



Saint Bonaventure High School

3167 Telegraph Road - Ventura, CA 93003
(805) 648-6836 - Fax: (805) 648-4903

From: Timothy R Ambler
To: Physics Students and Parents

Fall 2011

Greetings! I hope that you are as excited about this year as I am. I am excited because I love teaching this class. I love this subject because it lets me stretch my thinking capacity daily and will help you develop that ability also. Physics is a class that is designed to develop your thinking skills like no other class in high school. We will immerse ourselves in the concepts, struggle with the content and wait anxiously for the inevitable moments of epiphany. You will learn to love these mental struggles that lead to feelings of accomplishment. They really are what make life worth living and education exciting.

The class is designed to be a challenge for everyone. Some of you have better math skills than others and some of you have better logic development. These differences will not matter. Everyone will struggle at some point and we will all learn together. Everyone will have times when they feel lost. You need to learn to support each other, study together, explaining something when you understand it, and ask questions when confused. When you are lost, do not despair. Ask for help, in class or out, from myself or other students. Make sure that you attempt all homework problems by yourself first and then compare your thoughts and answers with others. Physics is best learned in groups struggling together with a common purpose. You should try to find a peer group that you can study with. When you need extra help, I am available after school just about every day. If you need help, make an appointment with me and we will work to get you caught up.

One of the major hurdles that presents itself in Physics is that the information builds on itself for almost the entire year. Do not allow your struggles or mental blocks with concepts stop you from moving ahead. This material is surprisingly simple when you don't over-think it. Go through the steps that we learn in class. Be methodical. Often the more patient thorough student will do better than the "brain" that tries to go too fast and skips steps. The more work that you show the better. The more problems you attempt the better. **You probably cannot pass this class without doing the assigned homework.** Not only will you lose precious points by not doing the homework, you will not be familiar with the information come test day. The tests are mostly application of the material learned, not a reworking of the same problems over and over. Physics cannot just be memorized and regurgitated on test day. Many of you have done that for most of your academic careers so this may be something new for you.

Many of you are wary about this class. You might have reason to be, but as long as you are prepared to work hard and exercise your brain for the entire school year your grade will be fine. As long as you are keeping up with the work, showing up for class and getting help when you need it, you should be able to maintain a C or better in this class. Please understand that maintaining an A is a challenge that will require extra effort above and beyond the norm. Good luck!

Let's go learn to enjoy the struggles of life!

Timothy R Ambler
Physics teacher

Pride

Mr. Ambler's Goals and Expectations

1. To show you that I care about you as a person first and foremost.
2. To create an environment where **everyone** has a chance to learn.
3. To expand your interest in science and develop your ability to explore the world around you in a scientific manner.

Communication

Respect

We can expect of each other:

1. We will be respectful of all others in the classroom at all times.
2. We will come to class on time, and be prepared when the bell rings with all necessary materials.
3. We will put forth our best effort at all times.
4. We will adhere to policies as set forth in the Student-Parent Handbook / Faculty Handbook
5. We will be patient with each other. We all want to learn.

Grading Procedures:

Grades: While grades are not more important than the material learned, they provide the best way for the school to keep records of your academic achievements. The class is run on a **straight point system**. One point on a test is equal to one point of homework is equal to one lab point. **In general**, the point breakdown will be as follows:

For each quarter:

Tests/Quizzes	45%
Homework/Classwork/Labs	45%
Participation (POD's etc...)	10%

For each semester:

Quarter 1	40%
Quarter 2	40%
Semester Exam	20%

TESTS will usually be approximately every two weeks. Quizzes can be at any time and will usually **not** be announced.

HOMEWORK and class work can be done in pen or pencil. Homework will be assigned most weeknights and often on weekends. All work must be properly titled / labelled and done on standard loose-leaf paper with no fringe attached. If it has fringe attached or is not titled properly, it may not be accepted and you may receive no credit. If your handwriting is illegible or extremely messy, I reserve the right to have you type up your work.

NOTEBOOK: You are **required** to have a separate three-ring binder or multi part notebook for **just this class**. There will be at least two major sections in this binder.(Homework/Notes and POD's) Save this page in your class binder, as it will come in handy in the future.

ALL necessary materials (textbook/writing utensils/paper/binder/calculator) should be brought to class **every** day.

COMPUTERS: You will be using the computers in this classroom and on campus for this class. You must adhere to SBHS policies for using them. These include but are not limited to always using your own personal login for accessing the machine and not using them inappropriately or for any other reason than is specified for the assignment at hand.

KEEP EVERYTHING THAT IS GRADED FOR THIS CLASS! If there is a discrepancy about your grades then you must have proof about your grades or they stay as recorded in the grade book. They will also give you study and review material.