



## Welcome to Environmental Science!

Welcome to Environmental Science! This year we will explore the complex ecological relationships around us. We will also develop our skills for exploring scientific phenomena. This syllabus is meant to inform you about what to expect from this class, and what you should expect from me.

### Instructor Information and Communication:

Please feel free to contact me at any point during the school year with any questions or concerns. I am able to meet with you to answer any questions, however, please make arrangements ahead of time to ensure that I am available. Email is my preferred way to get in touch.

- Email : [abrunner@edencsd.org](mailto:abrunner@edencsd.org)
- Voicemail : 716-992-3600 EXT 2221 (Please note that I will not answer calls during instructional time)
- Website : <https://www.edencsd.org/Page/8432>

### Course Description and Goals:

This year we will be focusing on environmental science. Environmental scientist monitor characteristics of the environment to help them understand interdependent relationships. Throughout the year we will integrate science and engineering practices when exploring questions and learn these concepts in an environmental science context. Students will be able to apply their scientific analysis in other subjects/classes as well as outside the classroom.

The following is a summary of what students will come to understand:

- **Environmental Ethics:** Why do we care about the world around? Do we all value the same natural resources? What influences the way we look at our surroundings?
- **Practicing Science & Engineering Concepts:** students will understand that science is a way of knowing about the world through scientific inquiry, using multiple skills to design and conduct investigations. We will support these investigations by using tools/technology to help us explore concepts that may not be reachable using only our senses.
- **Orienteering:** students will orient themselves on a map. We will be able to navigate to a specific point using only a map, a compass, and our feet. Orienteering is important for sharing locations with other people.
- **Dendrology:** The dominant species in our area (besides humans) are trees. Students will practice identifying tree species in our area. We will analyze species characteristics to help us learn more about the surrounding landscape.
- **Ecology:** We can manage an ecosystem more effectively by understanding relationships between organisms and their environment.
- **Reading/Writing Scientific Papers:** we have to be able to conduct research through reading information learned by other scientists. We will also format our own research to share with others.
- **Sampling Techniques:** students will learn techniques for gathering information/data from the environment. We will use biometrics to analyze the data collected.
- **Human Impact:** students will apply their acquired knowledge to investigate how we impact the world around us. We will construct plans to help decrease our negative impacts and improve on positive change.

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### **Materials for Each Class:**

Field **notebook and folder** exclusively for Environmental Science

Pencils/pens

School planner

Completed assignments

### **Grading Policy:**

I have high expectations for all students and encourage everyone's personal best. I believe all students can reach their desired goals through hard work. If students submit work on time and try their best, they will be successful.

Course grades are determined as follows (approximately):

Classwork / Projects / other Assessments --70%

Homework / Participation --20%

Exams --10%

There may be opportunities for extra credit. Students may earn a higher grade by completing retakes and doing better on assessments. The student **must** have a conversation with me (Mr. Brunner) to discuss these opportunities.

### **Assessments:**

Assessments include quizzes, tests, labs, and some projects. Most assessments will be projects where students can show their knowledge in a different format other than a paper/pencil test. After quizzes, retakes will be available (based on teacher discretion) after a student has proven to re-learn the material. The reason for this is students need to learn the material, regardless how long it takes.

### **Retakes:**

Retakes are allowed by teacher discretion. In order to retake a quiz or test, students are required to show that they have relearned the material. Students must prove this by providing evidence of relearning; this includes answering specific questions, reading, study time, etc. During this "relearning" time, students are also encouraged to come to me with any questions and for one-on-one tutoring. Last, students need to schedule a retake time (before school, during lunch, or during a free period) and have a conversation which will show me what they have done to re-learn the material.

### **Homework Policy:**

Homework is designed to engage students' use of Earth Science in their home environment. This work also supplements the information we will cover in class. Even though homework will count for less of a student's grade, it is still important that the homework is completed to be applied in the classroom. Students will do better on the assessments if the prior work and learning have taken place. I expect students to do all homework assignments and to turn them in on time. All assignments are due at the beginning of the class period. I will only give helpful assignments; no busy work.

### **Make-up Policy:**

Work that was assigned before you were absent should be ready to be turned in upon arrival back to school. You will be given two days to make up any work that was assigned when you were absent. When you return from being absent, you will need to check with me (Mr. Brunner) and with a peer for explanations or to get any missed

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notes. Once you complete this process, I will be happy to help you with any questions that you have. If there are any unique circumstances, we can figure it out together. I realize life can get crazy sometimes. We just need to communicate. **It is the student's responsibility to check on any missed work and to make-up all learning and assignments on time.** I am here to help.

**Discipline Policy:**

Students are expected to follow by all school and classroom expectations. I do not expect issues to arise. However, if they do, I believe most issues will be resolved through conversations between me and the student. If issues continue, I will reach out to a parent or guardian to develop a plan together. Our guidance team is an excellent resource as well.

**Classroom Expectations:**

Be kind and respectful to all others and equipment.

Be prepared for class: ready to learn, on-time, with materials and completed assignments.

Abide by all school and classroom policies and procedures.

Always do your personal best.

Encourage and uplift each other.