Hello eighth graders! Hard to believe, barely two years after finishing elementary school, and you are a senior in middle school. Woo hoo! Are you ready for what this year has in store for you? Although, this year will be filled with lasting fun memories, it will also mean new levels of good citizenship, and purposeful, disciplined work to prepare you for what awaits you in high school.

This summer we would like you to read **ONE** title from the **8th Grade Summer Reading Book List**. We encourage you to read as many additional titles as you wish. As you read, be sure to **take notes on the book, focusing on the essential question (Are we changing for the better?)**, essential literary elements and/or author’s craft. It is imperative that you do this to gain meaning and insight from the story and to think about its connection to life and the world in which we live. Taking thorough and accurate notes will also help you remember the story when you return to school.

We need you to begin to brainstorm and reflect on the skills and characteristics of an effective leader. As eighth graders, it is crucial that we develop a self awareness of what affects our attitude and outlook on life. This will help you communicate more effectively and will allow you to understand others’ feelings and thus, have better relationships. This is an important life skill that will help you make wise decisions, and ensure you will become successful in your future endeavors. **Please know that at the end of September, you will be participating in a Socratic Seminar. Each student will be sharing their views and ideas based on the book they chose to read and painting they chose to analyze. At the conclusion of the Socratic Seminar, your teacher will ask you to write a reflection as an in-class assignment. This will count as a written grade towards your first-quarter grade entered into eSchool for your eighth grade year.**

### Tasks and Resources

**Task:** You will need to complete a reflection in which you begin to dive into our Essential Question:

- **To what extent, if any, are we changing for the better?**

In order to complete this task, you will need to do the following:

1. Read the text of your choice from the **8th Grade Summer Reading Book List:** ____________________

2. Be prepared to participate in a Socratic Seminar when you return to school by:

   - **Recording** your thoughts & ideas on post its or in your new 8th Grade Reader’s Notebook. These notes will help you contribute to the Socratic Seminar discussion.

   - **Choosing one** quote from the beginning, middle, and end of the text that is relevant and made an impact on you. At least three quotes in total.

   - **Studying** the paintings **THE SUBWAY** or **LUNCH** by George Tooker (See below)

   - **Analyzing** the paintings and decide to what extent, if any, does the essential question represents them.

Below are a list of questions to help you think about the paintings.

- How does the form contribute to the unity of its composition.
- How do the paintings aim to capture the audience’s attention?
- What was the artist’s intentions?
- What message do the paintings convey?
Questions to consider . . .

As we continue on this journey we started together, two years ago, consider the following questions:

- What is the responsibility of those with rights toward those deprived of rights?
- Why does prejudice still exist?
- Is change good?
- Are we changing for the better?
- Does adapting to change make our lives better?
- Does change impact continuity?
- Can we make the changes we need to live well in the future?
- How can we know what is right, fair, and true?
- Can we have a future where everyone will have all that they need?
- Is America a land of opportunity?
- What does it take to be a JUST person?
THE SUBWAY- by George Tooker 1950

LUNCH by George Tooker 1964
8th Grade
Summer Reading Book List

The Face on the Milk Carton by Caroline B. Cooney
The face on the milk carton looks like an ordinary little girl who was kidnapped more than twelve years ago from a shopping mall in New Jersey. In this gripping page-turner, as fifteen-year-old Janie Johnson stares at the milk carton, she feels overcome with shock. She knows that little girl is she. But how could it be true? Janie can’t believe that her loving parents kidnapped her, until she begins to piece together clues that don’t make sense. Why are there no pictures of Janie before she was four? Her parents have always said they didn’t have a camera. Now that explanation sounds feeble. Something is terribly wrong, and Janie is afraid to find out what happened more than twelve years ago.

Steve Jobs by Karen Blumenthal
From the start, his path was never predictable. Steve Jobs was given up for adoption at birth, dropped out of college after one semester, and at the age of twenty, created Apple in his parents’ garage with his friend Steve Wozniak. Then came the core and hallmark of his genius—his exacting moderation for perfection, his counterculture life approach, and his level of taste and style that pushed all boundaries. A devoted husband, father, and Buddhist, he battled cancer for over a decade, became the ultimate CEO, and made the world want every product he touched.

Soul Surfer by Bethany Hamilton
They say Bethany Hamilton has saltwater in her veins. How else could one explain the passion that drives her to surf? How else could one explain that nothing—not even the loss of her arm—could come between her and the waves? That Halloween morning in Kauai, Hawaii, Bethany responded to the shark’s stealth attack with the calm of a girl with God on her side.

I Beat the Odds by Michael Oher
Michael Oher is the young man at the center of the true story depicted in “The Blind Side” movie (and book) that swept up awards and accolades. Though the odds were heavily stacked against him, Michael had a burning desire deep within his soul to break out of the Memphis inner-city ghetto and into a world of opportunity. This is the first time he shares his account of his story in his own words, revealing his thoughts and feelings with details that only he knows, and offering his point of view on how anyone can achieve a better life.

Enrique’s Journey by Sonia Nazario
A true story from award-winning journalist Sonia Nazario recounting the odyssey of a Honduran boy who braves hardship and peril to reach his mother in the United States. In this astonishing true story, award-winning journalist Sonia Nazario recounts the unforgettable odyssey of a Honduran boy who brahs unimaginable hardship and peril to reach his mother in the United States. When Enrique is five years old, his mother, Lourdes, too poor to feed her children, leaves Honduras to work in the United States. The move allows her to send money back home to Enrique so he can eat better and go to school past the third grade. It is an epic journey, one thousands of immigrant children make each year to find their mothers in the United States.