Dear Parents,

Happy Spring! I am very excited about our new novel study. We will be reading The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian by Sherman Alexie. It has won the National Book Award and adds supplemental material to our social studies curriculum of Native Americans and how colonization and expansion have affected native communities in the Americas. The novel revolves around a 9th grader growing up on the Spokane Reservation and the battle between his aspirations for success and the challenges he faces.

Throughout the novel we will be analyzing “point of view”, how external expectations influence our lives and how the Native American experience has been shaped by colonization.

The book is funny, raw, honest and sometimes heart-breaking. Because the author writes to capture the reality of the character’s life, there is some mild sexual content (he talks about his body’s physical reaction to girls). If this content concerns you, you would like more information or you would like to preview the novel, please contact me. I highly recommend the novel for an enjoyable adult read.

Sincerely,   
Caroline McCulloch

cmcullo@pps.net

Links:

Interview with Sherman Alexie:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Io9vRHYMiFM&safe=active>

Common Sense Media Assessment of age-appropriate books:

<http://www.commonsensemedia.org/book-reviews/the-absolutely-true-diary-of-a-part-time-indian>

New York Times Book Review:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/11/books/review/Barcott3-t.html?_r=0>