

Dear Parents and Students,

My name is Jennifer Mason, one of your child's Junior High Teachers. I will be teaching 8th Grade Social Studies, 8th Grade Math, 7th Grade Math, 7th Grade Geography and Response to Intervention (RtI). I am also the Hisodak Advisor.

I grew up in Dell Rapids, South Dakota where I also attended school. I graduated from Augustana College in Sioux Falls with a major in Elementary and Middle School Education. I chose the education field because I am passionate about learning and strive to find new and creative ways for all children to learn.

As students reach the Junior High level, the expectations and requirements begin to change and become more challenging and demanding. It is because of these things that I am continuously helping students take accountability for their actions and words and help them to learn from mistakes. This can be a difficult process for some students and I recognize that. **I want what is best for your student, always.** So, if you ever have a concern, please let me know.

It is important that you and your child be informed of my standards of classroom behavior so everyone knows what is expected. I am attaching a copy of our classroom rules. If your child develops any difficulty understanding the rules, I will notify you. As well, I hope that you will advise me if at any time your child has a problem, academic, social, or emotional. Should your child become discouraged or fearful about school, please let me know so that we can discover the cause of the problem.

You are invited to phone me or visit the school any time that you have a question concerning your child's progress. I will keep you informed by emailing and calling, as well as progress reports and updated grades on the Parent Portal. If you have expertise in a specific field, an unusual hobby, or have a different culture that you would like to share, please let me know. I would be happy to visit with you about the possibility of your sharing with our class.

To get to know your child better, I am attaching a form with questions for you to fill out. Would you please take a few minutes to answer the questions concerning your child? Then, have your student bring it back to school to earn extra points!

I am very happy to have your child in my classroom. I believe that by all of us working together we can make this a very successful year. I consider it of prime importance that you be an active part of your child's education. I consider it a great privilege and responsibility to be your child's teacher this year, and look forward to meeting each of you!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Jennifer Mason

Late Work

- If a student did not finish their homework, they need to come to me so that we can work something out. When a student hands in late work, they will receive 75% of the assignment. Unless, there are extenuating circumstances in which they are unable to work on time. These circumstances should be communicated so that I know how to address your student's work.

Makeup Work

- Makeup work due to illness or appointments may be picked up before the child leaves, at the end of the day, may be sent home with a sibling or friend, or may be left at school until the student returns.
- Makeup work due to a planned vacation or school event will be given out before the student leaves and must be handed in before they leave.

Academic Dishonesty

- I will not tolerate academic dishonesty. If a student is caught cheating, I will refer the student to the principal for further action. (See Classroom Guidelines #8)
- If a student feels as though they need to cheat, then something is missing. I would rather students be honest with me and talk with me if they feel that they did not understand an assignment, did not have enough time to complete the assignment, or something unexpected came up. I am willing to work with students who remain honest and are willing to come to me.

Semester Tests

- Semester tests are given at the end of each semester. Schedules are made out and distributed to students and teachers at that time. Students who have no more than three absences per class period and have a 92% will be exempted from semester tests. In addition, students who have no absences per class period and have an 88% will be exempted from semester tests. Students who are exempt have the option of taking the semester test to improve their grade. Nine weeks tests will be given at the end of the first and third nine weeks for all students.

Participation

- I will be rounding up daily work by using participation points. A student can earn up to 10 extra points a week based on their participation during class.

Communication between Home and School

- School – (605) 852-2275, or email – jennifer.mason@k12.sd.us

Classroom Guidelines and Consequences

1. Come to class on time
2. Leave your seat only when necessary, which should be often to go collaborate with others or demonstrate something to the class.
3. Bring required materials
4. Use polite speech when speaking, sharing your ideas, or asking for help or giving help.
5. Do not cheat, but remix, re-purpose, and sample other peoples' work and ideas and give them credit.
6. Follow the teacher's directions immediately
7. Be polite, courteous, and respectful at all times – this includes other students as well as respecting the things within my classroom
8. Complete all assignments neatly and on time
9. Keep your hands to yourself, but share all your ideas and knowledge with others
10. Be quiet in hallways, and restrooms - most of the time, I love having my classroom full of discussion and expression. I just ask that when you go out, you remember that you are no longer in my classroom, but a space that is shared by many.
11. If you need help raise your hand or ask a neighbor. (See #8)
12. Know what you are supposed to be learning, why, and what you will do with the knowledge.
13. Be a student of integrity.
14. Know how to laugh!

Consequences

- 1st offense – Verbal Warning
- 2nd offense – Private Conference with Student
- 3rd Offense – Office Referral

Homework

- Homework is an important part of the educational experience for each student. It is important for parents and students to understand that there will be times when I expect students to complete work outside school hours. Students need to be responsible to complete their homework.

A	90-100	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I understand!• Neat and complete!
B	80	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good effort.
C	70-79	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I understand some.• Not all complete and neat.• May not be my best effort.• I need to ask questions.
D	Below 70	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I do not understand.• I need to ask for help.• May not be neat or complete.