

STUDENT EMPLOYEE TRAINING HANDBOOK CIVICS AND ECONOMICS

“Education pays. It just doesn’t pay you right now.” –Ms. Thrower

Daily Calendar and Job Duties: www.laurathrower.com

Contact Email: lthrower@wcpss.net

Room Location: Trailer 1708

Planning Period: 1st Period

Tuesday Tutorials: 2:40PM to 4PM

All other Tutorials/Make Up Scheduled by Appointment

Class Edmodo Join Codes

2nd period Civics and Economics:

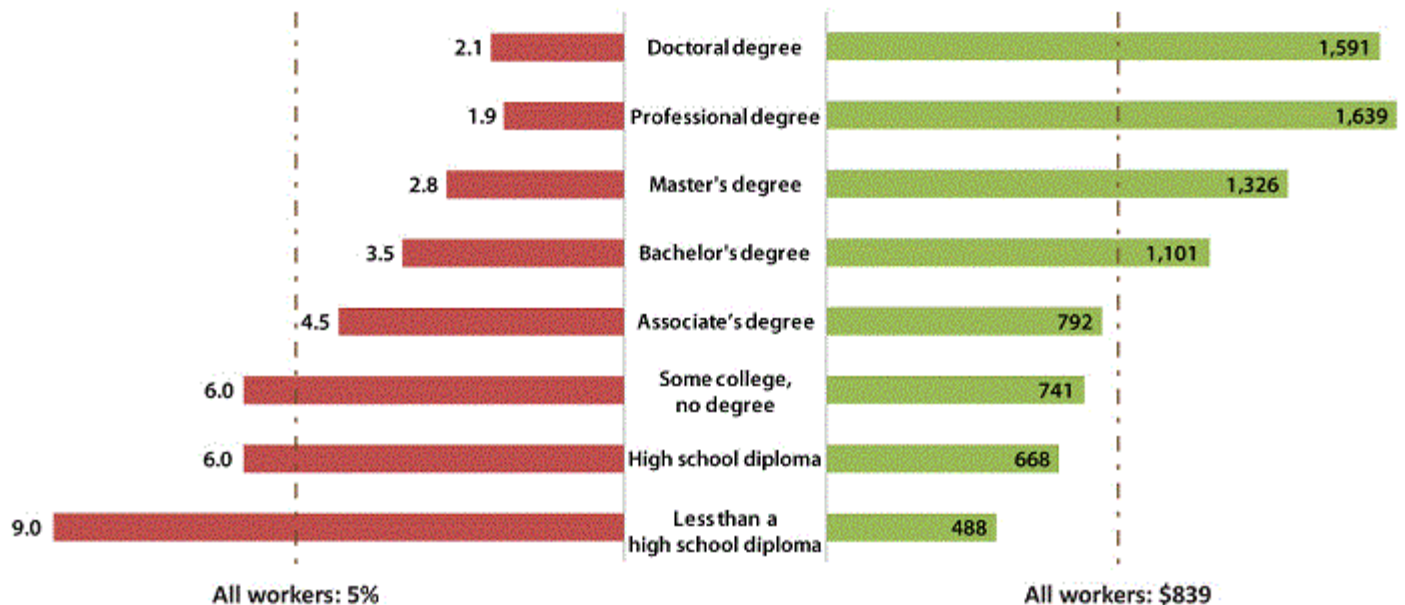
3rd period American History 2:

4th period Honors American History 2:

Earnings and unemployment rates by educational attainment

Unemployment rate in 2014 (%)

Median weekly earnings in 2014 (\$)



Note: Data are for persons age 25 and over. Earnings are for full-time wage and salary workers.
Source: Current Population Survey, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor

The 2015 Federal Poverty Line for a Single Person: \$11,770

2015 Federal Poverty Line for a Family of Four: \$24,250

Once this handbook is reviewed, parent and student signature pages must be returned acknowledging understanding of student’s employee contract.

“The most expensive mistake a person can make is to choose to remain uneducated.”

