

IRWIN ALTMAN MIDDLE SCHOOL 172

81-14 257 Street

Floral Park, New York 11004

718 831-4000 FAX: (718) 831-4008

Dr. Paul DeSimone, Principal

Ms. Kristin Devine, Assistant Principal

Mr. Myles Nash, Assistant Principal

Ms. Maritza Soto, Assistant Principal



June 2026

Dear Future 8th Grade Parent/Guardian:

As District 26 schools prepare for September 2026, the ELA department would like to share the first HMH unit of study with our families. As part of our opening English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum, we will start the year with a unit titled *Finding Your Path*. In this unit, we will examine the changes that occur in adolescence that prepare young people for adulthood and consider how teens can find their own paths as they undergo these changes. The texts we will read center on the Essential Question, ***“How do the challenges you face today help to shape your future?”*** This open-ended question is intended to spark thoughtful discussion. You may wish to explore this question with your child at home as well.

Unit 1 includes:

- **Short Reads** - online independent reading selections in a variety of genres. These include poetry, short stories, and an informational text.
- **A Long Read** - a novel related to the unit theme and Essential Question.
- **A Unit Writing Task** - writing an argument essay based on the selection of texts read in class and the Essential Question.

We encourage reading over the summer and recommend the following titles which connect to the Essential Question for the first unit of study:

- Ø The House on Mango Street by Sandra Cisneros (880L)
- Ø Hush by Jacqueline Woodson (640L)
- Ø A Long Way Gone by Ishmael Beah (920L)
- Ø Reaching Out by Francisco Jimenez (910L)

Click [HERE](#) to receive information and links to Summer Reading programs and to access ebook titles for the above texts and/or other engaging books you want to read this summer. Click [HERE](#) to view slides on how to access and use this digital library.

Please see the suggested supply list for incoming 8th grade students.

- A pack of Pens, Pencils, and Highlighters
- One Binder (1.5 or 2 inch) with one tab/divider for each subject
- One folder per subject (If inserted into binder, they can serve as dividers)
- A pair of earbuds compatible with your DOE device

We look forward to meeting you in September!

Sincerely,

Eighth Grade ELA Team