You may want to keep the handbook so that you may refer to it throughout the year. I know that together and with God’s help we can make this year a fun-filled, Christ-centered, highly-educational, and productive one for your student.

**All the best,**

**Marjorie Ellenwood**

**Combination Classroom**

As you know, your student will be in a combination classroom..   The Seventh-day Adventist curriculum is written so that combination classrooms can be done with ease.  Students in my classroom will be encouraged to excel above their grade level, and to help teach and assist their peers in understanding the work.

**Class Work and Expectations**  
We are using the Griggs online curriculum from Andrews University this year. Because our classwork will be turned in almost entirely online, it is important that our students are focused on their work while in class—we teachers provide an environment where we help explain the assignment and material, and then expect the students to work on the reading/writing/researching/etc. themselves during the class period. It is *essential* that they stay caught up with the rest of the class on their work, so that they are clear on their responsibilities and instructions on whichever assignment is currently ongoing. They also need to stay on task with their work because their online tests must be scheduled and taken as a group. I am here for their questions and yours. I encourage students to ask if they are unsure what they should be doing, or how to do it. I have also built additional times in the day for work, should they need a little extra time to complete an assignment.   
 **Homework**  
If for some reason they are unable to complete their assignment(s) in class, then they are responsible for finishing those assignments at home. The students have access to their accounts as long as they have their log-in information, and can sign in to their work from any Internet connection. Some textbooks are also available online. The amount of work taken home by students will depend on what they are able to accomplish during class, and on the requirements of the assignment itself.   
 **Attendance**

Regular and punctual attendance is critical for a productive learning experience. Timeliness also teaches responsibility. If your student is late to school, please note that the student will be responsible for any classwork missed.  
  
**If for any reason your student will be absent, he/she should send Mrs. Matthews and I an email so that we know what work to communicate for him/her to complete.** Note: students may not be able to make up points for class discussions, etc. as those assignments cannot be replicated outside of class.

In case of an absence, a doctor’s note MUST be brought to school ON THE DAY OF THE STUDENT’S RETURN in order for the absence to be excused. **If for any reason you need to talk to me in person, I appreciate you scheduling an appointment with me in advance.** Please read the school handbook for additional information on attendance.  
**Phones**  
We have a no cell phone policy at VACS. If a student bring a phone to school, it must stay in their backpack at all times unless they have specific permission to use it to communicate with parents, guardians, etc. Phones may not be out during recess, lunch, or as students wait for parents. This policy keeps students present and focused during school hours.

**Appearance:**

High school student do NOT need to be in uniform, but must still stay within dress code. (See school handbook for details.)

**Discipline**

There are four major rules in our classroom:

1) **To be respectful**

2) **to be responsible**

3) **to advocate for the success of both others and yourself**

4) **to communicate needs and questions as soon as possible**

All of this can be summed up in the biblical Golden Rule: **Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.**

A system of color changes will be used for discipline.  Every student begins the day on the color green. Each student is allowed one warning with no color change.  I have summarized the system for you below.  If behavior continues, further discipline will take place. See the school handbook for additional discipline policies.

Here’s a synopsis:

Green = Everything is okay

Blue = second warning, miss recess, possible 15 min. detention

Yellow = third warning, 30 min. detention after school

Orange = fourth warning, 45 min. detention after school

Red = fifth warning, 1 hr. detention after school, possible suspension

**Griggs Grading Scale**

93-100 = A (4.00)

90-92 = A- (3.67)

88-89 = B+ (3.33)

83-87 = B (3.00)

80-82 = B- (2.67)

78-79 = C+ (2.33)

73-77 = C (2.00)

70-72 = C- (1.67)

68-69 = D+ (1.33)

63-67 = D (1.00)

60-62 = D- (0.67)

0-59 = F (0.00)

**(Please return to Ms. Ellenwood by Tuesday, September 4th)**

My student and I have read, understand, and will abide by Ms. Ellenwood’s high school handbook.

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Parent’s Signature                        Date

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Student’s Signature Date