

Dear students and parents,

Welcome to our 5th/6th grade classroom. I would like to introduce myself, to those new to the school. My name is Robert Stagg. I've taught at Aquarian for 11 years, beginning with Kindergarten and ending with a 5/6th grade last year.

I have put together this informational packet to familiarize you with the various aspects of our classroom. If you have questions beyond the scope of this packet, I encourage you to drop me an email. (Classroom Cell: 632-7730) stagg_robert@asdk12.org

Sincerely,

Mr. Robert Stagg

General Classroom Information:

*Classroom /Home Communication: **Planners / Web Site / Newsletters / Progress Reports***

Classroom newsletters will be emailed Friday afternoons, if not earlier in the week. Some newsletters may also make their way to our classroom web page.

The classroom web page is accessed at: www.aquariancharterschool.com/stagg/Stagg/

** Please use the web page as a supplemental resource for news and information. I don't put everything on the web page, but I do try and post some assignments that may get lost, or copies of packets or projects that may need to be downloaded multiple times.

The number one form of school-to-home communication will be the class **planner**. Each student will receive a classroom planner. I require that each student record the daily assignments on the class planner. Students use their personal planners as reminders and calendars for class and home events. Homework, as well as classwork is recorded in the planner. I do not require that students have the planner signed at home, but if it becomes apparent that students are not writing in the planners or turning in homework, I will require signing. Planners are to be kept in the front of their binders – which go back and forth every day. Just remember, “Your binder is your buddy”.

Progress reports will be sent home every other week, unless something comes up. I try and provide students feedback on a regular basis, but students should also know how they are doing. Most students who receive unsatisfactory grades are not getting their work in, or it is very late. This year I am tightening down on late work. Work that is one day late will receive a 25% reduction on top of the graded score. Two days late earns a reduction of 50% on top of the graded score. And work that is three days or later will not be accepted. In the past I was more relaxed in my acceptance of late work, but I found it only enabled student procrastination.

Discipline Policy :

I follow same **discipline policy** as laid out by the Anchorage School District, found in the ASD Student Handbook. Please make sure you cover the rules and guidelines laid out by the district with your child.

Our basic classroom policy is that if an action or activity, behavior or practice is getting in the way of another child's safety and/or ability to learn (and/or his/her own safety or learning), then it must be addressed and corrected. This covers a large spectrum, but it is also basic and fair. We are not allowed to take away from another person's right to learn in a safe, fair, and productive environment.

When a behavior crosses the line, I give the student or students a warning, if it continues, I will ask him/her to take a time out from the group where I will institute a writing assignment (reflection on the behavior, alternative choices, etc.) depending on the situation. The third strike results in the student visiting a buddy room, or the principal's office, and an email will be sent to parents. These are a student's formative years, and positive communication between student, parents, and the classroom teacher is important. My goal is to ensure positive discipline and to promote effective change.

Pullout schedule:

Lunch for 5/6th grade is from 12 – 12:30 and outdoor recess is from 11:30 – 12:00. By 12:30 we are headed back in and getting ready for read aloud.

The mornings contain a lot of pullouts, so we will use the morning for editing and spelling practice. Math blocking begins at 10:00 and lasts till 11:15. We write out planners and stage for the afternoon from 11:15 – 11:30.

Reading, Writing, Science, Social Studies, and everything else are scheduled for the afternoons and on Fridays. We have a full schedule!

Lunch / Snack/ Recess / Dress Code:

Please pack both a **healthy lunch**, and a healthy snack. We discourage soda, sugar candy, chips, etc. Let's prepare our students for success and fuel them with healthy food. We usually have snack before math. I do not provide snack.

Fall is here and winter is on the way. Please send your students to school with appropriate clothing to spend ½ hour outside during recess. Also, since our classroom is not large, please don't send in your entire child's winter wardrobe. I will send back extra snow pants, boots, etc. when it builds up. Each child needs only one set. Otherwise we end up with wet, smelly clothes in our class.

The Aquarian **dress code** is outlined in the student information from the office. Think warm and comfortable as we do move around a lot and go from the building into the portable often.

