Bienvenue à Français 10

M.Davis

Dear Parents and Students:

***I believe that students should experience their successes and failures as information, not as reward and punishment.***

I am committed to providing your son/daughter with a quality and relevant French language experience where students will immerse themselves in the French language and culture. The curriculum is student centered and focuses on 4 major components: reading, writing, speaking and listening while integrating various French cultures.

**Course Themes:**

1. Mission Survie – Intro Unit
2. Passons aux nouvelles - News
3. Le Folkore urbain – Urban legends

**Students will not be receiving any letter grades or marks prior to each reporting period.** Consistent with Surrey School District priority of Assessment for Learning, students will employ a variety of verbal and written assessment strategies to develop a French working portfolio. These include techniques such as student teacher-interviews, student-reflections, goal setting, both verbal and written peer, student and teacher assessment using rubrics created by the students. They are all aimed at broadening and deepening student understanding as well as having them take greater ownership of their learning.

Through various research from the likes of Alfie Kohn – The Case Against Grades, Jonathan Vervaet – Portfolio Assessment and my personal observations: grades tend to diminish student’s interest in what they are learning, they create a preference for the easiest possible task, they cause an increase in cheating and a fear of failure as well as reducing student thinking. I believe that a language classroom should be an environment that requires risk taking, hard work and perseverance. I believe students should be able to explain what they are learning and apply it to their work rather than relying on the memorization of facts.

I believe our classroom should be an environment where students can learn from their mistakes and make improvements without being punished through grades and marks. Rather than the traditional grading practices that aim to somehow reduce and quantify student learning as well as potentially interfere with, undermine and devalue it. I am interested and passionate about the effect that the host aforementioned strategies might have on student engagement, motivation and learning. As a result, the subject of grades will only be discussed formally during student and teacher interviews prior to each reporting period. During the interview students will choose assignments from their portfolio that demonstrate their growth, improvements and achievements in all French skills over the course of the semester. They will use assessment rubrics and personal portfolio submission forms to demonstrate their learning. Together, student and teacher will collaborate and agree to a grade-level that attempts to reflect and represent their learning.

**Portfolio Assessment:** aims to provide all students an opportunity to demonstrate growth and development of key curriculum expectancies and indicators over time. Student’s can use their portfolio to create a sense of responsibility and ownership of their learning. They can promote an ongoing process where they can assess, demonstrate and revise work in order to improve and produce quality work. It also allows for student, peer and teacher reflection as well as goal setting. Portfolio assessment provides the opportunity for teachers and students to collaborate, it provides concrete evidence for evaluation, it provides feedback on individual student performance and provides evidence to support reports to parents. It also allows for increased parent involvement in their child’s learning and development of skills over time.

Please email to initiate contact and indicate that you are aware of my educational philosophies and it’s associated assessment model. Please feel free to contact me at any time with questions or concerns. Thank you for your ongoing support.

Sincerely,

Aaron Davis

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