CIVICS AND ECONOMICS COURSE SYLLABUS

Teacher Website: www.laurathrower.com

Room Location: Trailer 1708

Planning Period: 1st Period

Tuesday Tutorials: 2:40PM to 4PM

All other Tutorials/Make Up Scheduled by Appointment

The study of Civics and Economics (C&E) is to focus on the economic, legal, and political systems in our nation. The study of Civics and Economics falls under the category of Social Studies. Which means...the course will go beyond memorization of isolated facts to the development of *higher level thinking skills*, encouraging students to *make assessments and evaluations of past, present, and future events* and be able to *recognize cause and effect*. Opinions and thoughts based on well researched facts are highly encouraged, while developing critical thinking skills will help you succeed in this course but more importantly, in life!

Most frequently asked question: "Is this a hard class?"

If you can show me you can READ and you are willing to THINK, you WILL pass this class. If you attempt all the work requested of you in this course **to the best of your ability, you will most likely make an A or**

B. If you put only your bare minimum effort in, you'll probably earn a C, D, or more likely, an F.

100% of students that fail this class are afraid to try.

Lazy = FEAR.

Students come into high school with all different levels of these "life skills" as I call them...but to succeed in this course, it is a "must" you develop and use these every day. **Your brain is a muscle, and the things you learn in this class require skills.** Every day I challenge you to practice these skills and don't get discouraged by comparing your progress to others. Most of your homework is to **review** and **re-learn**. It is unrealistic to think you can learn the majority of this information WITHOUT outside reviewing at home. **I will help teach you the skills you need to improve your knowledge. What YOU bring to class that will help you earn an A is MOTIVATION and FOCUS. I cannot provide either of those things for you. That's YOUR JOB in this job.**

Civics and Economics Pacing

More detailed information on each objective will be given before we begin each unit. The amount of time we spend on each unit is flexible, depending on the pace student's can learn the material.

Unit 1 – Foundations of American Government

Unit 2 – The Constitution

Unit 3 – Three Branches of Government

Unit 4 – Politics, Elections, and Citizenship

Unit 5– Making Laws

Unit 6 – Violating the Law

Unit 7 – Personal Financial Literacy

Unit 8 – Economic Fundamentals

Unit 9 – Government in the Economy

Unit 10 – International Economics

The first 4 days of this course will focus on skills you can use to improve your reading comprehension, vocabulary, critical thinking ability, attention, technology skills, and organizational skills. **In my opinion, for many students, these 4 days and what you take from it will be THE reason you pass or fail this class.** Think of this first week as your “job training”. Your high school education IS your current job. It will pay you BIG BUCKS later in life (as you can see from the chart on the front page of this packet). You don't take this job seriously, you will suffer financially later in life. There are very few “permanently poor” people that are educated.

SUPPLY LIST: Have all of these by this Friday (grade check!)

- ___ Pen and pencil (I NEVER provide these for students, this is all your responsibility)
- ___ Highlighter IS required (I will typically have these to borrow for the class)
- ___ Spiral notebook every day (available from me for \$1 towards your class party fund)
- ___ A binder for handouts that will be part of your graded Portfolio of Effort
- ___ *Classroom donation (see below for your specific contribution, only this is due Monday)

***Classroom Contribution Details:**

Because the good taxpayers of Wake County do not provide unlimited resources for students (in economics, we call this *scarcity* of goods), **you** are expected to contribute your choice of a resource for your classroom community.

Taxpayers make their contributions to your education, each student is worth about \$8,000 a year of taxpayer dollars! Teachers continually use their own money to enhance your education, and therefore YOU are also expected to donate **either time or a classroom supply** at least once this semester. If you do not bring one of these by the deadline, then your contribution will be one 30 minute after school or lunch session of classroom housekeeping (cleaning or organizing your classroom or helping me with errands. This grade will show in PowerSchools as “community donation” and is worth 50 points. *If you find donating a small item or your time is difficult, please email or see me to discuss alternatives.*

Choices are as follows and are due **BY NEXT Monday**. **If you don't bring something by next Monday, your assessment for “community donation” will show an INC until you donate 30 minutes of your time to the community.** You will need to schedule that time with me after school only.

