

7th- grade Callanan Parents/Guardians,

In the event that we were not able to meet at open house, I wanted to take the opportunity to formally introduce myself. My name is Andrew Patterson, and if you are receiving this, I am excited to have your student in my Global Studies classroom this school year.

I believe that Callanan represents what is best about public schools in America. Our student body is drawn from a wonderfully diverse set of neighborhoods. We see this reflected in our lunchrooms, hallways, and in the ideas vocalized in our classrooms. Hearing the high-level civil discourse from our students reaffirms the reasons teachers at Callanan have dedicated their lives to this profession. It is our job as educators to cultivate this passion and create an environment where honest academic conversations can take place on a daily basis.

Your child’s experience in 7th-grade Global Studies this year will hopefully reflect this. The curriculum is driven largely by student interests, areas of growth, and contemporary world events. It is my job to provide the necessary balance between autonomy and structure so that each student simultaneously feels both supported and challenged.

In the first couple of months of the school year, I generally have students work on a series of map quizzes. In my opinion, it is important for students to have the ability to visualize the location of continents, oceans, and regions of the world. By mastering basic geographic knowledge, it allows students to put into context and understand the interconnectedness of issues we study. As such, students will take a series of leveled quizzes in the first month or two of the school year. I want to assure you that these quizzes serve a specific purpose. The daily work in Global Studies will go far beyond rote memorization of basic facts.

7th graders can ocassionally find it difficult to grasp abstract concepts. In the past, I have used clips from certain PG-13 movies and documentaries to help make these ideas more concrete. In accordance with Des Moines Public Schools policy, parents/guardians need to give consent before their student views clips from these resources. There is an attached permission slip to this letter.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions, comments, concerns, or even to just check in on how your student is doing in class. If you are interested in receiving a copy of a formal syllabus that outlines policies such as retakes and tardies, please contact me, and I will be happy to provide a copy.

Thanks,

Andrew Patterson

Callanan Middle School

515-242-8101

[Andrew.patterson@dmschools.org](mailto:Andrew.patterson@dmschools.org)

Sign and Return

\_\_\_ I **give** permission for my student to watch clips of PG-13 movies and documentaries.

\_\_\_ I do **not** give permission for my student to watch PG-13 movies and documentaries.

Student Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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