Dear Parents,

We are very excited to be teaching your child chemistry this semester. The chemistry classroom is a little different than the traditional classroom, so please read below to answer some questions in advance that you might have as the semester goes on.

In the traditional classroom the teacher lectures during class and then assigns the student homework that is typically practice. In the past this has not worked because the students struggle when taking chemistry problems home to do by themselves. The result was a majority of the students did not have their homework completed and we would move on the next day (lecturing) before the student had mastered the concept from the day before. This semester we are going to be looking for mastery of concepts before they move on to the next concept. To do this we have put in a lot of work making lecture videos, building a website, and changing how class time looks and is used by the student. I will introduce these changes below

1. Homework
   * The website: [www.covarrubiaschemistryresource.weebly.com](http://www.covarrubiaschemistryresource.weebly.com)
     + Here you will find a living syllabus with topics and subtopics. We will typically cover one “page” or learning target per day. On these pages they will find the objective for the lesson, a lecture video, important vocabulary, pages in the book that correlate, and other online resources and interactives. These “pages” will be their homework, no worksheet or problems will be done (unless they are completing class work from that day)
   * Write Notes-Summarize-Question (**WSQ’s**)
     + We just want them to *take notes over the page and video and write a summary over the information* on the page/video as they understand it. We also want them to *write a question that they have about the information* (either something they don’t understand or a high level thinking question that they can stump us with). This is called a **WSQ** in the grade book. This is a great use of the technology that the district is providing for us and also is a task that most everyone can do where doing chemistry problems wasn’t. This will be the homework grade and **your student will have homework EVERY NIGHT in chemistry** in order for us to cover the information we need to in this class. This homework is very applicable to class the next day because that is when we will be putting this knowledge to practice, demonstrations, labs, etc.
2. Class time
   * No longer will students be sitting and listening to us talk the entire 90 minutes. Now students will come to class prepared to ask questions, practice the concept, do problems, labs, and watch demonstrations about the topic. I will be here to answer questions the whole time. However, class work and practice will not be graded. An answer key will be provided for the students to check their work as they are working, to ensure success. **We are practicing for an understanding of the material, not to get “points” in the grade book**. However this practice will pay off when the students take their formative assessment (over a single topic) and their summative assessment (over the entire unit).

It is very important that the student works on chemistry for at least 30 minutes every night to stay on pace for class the next day. However, if a student is absent or falls behind, the website has all the information they need to catch up. Remember, students will not be moving on during class time until they have notes over the page and have watched the lecture video. **Please encourage your child to do chemistry each night.**

Thanks in advance,

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