

Dear Parents and Students:

Welcome to Earth Science at Liverpool High School! We will surely encounter some unique challenges as we move through this academic year together, but I am confident that we will approach these as opportunities for growth. I explored many different instructional technologies last year and learned a great deal about the types of resources that work to promote meaningful learning. This year's Earth Science course will continue to be embedded with technology, and will provide several pathways for students to cultivate their 21st century skills (i.e. collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity) as they engage with the big ideas about our planet.

Earth Science consists of three broad areas of study: **Geology** (study of earth), **Astronomy** (study of space), and **Meteorology** (study of atmosphere, weather, and climate). It is my goal to help all students develop a clear understanding of how these three strands are interconnected to form the systems that surround us.

Students will examine Earth Science through a series of laboratory activities, class lectures/notes, video clips, readings, collaborative projects, and problem-solving activities. Some of the laboratory exercises will be physically "hands-on" when possible, while others will rely on interactive websites. For this reason, it is critical that students **bring their Chromebook to class each day**.

Communication: If at any point you have questions or concerns, you can contact me through email at jwilliams@liverpool.k12.ny.us. If you would like more general information about our Earth Science classroom, or to view a copy of this letter, please feel free to visit my website: <http://williamslhx.weebly.com/>

Grading Policy – Academic Classes (and 4th Quarter Honors)

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| • Unit Tests (about 2 per quarter) | 30% (of quarterly grade) |
| • Labs (about 10 per quarter) | 30% |
| • Quizzes/Homework (about 15 to 20 per quarter) | 30% |
| • Literacy & Current Events (1 per quarter) | 10% |

Grading Policy – Honors Classes (1st and 2nd Quarters)

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| • Unit Tests (about 2 per quarter) | 25% (of quarterly grade) |
| • Labs (about 10 per quarter) | 25% |
| • Quizzes/Homework (about 15 to 20 per quarter) | 25% |
| • Literacy Assignment (1 per quarter, symposium-related) | 25% |

3rd Quarter

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| • Symposium | 50% (of quarterly grade) |
| • Unit Tests | 20% |
| • Laboratory Reports | 20% |
| • Quizzes/Homework | 10% |

Lab Policy and Regents Exam: A student must pass at least one science Regents exam in order to be an eligible candidate for a HS diploma in NYS. This course will culminate in a **Regents Exam** to be administered in June, 2022. New York State Education Department (NYSED) requires that, in order for a student to be eligible for the New York State Earth Science Regents examination, they must satisfactorily complete at least 1200 minutes of hands-on (or virtual equivalent) laboratory activities throughout the school year. Students will have no problem satisfying the laboratory requirement as long as they regularly complete assignments (I assign many more lab activities than the required minimum). Students will be expected to keep track of their completed lab grades in electronic folders that I will distribute via Google Classroom.

Assignments and Late Policy:

- Students will need to regularly complete assignments in a timely manner. Assignments and due dates will be posted on my **“Homework Calendar” and Google Classroom**. Each assignment is due before the start of class on the due date. For example, if a student’s class starts at 10:17AM, then the assignment must be “turned in” to Google Classroom prior to 10:17AM. Most of my homework assignments are meant to be short tasks that allow students to check their understanding in preparation for upcoming assessments. These types of homework assignments will be graded, but they will not be included in the student's average. However, if students do not complete these assignments, their quiz/test grades (and their overall averages) will reflect a lack of preparation. Other “homework” tasks will simply require students to spend some additional time outside of class to complete activities/labs that were started (but not completed) during class time. These assignments will be graded and included in the student's average.
- Students should frequently check **my Homework Calendar** to keep track of assignments/assessments.

Class Materials (You are expected to bring the following materials to class each day):

- **CHROMEBOOK!**
- “Earth Science Reference Tables” (will be provided) and a Two-pocket folder
- Spiral Notebook **or** Composition Notebook **or** 100 sheets of loose-leaf paper in a binder

Class Rules:

- **ATTEND CLASS EACH DAY READY TO LEARN.**
- **REACH FOR YOUR BEST POSSIBLE EFFORT AT ALL TIMES.**
- **RESPECT ALL PEOPLE AND PROPERTY IN OUR CLASS.**

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays (2:20 - 3:20). I am available after school by appointment for anyone who would like additional assistance/support with assignments.

My paramount concern is the health and well-being of my students (both physical and mental). Students need to feel socially and emotionally engaged with the learning process in order for them to effectively learn Earth Science. I am committed to providing a positive and

authentic learning experience for all of my students. My mission is to challenge students without overwhelming them. Furthermore, I recognize that we will continue to encounter pandemic-related challenges this year, and we will need to maintain a higher degree of flexibility than normal. The bottom line is that I am here to support student success in any way that I can. I look forward to working with you all this year!

Sincerely,

Jason M. Williams
Earth Science Teacher