

Welcome to 8<sup>th</sup> grade Earth & Space Science! We will spend the year learning about our world and beyond! We will study Earth chemistry, minerals, rocks, tectonics, volcanoes, earthquakes, geologic time, cartography, meteorology, and astronomy. The course is based on the concept that students “learn by doing.” Life on Earth is tied by amazing interrelationships to the oceans, minerals and rocks, the process of weathering and erosion, and the supply of natural resources. The practical applications of information learned are reinforced throughout the entire course of study so that students can better cope with their changing world. Below you will find the requirements & expectations to guide you through a successful year!

### Materials

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You are responsible for bringing the following items with you to class daily: your covered textbook, an organized binder, a pencil & pen, class notes, and homework. You will need colored pencils on occasion. You will have access to an online textbook, as discussed in class. You also have the option of signing out a CD-ROM from the library which contains our textbook, as well as other valuable resources.

### Attendance

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You must be on time for class. You have 4 minutes from when the bell rings to be seated in my classroom. Any student that is late for class must have a pass from the previous teacher. Repeated unexcused tardiness will result in a detention being issued.

When you are absent, be sure to check the absent bin upon return. Ideally, this should be done during AM homeroom the day you return. You will be given ample time to make up work from an absence – typically equal to the number of days that you missed. If there are special circumstances, speak to me about them immediately. My degree of flexibility will correspond with your level of responsibility.

If you miss class due to a scheduled early dismissal or field trip, be sure to find out what you will miss that day, your assignment for the evening, and then turn in any work that is due that day.

Carson Middle School has a “Homework Hotline” **(412) 369-5454**, for student absences of **two** or more days. See the CMS website for more information. If you are sick, you should focus on resting and recovering. You can make up the work when you feel well.

### Assignments & Grading

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Grades will be based on your homework, quizzes, tests, projects, & class activities. Grades are calculated by dividing the total number of points earned by the total number of points possible for the grading period. The North Allegheny scale is used:

90% - 100% = A

80% - 89% = B

70% - 79% = C

60% - 69% = D

≤ 59% = E

**I assume that students and parents use Tyler to track grades. It is your responsibility to know your grades.** If you do not have Internet access, see me for a permanent pass to the library or computer lab so that you can check your grades each week print a report to take home to share with your family. The Tyler System has a variety of methods of communicating grades via email, text messages, etc. Discuss this in greater detail with your parents. “I didn’t know my grade was a \_\_\_” is unacceptable. Use the calendar that the District provided to your family to locate grading period and interim dates.

Tests will be given at the end of each chapter or unit. You will receive at least one week’s notice to prepare for tests. Quizzes may be given at any time, and they may be announced or unannounced. Be prepared by reviewing your notes when assigned. If you score less than 60% on a **quiz** I will allow you to retake it, with certain conditions:

1. You must retake the quiz within three school days.
2. You must spend time reviewing the material, and see me for clarification if needed.
3. You must see me to schedule the retake. I will not ask you if you want to retake a quiz.
4. The average of the two scores will be recorded in the gradebook.
5. If you fail a retake, you will no longer be eligible to retake quizzes in this class.

You will have homework **four nights per week. You should plan on working 20 minutes per night on science homework.** I typically assign work Monday through Thursday evenings. Written homework is usually given two or three times per week, & the assignment “review notes” is assigned on other nights. The Earth & Space science curriculum contains material that is new to most 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. A great deal of the content is in-depth & abstract. By completing the reading assignments and reviewing your notes when assigned, you will get the most out of this class. Your success will be determined, in part, by your efforts outside of the classroom.

Homework is checked in one of two ways. Your work may be checked for completion or accuracy. Illegible work will not be accepted. All checked work must be turned in on time to receive full credit. In order for work to be complete, it must be in the classroom when I start class. **For the first nine weeks, work that is not completed on time can be turned in one day late for half credit.** After the first nine weeks is completed, late work will not be accepted.

If you are not in class when we review an assignment I will enter the letter 'M' for missing in the grade book. It is your responsibility to see me to turn in your work when you return as I do not chase students for missing work. I will change your grade if you turn your work in to me within the time constraints mentioned earlier. If you fail to turn in your work on time the assignment will remain listed as missing, and the grade will be a 0.

You need to keep track of your assignments. **It is your responsibility to copy down exactly what is written on the assignment board daily.** Time will be given at the beginning of each class to complete this task & ask questions about the assignment. Completed homework should be kept in your binder so that you can review it at night, and that you are able to locate it in class when needed. If you prove to need further assistance completing this task, daily **teacher & parent signatures** in your assignment book will be explored.

You are responsible for keeping your notes and assignments updated. All classwork and homework should be completed using a pencil, and checked in pen. You are required to make corrections on your work as we review it in class. By doing so, you have a valuable study aid. If you are absent, be sure to check the SCIENCE binder that is kept in my classroom to update your work. You can do this during AM homeroom, activity period, or in any free time during class.

You will have a final exam at the end of the year. **Save your notes throughout the year!**

### **Academic Integrity**

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It is understood that you will behave & complete your work in a fashion that reveals an honest, hardworking character. Under no circumstances will cheating of any type be tolerated. To clarify, cheating means:

1. Using unauthorized materials on any class work, homework, quizzes, or exams.
2. Copying class work, homework, quizzes, or exams from another student.
3. Allowing a student to copy class work, homework, quizzes, or exams.
4. Plagiarizing, in part or in entirety, any assignment.
5. Changing, or attempting to change, an answer on homework, tests, or quizzes, while being checked or later.

Participating in any of these dishonest behaviors will result in a 0 for the assignment and a detention.

**Tips on Organization & Success in 8<sup>th</sup> Grade** - *Organization will help you make the best of this & future years.*

1. Guard your notebook with your life. Write your name on the outside so that if it gets misplaced, it may be returned.
2. Look at your calendar & notebook every day before you leave school, when you get home, & again each morning.
3. Keep all notes and assignments in your binder – never anywhere else!
4. Learn to plan your time wisely. Work on long-range assignments little at a time – in advance. Don't procrastinate!
5. If you don't have a written assignment in a subject, spend 15 to 20 minutes that night going over the notes in the unit.
6. If you feel that you are becoming unraveled & disorganized, seek help from a teacher or counselor; that is why we are here.

### **Parents:**

We reviewed and discussed these requirements in class. Please discuss these with your child, sign the bottom, and return it to school. A copy is posted in my classroom, and will also be posted on my website. Please feel free to contact me at [bfontana@northallegheeny.org](mailto:bfontana@northallegheeny.org) (**parent use only**) with any questions that you may have.

Mr. Fontana  
(412) 369-5520

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PARENT SIGNATURE

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STUDENT SIGNATURE

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PRINTED STUDENT NAME