Welcome to a new school year. In this brochure you will find useful information regarding the science and math classes taught by Mr. Markow.

Please keep this brochure; it may be a useful reference throughout the school year. One suggestion is to place it inside your student handbook.

Contact Information
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Meet your teacher

At Kellogg School, I work with students for four years (grades 5-8). Therefore, it is helpful for parents, students and teachers to get to know each other so that we can provide the best experiences for Kellogg middle school students.

My science career planning began in Kindergarten when I developed a passion for naming, drawing and sculpting dinosaurs. In middle school, I began to focus my interest more on microscopic pond organisms and marine life. The pond in the woods behind my house was an important classroom, as was the Cape Cod estuary where my grandparents lived.

I also found boy scouts provided me with the adventure and skills I sought outside school. Hiking and boating trips locally and in New Mexico and Florida helped me prepare for my college outdoor field studies.

In college, I majored in zoology. I conducted ecological research projects on salamanders in Connecticut and on lizards and migratory birds in the Caribbean. Later in graduate school, I spent two years studying toads on Cape Cod. While in graduate school, I enjoyed teaching a lab class to pay my way through school and shifted from a research career path to teaching.

I worked as an educator for National Audubon Society for five years and then completed my middle school teaching certificate.

I still do some research and field surveys from time to time, mainly for the Connecticut Amphibian Monitoring Project.

I also enjoy playing trumpet and euphonium.

My wife and I have two sons and we enjoy living in the beautiful northwest corner of Connecticut.
What can you expect from your teacher?

You can expect me to work hard to provide active learning opportunities and experiences that help your child grow academically and socially.

You can expect me to hold high expectations for your child to help them prepare for high school and gain an education that will keep many doors open for their future career planning.

I am reasonable and fair to students needs. The challenge we face together in middle school is to increase the level of independence and self-responsibility of children toward their education, in preparation for the rigor of high school, without losing our connection with them. Communication is what makes the difference in this team made up of students, parents and teachers.

Please call me at school if you ever have a concern. I reply to messages as soon as I can after classes.

How can I help my child at home?

1) Create a quiet, distraction free work area for your child.
2) Encourage and support. Ask them to teach you what they are learning in school. Connect it to home or your life if possible. Students need to see that what they are learning is important in life. You have great influence in that area. Some parents find that treating it as an adult conversation rather than a parent checking up on their child to be a very rewarding family activity.
3) If children have a question on homework, ask them to explain what they remember from class first. Sometimes letting them talk it through is all they need. It also helps avoid re-teaching it from scratch. Through their explanation, the source of the confusion may become apparent.
4) If your child has difficulty when doing homework, one suggestion is to have your child say or write a specific question about their confusion that they can ask in class the next day. This is a way parents can increase the student’s self-responsibility for their education. It also helps the teacher distinguish between students that struggled and students that did not attempt the assignment. A communication note from parents is always welcome too.

Materials for science

Folder in binder designated just for Science
2 blue or black pens
2 pencils (for graphing)
Flash/usb drive to transfer computer files (recommended)

Materials for math

Single subject spiral or composition notebook (Students usually go through 2 in a year)
At least 2 blue or black pens
At least 2 pencils (for graphing)
Calculator (These can be checked out of the Kellogg library)

At home materials: Ruler, protractor, calculator, coloring supplies, computer/word processor/printer
Mr. Markow’s Class Expectations: Students will...

- Show **respect** for people, property and self.
- Demonstrate **courtesy** in words and actions.
- **Cooperate** with group partners.
- **Do their best.**
- Think, plan and act **safely.**

**Students will learn through:**

- Laboratories, visual activities and note-taking
- Journaling, poetry, story writing and reports
- Models and poster projects
- Connecticut Science Frameworks embedded tasks
- Summarizing articles (newspapers/journals)
- Graphing and measurements
- Individual and group work, and discussions.

**Helpful Class Notes**

- Middle school students experience tremendous social, physical and academic growth. These are important, sometimes challenging, transition years. Parents, students and teachers acting as a team can help students succeed.

- Students are encouraged to develop greater **independence** and **self-responsibility** in the middle school years.

- In class there is an **absentee folder** to assist students, as well as trays for work to be graded.

- Students are given time at the beginning of class to write their **homework** in their assignment notebook.

- Mr. Markow encourages students to make use of **textbook online resources**.

- A **Communication folder** and homeroom cubby is used to send home weekly notices and forms.

- **Portfolios** of student work are maintained. Work is added to the portfolio during notebook checks. Students may sign out their portfolio so that parents can see the work. The purpose is to keep the work accessible for teachers, parents and students.

**Websites**

- Kellogg School: www.kelloggschool.org
- Region One: www.region1schools.org
- State Department of Education: www.sde.ct.gov
- Holt Online Texts: my.hrw.com
- Prentice Hall Online Texts: www.phschool.com
- Boxtops for Education: [www.boxtops4education.com](http://www.boxtops4education.com) (Mr. Markow is the fundraiser coordinator)
Retake Policy

Everyone has a rough day on a test or quiz at some point. With that in mind, Mr. Markow does allow students to retake some tests or quizzes.

