Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to an exciting semester of Marine Science. Every semester starts out with high expectations and some questions about how a teacher operates their class. This semester I will be running my classroom using the “flipped classroom” model. The question most parents have is what the “flipped classroom” is and how this will affect their student. To get things started watch the video found at kdegar.weebly.com/what-is-a-flipped-classroom.html or use the QR code provided. **(password: kdegar)** Please watch this first and then read the rest of the letter!



**The Summary**The short version is that the “flipped classroom” takes the traditional model of lecture at school and problems/worksheets at home and flips it. Students will now take notes on the basic information at home using a website and we will use this for more in-depth, high level discussions and activities in the classroom in a supportive atmosphere. This allows students to gain a higher level understanding of the concepts and challenges them to take charge of their own learning. This goes hand-in-hand with Lexington One’s Vision of graduates who are self-directed. This method allows for students to have access to my lessons at their own pace while taking notes. They can re-read the material or re-watch the videos as needed.

**FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions)***What does homework look like now?*There is still homework to some degree but it is in the form of students being required to get baseline knowledge of important concepts through guided notes. Typically the lessons will take 20-30 minutes to complete. There may be other types of work to be done at home, but this is likely related to reviewing, studying or projects. The vast majority of traditional homework will be done in class with support.

*How does my student access the website?*Ideally, students will use their iPad to access my website (kdegar.weebly.com; password: kdegar). The videos tend to have the best quality through a computer or tablet. However, students can access the information through smart phones as well.

For students without consistent internet access, there are some other options. I can print off the necessary web pages and the student can bring in a flash drive (4GB at least) and I can copy the files to that drive. We would need to do this before school as it takes a little bit of time.

*What does class time look like now?*Classes will generally begin with checking the guided notes to make sure students completed the assignment. Students who have not completed the homework will be required to complete the assignment during class time which means missing valuable discussion. Students will be required to come up with one or two HOT (Higher Order Thinking) questions that deals with the previous night’s material. We will discuss some of these questions as a class. This gives each student some time to refresh the lesson in their mind and try to clear up some simple misconceptions.

The majority of class time is then spent in a variety of ways. A typically day will consist of an activity of some kind. Since science is dependent on investigations, there will be a lot of lab activities. These activities are aimed to help students analyze and think critically.

*What can parents do to help in the flipped classroom?*Understandably, a lot of parents are uncomfortable helping their students with their work in certain classes. This model gives a lot of opportunities to be involved in your student’s education.

1. The first thing is to make sure they are actually accessing the website. When watching the videos, headphones are preferable. Distractions should be minimized. Teenagers believe they are awesome at multitasking, but research shows it hinders their studies!
2. Encourage them to use the website to its fullest, rereading, re-watching, or rewinding as needed. Students can even find other sources to get information if needed.
3. This is certainly not required but a lot of flipped classrooms have parents that access the material as well. This not only helps you help them but keeps you up to date on exactly what they are learning.

*What should students do to excel in a flipped classroom?*A big thing for students is to make sure they actually complete the guided notes. The students will miss out on class discussions if the assignment has not been completed on time. Keep in mind that you will have little traditional homework and instead have 20-30 minutes of guided notes. A motivated student could probably get this done at school and not even have homework!

The other key part is to realize that participating in all class time activities to the fullest will lead to a deeper, more complete understanding of the material. This is different than “cramming” material the night before a test. If you fully buy into the flipped model, you will really know and understand Marine Science, not just pass it and get a grade.

*What if students complete the guided notes and still don’t understand the material?*That is okay! The website is not meant to be the end goal, so have no worries there. The real point of flipping the class is so students can get the baseline information at home and have support each and every day in class as we delve deeper into the topics. While I want every student to pass and enjoy the material, my goal is to give students a deep understanding of the class, to inspire a greater love for science, and to prepare them for future endeavors by encouraging them to take charge of their learning.

I want to be there for students as much as possible. I check my email throughout the day between the hours of 6am and 8pm (M-F). I also check my email periodically on the weekends. I’m here to facilitate growth and learning and am always excited to do that. I would encourage both students and parents to contact me with concerns or questions at any time. I will do my best to respond within one school day.

I am so excited for this upcoming semester! I look forward to working with your student as we dive into Marine Science.

Katherine Degar  
Marine Science  
WKHS

**Parent/Guardian: Please fill out this form completely and return with your child as soon as**

**possible.**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Block/Day: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian: Please initial the statements below.

\_\_\_\_ I have read the parent letter

\_\_\_\_ I have watched the brief introduction video

\_\_\_\_ My student has watched the intro video

\_\_\_\_ I understand the changes that are taking place in the flipped classroom.

\_\_\_\_ I understand the expectations that the Flipped classroom requires of my student as stated in

the letter and the video.

\_\_\_\_ I have read the Course Syllabus and understand the Grading for Learning practices that will be used in Marine Science.

Parent/Guardian: Please check one of the following boxes:

[ ] We have consistent internet access at home. Watching the videos and completing the guided notes will not be a problem.

[ ] We have inconsistent internet access at home. My child will need paper copies of the information and will bring in a flash drive to get the videos. My child understands that some work must be submitted online and so will arrange to come to school early to submit it before class as needed.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Best way to contact parent from 8am-4pm during the week:

[ ] Email: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

[ ] Phone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Questions, comments, or concerns regarding the Flipped Classroom: