

# Rules & Expectations

All students will achieve their maximum potential by becoming responsible, productive citizens and life-long learners.



2017-2018 Civics

Congratulations! I am honored that you have decided to take Civics. Your first assignment is to read the rules and expectations very carefully and decide if this is the proper course for you. If you think this class will be too demanding on your schedule, if you believe that the expectations will exceed your capabilities, or if you do not have a burning desire to learn about our government, see your guidance counselor and transfer elsewhere. If you are uncertain as to whether or not you are in the correct place, see me after school so we can talk about it.

The following is a list of the most important class rules. Please understand that it is impossible to write out every rule for this class. Additionally, some of the more obvious items, such as being quiet and respecting each other, have not been specifically written out since this type of behavior is expected at all times. Therefore, throughout the year situations may occur that are not covered below. In these instances appropriate action will be taken on a case-by-case basis. Also, any and all necessary modifications will be made for those students with additional needs as specifically stated in their 504 or Individual Education Plans. Finally, please understand this is the first time this course is being offered. Despite the careful consideration I've put into developing this course, we may all have to be a little flexible and accept change midstream if necessary.

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Civics will explore the origins and function of the government system at the local, state, and federal level. The course will examine how the United States Government provides a blueprint for the three branches of our federal government and will assist in the development of student role as constructive citizen. The course will highlight the study of the basic characteristics of civic responsibility. Throughout the course the student will be working on a Civic Participation Project that will incorporate course content.

## **CLASSROOM PROCEDURES**

Students are expected to be on time for class and ready to work. Anyone arriving late without a pass will be assigned an after-school detention. At the beginning of class there will usually be a brief PowerPoint presentation playing on the overhead

screen in front of the class. It will list instructions for class assignments. Therefore, students are expected to immediately get to work and not wait for a prompt from the teacher.

## **REQUIRED MATERIALS**

A notebook, planner, and a pen or pencil must be brought to class each day. There will not be a textbook for this class. Instead, most readings will be posted online and often through iCivics. You will be required to register for this class through iCivics. Your notebook **must** be a three-ring binder with built-in pocket folders. It must be used exclusively for this class. (I do not want to see work for other classes mixed in with it.) It should be filled with lined composition paper. It is **not** permissible to substitute this by putting a spiral notebook in the binder. In an attempt to help you stay organized,

most handouts will be three-hole punched so you can keep them together with the notes in the binder.

## **HOMEWORK**

Homework is generally assigned twice a week. Homework is not busy work; it is intended to supplement or reinforce information presented in class. Please take all assignments seriously and complete them on time. In the past I found that there is a strong correlation (connection) between homework and grades; those students who regularly complete the homework have good grades.

Homework assignments are expected to be completed on time. In most instances late homework will not be accepted. Anyone absent on the day homework is due must hand in the assignment upon returning to school. (Students too ill to complete the work must have their parents send in a brief note and I will allow extra time for the assignment.)

The late rule is different for major projects. Major projects are long-term assignments requiring extensive research and work. They are usually assigned once or twice a quarter. Projects may be completed up to two days late, however ten points will be deducted for each late day. No projects will be accepted after two late days.

Be forewarned, I do not let students make up missing work or do extra credit at the end of the quarter.

## **ABSENCES**

I know this may be difficult for some to accept, but we do go on with class when you are absent. Therefore, students are responsible for making up all missed work when not in class. When absent do the following:

- First, check my website (<http://www.rcensabella.net>) to see what was missed and download any important handouts distributed in class. Additionally, make note of upcoming homework assignments or quizzes. Since students will have access to an electronic version of the

textbook via the Internet, any and all assignments involving the text must be completed.

- Have a class buddy, someone who is trustworthy and conscientious about school work, to contact for additional information if needed.
- Upon returning from your absence plan on staying with me after school if additional assistance is needed. **(DO NOT ASK ME DURING CLASS TIME ABOUT WHAT WAS MISSED.)**

Please keep in mind that since I have invested my time to maintain an updated website listing classwork and homework assignments, and since most readings will be posted online, students will be held accountable for staying abreast of what we are doing in class when absent.