- ❖ **2nd period choose from: 1 box of Kleenex OR 1 roll of paper towels**
- ❖ **3rd period choose from: 1 highlighter or 2 pencils/pens**
- ❖ **4th period choose from: bag of wrapped candy for class rewards OR hand sanitizer**

Parents/Guardians: If you have any further questions or concerns about this classroom donation, email me at lthrower@wcpss.net

JOB ASSESSMENT (GRADING) INFORMATION: Civics and Economics

Teacher Website: www.laurathrower.com

Email: lthrower@wcpss.net

Classwork/Homework/Quizzes – 20%

Tests - 50%

Effort in Unit Portfolios - 30%

1st quarter = 40%, 2nd quarter = 40%, final exam=20% of semester grade

PowerSchools will often track various other “life skills” needed to be successful in this course. These are un-weighted grades used to track your improvement in various areas of behavior and character. Behavior and character affect your overall grade (and your success in life), therefore it is important both you and your parents see evidence of your life skills.

Speaking of Grades....

Grades in my class are never used as punishments OR rewards. And more importantly, they are NOT used as “external motivators”. Virtually all research on learning shows us whether the reward is money, grades, gold stars, candy, etc., **internal** motivation is DECREASED when rewards are offered. **Real learning and creativity diminishes and the end result of a person’s focus moves to the reward and not on the actual task.** In the end, no one does any difficult task well without internal motivation. And studies show, external motivators make people think the task at hand is uninteresting and frustrating. **“Do this, and you’ll get that” puts the focus on “that” instead of where it should be...on “this”.** We will look more into this phenomenon during job training week.

How Do Beliefs About Learning Alter Behavior?

Behaviors follow beliefs. If you believe becoming an educated, intelligent adult is important, then your behavior in school will reflect that. A choice to sleep through a video, or zone out or sneak a text while a teacher is giving you new and useful information becomes a REALLY ridiculous choice. There’s a reason the kids with the highest grades don’t typically sleep or text in class. They value their education, therefore, their behavior mirrors what they value. **Food for thought:** There’s a reason why anyone that goes back to high school after dropping out, usually makes all A’s. This is the same reason people that go back to college as adults usually have a 4.0. **What do you think their focus is once THEY choose to go back to school? Do you really believe these people got smarter? Or did their motivation and values change?**

So How Do You Grade Learning in This Class?

Grading in my class is based on a total points system. Each assignment has a total possible points value (i.e. major test = 100 points, optional (aka extra credit) assignments = 10-20 points, class work/homework=20-ish points, quizzes =

10 points). **Homework will lose 5 points for each day late. Most “small” assignments will not be accepted after 3 days late.** You should check Powerschools for assignment deadlines. I put a plethora of comments on assignments to help you out. All you have to do is be willing to read what I write. **Be aware that the instructor is under no obligation to accept work after its assigned due date. Ever. Jobs have deadlines. My class is your job. MY job is not to teach you a month’s worth of material 3 days before your interim comes out. If you’re focused on learning and not your grade, you will do fine in this class.**

You will have ample opportunity for OPTIONAL work (including a 50 point optional projects throughout the semester), in order to make up points lost points from missing assignments, late work, low test grades, and/or other assignments not earning full credit. **I DO NOT GIVE MAKEUPS ON QUIZZES DUE TO ABSENCES.** Take advantage of these optional assignment if you want more points added to your grade!

At the end of the quarter a student will have completed a number of assignments worth a certain number of total points. The total possible points will be divided by the points the student has earned to determine the final grades (i.e. total possible points = 1500, total points earned = 1375, grade = 1375 divided by 1500 = 91.6 = A).

In short, the more work you do, the more points you’ll earn, the more you’ll learn...and the higher your grade will be. And later in life, the more you’ve learned, means the more you’ll earn. \$\$

It is YOUR responsibility to follow your progress in Powerschools. It is YOUR responsibility to utilize ANY additional prep sources you need to learn the material. If you need to review online notes, make flashcards, schedule tutorials, watch youtube videos that teach you a concept better than you learned in class, or anything else that helps you reach your goal of “learn and earn”...you need to do it. Teachers cannot motivate you. Motivation comes from within. You **MUST** focus in class on the knowledge. Not your friends, not your phone, not the floor.

What Are Your Expectations on Class Participation as a “grade”?

