August 25, 2014

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Reading is a central focus in my classroom and as we begin a new school year, I would like to share some thought about reading with you.

 Reading is a skill. The only way to get better at reading is to read—this holds true for excellent readers as well as reluctant readers. With this in mind, my goal is for your student to read two million words within this school year. For the average student, two million words a year translate to forty minutes of reading every day. I will do my best to motivate your student to read academically as well as for fun. Some of the reading will be assigned, but your student will have opportunities to select his or her own books to read independently.

 To help your child read the two-million word goal, I have worked hard to develop my own classroom library. This library is available to any student who wants to choose a book to be read recreationally. Research shows that availability of books is major motivating factor in getting teens to read. Students who are surrounded by books at school and at home read more. Students, who read more, read better. I have found that having my own classroom library has dramatically increased the amount of reading my students do.

 As a parent myself, I want you to know I am sensitive to having appropriate reading material in my classroom library. That said, what is considered “appropriate” may vary from one parent/guardian to another. Some parents do not mind their child reading Stephen King; other parents object to the horror genre. Please be aware that the selections in my classroom library, just like any public library, range from elementary-level to university-level readying material. As a parent, I ask you to remain aware throughout the year to the books your child has chosen to read and assist in gauging appropriateness.

 Rest assured the books in my classroom are never assigned. They are checked out on a voluntary basis only. Some students use my library a lot; others find books elsewhere. Any student who checks books out of my library is asked to have a parent or guardian sign below indicating that this classroom library letter has been read and understood.

 My conference period is third period, from 10:25- 11:15. If you have any question, comments, or concerns, please feel free to contact me at (713)251-4600 ext. 4686. Let’s get reading!

Warmly,

Olivia Westerman

Language Arts and Reading

Spring Forest Middle School

“Adjust and Overcome”

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I have read this letter, and my student has permission to use Ms. Westerman’s classroom library.

\_\_\_\_\_ No, I would prefer that my student not have access to Ms. Westerman’s classroom library.

Parent’s Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_