**Kate Collins Middle School 7th Grade Life Science**

Hello!

I am excited to be joining the staff at KCMS this year! This will be my first year teaching and I am thrilled to be sharing it with your students. I am looking forward to sharing my passion for science and the love of learning I have with your child. Please do not hesitate to contact me by email if you have any concerns or questions. You can also check out my website throughout the year as I add activities and other miscellaneous materials that we are doing in class!

Instructor: Ms. Rachel Becker

E-mail: [rbecker@waynesboro.k12.va.us](mailto:rbecker@waynesboro.k12.va.us)

Room #: 709

Website: <http://msbeckerssciencecenter.weebly.com>

**Course Description**

The Life Science standards emphasize a more complex understanding of change, cycles, patterns, and relationships in the living world. Students build on basic principles related to these concepts by exploring the cellular organization and the classification of organisms; the dynamic relationships among organisms, populations, communities, and ecosystems; and change as a result of the transmission of genetic information from generation to generation.

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**Course Content**

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| **Semester 1:**  Routines, Procedures, Expectations, Course Pretest  Unit 1 Measurement, Tools, Lab Safety, Microscope Use  Unit 2 Characteristics of Living Things, Cell Structure & Theory Pt 1  Unit 3 Cell Structure & Theory Pt 2 Unit 4 Cell Organization & Systems  Unit 5 Classification of Organisms Unit 6 Photosynthesis & Cellular Respiration  Unit 7 Cycles in Nature & Energy Flow 1 | **Semester 2:**  Unit 7 Cycles in Nature & Energy Flow 2  Unit 8 Populations in a Biological Community  Unit 9 Organisms in an Environment  Unit 10 Dynamic Organisms  Unit 11 Ecosystem Dynamics & Humans  Unit 12 Organism Reproduction & Genetics  Unit 13 Organisms Change Over Time  Comprehensive Lab Practical Exam, Review & Course Post Test |

**Student Evaluation**

**Type of Grade:** **Weight:**

Bell Work 10%

Classwork 15%

Labs 15%

Quizzes & Tests 30%

Study Guides 10%

Projects 20%

**Communication Devices**

Students may possess phone, tablet, Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) or other communications device on school property, including school buses, provided that the device ***must remain off and out of sight during instructional time.***

* Students will place their devices into a basket as they come into the room; the devices will then be placed into a pocket chart by my desk for the remainder of the class
* Students’ devices will be returned at the end of class
* For safety precautions, students may not use devices in the hallways or listen to music
* Bluetooth speakers are prohibited on grounds and busses

**Standards of Student Conduct**

Students have the right to a free public education free from disruption. Any physical or verbal disturbance which interrupts or interferes with teaching and orderly conduct of school activities, is prohibited.

**Class Rules & Behavior Expectations**

**Respectful** - Be kind with your words and actions. ***How?***

* Speak kindly to/about others and yourself
* Raise your hand to speak.

**Involved** - Listen and follow directions. ***How?***

* Ask questions.
* Participate in discussions by adding related comments.
* Be willing to work with anyone.
* Try everything you are asked to do.
* Complete assignments in time given.

**Responsible** - Handle yourself, classroom supplies and school property with care. ***How?***

* Follow lab safety guidelines set forth in Lab Safety Contract.
* Walk around the classroom quietly.
* Keep your hands to yourself at all times.
* Begin Bell Work or activity written on board.

**Rewards and Privileges**

Throughout the year, I will occasionally have rewards that the students can earn as a class. The privileges that students can earn are separate from that in that they are earned on an individual basis. Students will earn the privileges/rewards by following classroom rules and refraining from behaviors that will negatively impact their--and other students’--learning. Some of those privileges include, but are not limited to:

* Listening to music with headphones on their laptops. **CELL PHONES WILL NOT BE ALLOWED FOR THIS**
* Picking the students who they would like to work with for projects and labs
* Choosing where they would like to sit in the classroom
* Being able to have snacks in class--at teacher discretion

\*\*\* A privilege/reward is not the same as a right. A right is irrevocable, which means it cannot be taken away. Privileges can be taken away if a student does not follow the set guidelines for earning and keeping them \*\*\*

Students who require extra/closer/additional supervision and coaching may miss out on some of the aforementioned privileges. ***Privilege loss will be used as a classroom behavior intervention if, and only it, other classroom interventions do not improve the behavior.*** Classroom interventions are aimed at teaching students positive behaviors that are acceptable in a classroom or other areas of the school (and just about anywhere in life).

**Example Interventions**

* **Meet with Student**: Discuss solutions. Explain/ reteach and make request for desired behaviors and replacement behaviors. Ask student to fix it.
* **Conference with Parent**: I will attempt to talk with you by email first and then by phone. I want to be part of a team that works together to help students become better people. **I am looking to improve classroom behaviors to protect all students’ rights to a learning environment free from disruptions.** This is a right guaranteed by the State of Virginia Department of Education. It is my hope that you will give your child the message that disruptive behaviors are not desirable or sought after “skills”
* **In Class Time-out:** The student will be moved to a separate part of the classroom to work alone. All assignments will still need to be completed to receive a grade.
* **Privilege loss:** See previous list for examples- remember I said earlier that a privilege loss will occur if, and only if, other interventions do not improve the behavior.
* **Out of Class time-out**: The student will be sent to work in another classroom. The student will log the event with a simple reflection form, and all assignments will still need to be completed to receive a grade. This is an option if a student continues to disrupt the class and cause learning to be difficult for themselves and/or others repeatedly.

**Absences/Make-up Work:**

Missed assignments can be found in the back of the classroom. It is the students responsibility to ensure they collect their missing work upon their return to the classroom. The students will have the number of days they were absent plus one to complete and return it. I will be available to help upon request.

**Extra Help**

I will be available to help students upon request. Students just need to ask to schedule time and I will gladly accommodate!

\*\*\* I would love to get to know you and form a strong team with you- with your child’s best interests in the forefront! I am certain that we want similar things for your child and would love to talk to you to better understand individual needs and wishes. Please send me an email, or jot down any questions that you have, and I will get back to you as soon as possible. \*\*\*

**PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN**

I have gone over the syllabus in class with Ms. Becker.

Student signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

I have read through the syllabus.

Parent/guardian signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

Parent/guardian email: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/guardian email: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/guardian phone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/guardian phone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

CHECK ONE:

* I prefer to be reached by email
* I prefer to be reached by phone

Is there internet access at home where your child can access Google Classroom and the internet? (This can be done using free apps from the App Store and a cell phone with wifi or data connections)

CHECK ONE:

* Yes, my child has access
* No, my child does not have access