Participation in class is more than physical presence. It means making a meaningful contribution to discussions and course activities. Satisfactory class participation and cooperation is defined as being present with all required class materials, answering questions, offering constructive opinions, and generally cooperating with the teacher and other students in the class. **At the end of a semester, if you are a couple points away from a higher letter grade, and I remember you participating in the class, curious and thoughtful, I promise this will factor into you earning that higher grade.**

Note to parents:

Studies show when a reward, especially a grade, is offered, people choose easier tasks, take less risks, think less creatively about the task, enjoy the task less, and most importantly, **the reward makes the person believe the task is not worth doing.** (Why else would I *have* to offer you a reward unless the task at hand was not important or meaningful, right?). This is why as an educator, I do not use grades as “rewards”. Education is not meaningless or

unimportant and my students need to learn the value of this without “carrot and sticks”. **If you are concerned about how your student’s work will be evaluated, please email me at lthrower@wcpss.net**

MS. THROWER’S STUDENT EMPLOYEE EXPECTATIONS

Did you know? People that believe intelligence is something you are “born with” are *less* likely to be successful and achieve higher levels of education than people who believe intelligence is a skill that can be taught, learned, and improved upon? **Which do YOU believe about yourself?**

Top 4 Things Needed to Achieve Success

1) FOCUS: put your attention on everything the teacher is giving you, every minute of the class. Lecture time is a time you should improve listening and summarizing skills. Videos, maps, and graphs are shown because your brain learns better through images. New words, ideas and thoughts are constantly coming at you in class through verbal, visual and written methods. You need to pay attention to all of them. **The EASIEST trick to focusing your attention quickly is to put your eyes on what you need to focus on. Your eyes tell your brain what to focus on.** Choosing NOT to pay attention in this class is like choosing to actively frustrate yourself on a daily basis. Your lack of attention will confuse you about what is going on. And typically, when people are confused, they get frustrated. **Why would you WANT to do things that frustrate you?**

2) Ability to DELAY GRATIFICATION: More on this concept this week, but in short, people who are successful are constantly delaying (waiting) gratification (anything that satisfies you immediately). That kid that’s going to be your valedictorian?...he/she does homework instead of being on the phone or watching tv. He/she drinks coffee (or goes to be on time) instead of falling asleep in class. He/she sits near the front away from his/her friends, even though they’d rather be chatting during lessons. **THAT’S** the skill of delaying gratification. And it’s why that valedictorian will be rich one day. He waited.

3) READ: Read for understanding. Don’t skim or “hunt and peck” when reading. **Studies show children who are read to on a regular basis before kindergarten, start school with a vocabulary nearly 4 times that of children who were not read to as small children!** A lower level of vocabulary for kids and adults leads to problems learning, understanding, and communicating. Adults with lower levels of vocabulary have more emotional and/or anger problems. They also learn less money over their lifetime. Higher vocabulary is only gained through experience, observation, and reading. **Your opportunities in life without the ability to read above a high school level WILL be limited. The only way to get better at reading, is reading.**

4) INTERNAL MOTIVATION: We will discuss this idea more this week, but you need to be thinking about what motivates YOU. WHY are you here? Is it just because you have to be legally? Your parents will get mad if you don't? Are you in school to better yourself and your brain? To be financially set later in life? Think about these things!

JOB BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

The student employee is expected to follow all policies legislated by the School Board and Southeast Raleigh Magnet High School's administration. I expect my students to understand they are in a place of learning and education. I expect that my students won't distract others, use insulting or degrading language, or in general, commit behaviors that make their life or learning more difficult. Complaining doesn't work for me. Yelling doesn't work with me. Being irritating to me or others in my classroom doesn't work with me. **Think about what you want/need and then exhibit positive behaviors that will work for you to get those goals.**

On plagiarizing...

Assume your neighbor is not as intelligent as you are. Plagiarizing or copying from anyone else will result in an incomplete for the assignment for **both students** and an alternate assignment will be given to each of you. If your only class goal is to LEARN, then copying becomes a REALLY stupid action, right? Plagiarizing from the internet is something many kids do without even realizing it. Reading and re-wording in your own words is a skill you will need to build. I had a student once say she copied everything for a project from the internet "because it's too hard to do it on my own." That's the EXACT REASON you SHOULD do it on your own then.

Frequently Asked Questions About Other Stuff

❖ What's your policy on eating in the classroom?

No eating in my class. This is a trailer with cracks, holes and carpet. Bugs are waiting for excuses to come in. From time to time I give candy as rewards. I need you to put the wrappers in the trashcans. A clean room is a happier place to be. **Drinks are allowed (except those brought from off campus).**

❖ What's your policy on cell phones and other devices?

