**Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Dear Parents,

Welcome to 8th Grade Science! I am very excited about teaching your child this year and inspiring them to do great things!

I am writing this to let you know of several things I need you to do to make sure that your child has a successful school year.

**21st Century Learning/Digital Citizenship/Parent Communication**

This is a big heading, I know. However, all three of these are connected with the internet-based classroom community that I will be using this year. I teach from my webpage and you will find all the resources you need to help your child be successful this year easily accessible there. My webpage is [www.8thgradesciencehcms.weebly.com](http://www.8thgradesciencehcms.weebly.com). On my homepage, you can send me a message, you can sign up for email alerts when I post another blog, you can view the classroom curriculum map and the syllabus, and you can browse through each of our units to see what your child is doing in science class, and you can download classroom documents.

**BYOD** (bring your own device) is allowed in my classroom however, I reserve the right to remove any devices that are being used inappropriately in my classroom. No selfies, no pictures for non-academic reasons, no texting in class or social media of any sort. **1st offense**: student must turn over their device to me for the class period. **2nd offense**: student must turn over their device to me for the entire day. **3rd offense**: student device will be turned into the office for parent to pick up. **After the 3rd offense, student loses all device privileges in my classroom.**

**8th Grade Science Curriculum: Next Generation Science Standards**

Education is always evolving as well as the science classroom. Kentucky has adopted the Next Generation Science Standards as the common core. Our curriculum for this year is posted on my webpage under the curriculum map on the homepage and also my syllabus.

Please keep in mind that these standards are new and therefore the time spent on these units are approximate and by no means set in stone. If you have questions or concerns regarding this curriculum, please email me or jump on the Kentucky Department of Education’s website for a detailed description of the NGSS for 8th grade science.

**Expectations**

**Attendance:** This is the biggie! I cannot teach your child if they are not in class! If your child is absent, they must get on my webpage and see the posts that they have missed and/or any assignments they must turn in. They must come to me BEFORE school or AFTER school or during my planning period. It is up to the student to request any make-up work they need. They will have the same amount of days that they missed to make up any assignments. HOWEVER, there may be some assignments that cannot be made up; class discussions, performance assessments, labs, presentations, debates, etc. All of these are valuable experiences that will be simply lost unless the student is present in the classroom.

**Late Work Policy:** There is a strict **NO LATE WORK POLICY** in the 8th grade. The 8th grade team of teachers have decided that to better prepare our students for high school and the world beyond, we should keep our expectations high. We know that things happen and that sometimes we forget, however if an assignment is late, it will not be accepted. If a student knows that they will be late turning in an assignment, they should approach the situation with an explanation in writing before the assignment is due to request an extension. If this protocol is not followed, the probability is low that the assignment will be accepted, however each situation is different.

**Giants of Science Biographies Project:** This is an **out-of-class book assignment** that your student will complete. He/she will have 9 weeks to read a biography of their choice about a scientist that has contributed to our modern way of thinking or technologies. Our librarian has the list and the books. They will have a series of questions to answer about the book and then will also have to create a presentation about the scientist. More details on this assignment will follow and can be found on my webpage under the Giants of Science heading. The semester that your student will complete this assignment is dependent upon the class that they are in. This project will be worth a test grade.

**In-Class Projects:**  We construct a lot of collaborative projects in my classroom. This being said, anytime your student has a project please don’t feel like you need to go out and purchase extra materials for them. My goal is for them to become imaginative problem solvers and upcycle materials that they would normally throw away or that they are not using to bring in from home.

I know that this all seems like a lot. My goal is to produce some great thinkers and problem solvers while inspiring their sense of wonder. Productive struggle is more meaningful than shuffling through the school day.

Expect periodic newsletters from me to let you know of upcoming events in science class.

This is a contract between you and I to make sure that we do what is best for your child academically. Please sign on the signature line so that I know that you have read and agree to all the expectations.

Sincerely,

Larisa McKinney \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

8th Grade Science Parent Signature

larisa.mckinney@henry.kyschools.us