

# Housel Middle School

Sunday, August 28th, 2011

8<sup>th</sup> Grade History

Dear Parents:

Hello. My name is Mr. Dean Smith, and I will be one of your child's teachers this year. I would like to take this opportunity to let you know how happy I am to have your child in my class. I am dedicated to making this a busy, productive, and fun year. I will be communicating with you about my classroom plans, your child's progress, and other activities as they arise. I use my Internet web site for posting classroom activities, handouts, and links to the appropriate Washington State Essential Learnings. If you have access to the Internet, please bookmark [www.smithclass.com](http://www.smithclass.com) and visit frequently. I am happy to communicate with you via district email. You will need to fill out a form in the office to receive personalized student updates. Please do not think I am rude, but I will not communicate with students via Facebook nor other social networking sites.

As you know, students here will need a three ring binder, with dividers for each class to help keep them organized. Your child will also need to have pens (black or blue **and** red), college ruled paper, and colored pencils. All students will need to purchase a one inch three ring binder that will be used for their class notes and responsive journals. This notebook is for my class **only** and it will be graded throughout the year. If your child is unable to purchase this binder, she or he will need to ask me within the first week of school to borrow one from the class.

## Washington State History - Course curriculum

- Each unit will focus on the U.S or Washington State Constitution with an emphasis on how the unit shows the conflict between **individual rights and the common good. In fact, it is this year's class essential question. "What is the Common Good.?"**
- Each unit will contain the following activities ( not necessarily in this order)
  - A vocabulary list of key terms to be defined during the unit
  - Background to help students understand the issues in the unit. This may be delivered via: lecture, PowerPoint, reading, video, etc.
  - Primary sources to help students understand the time and setting of the issues.
  - A debate or other simulated trial activity to involve students in all sides of an issue.
  - Drawing a comparison between historical issues and current events.
  - A student reflection in which she or he summarizes the material that has been learned and formulates an opinion on the key issues in the unit.
  - A common assessment to verify students are retaining information from the unit.

I have copied on the back of this letter my classroom rules and consequences for you to look over. Please read these, sign, and return the bottom portion with your child. I am looking forward to sharing this year with you and your child. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at school, 786-1732. The best time to reach me is 12:45 – 1:15 PM Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and/or Friday. Thank you for your time and interest in having a great school year. Sincerely,

Mr. Dean Smith

[dean.smith@prosserschools.org](mailto:dean.smith@prosserschools.org)

786-1732

National Board Certified Teacher

[www.smithclass.com](http://www.smithclass.com) [www.housel.org](http://www.housel.org)

<http://www.nbpts.org/>

## Classroom Rules

1. **BE PREPARED** - It is each student's responsibility to attend class with notebooks, books, and all other appropriate materials. This also includes turning in assignments on or before the due date. Unless prior arrangements with me have been made, late assignments will be deducted **20%** per day late to a maximum of 50%.
2. **BE PUNCTUAL** - Students must be seated on time for every class.
3. **RESPECT PEOPLE** - Students will treat all persons in a respectful manner. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated.
4. **RESPECT PROPERTY** - Students will treat our facilities and other peoples' property in a respectful manner. Room 102 has some new and exciting technology that students will have the opportunity to use as part of their studies this year. **Horseplay and other inappropriate classroom behavior, however, will not be tolerated.**

We will usually schedule a few minutes at the start of class to review current events in the community, nation, and world. This daily activity targets many of the Social Studies goals. (It directly relates to Understandings and Evaluates Reasoning 5.1.1, 5.1.2, Economic Issues 2.4.1, Historical Antecedents 4.4.1, Deliberation 5.3.1, and Civics Structure and Government 1.2.1.)

For more on the Washington State Social Studies GLEs look online at:

<http://www.k12.wa.us/CurriculumInstruct/SocStudies/pubdocs/SocialStudiesGLEs.doc>

During our current events news time, student will be expected to enter the planned class learning goal (s) and lesson activities in her or his agenda.

### **Housel Tardy Policy**

Housel Middle School's tardy policy is very clear. Students are expected to know the policy as defined in the student agenda.

### **Classroom Consequences**

*No student has the right to interfere with the learning or safety of others. Any action that violates this rule will be dealt with as follows:*

1. Verbal Warning
  2. New seating arrangement
  3. Student/teacher conference
  4. Parent contact (letter or phone)
  5. Referral to the office
- Severe Clause: Immediate Office Referral

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Class Period: \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime Phone No: \_\_\_\_\_

(Student Name) \_\_\_\_\_ and I have read and discussed the classroom rules and consequences for your classroom.

(Parent/Guardian Signature) \_\_\_\_\_ Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**8th Grade History Theme: Individual Rights vs. The Common Good**