For cell phones, and other electronics, I do not allow the use or visibility of these in my class, per *School Board Policy 6426.1 and 6426.4*. No matter our age or intelligence level, it is **more difficult** to learn with distractions. **All data on learning supports this.** Multitasking (dividing attention) leads to decreased performance on all tasks being performed. If I tried to teach while I were texting or listening to music, I wouldn't be able to educate you as well either. **You will not learn as well dividing your attention between education and your social life. And your social life isn't going to pay your bills later in life,** so choosing that option is **irrational (another economic term!).**

I have a phone bag and if you want to be powerful in my class, you will put your phone there at the start of class and retrieve it only when I give you the "green light". If you choose not to use my phone bag, and I see a visible electronic device (whether you are using it or not), I will ask for it and I will turn it in per Wake County school policy to Ms. Ordonez in the front office, where your

parent can retrieve it after the 24 hour hold. If you refuse to turn it over, I will call an administrator to come retrieve. **Either way, you will lose your phone to the front office.** Your SMARTER choice is to not use your phone. **INCENTIVES!** Students that utilize the phone bag will have daily opportunities to win various incentives of their choosing. Drawings will be held at the end of class, assuming the large majority of students are using the bag. Demonstrate your power. Use the phone bag!

❖ **What's your policy on sleeping through my free, public education?**

If you sleep through lectures, videos, etc, it is not my responsibility to wake you up. If you worry about sleeping, tell your neighbor to wake you up. If I observe you sleeping through any part of class, you will be marked "SLEPT" in Powerschools for that activity/video and will only earn the right to have that changed by writing a one page paper over the objective for that day. The daily objective is always on the green board. If I give you a "Daily Learning Assessment" slip by the end of class, you'll need to write that objective down. That assignment is due within 2 days or you'll earn a 0.

❖ **What's your policy on behavior that disrupts others?**

If you act as if your top priority in class is gaining attention of your peers, or you do not understand that others in the class have a right to learn with minimal distractions, consequences will be assigned by me within the week. Usually, it will be to write a paper with your thoughts on questions related to your behavior. For example, "Why do I feel the need to talk while a teacher is talking?" or "Why do I feel like my thoughts are more important than another student's right to learn?" I will assign these through email and issue you only one reminder. These will be entered into Powerschools as un-weighted grades..

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR, MS. THROWER? While disruptive behaviors can vary, a good rule of thumb says that if you personally feel like adults are always telling you "what to do" and how to behave, you probably aren't showing people that you actually KNOW how to behave or what to do. You are POWERLESS. If you feel like you have plenty of freedom and responsibility given to you, that is probably because you have earned it by showing adults you are mature and can handle freedom, so they leave you alone for the most part. You are POWERFUL. **Basically, if you constantly act like an insensitive fool, people will probably start to treat you that way.** If you act like you have your "sh*t together", then people for the most part will leave you alone to run your own life. **Which type of person do you WANT TO BE? Powerless? Or powerful?**

Ms. Thrower's Personal Expectations of You

In addition to your main goal of becoming an educated individual, I have high expectations for "employee" behaviors in my classroom. Classes are crowded, students need to be able to focus to learn, so everyone must follow the requirements below. High expectations can be scary for some, but think "go big, or go home." Rise to the challenge of behaving like a rapidly maturing young adult.

- 1. Show the world you have been taught (or are learning) "empathy":** Empathy, unlike anger or sadness, is an emotion that must be taught to you as a child. Empathy means you can put yourself in the situation of someone else and understand his needs or feelings. Talking to a neighbor during class time shows a lack of empathy. If you realized the student you are talking to may want to be learning instead of listening to your story, you would get out of their way and let the other student learn. Holding up class for your attention needs, being late,

complaining, etc. all show a lack of empathy. Don't worry, thinking you are the center of the universe is somewhat normal at your age, but trust me, you aren't, and those that already realize this are maturing faster than others.

