***Welcome 8th Graders!***

***Education is not about filling the bucket. Education is about lighting the fire!***

***~ William Butler Yeats~***

**This will be an exciting and very challenging year! We are so glad to have you in our classes. This syllabus details important class info and should answer many of your questions about our class.  If you have any further questions, please don’t hesitate to ask.**

***Contact Information***

Cornerstone Academy: 713.251.1600

Mr. Jones, Math / Science kenneth.jones@springbranchisd.com

Mrs. Robertson, Math / Science elizabeth.robertson@springbranchisd.com

Mr. Nichols, Language Arts / Social Studies samuel.nichols@springbranchisd.com

Mrs. Lee, Language Arts / Social Studies lori.lee@springbranchisd.com

***Conference Periods:***

Mr. Jones & Mrs. Robertson 9:15 – 10:05 am daily

Mr. Nichols & Mrs. Lee 7:40 – 8:25 am daily

***Course Content info:***

**Algebra 1**

We will extend students’ knowledge and understanding of the real number system and its properties through the study of variables, expressions, equations, inequalities, and data analysis. Emphasis will be placed on making connections in algebra to real-world problems, geometry, and statistics. Calculator and computer technologies will be used as tools wherever appropriate. The use of a graphing calculator is considered essential to provide a graphical and numerical approach to topics in addition to a symbolic approach. Algebra 1 topics include linear equations and inequalities, systems of linear equations, relations, functions and polynomials. Students are required to take the State of Texas End of Course Assessment. We will also have an opportunity to review content from 6th, 7th, & 8th grade math.

**Math 8**

The purpose of Math 8 is to build a strong base for Algebra I and other high school math classes. The first semester of class will cover the foundational skills needed for success in Algebra including operations with integers, such as fractions, decimals and percents, as well as algebraic thinking concepts like proportions and rates, measurement, and spatial reasoning. The second semester will cover the beginnings of Algebra I. These concepts include foundations of functions, equations and inequalities, and patterns and relationships.

**Science**

In science, we will learn more about chemistry; physics; changes to Earth’s systems; interactions between living systems; relationships between organisms and the environment; and the Sun, Earth and Moon cycles. All of our 8th grade topics will build on what you learned in 6th and 7th grade science, such as the rock cycle, body systems, our solar system and moon/sun/Earth interactions, and energy resources, transfer, and conservation.

**Language Arts**

Reading comprehension and literary elements are incorporated throughout the year within various novels and short stories as well as poetry, articles, essays, propaganda, and other genres to enhance the historical units. Students will write for a variety of purposes in 8th grade.  Narratives, poetry, themed essays, and letters will be some of the genres for writing.  Our goal is for students to establish fluency and correctness in their writing as they explore the crafts of authors both in and out of the classroom.

**Social Studies**

We will focus on American history beginning with the building of our New Nation after the Constitution and ending the school year with Reconstruction.   We will examine the political, economic, and social events and issues related to the development of our nation during these time periods. We will use a variety of rich primary and secondary source material including historical documents, biographies and autobiographies, novels, speeches, letters, and diaries, as well as poetry, songs, and artwork.

## Classroom Environment

## Our classroom environment will be based on mutual respect, no put-downs, attentive listening, and right to pass. In addition, we will incorporate Love & Logic principles to promote positive classroom behaviors. We have high expectations for student learning and classroom participation. We encourage all students to take ownership of their own learning and share their knowledge and perspective with the entire class.

## A variety of instructional methods will be utilized in our classroom. Individual, partner, and group activities will be used to enhance discovery and learning. We will integrate across the core curriculum through projects, labs, and activities.

## We view eighth grade as a formative year that focuses on preparing students for high school and beyond. Throughout the year, we will continue to increase in academic rigor, offer opportunities for student creativity, encourage individual responsibility, and assist students as they develop personal organizational, time management, and study skills.

## STREAM

## STREAM stands for Students Tutoring, Reading, Enrichment, Advisory, and Mentoring. The focus is on academics – getting assistance with homework questions, putting final touches on a project, talking with a teacher about study or organizational skills, reading your LA novel, etc.. Students can choose to go to a room other than their fourth period class but must check in with their fourth period teacher and sign out if they are going to another room. Students who are caught up in all their core classes can go to Band, Art, Dance, etc. during STREAM.

## Grading Procedures

The student will be evaluated through formative and summative assignments and activities. **Formative assessments** include daily work, homework, labs, checks for comprehension (CFCs), homework checks, and rough drafts.  Formative assessments help the student by giving them opportunities to make mistakes and learn from them, and to receive immediate and positive feedback.   **Summative assessments** are given when the student has had plenty of opportunities to master the concepts and it is time to demonstrate their level of mastery. Tests, projects, and final papers fall into this category.  Summative assessments are eligible for re-take, up to a maximum grade of 70, if they are failed the first time. Extra credit assignments are not available.

Tests / Projects / Major Papers (Summative) 40%

Quizzes / CFCs / Labs / Essays/ Daily / Homework (Formative) 60%

***Homework Policy & Late Work***

Homework assignments will provide opportunities for learning, enhancement, and reinforcement. When appropriate, homework grades will be collected and entered into the grade book. Some homework will be assessed using Checks for Comprehension or Homework Checks. Partial or missing assignments will immediately result in learning lab and a parent contact. Students will lose partial credit for the assignment if it is late. Because every assignment is important, students are expected to complete all assignments.

***Make-up work Policy***

When they return to school, students are responsible for picking up any of their returned work and missed assignments from the Absent Packet bin. Students will have one day for each of the days they were absent, up to a total of 5 days to complete make-up work. It is the student’s responsibility to discuss with their teacher any assignments that need to be clarified.

***No-Name Policy***

Each class will have a bin with a No-Name file at the front of the room. Students who do not receive work back and are sure they turned it in need to check this file for their paper and resubmit to teachers for grading. No points are deducted for no-name papers.

***Character Policy***

Students will be encouraged and guided in making positive choices at all times. Academic dishonesty will be handled on a case by case basis. Possible consequences may include, but are not limited to, requiring an alternate assignment to be completed, parent notification, reflection activity, and office referral.

# *Learning Lab & Tutorials*

Learning lab will be held every Tuesday and Thursday afternoon. Students who have incomplete or missing assignments will be assigned to learning lab, where they are expected to complete their assignment without disturbing or distracting other students.

Weekly tutorials will be held after school on Tuesday and Thursday in order to support students who need extra academic assistance. Additional tutorials may be held at the teacher’s discretion and will be announced ahead of time. Learning Lab and Tutorials will begin Tuesday, September 17th. Late bus transportation is available to all students. Busses will drop students off at the elementary school closest to their residence.

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## I have read and understand the classroom policies outlined in this syllabus. I understand that I may meet with my teachers as needed to clarify any classroom, academic, or behavioral concerns.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

## TI-83 Graphing Calculator Agreement

I agree to use calculator #\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ that will be assigned to me in good working order.

I will:

* follow all instructions given to me by Mr. Jones or Mrs. Robertson.
* return the calculator each day in proper working order.
* report any problems or inappropriateness from previous use immediately. I understand that failure to do so will result in calculator privileges being lost.

**I understand that any student who intentionally damages a calculator will be held responsible.**

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_