

## Information and Recommendations for Your Child's Success

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I'm writing to give you information about your child's mathematics class with me, to offer my experience of what I've found most helpful for students' success, to invite our full partnership and communication in your child's success, and to introduce myself.

**Assignments and grading:** I provided your child with a copy to give you of the syllabus and the year's seven math units. I've found that if you have this information, you will be of greater help in your child's successful learning and completion of the assignments. Electronic copies of all assignments are on the Hoover website (please explore to discover resources from all of your child's teachers). I will update you via e-mail after every graded assignment with class results and upcoming assignments. Basically, we progress sequentially through the math units along with one of two projects (*Purpose of mathematics*, and *Using mathematics for real-world improvements* - with research and a talk to the class). I give projects a generous amount of time (I know your children are busy) and provide the incentive that early completion allows my full feedback until the due-date. This means that motivated students (and with informed parents) can easily earn an "A" for projects because their early work can be upgraded. In addition, students may always do extra credit to improve their learning and grade (instructions on *Purpose of mathematics*). I want to work with all parents/guardians and students so our community members can earn the grade of their choice. Grading is absolutely transparent; grades improve through earning higher overall percentages. My motivation is twofold: it's my job to produce high performance in learning, and I very much prefer being around motivated and successful human beings.

**Recommendations to maximize success:** I typically grade all unit notes and tests the day they are given, and return them the following day. Historically, students who have been most successful have had parents who were aware of the assignments, and been an active participant in their child's success. **History (and research) has shown that perhaps the most effective way to help is for your child to teach the information of the course.** You have the unit's topics and can ask your child to explain these to you. It might feel weird to start this, *and I encourage you to do so!* Your child knows I emphasize this recommendation to you. These conversations will strengthen your child's comprehensive understanding. Moreover, engaged students feel proud of their grade, and appreciate your help in their success. When students practice the material by teaching/ explaining to others, students often find it's easy, fun, and valuable to learn.

I also encourage you to be a math resource for your child. Parents, grandparents, and other contacts can provide information and/or personal experience to supplement your child's learning. In fact, I encourage students to interview family members regarding use of math in the real-world for extra credit. You have an open invitation to attend class whenever you want and/or provide perspective to the class by sharing your experience.

**Our partnership and communication:** I've let your child know that I'll invite our full partnership to optimize each student's learning. Almost all of my students really like the idea of proactively including you in their school success (I emphasize that as young adults this is inclusion *on their creative terms* since they are no longer younger children).

I emphasize "**your child**" because as a father I know how precious your children are to you. You should see your children's faces when I tell them I know how important they are to you, and when I invite them to discover the best way to include your full participation in their success as young adults. They very much want this to happen.

Please feel free to communicate openly with me. While e-mail is the easiest form of communication for me, if you prefer to meet, we can do so virtually through Skype, FaceTime, phone, or meet in person. Please write all e-mail addresses you'd like me to include for regular status reports of class progress (you can e-mail me them or write them on the signed copy of the syllabus your child will return). As you will gain insight from my introduction below and through assignments, my commitment to teaching mathematics is to build a brighter future through peoples' freedom to pursue brighter futures as *they* best imagine in their unique, beautiful and powerful self-expressions.

**My background:** The satisfaction of my students, colleagues, and parents in my 30 years in education are reflected by two Los Angeles Mayors and USC honoring me for being among the top few teachers in a district of ~45,000 teachers. To improve my students' learning, I went through the rigorous student-centered study and reflection to become a National Board Certified teacher. I'm one of few also certified to assist NBCT Candidates.

I engaged with professional research at the highest level to obtain an Ed.M from Harvard's Graduate School of Education. I have taught all age-levels from middle to high school, from a wide-range of academic skills in inner-city Los Angeles with at-risk students, to two of California's top API-performing high schools.

