**Dear Biology Student and Parent(s)**

Biology is a course required for graduation from high school by the state of North Carolina. I will be helping you understand the many interconnections and relationships that exist in nature and where humans fit into these relationships and what our responsibilities are. As well as studying more traditional biology topics, we will dive into the unfolding mysteries of genetics and the DNA molecules.

**CURRICULUM**- The biology curriculum is organized around four themes.

* Systems and Interrelationships: populations, ecosystems, biomes, dilemmas such as overpopulation, loss of diversity, and habitat destruction
* Energy: flow of energy and matter through ecosystems, the problem of limited resources, photosynthesis, cellular respiration, cell structure and function, nutrition and circulation of nutrients
* Change: genetics and evolution, including the new DNA technologies and related bioethical issues.
* Patterns: classification, similarities and differences in structure and function of various organisms.

**END of COURSE TEST (EOC)**

There is a state End-of-Course Test that all students must take in May. The state requires that students take this test. It counts as their final exam for the course. If a student fails he/she will have a second chance at the test.

**TEXTBOOKS**

Our textbook is Biology by Kenneth Miller and Joseph Levine, published by Prentice Hall. Each student will be assigned a textbook that must be returned in good condition at the end of the year. There are practice tests and notes that can benefit the students. In addition to the text, we will have many other biology research sources in or classrooms and in the media center.

**ACTIVITIES**

Biology is a very activity-based course. Our curriculum is based on collaborative projects showing that students learn best by actively participating in inquiry-based laboratories, group work, and projects. We encourage them to ask questions, to risk, to collaborate, and to think!!

**SUCCESS**

I have found that the student who are successful in biology (and in the rest of their courses) are those who pay attention in class, ask clarifying questions, do their homework, study for tests, and turn assignments in on time. You should see your child reading, doing study guides, finishing the analysis questions for lab and other activities, and working on projects. Hopefully, you will also see enthusiasm and curiosity about the study of living things.

As part of my policy, I do not accept late assignments. Part of my job is to prepare students for college and part of that is meeting deadlines. Effective 10/7/13 no late work will be accepted.

**WEB SITE**

I have a web site that will be updated several times throughout the school year. You will be able to find tentative schedules and projects that students are working on.I hope to post current grades on ECHO for you and your child to keep track of his or her progress. Parents and students can easily access it by going to the school’s web site and following the quick link. My e-mail is [ahoback@warrenk12nc.org](mailto:ahoback@warrenk12nc.org) and phone number is 257-3767.  I wish our students an exciting year studying the "web of life"

 Amy Whitten