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Physics Teacher
Edna Karr Secondary School
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New Orleans, LA 70131

Dear Parent/Guardian of Physics Student:

I am writing to introduce myself as your child's new Physics teacher. Your child is going to be a part of an exciting new approach to learning called **Modeling Instruction in Physics**. In this approach, tested and shown very effective by physics teachers throughout the nation, your child will be confronted with a series of situations in which he/she will decide what factors might be related, how he/she can go about measuring them, and then collect the data. Your child will learn how to use a computer to help him/her graphically analyze the data and he/she will learn how to clearly describe the relationships he/she found, using a variety of representations. Your child will then go on to explore how the relationships he/she discovered can be applied to a wide variety of new situations. So, in this approach, your child will derive from his/her experiments most of the equations he/she will use in physics.

Your child will work in the lab and on assignments in 3-4 person groups. Members of these groups will make oral presentations before the whole class in which the students present their ideas and answer questions from their classmates. The emphasis is on the general understanding of the principles involved and how the student solved the problem rather than on the answer. Part of the student's grade will depend on how well their group functions.

All students are expected to uphold Edna Karr's Academic Honesty Policy. Cheating is defined as "accepting or providing work or information that is not one's own." The consequences for students who violate this policy are explained on pages 10 of the Edna Karr High School Student Handbook 2009-10.

Students are expected to bring to class daily a three-ring binder with tab dividers and loose-leaf paper. Students will keep all the materials in this binder until the completion of the course. Students will need to store lab and other data on a flash/jump drive. As a result, students are required to bring a USB flash drive with a memory of at least 2 gigabyte. Students are also required to have a scientific calculator. There are a number of inexpensive (under \$10) scientific calculators (ones that include trig functions) which are suited to the needs of this class. Expensive, programmable engineering calculators are unnecessary and, unfortunately, students are not allowed to use during test and more are likely to disappear. To help with security of your child's calculator, I encourage engraving your child's name on the calculator, which makes it easier for me to return a lost calculator. Should your child forget his/her calculator on the day of a test or quiz, he/she may borrow one **if I** have enough extras.

STUDENT SUPPLIES

Scientific Calculator

1-inch 3-ring notebook labeled with your name, subject, and teacher

Notebook paper (*loose leaf*)

Dividers with tabs (Quizzes, Notes, Homework, Classwork, Laboratory/Projects)

Graph paper

No. 2 Pencils

Black or Blue ink pens and Red pens

\$15.00 Lab Fee – Due by Monday, August 24th

The problems assigned as homework, which will be available on [Edna Karr website](#), are designed to test to see if your child really understands the concepts developed in class. It is reasonable to expect that your child will often experience difficulty in setting up and solving these types of problems. It is not such a bad thing if your child struggles a bit in trying to complete the assignment. It is in the discussion of the homework the following day that the class as whole **really learns** the material. To be a meaningful contributor, your child and his/her group must attempt to do the problems. *To receive credit for attempting the assignment, students must at least write down the starting facts and what they are supposed to find.* At the beginning of the period, I will check your child's homework to make sure a reasonable effort has been attempted. Only assignments initialed by myself will receive credit. Test & quiz questions will be similar to the problems your child encounter in the homework. Therefore, it is simple: if your child DOES HIS/HER HOMEWORK, he/she are more likely to be successful!

Throughout a unit, quizzes will be given at any time to check for understanding and are graded immediately in class. As a result, students who miss a quiz will be given a zero for a quiz missed due to unexcused absence or tardy. If a child's absence or tardy is excused, the quiz will not count toward the child's grade.

Tests are given at the end of major units. We will review the test in class on the following day. As a result, *students who miss a test due to **any absence must schedule to take a make-up test after school.*** Students have ten (10) school days to take a make-up test. After this time, the student will receive a grade of F for that test.

Almost everything your child learns this year in physics is based on the results of his/her experiments. He/She will be expected to report the results of the experiment. For many experiments, your child will be required to give an oral explanation with his/her group* on their finding to the class. Since they will be given class time to discuss their findings with their group, they are expected to work together to insure that each member of the group is able to turn in a quality product. For some experiments, he/she will be expected to write a report in a format he/she will soon receive. These formal laboratory reports must be typed and turned in at the beginning of class. Any report turned in after the beginning of class is considered late and will receive a deduction in points according the syllabus, which your child received during his/her first day in class. All formal, typed laboratory reports are individually done. I do not except group laboratory reports. Students are encouraged to work together on analyzing their data, but students must work on concluding their results individually. Any students found duplicating lab report or allowing other students to duplicate their lab reports will receive a grade of F.

