

John Jay Middle School

P.O. Box 387

Katonah, NY 10536

914-763-7500

“Learn. Care. Lead.”

Mr. Jeff Swiatowicz, Principal

Ms. Monica Bermiss, Assistant Principal

Ms. Shantel Brooks, Assistant Principal

2018-19

Open House

JJMS Goal: Take the time to get to know our students well and use that knowledge to increase student engagement in our classrooms.

Class Mission Statement: My mission this year is to provide opportunities for each student to find their voice in their writing.

Subject: 7th Grade – English

Teachers’ Names: Jessica Balanda

Curriculum: The **seventh grade English curriculum** sets the foundation for the Katonah-Lewisboro Humanities Program in grades 7-12 and *aligns with the New York State Common Core Learning Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy.*

Reading

- a. Our program explores a range of authentic texts, both literary and informational: **stories, novels, drama, poetry, and literary nonfiction.** Students practice reading strategies, investigate different genres, and analyze texts through close readings, classroom/small group discussion, and written responses. Students will also develop their research skills throughout the year.
- b. **Independent Reading:** Students are required to consistently read “just right” books of choice inside and outside the classroom. Throughout the year, they share their reading experiences through book talks, reader responses, creative projects, and essay writing. Students have access to classroom collections and our school library and may seek guidance in choosing books from their teachers and their library-media specialist. The JJMS Library Website also serves as an excellent resource. ***Parents are encouraged to take an active role in helping students select appropriate material.***

Writing

Students participate in authentic writing workshops composed of direct instruction, independent practice, writing time, peer and teacher conferences, revision, editing, and publishing. In addition, students will practice on-demand writing in the form of short-responses and extended-responses. Students will be required to provide relevant textual evidence to support their claims. Student writing assignments include expository, analytical, persuasive, and creative forms.

The English department continues its use of the **English portfolio** and **reading/writing notebook**, which chronicle each student's development as a reader and writer throughout the year. Students use their portfolios and notebooks to reflect upon individual progress and to set goals. English portfolios are kept in the English classroom.

Language

Mechanics, grammar, spelling, and style are addressed through the context of mini-lessons, independent practice, writing workshops, and discussions about literature. Vocabulary instruction will be connected to words encountered in texts read in class.

Speaking and Listening

Students develop speaking and listening skills through class discussions, small group conversations, public speaking exercises, individual and group presentations, note taking, and publishing days.

Grading and Homework: Students will participate in **formative and summative assessments** throughout the year. **Formal grading** falls into three categories: *major assessments, minor assessments, and homework.*

Daily homework, rubrics, and resources are posted on eChalk as a reference for students and parents.

Resources: *The Outsiders, various book group selections over the course of the year*

Extra Help: Extra help is available after school once a week **from 2:10 pm to 2:45 pm** except when re-scheduled by the teacher. **I offer extra help every Tuesday**, Conflicts with this time should be discussed with me so that alternate arrangements can be made.

Teacher Contact Information:

Mrs. Jessica Balanda: jblanda@klschools.org