

Reading is a central focus in our classrooms. One of our highest priorities is to provide a solid foundation upon which our students can grow and develop as lifelong readers. As is true of any skill, reading is a skill developed through practice. The reading or practice students do as part of reading workshop allows them to develop the stamina they need for success as they continue their education throughout middle school, high school, and beyond. In addition, we encourage students to experience a variety of genres in order to foster an enthusiasm for reading.

In our classrooms, we make every effort to provide students with opportunities for the practice they need to establish and maintain reading lives. To that end, teachers continually work hard to develop classroom libraries that contain a wide variety of texts to support all readers. Classroom libraries contain a broad range of books in terms of issues, topics, styles, and readability. We strive to have interesting, relevant, challenging texts for all readers in order to provide students at varying levels the ability to scaffold their skills throughout middle school. Because classroom libraries are continually growing and changing, it is not possible for teachers to read each and every book before adding it to a classroom library. To select materials for their classroom libraries, teachers rely on recommendations from students, staff, and a variety of additional sources (YALSA, ALA, Amazon, goodreads, etc.).

Rest assured that books from classroom libraries are never assigned; students are allowed free choice with regard to their independent reading selections. We realize that each family has its own unique set of standards regarding what is considered acceptable reading material. As a parent or guardian, you set standards to help your child decide which movies and TV shows are acceptable for him or her to watch, which music is acceptable for listening, and which video games are acceptable for him or her to play. In the same manner, we encourage you to talk with your child about your family's standards for selecting reading materials, to remain aware of the books your child is selecting throughout the year, and to assist him or her in determining appropriateness. Independent reading books are selected by your child, so there can certainly be other choices if you are not satisfied with any book. Students are not at all limited to reading only the books in classroom libraries. Many students also purchase new or used books from bookstores or thrift shops, borrow from friends or family, or use the public or school libraries.

We are excited to see the growth your student makes this school year with the books he or she chooses. This reading foundation is crucial to your student's future success in high school and beyond, and we can't wait to help foster a reading life in your child.