8th Grade Science

“Learning is a two-way street”

Welcome to the 2012-2013 school year. I hope this will be an exciting learning experience for each of my students. I intend to work as hard as I can to create a classroom environment where students will not only enjoy learning about science, but also about being a productive citizen. Therefore I have established specific educational topics to be covered along with classroom behavioral goals.

**Educational Topics Behavioral Goals**

Atoms, Elements and Compounds Properties of Matter Be respectfull

Plant/Animal Cells Human Body Systems Be honest

Reproduction Heredity Be helpful

Disease Rocks/Minerals Be courteous

Plate Movement Be motivated

I have created a classroom website to serve as a tool to help us use our time efficiently and effectively. The 8th grade will have a page which can be accessed from my main page. This page will provide a link to each of the educational topics. Each topic will have specific learning objectives along with websites and activities to help achieve our goals. Please bookmark my website using the following address:

<http://coachthornhillscience.weebly.com/>

In addition to my website, we will also use some web-based sites to help with our communication and critical thinking. As of now I am experimenting with some of these sites, but feel each will serve as a way for students to be able to express their ideas for others to assess. Some of the sites I plan to use include:

**Animoto**—a site to create exciting videos

**Edomo**—a site to communicate assignments, assessments, etc (need student user name & password to access)

**Wikispace**—a site for discussion and to create projects to be publicly viewed on the net

**Weeby**—a site for individual science journal entries and group responses to specific science questions

**NOTE: All communication between teacher and student from the above websites and all web-based communication sites can be viewed publicly and will not include any private correspondence.**

I plan to create and provide each student ­­­­with scoring guides before, during and after assessment. Students will be expected to take an active role in classroom discussion, activities and group projects. Assessment plans will be developed for each educational topic and will be posted on the specific webpage as part of a comprehensive unit plan. To view the plan go to the educational topic and click on “unit plan” listed in the menu at the top of the page. Even though all plans are not completed as of now, I will work hard during the school year to have each completed.

With the busy lives we lead, it is often difficult to balance all of our demands. Since the goal of public school is to promote learning, I will do my best to limit the amount of homework I assign. Instead, every student will be given ample time in class to complete most assignments, should they decide to use that time wisely.

With 13 years of teaching experience, I am very capable of addressing any situation that might arise. Be reassured that my students will be expected to behave and be respectful. When the bell rings, they should be seated and shift their focus to the task at hand. The bottom line is that I love to teach and I love being a Conway Bear. I will work hard to make this year a great experience for my students. But, learning is a two-way street and students must come to class motivated to push themselves to achieve their best.