



ELIZABETH FORWARD Middle School

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September 6, 2017

Dear Parents & Guardians:

Greetings, Mr. Englert and Mr. Hartnett welcome you and your child to 8th grade American History. We hope that you enjoyed your summer and we look forward to a productive year within American History Class! This school year, we are implementing a new instructional technique called the *Flipped Classroom*. The *Flipped Classroom* or *Flipped Learning* reverses the traditional order of teaching with the purpose of creating a more in depth and supportive environment in the classroom. The *Flipped Classroom* method is a simple idea at its core:

- Direct instruction (lecture) is moved away from the group space. This means that students watch and interact with an instructional video (flipped video) prior to coming to class.
- Students engage in various types of activities that allow students to practice learned concepts and use higher-order thinking in class.

There are many benefits to a *Flipped Classroom* instructional style. These include:

- Most students often go home with questions/homework. They do this work independently and have little or no help. In a flipped class, students do the difficult tasks in class in the presence of the expert, the teacher.
- With the presentation of content removed from class time, there is more time for teachers to interact & help students.
- Students can pause and rewind a video. In a typical class, you cannot pause your teacher.
- Students are provided more ownership of their learning and will perform high order thinking skills, such as creating, analyzing, applying, and synthesizing.
- During class time, students will be provided a *Choice Board* of activities that allows students to customize their learning and work at their own pace.

Please see the other side for a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) to help you have a better understanding of *Flipped Learning* in American History Class.

Flipped Learning FAQs

Question: *What does a Flipped Classroom look like?*

Answer: This is a great question! Typically, American History Class will follow this format:

- **At Home/and or Team Time:** Students view & interact with a video about a specific topic.
- **In Class:** The teacher checks that students have viewed/interacted with the video. The teacher will lead a short discussion about the video's content. Students can ask clarifying questions if any exist.
- **Activity:** The rest of class time is dedicated to an engaging activity of their choice, or for students to get help on tasks that are more difficult.

*Adaptations will be made for students without internet connection at home, or who are not permitted to take their iPad outside of school. *

Question: *Can I have more information about the instructional videos?*

Answer: Sure you can!

- Mr. Hartnett and Mr. Englert will make the instructional videos.
- The videos will be relatively short in length, with no video being more than ten minutes in length. Students should expect to view two videos per week.
- Students can watch these videos on several platforms, including eBackpack, YouTube, & the Ed Puzzle application.
- The videos will contain interactive features. These features will include, required note taking, concept check questions, and more!
- The purpose of the videos is to introduce students to the American History content. In class is where students will demonstrate their *knowledge, application, and mastery* of the content.

Questions: *How will my student be graded?*

Answer: Students will be graded on a variety of different criteria, including:

- Video completion
- In-class activities
- Class projects & simulations
- Assessments such as a quiz or test.

Please do not hesitate to contact Mr. Hartnett or Mr. Englert if you have any questions, comments, or concerns, see emails below. We look forward to a successful and memorable school year!

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