

August 16, 2007

Greetings:

My name is Mr. Jim Riske, and I will be you child's science teacher during this school year.

I have an undergraduate degree in Aerospace Engineering from the University of Michigan and expect to complete a masters degree in Curriculum and Instruction at Concordia University – Chicago by the end of the school year. I am certified by the State of Florida to teach physics and am eligible for certification in chemistry, as well, should I choose to get around to the paperwork.

This marks my third year at Port St. Lucie High School. I will be teaching Integrated Science, Honors Integrated Science, Physics I, and AP Physics. For those who might be interested, I also coach the county robotics team “Twisted Ego”, and am a member of our team preparing for the International Baccalaureate Program.

Every student who is motivated to achieve and willing to work can and will succeed in my class. Especially given the volume of material that we have to cover, I cannot allow any student to distract from the learning process of others. I must also be clear that this is an active science laboratory. There are clear safety rules that must be followed. In order to preserve a safe, secure, and productive learning environment, I will not hesitate to utilize all behavioral interventions at my disposal, when a student chooses not to adhere to classroom rules and procedures.

On the first day of class, students will receive my syllabus, classroom rules and regulations, lab safety contract, contact information form, and various permission forms. Several of the forms require your attention, including the addition of information and signatures. Those papers that need to be returned will be due on Friday, August 24, 2007 (this is a grade). Students will also be tested on classroom rules and procedures at that time.

You are always welcome to contact me via email at jim@jimriske.com. While you may contact me by phone, through the front office (772) 337-6770, email is generally the fastest and most reliable way to get a message or question to me and have it answered quickly.

All class websites may be accessed through www.jimriske.com. Please be advised that 2007-2008 information may not be uploaded until Sunday the 19th. Feel free to check before then, but double-check the date on the files.

Sincerely,

Jim Riske

(Supplies list on opposite page)

Supplies Needed:

- Scientific Calculator All classes will need a calculator than is labeled “scientific” (if it has the buttons “sin”, “cos”, and “tan” you’re generally fine). (A graphing calculator is recommended, but not required for physics. If you choose to go that route, the Texas Instruments TI-84+ comes highly recommended)
- 2 inch 3-ring binder (I don’t care about the actual size of your binder, but you are strongly advised to maintain a binder(s) strictly for this course. This is a cumulative course, which means that you will want to keep all of your work from the beginning of the year to be successful at the end. You may not need it everyday, but you will want it available and organized. Two inches is about right for the volume of paper we’ll generate.)
- Notebook dividers You’ll want at least 4 – Class work, Class Notes, Homework, Misc. (I recommend Avery A-Z Index Dividers, in case you want to create more sections. Avery #11125)
- Notebook Paper No spiral notebooks – I often run work through an automatic scanner for record keeping. It really dislikes spirals.
- Lab Notebook A separate lab notebook for collecting lab data. This may be a composition book, spiral notebook, or binder and paper. It will be your source for writing lab reports.
- Pens Blue or black ink preferred – again the scanner is picky
- Pencils (#2) Almost all tests and quizzes will involve scantron forms at some point for analysis. Mechanical pencils are generally fine.
- Colored Pencils We will use these for some labs, activities, and homework. They need to be available, but don’t necessarily need to come with you everyday
- Graph Paper You will need graph paper for labs and activities. I will post a pdf template to the website, for those who prefer to print their own rather than buying a pad of it.
- School ID w/Internet Clearance You are expected to have your school ID on you at all times anyway. But you also need to have Internet clearance in order to complete many homework assignments and projects that we will be working on in school. Upperclassmen who do not already have it should get the form from the media center. Freshmen will be provided with the form as we cycle through getting you school IDs.
- Internet access outside of school is also highly recommended given the scale of many of the projects that will be assigned. If this is a problem, please see me individually.
- Day Planner Have some sort of planner, or you will be completely lost. Day to day homework is hard enough to remember. Large projects can be a nightmare. I will not always remind you of impending deadlines before it’s too late.