

## Keys to Success in Social Studies Class

We are now beginning a new school year and I would like each student to cultivate his/her study behaviors. During the previous school years, I have observed many students exhibiting behaviors, which will not enable them to be successful learners. Students often play the compare game. "I'm doing better than so and so." Unfortunately, students often compare themselves to those who are not exhibiting good student behavior standards. As you know the State of Michigan has set educational standards for the students. When students compare to each other, they will miss the mark, which in this case is the State and Federal standard.

To help each student reach the educational standards, I am listing below a summary of expectations for basic student success in their Social Studies class. Each student is expected to do his or her job (which in this case is Student) properly, so the highest quality education possible can be attained.

1. **Discipline:** Students are expected to be courteous and polite to all and use the available class time fully. **Rule: Students who disturb the education in this classroom shall be disciplined.** Discipline steps: 1<sup>st</sup> Verbal warning. 2<sup>nd</sup> Written warning. 3<sup>rd</sup> Communication to parent. 4<sup>th</sup> Principal alerted. Be aware that when you distract yourself with your non-assignment activity, you have disturbed your own education. Students remember to "discipline yourself, so others don't have to take action about you."
2. **Some Basic School Building Expectations:** All work is conducted through OTUS. Tardy will be marked. Bell rings, phone goes away. Use restroom before arriving to class. All supplies for class are to be on time. No food or beverages. Water only in teacher approved container and placed away from Chrome books. When the teacher plays music you do not. "Courtesy to all, including yourself."
3. **Some Basic On-Line Expectations:** The go to source for work is OTUS. Tardy will be marked. Class starts, phone goes away. Use facilities before logging in to class. All supplies for class are to be easily available. Focus on the lesson. "It's better to look ahead and prepare, than to look back and regret."
4. **Preparation for Class:** Students are expected to come to class prepared and on time. Each student is expected to take care of personal needs before the start. Each student is to bring the necessary materials with them to class. These include Chrome books, the completed assignments that are to be turned in, paper, pencil, etc. Assignments and readings never completed will show up as lack of learning when you are tested. Remember to complete your Review Preview each day to be prepared for the next day's Daily Review. Students remember the current job is Student, so "take responsibility for your own learning."
5. **Class Work:** Students are expected to complete ALL the lessons taught. No name papers are treated as missing work. Check OTUS and Power School to figure and complete your missed lesson(s) due to absence, field trips, etc. The test results will reveal your real learning and work ethic. Missed tests have a limited make up window. See Student Handbook for absent work make up timeline. Mr. Spitzer will not chase or hound you for missing work – you are the one responsible to check Power School and OTUS, and then do the work. Communicate to Mr. Spitzer promptly when you have questions. Part of doing ALL work is study for tests and this can earn you Test Study Boost points daily for up to seven days of effort. Remember: "Procrastination is grade assassination."
6. **Keep Track of Your Progress:** Students and parents are encouraged to access Power School on line, which computes their grade, lists lesson grades, contains important messages and at times personal messages, etc. Each student is to check their progress in class and is expected to take care of any deficiencies right away. Each is expected to redo, immediately, assignments Mr. Spitzer directs to be redone and Essays below 100%. Each week students should ask: "What is the current health of my learning?"
7. **Grading:** The school's grading system is followed – see student handbook for details. Students need to remember: "Failure is the path of least persistence." Students ought to ask each week: "What was the quality of my work ethic this week?"

8. **Testing:** Tests are given at the end of each study unit and you are expected to be ready. I.E., your preparations and actual learning will be revealed. Test dates will be posted ahead. Use the provided Test Resources to help test taking preparation. Students are expected to master the material, not just cram and forget. To study for mastery, each student should review unit material for the unit test about 15 minutes each day of the week. A study partner helps. A quick review of previous unit materials once or twice a week maintains mastery, which makes exam review study at the end of the semester easier. Test Study Boost Study Points are available. Students: “Cultivate a regular study habit.”
9. **Internet Use:** Much of the work assigned requires the use of the Internet. Students are expected to use class time for assigned work and when that is completed for study toward tests. Games, hobbies, modern fashion dreaming, talking off topic, sleeping, doing nothing, etc. are not acceptable. The unacceptable earns you fewer Class Work points. You are also expected to take 3-5 minutes to check Power School and OTUS whenever the class lesson calls for Internet use. Students: “Use class time responsibly!”
10. **Cheating/Plagiarism:** To steal the language, ideas, and / or thoughts from another, and to represent them as one’s own creation is wrong. If you cheat, you will receive a failing grade on the assignment and will be disciplined. A second offense may result in the loss of credit for this course. (Please see the Student Handbook for exact consequences.)\* K. Mikula I.E copy and paste from the Internet is wrong. You are to think and write your own essays and other assignments. Cite sources for your research efforts when using the Internet. Students: “Honest thinking and work is the best learning.”
11. **Awards:** If students want to be recognized for their job performance in this class, keep in mind the award criteria:

**Exceptional Student in \_\_\_\_\_ (class name)** – This is the award earned by the top student in the class. This student must meet three criteria. (1) Be among the top in the class for turning in assignments on time. (2) Earn one of the highest-grade averages in the class for the school year. (3) Demonstrate throughout the year a positive attitude toward the subject, fellow students, teacher and school. Remember the current job is Student, “Rewarded is the one who works for wisdom and gains understanding.”

In conclusion, some work at home suggestions for students and parents: Agree on the rules for when, where, minimum length of time schoolwork is done. Set up a quiet, well-lighted work area with the required supplies and resources available so “preparing to study time” is brief. Parents, please encourage independence by not doing your student’s homework for them, but by being available for consultation. Limit or ban TV, electronic games, etc. Decide how much is acceptable and stick to it. Frequently check OTUS and Power School. With a little organization and diligence, students can take many hassles out to nightly homework.

Consider the value of education to the future and that taking personal responsibility is one of the most important life lessons each needs to learn in preparation for adulthood. “Your future is purchased by the present & it won’t work unless you do.”

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I am the parent/guardian of \_\_\_\_\_. I have been given, for my reading and reference “Keys to Success in Social Studies Class.”

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Named (Please Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

“Success comes to those who make it happen not those who let it happen.”

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Parent/Student Quick Reference Page For Social Studies:

1. Unit tests are given at completion of each unit.
2. Guides for test study are available on OTUS and expected to be used for daily study by students as regular homework, 15 minutes each day.
3. Daily study points for tests are available
4. Students are expected to make up the lesson missed, due to missed class.
5. Parents: The best time to check Power School is most any evening each week.
6. Parents Mr. Spitzer’s phone number is 269-3325 ext. 3081. I am available most afternoons after school.
7. “Boredom is the sign of an undeveloped mind.” (Mr. Muffet)



Discipline Steps Taken:

Student \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Verbal warning \_\_\_\_\_

2<sup>nd</sup> Written warning:

3<sup>rd</sup> Phone call to parent \_\_\_\_\_

4<sup>th</sup> In-school Suspension

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