If removed from school for an extended personal vacation, see me ahead of time regarding the assignments that will be missed and expect to be held accountable for this work immediately upon returning to school. In other words, I expect students to work over their “vacation” and be ready the first day upon returning to school.

## **LAVATORY POLICY**

Students are permitted to leave class and use the lavatory, however I will say “no” to those students making a habit of this. (Exceptions will be made for anyone with a medical excuse.) They must neatly write their name and time on the lav. sign-out sheet. Lavatory privileges will be revoked upon failing to accurately follow this rule. Additionally, as per school policy, no student will be permitted to use the lavatory immediately prior to and after lunch and during the first and last ten minutes of class.

## **CHEATING**

Cheating or plagiarism will result in a zero for the assignment, a notification sent to the office, and a parent conference. See the student handbook for additional information about this topic.

## **EXTRA HELP**

Unless otherwise noted, extra help will be available after school every Monday and Wednesday. On other

days just check my room - I am usually around after school and I will not turn anyone away. In this class students are expected to take responsibility for their work and actively initiate and seek out extra help when necessary. If in doubt or confused, come and see me. I guarantee that the minutes invested with me after school will be well worth the time.

## **FINAL GRADES**

The final grade for each quarter will be computed using the following items:

- All quizzes, homework, and classwork assignments will be averaged together and count for 40% of the quarter grade.
- All tests and projects will be averaged together and count for 40% of the quarter grade.
- Class participation will count for 20% of the quarter grade.

As per school regulations, the final grade for a semester course will be determined by taking 80% of the average of the two quarter grades and 20% of the final exam.

## **NOTIFICATION ABOUT GRADES**

Grades will be posted online approximately every two weeks. Near the beginning of the year parents will receive information about the Parent Plus Portal program and will have the opportunity to get instant email notification upon the posting of new grades.

Any parent or student who did not receive information about this program should contact the guidance department for a username and password to establish an account. It is strongly recommended that all families participate in this program.

In an attempt to help save the school district money, all progress reports, including the midterm progress report, will be submitted online through the Portal. If this is a problem please write a brief note on the signature page and I will make sure a paper copy of the midterm progress report is sent home via your son or daughter.

Since I am taking the time to post grades through the Portal on a regular basis, and therefore parents will have continuous access their child's overall average

for the quarter, most likely I will not call home if your son or daughter is failing the class. Please contact me if you have any concerns or questions.

## **CONTACTING ME**

Please feel free to contact me by phone (336-7272 ext. 528) if you have any concerns or questions. In the past most parents and students have found it more convenient to reach me by email at **[censabellar@seekkonkschools.org](mailto:censabellar@seekkonkschools.org)** Furthermore, a brief description of coursework and homework assignments will be listed on my website, which will be updated once a week (usually Sunday evenings). The URL for my website is **<http://www.rcensabella.net>**. It can also be accessed via the school website at: **<http://shs.seekkonk.sharpschool.com/>** (select the link for the social studies department and then the link for my name on the lefthand side of the page). In the past many students and parents have found this to be an incredibly helpful resource!

Periodic updates and reminders will be posted via text messages. I plan to use this for notifications about website updates, grade postings on Edline, and reminders about due dates for important projects and tests. I will utilize the text service provided through Remind. As per the policy of this service, I will not have access to anyone's phone number. Further information about how to sign up for this service will be provided on my website. I strongly encourage parents and students to take advantage of this service. I promise that I will limit the amount of messages - generally no more than once or twice a week.

## **Civics - Seekonk High School**

I have read and understand all of the above-stated rules and expectations for this class.

Student name (Please print): \_\_\_\_\_

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

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Please Check the Appropriate Box Below**

I have Internet access in my home or via a mobile device

I do not have easy access to the Internet

### **I have book marked or saved your webpage as a favorite on my internet browser**

Yes

No