

# Welcome Back

August 22, 2012

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to the seventh/eighth grade at Boulder Creek School! I am delighted to be joining the dynamic staff here at BC. Thank you in advance for your support, encouragement, and help at home to provide this positive learning experience for your child.

A little bit about me: my name is Tim Hemeon. I have been teaching in the Enterprise Elementary School District for twenty-one years, much of it in a departmentalized science situation. Prior to 1991, my wife and I lived in Southern California and we both taught in Riverside. We have three children: a 21-year-old daughter, a 19-year-old son, and a 15-year-old son. Both of my sons are drummers; when I am not hearing paradiddle echoes, I like to relax by hiking, singing in a local folk duet, and writing novels.

I look forward to leading your child through the curriculum. I will be teaching your child 8<sup>th</sup> grade Physical Science. The 8th grade students will be tested by the State of California regarding their Science knowledge.

## Science:

I like to present a variety of learning situations to the students. I believe they learn the best when engaged with activity-based science. We will be doing lots of experiments in science class. From time to time I will request donations of various supplies – if you can assist us in this way I will be very appreciative. My philosophy of science is reflected in this quote of Confucius:

I hear and forget.  
I see and I remember.  
I do and I understand.

## Homework:

The amount of time each child spends on homework will depend on his/her use of class time, personal ability, and quality of effort. About one hour (total from all classes) is expected each night, in addition to independent reading. When I do assign homework, I will list the assignment on my website. Students may also have homework as needed to finish assignments from school.

Students are expected to write homework and class assignments in their planners daily. **Please check your child's planner and/or our class homepage nightly for a list of homework and class assignments.**

**I expect students to keep their science section in chronological order. At the end of each chapter/unit, I will collect their work as a portfolio and will give a grade for organization.**

Please note that the homework standards for seventh and eighth grade are a bit different. The eighth grade standards regarding late work are more rigorous. **Daily assignments (10 points or less) cannot be turned in late. Larger assignments/projects lose 10% per day for a minimum score of 50%. After 5 days the score will be set at 50% if turned in by the end of the progress report period.**

If special circumstances exist, please find a time to talk with me. Parents, you may also attach a brief note to a late assignment explaining why it is being turned in late. I try to be understanding of your needs as a family.

**Absences:**

Absent students are responsible for making up all missed work. The number of missed days is equal to the number of days to make up missed work. Missing assignments due to absences will not result in a late grade unless it is turned in after the given time. **I highly encourage parents and students to check our class website to obtain information on missed work.** If we do an experiment, will usually post an example of a write-up using the scientific method. Occasionally, students may need to obtain a handout from me upon their return. You can access our class homepage by visiting [bouldercreekhemeon.weebly.com](http://bouldercreekhemeon.weebly.com).

**Grading Policy:**

Progress reports will be issued **every three weeks**. They will be sent home on Fridays. A parent signature is required for students who have a failing grade or are in danger of a failing grade. This will be noted on the progress report. **If your child does not return the signed progress report on time, you will receive a phone call.** Grades can be viewed online at anytime using Powerschool.

Students' grades will be based on a percentage system as stated below.

A+ = 100%	B+ = 88-89%	C+ = 78-79%	D+ = 68-69%
A = 94-99%	B = 84-87%	C = 74-77%	D = 64-67%
A- = 90-93%	B- = 80-83%	C- = 70-73%	D- = 60-63%
			F = 0-59%

## Science Grade Breakdown

**Tests 20%**  
**Quizzes 20%**  
**Labs 20%**  
**Classwork 10%**

**Participation 10%**  
**Homework 10%**  
**Projects/Science Articles 10%**

In addition to larger projects (such as a 3D model of an atom) students will turn in one science-related news article per month. Students should write a one to two paragraph summary and attach the article.

Online grades with Power School. Please check your child's grades regularly. Each student has a name and password. If your child attended Boulder Creek last year, the information is the same. New students will be sent a username and password. There is a link to Power School on our classroom website. Here is the address for Power School: <http://sis.enterprise.k12.ca.us/public>

### Mr. Hemeon's Lab Safety Guidelines

1. Safe & Responsible behavior at all times
2. Follow directions carefully
3. Do not touch lab equipment until directed to do so
4. Use extreme caution when using sharp objects (such as dissection scalpels).
5. Do not eat/drink in science class without permission
6. Never use lab glassware as food/beverage containers
7. Horseplay, practical jokes, and pranks are dangerous and prohibited
8. Notify the teacher of any unsafe conditions you observe
9. Keep hands away from face, eyes, and mouth while using chemicals
10. Use gloves/safety glasses when directed to do so.
11. Please remain at your lab station – DO NOT go to other lab stations
12. Do not taste or smell any chemicals, unless directed to do so
13. If you do not understand how to use a piece of equipment, ask the teacher.
14. Never look into a container that is being heated.

## 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Science Classroom Materials:

1. **Rigid safety glasses** (typically \$1 - \$2 at Harbor Freight – avoid the soft goggles as they tend to fog up and the straps often fail. Students who already wear glasses do not need to buy safety goggles).
2. **Graph paper.**
3. **Pencils and erasers** (all Science/History homework/classwork must be done in pencil).
4. **Pencil sharpener with shaving catcher.**
5. **Blue Ball point pens** (for correcting).
6. **College ruled notebook paper (lots)**
7. A 1 inch **three-ring binder** – the cheap ones at Wal-Mart are about \$1.00. Please don't purchase a big, bulky, fancy binder.
8. **Colored Pencils.**
9. **100 ruled 3 x 5 index cards.**
10. **2-inch index card ring.**
11. **USB Flash Drive** (used for all classes as needed).
12. **Book for SSR** (silent sustained reading).
13. **Optional:** Scientific **calculator** in the \$10 - \$15 range. You will not need an expensive graphing calculator. The calculator I will be using in class is the Casio fx-260 and it costs about \$10.00 at Walmart, Target, or Office Depot.
14. **Optional:** please consider donating a **box of laytex or Nitrile gloves** (Costco carries Nitrile gloves).

I am looking forward to meeting you at **Back-to-School-Night, Thursday, September 6, 2012**, time to be determined.

Communication: if you have any questions, do not hesitate to drop by after school, call me at Boulder Creek: **224-4140**, or email me: [themeon@eesd.net](mailto:themeon@eesd.net). I will get back to you as soon as possible. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mr. Hemeon, Room 39  
7<sup>th</sup> Grade Science  
7<sup>th</sup> Grade History  
8<sup>th</sup> Grade Science

## *Mr. Hemeon's Signature Page*

Please read and review this letter with your child. After that, sign and return to indicate you are aware of the course expectations, materials list, & safety guidelines. Thanks in advance for your cooperation.

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**Print Student's Name**

**Period #**

**Date**

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**Print Parent/Guardian Name**

**Parent/Guardian Signature**

*Because email is often the preferred method of communication, please list ALL (both mom and dad if custody is shared) email addresses to which parent(s) would like email messages sent. In addition, please list all (home and cell) numbers for each parent. Please indicate which number belongs to whom. Thank you.*

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*e-mail #1*

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*home phone #*

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*e-mail #2*

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*cell phone #*

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*e-mail #3*

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*cell phone #*