What will be graded and what makes up grades:

Reading: DEAR – silent reading followed by journal responses
Independent Focused Reading - RTW (read, think, write)
Small Group Literature. Circles -
Guided Reading & Literature Centers, Reading in Content Areas

Writing: Editing (daily editing and English practice)
Assigned writing: Creative and expository writing
Letters, poetry, 6 Traits practice, Elements of Story, Journal
Writing, Writing reflections, Writing in areas – Science & S.S.

Math: Saxon – Tests (70% of Saxon grade) and Homework (30%)
Out-of-the-box math – Geometry – Math in Science

Spelling/ Vocabulary: Scholastic workbooks, tests, Vocabulary development
Editing

Science: activities related to ASD kits, observations/reflections,
demonstrations, and journals. (Structures, Waste Disposal, Astronomy)
– Focus on Process Skills of Science

Speaking/ Listening: - speeches , reflections on speeches, note taking, and
presentations.

Social Studies: notes, presentations, newspaper / Jr. Scholastic reviews,
book assignments, reports, and projects. 6th Grade = U.S. History – Civil
War to present) 5th Grade = Colonial Times to Civil War !

**** Reading Inventory:**

Please (student) take a minute to fill out the following inventory questions. I would like to learn more about you before we begin the school year. **Please write on another piece of paper. Write in complete sentences (Hint: Use part of the question in your answer).**

What kinds of books do you read? How often do you finish a book? What was the last book you read? Who are your favorite authors? Tell me in 1-2 paragraphs about a book you've read recently. Include the title, author, and 2-3 things you liked about the book.

**** Writing Inventory:**

I would like to see an example of your writing. Please choose (1) from the following topics and write 2-3 paragraphs.

1. Tell me about your summer.
2. Begin a story that takes place in an imaginary land.
3. Write a description of an animal, but don't give its name.
4. Write a summary for a movie you've seen lately.
5. Tell me about a time when you helped someone.

Do your best to write with passion. Pick a topic that interests you. You can change the topics if you like, but write the question or topic heading on your paper. I will be reading your writing and may share your writing with your parents during first quarter conferences, so do your best work. Write in your best Cursive handwriting for this assignment.

Both assignment is due the first Monday, during the 2nd week of school.

Parent Volunteer info .:

Volunteering is very important in our school. How can you help out in the classroom?

I am looking for parents who would like to volunteer to come in a talk to students as “guest speakers”. You may also volunteer in other ways – helping out in the classroom (making copies, reading aloud, reading with small groups, sharing a craft or interest, etc.). Email me if you want to sign up. I will have a calendar posted on the door in my classroom, or email me.

I need a class “mom” or “dad” to help organize field trips and potlucks. Get hold of me if you’re interested.

Thank you.

If you have any questions, please email me @: stagg_robert@asdk12.org

Sincerely,

Robert Stagg
5th/6th grade
Aquarian Charter School

Permission Slips (Please Return by Friday)

Permission to Use Moodle in Classroom

We have an online classroom associated with our “real” classroom. It is run on a private Moodle platform. Each student will receive a user name/password and periodically during the year he/she will be asked to complete assignments online. I control the site. Students will be instructed on how to post and reply to online posts appropriately. Students will work cooperatively to accomplish goals and complete assignments. I monitor the chats and forum posts. After five years of Moodle work with 5th and 6th graders, I've never had to pull a student's Moodle rights. It has been a great success as a class/home tool, but I need your permission to sign up your child for our online classroom.

Sign if you give permission for your child to have a private Moodle user account.

_____ Moodle account permission granted.

If you have any questions about Moodle or what we will use it for, please ask.

Permission to Walk Off Campus for Science Related Walking Trips

We often walk down to Old Hermit Part (3 blocks away) and around the neighborhood for science outings. I would like to have a one-time permission to take your child out on walking trips off campus. All the trips would be pre-arranged, but instead of asking permission each time, this would suffice for permission for the year.

_____ Walking Fieldtrip permission granted.

If you have any questions, please email me. I will announce all walking fieldtrips well in advance. The office will have our schedule when we are out on these trips.

Also, Please create a Google Mail Account for your child if they don't have one already. We will be using Google Docs to collaborate and share documents in class. Visit www.gmail.com to create an account. Accounts are free and virtually spam free!