1) A retake is allowed if the student completed all homework and assignments related to the unit. Some assessments, such as labs or performance tasks may not be eligible for retakes because of the equipment involved.

2) The student examines their assessment and writes the correct answers to any questions marked wrong on a separate piece of paper. Do not erase or change any work on the original assessment.

3) Show the corrected paper to Mr. Markow within 1 week after the graded paper was returned.

4) Schedule a makeup time.

5) The maximum grade on a makeup assignment is 75%. In this way, anyone can pass Mr. Markow’s class, but it is also fair to those students who prepared and earned 90 – 100% on the original assessment.

6) If a student begins to make a habit of retaking assessments, the teacher may set a limit on the number of retakes, in order to encourage the development of better study habits.

Grading

The student’s science grade will consist of:
- Labs, Tests and Projects 55%
- Quizzes and class work 35%
- Homework/Participation 10%

The student’s math grade will consist of:
- Labs, Tests and Projects 50%
- Quizzes and class work 35%
- Homework/Participation 10%
- Notebook 5%

Homework

Homework reinforces concepts learned in class and is expected to be turned in at the beginning of each class. Homework will be graded on completeness, sufficient understanding and effort demonstrated.

Make-up/late work

Student’s are responsible for acquiring and completing work following an absence.

Students missing class due to sports, music lessons, and other scheduled activities should communicate this with their teacher prior to the event and pick up the necessary work.

Students that hand work in late will lose 10% the first day and 5% each additional day, per the middle school homework policy.

A homework calendar and absentee folder are present in class where they can pick-up/turn-in their work. Students should not wait to be asked by the teacher to turn in late work.

Lab safety

Safety is always a top priority, particularly in laboratory activities and experiments. Students are expected to maintain proper conduct, follow all instructions and safety methods relating to the activity, and treat all equipment and students in the laboratory with respect.
What will you study in Science this year?

GRADE 5 SCIENCE
- Scientific Method
- Astronomy: Earth and moon
- Telescopes and microscopes
- Waves
- Light
- Sound
- Human senses

GRADE 6/7 SCIENCE UNITS (Odd years)
- Scientific skills and the Scientific Method
- Metric measurements and graphing
- Life Science: Ecosystems and Interactions
- Science, Technology and Society: Watersheds
- Earth Science: Geology and Plate Tectonics
- Physical Science: Properties of matter
- Physical Science: Elements, Compounds and Mixtures

GRADE 6/7 SCIENCE UNITS (Even years)
- Scientific skills and the Scientific Method
- Metric measurements and graphing
- Life Science: Cells
- Life Science: Human Body Systems
- Science, Technology and Society: Food Safety
- Earth Science: Weather
- Physical Science: Force and Motion

GRADE 8 SCIENCE UNITS
- Scientific skills and the Scientific Method
- Life Science: Circulatory system through an inquiry based lab
- Life Science: Heredity and Genetics
- Life Science: Reproduction
- Physical Science: Work/Simple Machines
- Physical Science: Potential/Kinetic Energy
- Science, Technology and Society: Bridges
- Earth Science: Astronomy

Science Common Assessments

Students in grades 5 and 8 complete a Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) in March. To prepare for these, students practice with a Blue Ribbon assessment in mid-year.
What will you study in Math this year?

**GRADE 6 MATHEMATICS UNITS**
- Working with decimals
- Working with fractions
- Equations
- Ratios, proportions and percents
- Algebraic concepts
- Data and graphing
- Geometric concepts
- Measurement

**GRADE 8 MATHEMATICS UNITS**
- Integers and expressions
- Problem-solving plans and strategies
- Equations and inequalities
- Coordinate plane
- Rational and irrational numbers
- Formulas
- Applications of proportions
- Applications of percents
- Exponents and powers
- Geometry
- Measurement
- Analyzing graph data
- Probability

**Math Common Assessments**
- Aimsweb benchmarks are done three times a year to provide teachers with data on student progress
- Blue Ribbon Tests are used in all middle school grades to guide instruction and prepare for mastery tests
- IOWA Algebra Readiness tests are given to students in Grade 7 or 8 to assist in determining course placement
- A cumulative math final exam is given in June
WISHLIST

Items that would enhance our classroom

I seek some items through donations so that I may apply the science budget toward assembling permanent equipment and technology in our classroom each year. Some donated items are linked to particular careers or skills.

**Materials (Call Mr. Markow for more information)**

- Medical models/posters from Doctor’s offices
- A simple ipod/mp3 player for sound unit and animal sound recordings for ecology unit
- X-rays of bones, teeth, fractures
- Wind-up toys or cars with spring motor for physics.
- Sewing Spools (wood or plastic)
- A small pottery wheel that rotates
- Boxes from plastic and balsa models and toys indicating their scale

**Volunteer**

Assisting with bundling Boxtops for Education

*Please let me know if you are able to help with any of these.*

**Boxtops for Education**

For each Boxtops label, we earn 10¢ for our school. They add up quickly. We aim for $500 a year. Mr. Markow coordinates the fundraiser and could always use the help of a few parent volunteers to count and bundle the boxtops. Please let me know if you are interested.

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**A sampling of past projects from science classes at Kellogg School**