Monday, August 11, 2014

 I hope you are as excited about the beginning of another school year as I am. In addition to visiting the beach and Pittsburgh (my hometown) several times, I have been planning all summer, and look forward to the fresh start that every school year brings. With that in mind, I am writing to introduce myself. My name is Sharon Hoetzlein-Sirman, and I am your AP Government and Politics teacher this year. While I encourage you to enjoy the remainder of summer, I also have a few requests which will allow us to efficiently use our time during the first week.

 Huntingtown High School is a "bring your own device" pilot school, which means that you can bring a laptop, tablet, or handheld Apple or Android product (phone, MP3 player). My classroom is one of many locations with wireless internet, and I have embraced the use of technology. I have a website ([www.hhssocialstudies.weebly.com](http://www.hhssocialstudies.weebly.com)), which I suggest you visit before the first day, as it gives you a glimpse of our daily routine. In order for our first week together to be as productive as possible, I am also asking that you preview, download, and/or join the technology-based Learning Tools listed on the back of this letter. If you do not have access to a device, please contact me as soon as possible so that I can accommodate your needs during class.

 Additionally, please do not wait until the last minute to complete your summer assignment. The information needed for the Constitution Scavenger Hunt is available in your text, as well as on a variety of internet sources. Considering the eventful summer we have had in terms of local, national, and international news, there are a diversity of options available to complete your Current Events summaries. Current Events will be a critical component of my classroom, and I expect you to be prepared to discuss your topics as early as the first day.

 Finally, I wanted to share the supply list for my class, so that you can shop at your convenience. At this time, I am requesting (aside from the essentials of paper and pencils) that you purchase 6 vinyl folders with prongs in the following colors: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple. Please bring these by Friday, August 22, 2014.

 I can't wait to meet you on the first day, and encourage you to contact me if you have any questions or concerns regarding the Summer Assignment or the Learning Tools list. You can reach me using my school email, home phone, or cell phone.

 Sincerely,

 Sharon Hoetzlein-Sirman

 hoetzleinsirmans@calvernet.k12.md.us

 410-535-5904 (home)

 410-610-3943 (cell)

**Learning Tools:**

**QR Code Reader** (choice of apps available free for Apple and Android devices)

A QR Code (it stands for "Quick Response") is a cell phone readable bar code that can store website URL's, text, phone numbers, email addresses and pretty much any other alphanumeric data. I have a QR Code for my website posted on every desk. This provides instant access to articles, surveys, slideshows, documents, and links which we use in class on a daily basis.

**REMIND** (can be accessed through a free app or through [**www.remind.com**](http://www.remind.com))

Remind is a one-way text messaging and email service. With Remind all personal information remains completely confidential. Teachers will never see your phone number, nor will you ever see theirs.

 \*To receive messages via text, text @shoet to 443-486-7999. You can opt-out of messages at any time by replying, 'unsubscribe @shoet'.

 \*To receive messages via email, send an email to shoet@mail.remind.com. To unsubscribe, reply with 'unsubscribe' in the subject line.

**QUIZLET** (can be accessed through a free app or through [**www.quizlet.com**](http://www.quizlet.com))

Quizlet is a free study tool which provides six study modes, including online flashcards, games, and practice tests. Once you create an account and join my class I will be able to see what you study, when you study, and how you study it. You will be required to study using this site twice each week, as vocabulary fluency is critical to your success on the AP test.

 \*When you create your account, please make sure your user name reflects your actual name for ease of grading.

 \*Once your account is set up, simply click on "+Join or create a class" located in the far left column. Enter Hoetzlein HHS AP Government and my class should immediately show as an option. Click on the blue "Join Class" button to the far right and I will be contacted immediately to approve your account.

**AP Exam Prep** (free app for Apple and Android devices)

Twenty five sample questions from each Unit with content derived from the successful McGraw-Hill 5 Steps to a 5 series, including questions and detailed explanations closely mirroring the topic, format, and degree of difficulty found in the actual AP exams.

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