

**Welcome to Honors Biology students and parents! I am excited to have you as a part of our classroom community this school year. Below is a short letter about me and our class, as well as, a list of tips for the school year. Class orientations will be held the first week of school.**

My name is Kristi Whittaker and I will be your instructor for Honors Biology. My undergraduate degree focused on the Natural Sciences with an emphasis in Life Science Instruction. I also hold an M.Ed. in Cross-Cultural Teaching. I have been happily teaching high school for twenty years; the 2019-20 school year will mark my 18th year here at the Reagan Educational Center (REC). Subjects I have taught run across the science curriculum including Science 1/Earth Science, Biology, Honors Biology, AP Biology, Chemistry, Physical Education, and online courses in Oceanography, Biology and AP Biology. Currently, I am serving as the Lead Teacher of the CUSD Biology Curriculum Design Team. I am a member of the Reagan Educational Center Diversity Education Coun. (RECDEC) and take great joy in being a part of the Clovis East community.

My husband and I have been a couple for more than twenty years. We have 3 children all enrolled in Clovis East Area schools, a cat named Banshee, and a dog named Ruby. After we moved back home to Clovis from the Silicon Valley it was important for us to have our children in the Wolfpack family. I love all things Wolfpack, and have overwhelming gratitude for the community of families, students, and staff I am lucky enough to work with each day.

During the first week of school we will talk more about what materials you will need in class each day to be successful. Class will start on Monday 8/17 following the REC bell schedule, and attendance will be taken. **Be sure to join your class period zoom on time for our first class (join link inside your class period Googleclassroom Stream for added security).** Visit our class website and join your class period Googleclassroom and start to familiarize yourself with the documents posted. Students, if you have questions before classes start on 8/17 please feel free to email me. When you get a moment please join our Remind (separate remind codes for parents and students) using the info below, and when you receive your schedule please join the correct period Google classroom using the correct code below.

Until then, wishing you a wonderful last few days of summer, and I look forward to meeting each of you soon.

--Mrs. Whittaker

kristiwhittaker@cUSD.com

Parents of Honors Biology students-text @he89e7 to 81010  
Students in Honors Biology-text @9ghec9c to 81010

Period 1 GoogleClassroom Code-**ic5kzcb**

Period 2 GoogleClassroom Code-**yifdpnh**

Period 6 GoogleClassroom Code-**avdxxd4**

Period 7 GoogleClassroom Code-**bu6pllc**

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#### **Directions to join Google Classroom:**

1. Students **MUST BE SIGNED INTO THEIR CUSD ACCOUNT**

Ex.

[www.joesmith001@cUSD.student.com](mailto:www.joesmith001@cUSD.student.com))

2. Go to Clever.cUSD.com, and then click on the link to your google drive

2. From drive, click on the waffle and click the Googleclassroom icon

3. Join correct Class by entering class period code listed to the left.

4. **Zoom join code for each period will be provided in the Googleclassroom Stream tab (for added security).**

## **Tips for the school year**

### **Information and communication**

-Visit our GoogleClassroom (make sure you join the correct period) and your GoogleClassroom and our class website early and often <https://cloviseastwhittakerhonorsbiology.weebly.com/>. Features include our weekly assignments f, access to digital copy of our textbook, our class syllabus/policies, grade breakdown, ALL Semester 1 vocabulary lists, and extremely helpful tutorial links for all of the curriculum we will be covering this school year.

-Most weeks we will have a class meeting at the start of the week to review our class agenda via Zoom. Each week our assignments, directions form completion/grading, point totals and due date/times will always be listed. Basically, there are no surprises in our class. Students will always know how to earn full credit on assignments and will always know due dates and assessment dates.

-As my attention is providing students with the best instruction each day, email is the best way to communicate with me for both students and parents in lieu of phone calls during instruction time. Please provide me with at least 1 school day to reply during school hours. Most of our school to home communication regarding our class, our assignments, and your student will be completed via email and Remind.

-Students will be informed regarding our class cell phone policy, and student integrity during assessments and class time. Depending on the format of the school day, students may be asked to check their phones into our "Cell Hotel" on a regular basis to support instruction, follow assessment security expectations, and to support communication and academic discourse/critical thinking exercises.

### **Perseverance, Grades and Support**

-Grades will be updated on a regular basis and can be reviewed using CUSD Student or Parent Connect. Be sure you get your username and password from the CEHS main office.

-Worried about Science Fair, Science Olympiad, Robotics, or the Research Paper? **Don't be.** This year, students will be assigned the default research paper as their Honors Biology requirement. Depending on the format of the school year, and co-curricular offerings, students may be able to complete an alternative assignment by participating in one of the above teams/projects. We will deal with this as information becomes available and I will never delay in keeping you updated. I've got you covered! We will spend lots of time making sure you know which option fits you best, how to get help, and who to go to for support.

-Students, this year you may encounter rough patches in some of your classes. Don't be afraid to ask for help. If you need help in our class I am ready and willing to support you. If you need help in another class I am willing to help match you with someone on campus who will support you. Please do not fear not knowing the answer, as learning starts from a position of "not knowing." Our class will encourage a community of academic risk takers, critical thinkers, and creative problem solvers. Students who encounter struggle, and choose to use it as a growth opportunity, learn about their capacity to rise above the goals they initially set for themselves both personally and academically. You've got this!

-Students should be encouraged to seek help for our class early and often. Office hours will be communicated and open for students to need individual help, study strategies, to complete work in a comfortable setting, and to facilitate group study teams.

### **Social Emotional Support**

-Keep your student ID with you at all times and refer to the emotional and mental health support information on the back of your ID as soon as you feel you or a peer may need help. The REC is about supporting our community and students at all times. There are many trusted adults on campus who are ready and willing to help you and your friends.

-Keep a close eye on your stress level. Seek ways to reduce stress and decompress using healthy coping skills away from electronics such as play, music, face to face talk, spending time outdoors, cooking, visiting with friends, coloring, art, physical exercise, breathing, and attention to present moment awareness. Explore new ways to manage your time and growing responsibilities..

-We will talk quite often this year about social media, digital life, assessment/testing security, personal integrity, adulting, and school safety. Our classroom will always be a safe space and all students are welcome.