

Allendale Public Schools Choice Reading Initiative

To our Allendale families:

Welcome back to a new year of learning, growing, and changing for your students. Your 6-12 English Language Arts department is excited to meet them! A word about our plans for this school year:

“No single literacy activity has a more positive effect on students’ comprehension, vocabulary knowledge, spelling, writing ability, and overall academic achievement than free voluntary reading.” (Miller, 2009)

The students at Allendale Public Schools will be provided with multiple opportunities for independent reading at school. They will have access to books with different genres and reading levels both in the library and in the classroom library. Each teacher has worked with the district to curate a growing number of books in their individual classroom. Teacher/researcher Penny Kittle says, in her book *Book Love*, "I believe every child in America needs access to books that will keep them turning pages, racing to the end, discovering new ideas and learning to understand the diversity in our world. I believe all children deserve books they can and will want to read and teachers that will guide them to improve as readers.... Every classroom should have hundreds of books to inspire curiosity, hope, and vision for the future." If you would like to help build access to new and classic titles at APS, please contact your student’s ELA teacher for ways that you can do that!

Please note that the libraries have appropriate reading materials; however, what is considered appropriate may vary from one student and family to another. The selections in the classroom library have a broad range for both interest and readability. At the high school level, many classroom libraries include college-appropriate titles, which are encouraged for students with a desire to read more challenging texts. The books in the classroom library are never assigned; they are chosen by your child and can be changed at any time if the original choice is found to not be appropriate. We encourage you to read alongside your student, or just ask questions about their reading:

the goal with daily reading is to get all students comfortable discussing the type of reader he or she is, and increase reading volume each year to help prepare our students for their future work or continued education. Teachers cannot be familiar with every available title, so while we do our best to recommend, there is no guarantee we have read the book your student has chosen.

Because we respect your role as parent or guardian for your student, we invite you to let us know if a book your student has chosen will not work for your family - we will help select something new for your student to enjoy.

Thank you for your support,

The English teachers of Allendale Public Schools

P.S. Please send books to us if your family is done with them! We will happily help more students find joy through reading them.