2. **Do your best** to be the mature, enjoyable, fun and thoughtful student your parents hope you are, and you'll be fine. BE AWARE! In high school, immature and ridiculous behavior is unfortunately allowed by law, however, when you get out in the "real" world, rude or ridiculous behavior usually will only serve to run good people out of your life.
3. **Be fearless.** Things in this class WILL be challenging. Don't give up. You CAN do anything as long as you aren't afraid. If you tell me you "didn't read", "didn't do homework", or anything else related to increasing your education, I'm going to tell you that you are afraid. Attack the fear, the challenges, and you will get better at everything!
4. **SELF ADVOCATE: This means YOU are the only person who can help you.** Teachers aren't mind readers. If you are struggling, use tutorials, set up an appointment for extra help, research the web...you may not know all the answers in life, but if you can find a way to find the answers...you will go farther than most people around you.
5. Give your **attention** to the class every day. Contrary to what teenagers think, *attention is what helps you learn, not interest.* Things ARE boring when you do not have the basic knowledge to understand concepts. You can fix your own problems of boredom by TRYING to learn more about the world around you. Something to think about: any job you will get if you don't have a high school diploma WILL be boring. It gets really old to take orders for the rest of your life.
6. Be **positive!** Please don't bring negativity or hostility into my classroom. Positive people are fun to be around and make others have a good day. Be THAT person.
7. SHOW YOURSELF WHAT YOU ARE CAPABLE OF, and you will succeed.

Absences from Class

- It is your responsibility to check my website or get any missed work from a reliable classmate. Let me repeat that: **It is your responsibility to check my website or get any missed work from a reliable classmate.** Extra copies of handouts will be in the white folder at the front of the classroom, however, **do not always rely on that. Check the website!** If you are suspended, sick, or otherwise, check the website! If you are in CARE, CHECK THE WEBSITE! If you do not have a computer or printer at home, use what the tax payers of Wake County have given you...Media Center, computer labs, public libraries, and computers in my room are all logical options. I never want to hear the words, "Ms. Thrower, what did I miss in class yesterday?" **It's on the website!**
- ***It is your responsibility to set up a time to make up tests or come for tutorials. I will not issue an invitation or reminder. There ARE deadlines for test makeups. It is up to YOU to succeed!*** There are no makeups for quizzes. You should still do the quiz from www.laurathrower.com to see if you learned the material. You're doing EVERYTHING in this class to LEARN, not for a grade.

"Those that don't learn from the past are doomed to repeat it." – wise old saying

“Only boring people get bored.” – Ms. Thrower

“Everything is negotiable.” – Ms. Thrower

Parents/guardians: (I highly recommend cutting this section out and hanging on your fridge!)

I will communicate with your teen using Edmodo groups (like Facebook for schools). They should receive either emails or text alerts routed to their phones. I will not know their personal email or phone numbers, so it is imperative they check Edmodo frequently.

If you need me, **my google voice number for text or calling is 919.351.2027**. Or you can email me at lthrower@wcpss.net

Make sure to check Powerschools for grades often either with your teen logging in or by getting your own account. The useful link to find all these apps is found here:

<http://www.wcpss.net/domain/5606>

OPEN HOUSE IS _____, AT _____ pm.

COME MEET ME! AN INVOLVED PARENT MEANS A SUCCESSFUL STUDENT!

Tear or cut here and return the below info to me by Monday with your teen’s donation (see page 2)

BY NEXT Monday, have this page signed and returned to me with your class donation!

PARENTS!!!! Please fill out an online parent survey at WWW.LAURATHROWER.COM UNDER THE PARENT INFORMATION PAGE. You can tell me specific info on your teen using this online survey. It’s important for me and helps me help them learn better!

These signatures certify that:

1. We have received a copy of, read, and understood STUDENT EMPLOYEE TRAINING HANDBOOK, which includes my syllabus, grading information and supply list, and student employee expectation. Student should file all these handouts in his or her portfolio binder for reference. NEVER LOSE THIS PACKET! WOULD YOU LOSE YOUR JOB TRAINING MANUAL?
2. I am aware I need to bring one of the items listed on page 1 by THIS MONDAY or student will be expected to donate 30 minutes of time to clean or organize our classroom community.
3. Both my parent/guardian and myself will keep on top of my grades by checking Powerschools on a regular basis. I have also visited (or will visit) Ms. Thrower’s website and understand what is expected of me as a parent or guardian.

_____ (PRINT *student name*)

_____ (*student signature*)

_____ (PRINT *parent name*)

_____ (*parent/guardian signature and date*) _____

_____ (*parent/guardian email address*)

(parent/guardian best phone number)

Have a great semester! I'm excited to be with you on your path to learning in my class!