

Note to Parents

Hello! I just wanted to drop a quick note your way to say “Hi” and to let you know what you can expect for your son/daughter this semester in my class. My name is Kevin Hall. I graduated from the University of California at Davis, and I teach Physics, Electronics, AP Physics, and Biology here at North Thurston High School.

Notebook/Lab notebook

Your son/daughter will be expected to buy a *graph paper* (quad rule) composition book. Students will be doing all of their assignments, circuit design and analysis, labs, etc. in their notebooks. Many students will want to use these notebooks for taking general notes as well. Students need to get their notebooks by Monday, Sept. 9. We will be using them in class starting that day. They are available for about two dollars at many of the stores that carry the regular composition books (Office Depot, Staples, etc.). If this is a hardship, please drop me an email, quick call, or have your student let me know after class. The stores run out of these *every* year, so please try to get it early. If the stores are out, the college bookstores (Evergreen, St. Martin’s, SPSCC) almost always have these.

Homework

In the past, a number of parents have asked whether or not their sons/daughters should have homework to do in the evenings, and if so, how much. We will probably be doing an average of 2-3 homework assignments a week, plus an activity or lab. There *will* be some time to work on the assignments in class in order for me to go around and answer questions and clear up problems. So, depending on how long the assignments are on a given week, and whether your son/daughter had enough time in class and/or study hall (if they have it), they may not have homework in the evenings some weeks. I would suspect most students will need to do at least one assignment each week at home in addition to preparing for the quizzes/tests.

Quizzes/Tests

There will be 2-3 unannounced quizzes every unit. In addition, there will be a unit test every 2-3 weeks. On the evening before a unit test, your son/daughter should spend a good hour or so preparing for the next day’s test.

Questions/Concerns

I am *always* delighted to talk to parents. Please consider my door to always be open. You can contact me at the email listed at the top of this sheet, or leave a message for me by phoning the high school, and I’ll get back to you as soon as possible. I’d also be happy to make an appointment with you to meet in person as well.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Electronics is also a “vocational” class, and as such will be taught in a slightly different manner than the more traditional science courses. One example of this will be their “Job Performance” or professionalism grade. Students will be expected to be on time to class and notify me *in advance* if they are going to be absent on a given day. You’ll find some important information about these differences on the classroom management sheet I gave the students. *Please* take the time to look over that sheet with your child as well.

(more on back)

I have a website for students (and parents) at: <http://scienceclass.dreamhosters.com>

You can access the website directly at that address or you can access it via the school website under my name in the staff listings. The website will have information on what is due and when, and I also put copies of most of the assignments on the website, so if the students misplace their papers, they can always print things up from the website.

Please keep this sheet for yourself, sign the second page of this form and send it back with your son/daughter. It's considered an assignment, and they will receive points for it.

Also, there are a couple of sections on the last page that may be of interest to you:

- 1) Student Role Model
- 2) Parents in the Classroom

Student Role Model - I'd like to get the name and contact (either phone or email) of a person that you think your son/daughter looks up to. This could be a grandparent, aunt/uncle, neighbor, pastor/priest/rabbi/etc., family friend, etc. The idea is that I'd like to send a couple notes out over the semester to this person letting them know that your son/daughter is struggling, doing exceptionally well, or you could even drop a note my way letting me know what news you'd like me to pass on. I'd like that person to then relay what they've heard to your son or daughter. I've found in the past that when the kids work in a vacuum, many of them don't remain as motivated, but if folks let them know they're concerned or proud, this tends to have an impact on their learning. Please don't feel that you have to participate, but if you think it would be helpful with your child, or if you have someone in mind that you think might like hearing how your child is doing, feel free to add the info on the next page.

Parents in the Classroom - I *love* to have parents come into my classroom. You don't have to have any background in science – I'll provide that. Your time and energy and a desire to make a difference with our young ones is all that's required. Your presence and voice are highly valued, and if you'd like to spend a little time getting to see your students and/or their peers from a whole different perspective, I guarantee both the kids and you will come away richer for the experience. You can participate in your own student's class, if you'd like, or a separate class. Either is fine with me. There is a background check involved, so if you're interested, please indicate so on the following page, and I'll get you all the details. You can also change your mind, but it's good to get the background check out of the way just in case as it takes a little while to complete. Please consider this opportunity. I'd love to have you be part of my classes!!

I want to make sure your son/daughter is well prepared for school, problem solving, and life in general. Anything you can do to help make sure homework is being done or that your son/daughter is keeping up with the material is *greatly* appreciated. I'm a parent myself, so I understand busy schedules and the work involved just keeping everything going, but I know that together as parent and teacher, we can give them a good head start. Thanks always!

