

September 12, 2016

Dear 6th Grade Parents,

I have the privilege of teaching your child in 6th Grade Math this school year. I wanted to let you know about an approach to teaching that I will be implementing this year. It is called the “flipped” classroom. The basic concept behind a flipped classroom is that what was traditionally done in the classroom becomes homework and what was traditionally done at home (homework) is done in the classroom. So what will this look like this year in my classroom? The direct instruction or lecture portion of the class will become the homework. This will primarily be in the form of watching videos that have been produced either by myself or by someone else. When students come to class the next day we will briefly discuss what they heard in the videos and answer any questions they may have. The rest of the class time will be used for practicing the concepts from the video (homework in the traditional setting), working with the teacher in small groups, and doing activities intended to enrich the curriculum. By moving the direct teach portion of the lesson to homework it frees up more time in the classroom so that I can interact more with my students and provide more individual help. There will still be assessment of student learning through quizzes and tests. In addition, there will be some additional outside work such as reviewing for quizzes and tests, and occasionally finishing work that could not be completed in class.

Here are some of the benefits to flipped instruction:

1. It helps busy students. Many of our students are involved in activities outside of school and often have a hard time getting all their homework done. Students will be able to watch videos ahead of time from their home computer, smart phone, laptops, I-Pads or school computers at their convenience.
2. Parents do not have to worry that they can't help their child with the math homework. In a traditional model, if a student had questions about problems they were doing at home, they had to go in for tutorials the next day. With this method, students are doing the work in the classroom and are able to get their questions answered immediately.
3. Flipping the instruction helps struggling students. By doing the work in the classroom, I will be able to monitor students more closely. I will be able to identify students quicker that have some misunderstandings or need more individualized instruction.
4. Learning is student-centered, not teacher -centered. Focus is not on the teacher teaching the content but on the student practicing and producing quality work.
5. There is more interaction between teacher-student and student-student. Since I won't be spending the class time on instruction, there is more time for me to answer student questions, work with small groups, and guide the learning of each student individually. There will also be more emphasis on students working collaboratively with other students to facilitate the learning. They will be able to have more relevant math conversations and tutor each other.

I am really excited about the flipped class approach in my classes!! If you wish to learn more about the flipped classroom, I've provided some links to articles and videos on the Internet. If you have any additional questions, feel free to contact me. **All 6th grade video homework assignments will be posted on the school website on my page, and I will also send the links out through Remind101 as needed.**

Thank you for your time,

Coach Brunkhorst

573-435-6293

tbrunkhorst@pcr3.k12.mo.us

Article Links:

1. Why the Flipped Classroom: http://www.techsmith.com/flipped-classroom.html?gclid=CPmTpqb_wbECFWROTAod8WgAnA
2. How the Flipped Classroom is Radically Transforming Learning: <http://www.thedailyriff.com/articles/how-the-flipped-classroom-is-radically-transforming-learning-536.php>
3. The Flipped Class: Myths vs. Reality: <http://www.thedailyriff.com/articles/the-flippedclassconversation-689.php>
4. The Flipped Classroom: What Does a Good One Look Like: <http://www.thedailyriff.com/articles/theflipped-class-what-does-a-good-one-look-like-692.php>
5. Flipping Classrooms: Does It Make Sense?: http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answersheet/post/flipping-classrooms-does-it-make-sense/2012/06/06/gJQAk50vJV_blog.html

Video Links:

1. What is the Flipped Classroom?: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4a7NbUlr_iQ
2. What is the Flipped Classroom?: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ojiebVw8O0g>
3. What the Flipped Class is not: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hGs6ND7a9ac>