**Group work: A group member who consistently lets his/her partner or partners down will be removed from the group until he/she demonstrates a willingness to do the work. All members of the class are required to contribute to completion of the lab activities and presentations. Students should always be actively involved in class.*

I have given the students a syllabus that lays out all of the details of the course. The grading scale is as follows:

<u>Category and Weight</u>		<u>Final Grade</u>
Classwork/Homework	10%	A: 93.0 – 100
Quiz	15%	B: 85.0 – < 92.0
Laboratory Reports	15%	C: 77.0 – < 84.0
Projects/ Oral Presentations	15%	D: 70.0 – < 76.0
Tests	20%	F: < 70.0
Comprehensive Semester Final	25%	

**** Student grades at Edna Karr are based on a semester of work. Students will earn 1/2 unit of credit at the end of each semester (fall and spring) this year. First (1st) quarter and third (3rd) quarter will be progress reports only.**

Please read the entire syllabus to see what is expected of your child. They are expected to follow all class and school rules and be in proper uniform at all times. Our academic honesty policy imposes harsh penalties on students who choose to cheat or plagiarize. Details are in the syllabus. Required materials are listed below and include a \$15.00 lab fee that is used to buy materials for the labs we will complete during class. All material and the lab fee are due by August 24, 2009. Please contact me if there is any problem having these things by the due date. Students will also be given the Holt Physics textbook to take home and cover. The cost of replacing the textbook is \$56.00.

Students should be in proper uniform before he/she enters the classroom. For proper uniform information, please refer to pages 17 and 18 of the Edna Karr High School Student Handbook 2009-10. My classroom rules are as follows: Students should...

Be **Ready!** means be on time, in your seat, and ready to start at second bell.

Be **Respectful!** means

- Listen quietly to others when they speak. **Use of any electronic devices is prohibited.**
- In class discussions, raise your hand and wait for teacher recognition before you speak.
- Do not touch any materials or equipment unless told to do so and then use them carefully and thoughtfully. Remember to return all materials and clean up when you are finished.
- The chairs and table surfaces must remain clean and unmarked.
- Food, candy, and gum **are not allowed** in class or the lab area **at any time**.
- Bottled water is allowed in class area only but not fruit juices, flavored water or soft drinks.

Be **Responsible!** means

- Have all your supplies with you in class each day.
- Maintain an organized science notebook with all current work. Keep all notes, handouts, and graded papers for the entire semester.
- Do all of your own work at all times. Inquiry Report group data collection and discussion of procedure is encouraged, but analysis, conclusions and all graded work must be your own.

Be **Reasonable!** means to always think first about your personal behavior and then speak and act in a safe, kind, and courteous manner. Simply put, "do the right thing."

Please review the laboratory safety contract with your child. Any student, who willfully and purposely, destroy any classroom items assigned to the student. These items include (but are not limited to) laptop computers, classroom response remote controls, balances, hand held data collection devices, probes, robot controllers, transmitters, battery packs and charger, tools, any robot component or any other classroom equipment. If any such item are not turned in good condition by the end of the class, the parent will be charged for the full replacement value if the item.

I will periodically be sending home computer generated progress reports, normally after unit test, and I welcome your input and assistance in helping your student to achieve his/her full potential in Physics. If your child needs extra help, I offer tutoring before school between 7:45 AM – 8:15 AM on Tuesdays-Fridays and after school between 4:00 PM – 5:30 PM Mondays – Thursdays. I am available for conferences between 11:30 AM– 1:00 PM or after 3:50 PM Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays. You may call me at **504-324-9740**, leave a message with the secretary at **504-302-7135** or email me at derrick.nesby@theacsa.org or dpnesby@yahoo.com.

I am looking forward to this year and speaking to you soon. Our Open House is scheduled for August 26th at 7pm.

Sincerely,



Derrick Nesby, M.A.T.

Physics Student – Parent/Guardian Academics and Behavior Pledge

PHYSICS 2009-10 MR. NESBY

Student Academics and Behavior Pledge

I understand that to support an equal opportunity for everyone in the classroom to learn in a safe and orderly academic environment. I must join my instructor and fellow student learners in a mutual pledge of academic commitment, good behavior, and safety.

To the best of my ability, I pledge to improve myself daily by completing all classwork, homework, laboratory reports, and projects assigned in a diligent and timely manner.

To the best of my ability, I pledge to completely respect all people and property, including myself and my own, in a manner that reflects the way I want to be treated and my property to be respected. I will always be honest and trustworthy and treat the instructor and my fellow student learners with courtesy, kindness, and respect. I will handle all materials and equipment in the classroom only when permitted and then in a careful, sensible, and respectful manner. I will ask questions when I am in doubt.

To the best of my ability, I pledge to follow all state, parish, association, school and classroom rules. I will always adhere to Edna Karr's Academic Honesty Policy.

I have reviewed, with my parent/guardian, the parent letter, student syllabus, and filled out the student information form for physics. I understand I receive a homework grade for handing this page into Mr. Nesby.

Print Student's Name

Student's Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Academics and Behavior Pledge

I have reviewed, with my child, this pledge, the parent letter, student syllabus, and filled out the student information form for physics. I understand the expectations set forth. I understand my child receives a homework grade for handing this page into Mr. Nesby.

To the best of my ability, I pledge to aid and support my child and the instructor in the achievement of the expectations. I will also contact the instructor if I and/or my child have any concerns or questions.

Print Parent's/Guardian's Name

Parent's/Guardian's Signature

Date

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Parent's/Guardian's Signature

Date