



# EAGLE MOUNTAIN SAGINAW ISD

*Fostering a Culture of Excellence*

Dear Families,

Welcome to the beginning of the second semester!

An important addition to our work this period is preparation for the STAAR test. Eighth graders will take a benchmark test February 1 – 5. This is modeled after the STAAR Reading assessment and will determine how prepared our students are for the test and how we can help strengthen their skills. We will also provide intensive tutorials for those who need extra help.

In addition to preparing for STAAR, we will focus on the unique elements of drama: character development, stage directions, and how a playwright can most successfully tell the story. We will also continue writing a variety of expository pieces that respond to different writing prompts.

Our fourth six weeks will include these big ideas:

- Interacting with texts through annotation, analysis, and comparison
- Examining the structure and elements of drama
- Reviewing expository text elements
- Writing and editing expository compositions guided by mentor texts

At the conclusion of our six weeks, students will take a districtwide ELAR assessment. This will help both the students and teachers assess needs and set goals for future growth in reading and writing skills.

We encourage you to talk to your child about what he or she is learning in class, and regularly review Skyward Access. If your child needs additional help, individual and small group tutorials are available before school; please check with your child's teacher for specific times.

You may also find the following online resources helpful to your child:

- Purdue Online Writing Lab: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/> This website offers a wide array of writing resources.
- Texas Library Association: <http://www.txla.org/> The Lone Star reading list is geared for middle school students.
- Additional resources are available on our district ELAR website: <http://www.emsisd.com/jvu>

Please feel free to contact your child's English teacher if you need additional information or have questions. Thank you for your continued support in helping your child stay focused. We look forward to working with you to help ensure your child's success.

Thank you,

8<sup>th</sup> Grade ELAR Teachers