August 21, 2019

Dear Parent(s) or Guardian(s):

One of the things we love about teaching seventh graders is just how unique they are. The differences in student interests, maturity levels, as well as learning goals are vast and varied. Therefore, they have different needs when it comes to reading. As teachers, we have a responsibility to serve all of the kids who come to us, and a responsibility to offer literature choices that speak to all of them. This is why we have extensive classroom libraries with thousands of books available for them.

Kids, in general, do a fantastic job of self-selecting books. When they find they have picked up something they are not ready for or not interested in, they are usually quick to put it down and ask for help choosing something else. (In fact, we encourage our students to abandon books that are not right for them at that time.) As a teacher, I will offer recommendations. However, self-selecting books is a pillar of our reading community.

As part of our reading journey, we encourage you to speak to your child about the types of books they feel comfortable reading. To help you learn more about your child’s book choices, commonsensemedia.org is a great website to use. We believe parents should have the ultimate say in what they feel is appropriate for their child. That being said, we ask for your support in two ways. First, please let us know if you are uncomfortable with any specific content, and we will try our best to steer your student away from possible books of concern. Secondly, and most importantly, please monitor what your child is reading so that you can address any issues that may arise.

This approach requires that each student select an independent reading book of his or her choice as long as it is not too easy or too challenging for that child. We will discuss this criteria with students in class. Students are required to bring their book with them to class every day. Furthermore, students are required to read independently outside of the classroom for 20-30 minutes a day to meet their individual weekly reading goals, which are set in class at the beginning of each week. A running record of this reading will be kept in class, and students will also keep track of their reading progress on their Chromebooks. Daily independent reading is the only language arts homework you can expect this year.

Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions. Finally, thank you for your involvement in your child’s education and helping to encourage reading growth and engagement.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Leslie Benko, 7 North Language Arts Teacher, lesliebenko@solonboe.org
Mrs. Gayle Marek Hauptman, 7 West Language Arts Teacher, gaylehauptman@solonboe.org
Mrs. Valerie Parillo, 7 East Language Arts Teacher, valerieparillo@solonboe.org

Please acknowledge that you have read our class expectations and guidelines for appropriate book choices by signing below and returning with your student.

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Student Name __________________________________________________________________    Date _____________________

Parent(s) Name ______________________________________ Parent Signature ________________________________________

Best Way to Reach You (home phone, cell, email) _________________________________________________________________

Any thoughts/concerns to share at this time? (seating issues, learning concerns, etc.) ________________________________