**Civics**

**Course Description:**

This course deals with basic concepts in democracy and the American system of government. Students will study the growth of democracy, federalism, the separation of powers, the system of checks and balances, civil liberties and civil rights, constitutional interpretations, and political processes. Students will also spend time comparing the American system of government with those of other nations. There will be an emphasis on current events, especially as they relate to politics and the American government.

Current events related to the discipline will be incorporated into lessons. Guest speakers will support various concepts.

Notes are posted on the class website as are major assignments and projects. Students are expected to participate and speak in class on a regular basis. Assignments are typically given in advance with more than one day to complete.

**Topics Covered:** Chapter 1 A Portrait of Americans

 Chapter 2 American Society and Its Values

 Chapter 3 The Meaning of Citizenship

 Chapter 4 America’s Political Heritage

 Chapter 5-7 The Constitution

 Chapter 8 The Legislative Branch

 Chapter 9 The Executive Branch

 Chapter 10 The Judicial Branch

 Chapter 11 State Government

 Chapter 12 Local Government

 Chapter 19 Laws and Our Society

 Chapter 20 Criminal and Juvenile Justice

 Chapter 21 Civil Justice

 Chapter 22 Political Parties

 Chapter 23 Voting and Elections

 Chapter 24 American Foreign Policy

**Projects:** Constitutional Case Review

 Criminal Law Project

 Civil Law Project

 Presidential Candidate Profiles

**Current Events:**

An important part of this class is the regular discussion of current events. Students are expected to add to the discussion of events. Some current events will result in different opinions and feelings depending on the issue. It is important that students express their thoughts appropriately and that they are respectful of those opinions with which they disagree.

**Class Rules:**

1. Be Prepared
2. Be respectful
3. Have Fun

Discipline is rarely an issue in this class and is typically resolved before formal disciplinary steps need to be taken. No food, drinks, sleeping, hats or ear buds. Inappropriate use of cell phones or any other electronic devices is grounds for a classroom detention or other disciplinary measures. Students must sign out and take a pass when they leave class for any reason. Participation points are deducted for behavior issues.

**Grading:**

90-100 A

80-89 B

70-79 C

60-69 D

0-59 F

Grades are earned by the student and not given by the teacher. Grades are based on earned points divided by total points that come from tests, quizzes, assignments, homework and projects. Generally there is no extra credit and periodic bonus points can be earned.

**Absences & Makeup Work:**

It is the student’s responsibility for any missed work. Assignments are posted on Sapphire and it is important that both the student and parent/guardian check their grades regularly for any missed assignments or grading concerns. No tests can be made up during regular class. Students need to make arrangements to take any makeup tests.

**Textbook:**

Civics – Government and Economics in Action (Pearson/Prentice Hall – 2007)

**Contact Information:**

Mr. Daryl Wessner

Website: <http://pgasd.enadmin.org/cgi-bin/index.ssp>

Email: dwessner@pgasd.com

Work #: 570-345-2731 ext. 284

Cell: 570-764-4965

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I have read and understand the course syllabus and class guidelines: Civics

Student (Print) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Student (Sign) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent (Print) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Parent (Sign) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_