Students' unique learning opportunity in real-world application of mathematics is having a teacher with direct experience of applying math to US domestic and international policy. For 18 years I helped create and grow the citizens' lobby, [RESULTS](#) now in over 100 US communities and 7 countries, working with economics and policy to end [domestic](#) and global poverty. RESULTS has been [a leading voice](#) for US Head Start programs that reach over a million children. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Executive Director, James Grant, credited RESULTS with saving over one million children's lives a year from increased funding we won for cost-effective programs that reduce infant mortality. We championed two UN Summits for heads of state: the 1990 [World Summit for Children](#) (largest meeting of heads of state in world history) and the 1997 [Microcredit Summit](#) (topic of the 2006 Nobel Prize in Economics). The UN and nations were so impressed with our work that they asked RESULTS to manage nations' progress toward the Microcredit Summit's goals. Today, [over 100 million of the world's](#)

[lowest income families now have access to credit](#); a total population greater than the United States. This saves millions of lives, tremendously improves quality of life, and in every historical case has reduced population growth rates and promoted wiser environmental management.

My current economics and policy research, education, and policy development has me in regular conversation with leading professionals working to build a brighter future:

- California Senators and Assembly members in developing policy for Senate and Assembly Committees on Banking and Finance.
- The California Energy Commission requested my advice for the state's Bio-Energy Development Project for finance options in 2010.
- I was one of six international presenters at Claremont Colleges' 2012 conference on monetary reform.
- My published economics work on creating state-owned banks and re-directing state investments into economic development contribute to over [25 states in legislative process with public-owned bank proposals](#) (for example, if the State of California had its own bank, a 5% mortgage and credit card would abundantly pay for all state taxes, including fully funding schools).
- [Project Censored](#), a consortium of over 20 US colleges and universities working with Schools of Journalism, recognized [my published work](#) in alternative media as a leading source to communicate important news under-reported by corporate media.

*“Project Censored is one of the organizations that we should listen to, to be assured that our newspapers and our broadcasting outlets are practicing thorough and ethical journalism.” - Walter Cronkite*

My contribution is to clearly communicate what the numbers mean for economic policies, and what related histories reveal is happening in our world of the present.

My younger brother teaches calculus, my older brother is a leading research psychologist in his specialty, my wife is a computer systems engineer, and my father is a retired engineer (Dad designed Disneyland's on-site waste water treatment plant, and also the ride *Pirates of the Caribbean*'s steam system for “cannon fire” in the scene with the pirate ship engaged with shore cannon).

I also had the extraordinary privilege of being [Buckminster Fuller](#)'s friend for the last three years of his life (his archive is [stored at Stanford](#)). Besides his applied mathematics in engineering, Bucky designed a [field of three-dimensional mathematics](#).

**Some additional background:** I volunteered as a YMCA youth counselor for ten years, which gives me adult experience relating to teens with fun and insight. I did amateur stand-up comedy for ten years, which keeps my classes entertained while we work. I was on UC Berkeley's JV basketball team, played competitive tournament tennis for 12 years

(and seek to competitive play again in the 50s division), and competitive softball for four years; I've made substantial contributions to athletic programs at previous schools. I converse, write, and read in moderate Spanish. My wife, Yvonne, and I adopted our 12-year-old daughter, Grace, from southern China. Our family has taken advantage of Yvonne's career promotions as a leading engineer for mobility in our modern economy. I've used this opportunity to gain teaching expertise with different grade levels and socio-economic communities. That said, we're now committed to settle in one place for Grace's stability :)

**In conclusion:** I am your partner for your child's academic and social success in this class. I promise to treat your child with kindness and respect in a professional environment that demands high-quality work and behavior from all students and myself. I promise to communicate and uphold the highest professional and academic standards for your child's success now and ongoingly into the future with real-world expertise. I promise to do my best to equip your child with the highest academic and professional tools for the next 70 or so years of critical thinking and mathematics competence.

Please call or e-mail should you ever have anything you wish to discuss, or if I can be helpful in any way for your child's success and enjoyment. Please read and return the next page.

Carl Herman

[CHerman@sjusd.org](mailto:CHerman@sjusd.org)

408-535-6274 x 121

[Carl\\_Herman@post.harvard.edu](mailto:Carl_Herman@post.harvard.edu) personal e-mail if you prefer

Student's printed name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please use the following space to write anything you want me to know about your child and/or anything else you'd like to communicate. Also, please have at least one signature to indicate you received my letter and assignment information, or e-mail me. You may place this in an envelope if you want me to keep your comments confidential. Again, my intent is for your family to work together for a lifetime of successful participation in the art and science of being with people, including real-world government, real-world economics, and real-world application of relevant history. Have fun!

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X Parent/Guardian signature

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