

Welcome to 7th Grade!

Meet the Teachers:



Nathan Piersma – English Language Arts



Hi! My name is Nathan Piersma and I teach 7th grade English here at Vista. In my class, students explore reading and writing and find ways to apply their skills in their daily lives and beyond. In my spare time, I enjoy adventuring of all sorts: reading science fiction and fantasy, running with my dog Thor, or travelling the country with my family. My favorite food is anything I haven't tried before, and my favorite adventures are the kind that lead to learning. I'm excited to be here at Vista again and can't wait to dig into more learning adventures!

Mr. Pendell—Social Studies

I am a graduate of Grand Valley State University with a Bachelor's Degree in Social Studies for Secondary Education. I am currently working on my Master's degree with an emphasis in an Educational Leadership at Grand Valley State University. This will be my eleventh year at Vista Charter Academy and my sixth year as the 7th and 8th Grade Social Studies Teacher. I have had a blast the past ten years and expect this year to be even better!

I am married to Jenny Pendell and we have a four-year-old son named Connor James Pendell. We are extremely excited to add a daughter to our family this fall. It is exciting to see all the new things happening each day with our family.

I love teaching 7th and 8th graders. My favorite things about teaching the 7th and 8th grade are:

1. Those moments when a student succeeds at something that they may not have been able to do before.
2. The relationships I build with the students that go beyond Vista when my former students tell me how they are making a difference.
3. The opportunities to make a positive difference on the lives of young adults every day.

It is an honor to teach at Vista Charter Academy and work with your children. I look forward to the coming year!



Science – TBD

We are currently in the process of filling this position. We will forward on information once we have found the best fit for our Vista students.

Mr. Rodgers—Mathematics

After graduating from Central Michigan University in 2001 with a Math major and Language Arts minor, I taught four years of 6th grade in Northern Michigan. While there, I earned my Master's Degree in Education from Marygrove College in Detroit. This will be my ninth year at Vista and my fourth year teaching 7th grade math.

My wife, Erica, and I have four fabulous children. Chloé (19) recently finished her second year at Grand Rapids Community College and has moved into her own apartment. Oriana (17) will be a senior in high school, and Lennon (11), and Juniper (8) will be entering sixth and third grades, respectively. We enjoy going camping, swimming in Lake Michigan, and checking out local parks and splash pads. I enjoy many sports and I rarely miss a Detroit Tigers' game on TV.

My favorite thing about teaching 7th grade is interacting with the students and watching their abilities grow. I love to engage students in intellectual conversation and listen to their ideas and opinions about a variety of topics. I truly enjoy being able to help students grow into mature, responsible young adults. I am excited to see how each of you will grow this year!



Supplies needed:

ELA:

Pencils (10)

Pens with blue or black ink (5)

Spiral notebook

Loose leaf paper

Folders (2)

Pencil sharpener

Pencil pouch or box

1 Box of tissue

Science:

1 Spiral notebook

1 Box of colored pencils

1 Box of tissue

2 Folders

Math:

Loose leaf paper

Pencils/Erasers

Pencil Sharpener

1 box of tissue

Social Studies:

Notebook

Coloring utensils

1 Box of Tissue

Keeper

General Materials:

3 ring 2 inch binder or Trapper Keeper

Plenty of pens and pencils

5 folders: (1 red, 1 orange, 1 yellow, 1 green, 1 blue)

Backpack

1 additional pack of pencils labeled "Art"

**Please discourage your child from choosing items that may be distracting to them and others in the classroom...such as toy erasers, giant pencils, etc.

Vista Academy

A Tuition-Free, Public School

711 32nd ST SE

Grand Rapids, MI 49548

616-246-6920

VistaCharterAcademy.org

Exciting Opportunities

With school of choice, parents have an opportunity to choose a school for their child. With that in mind, parents have to look at many different aspects of a school and decide which would be the best fit for their child and allow their child to develop academically.

Vista Academy has the best of both of these: a perfect fit for any child, and exceptional academics. Vista teachers greet students at their doors with a warm welcome and handshake making students feel appreciated and cared for as soon as they enter the classroom. With that mindset, students feel more comfortable to express themselves, and try their best in class. Students also participate in activities where they get to know each other, respect differences, and learn from each other's strengths.

A Standard of Excellence

The Seventh Grade team is very focused on making sure your child meets all of their educational objectives. We take pride in giving every student the best educational experience and we do this by teaching the students at their own individual level.

We work closely with one another to make sure that we are sharing our strengths and weaknesses as a team. We meet weekly to plan strategies and resources that will best meet the state objectives as well as the needs of our students.

7th Grade Highlights

In **Math**, we will be making calculations with positive and negative integers, converting between fractions, decimals, and percents, finding the surface area and volume of three dimensional shapes, solving simple algebraic equations, and finding the probability of an event

In **Science**, students will be participating in many labs that are hands on experiences for students to explore concepts. These labs will allow students to use materials such as food and chemicals to demonstrate a concept. Students will also work on a weather project in which they will create a forecast for the United States and report to the class.

In **Social Studies**, students will participate in classroom debates, draw accurate maps to display physical elements, climate changes, and population distribution, developing oral presentations/Power Points/Posters/You be the Teacher, and they will be involved in unsolved mysteries/ weigh the evidence: several topics/reenactments

In **ELA**, you will explore many genres, including historical fiction, realistic fiction, biographies, autobiographies, and more. In class, you will read, write, and get creative as you delve into the many exciting topics that will be covered. You will learn how to conduct research and present your information to others.