



**2009 - 2010 8th Grade Mathematics and Algebra
Combs 8th Grade Academy**

2505 East Germann Road ~ San Tan Valley, AZ 85140 ~ (480) 882-3540

<http://www.combscougars.org/teacherpages/jfurman44/>

Ms. Furman - Room 536



Welcome to the 2009 - 2010 school year. One of the goals for this school year is to help prepare you for high school math and help you to be successful academically. It's real simple - the amount of effort you put into the class will determine how successful you are not only in this class but in future classes as well.

WHO AM I? My name is Jessica Furman. Born and raised in New York, I graduated from Ursinus College in Pennsylvania. I am currently finishing my Masters Degree (Curriculum and Instruction) from Capella University. After graduating college, I left the East coast behind in search of warmer weather. Here I am, starting my third year teaching at Combs. I am a huge baseball fan (go Yankees!), I love to run, and do pretty much like anything else that involves sunshine and the outdoors. I did gymnastics at the competitive level for 13 years, including four years of NCAA collegiate gymnastics. Just because I'm "retired" doesn't mean that you won't occasionally find me at one of the local gyms still practicing some of my gymnastics skills!

WHAT WILL WE BE LEARNING? Math ... duh! We will work on number sense, algebra, geometry, probability, statistics, and graphing. Additionally, basic skills will be reviewed, strengthened, and improved on a regular basis. In addition to four years of math being required for high school graduation, math is all around us - you can't avoid it! From medicine to architecture, sports to auto repair, almost *every* career involves some type of mathematics. While the connections will not always be immediately clear, there *is* a purpose in learning the topics we discuss!

WHAT MATERIALS DO I NEED?

- At least 2 sharpened **pencils** with erasers or mechanical pencils (with extra lead)
** ALL MATH IS DONE IN PENCIL **
- 4 **notebooks** (70 page spirals) for math only
- 3 **ring binder** (1 inch) or a section in a larger binder
- Math **folder** or dividers with pockets
- Supply of lined notebook **paper**
- **Dry erase marker**
- **Agenda/Planner** (school provided)
- **Calculator** (a scientific calculator is preferred, but a small calculator is fine)

WHAT ARE THE SCHOOL POLICIES?

- **Food/Drink** - Clear, plain water in a water bottle with top. No flavored water or other drinks are permitted. Food and candy not permitted unless there is a medical reason.
- **Cell Phones/Electronic Devices** - Turned off and out of sight during class - no exceptions. Checking the time on your cell phone is **not** acceptable during school hours.
- **Hall Passes/Restroom Passes** - Please take care of personal needs between classes. Passes will be issued only in emergencies. You have 7 minutes ... use your time wisely!
- **Dress Code** - School dress code will be enforced.

WHAT SHOULD STUDENTS KNOW ABOUT THE CLASSROOM?

- **Attendance** - If you are not here, you are missing valuable minutes of instruction. Some absences may be unavoidable (illness, family emergency, doctors' appointment, etc.) but students should make every attempt to be in class every day.
 - o In the case of an absence, it is the student's responsibility to collect and complete missed work. As per the student handbook, students will receive a one day extension for each day of absence to submit missed/makeup work. If additional time is needed, it is the student's responsibility to discuss the situation with the teacher before the work is due!
 - o To find about missed work, ask a classmate, check the assignment list when returning to school, contact teacher via email/voicemail, or check the class website.
- **Be on time** - On time means in your seat, with materials on your desk at the bell. *If you are strolling through the door as the bell rings, you are late!*
- **Class Dismissal** - The teacher dismisses class, not the bell! Don't pack up until instructed.
- **Academic Responsibility** - Treat each assignment (notes, classroom assignment, or homework) as if it were a task given by a future boss. Any assignment submitted for math should be something that you would be proud to submit to a future boss—crumpled, torn, folded, or sloppy work will be returned to be redone. All assignments should have a legible heading with the following information at the top: *NAME, DATE, ASSIGNMENT.*
- **Late Work** - Late work will be accepted for partial credit (except homework that is checked for completion - no late credit awarded for daily homework).
- **Grading** - Grades will be done based on a points system. Students will also be keeping track of their own grades. A retest may be given for up to "C" credit.
- **Textbooks** - Textbooks should be treated with respect and care. They should be kept in a safe place at home so that they are available each evening as needed. Homework will often be assigned from the book.
- **Homework** - Yes! You probably will have homework most nights. Just like with any other skill (athletics, musical instruments, etc.), practice and repetition is necessary to strengthen and perfect the skill. The same applies to math.

- It is expected that homework will be completed by the beginning of the class period that it is due.
- Incomplete assignments or assignments of poor quality will not be accepted.
- All work must be shown neatly on the homework page to receive credit.
No work = no credit. No exceptions.
- Homework may be checked for completion or collected for a grade.

WHAT ARE THE CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS?

- **Honesty:** Honesty is expected in the classroom. Lying will not be tolerated.
- **Cheating/Copying:** Students are responsible for their own work. It is not acceptable to copy another student's work, nor is it acceptable to give someone else your work to copy! If students are caught copying work, both students will receive a zero.
- **Respect:** Please act like the mature young adults you are. Show respect for others by respecting the person and property of others. Inappropriate, offensive, or hurtful comments of any kind are not acceptable under any circumstances!
Respect for Property - It is expected that you will be respectful of the property of students, teachers, and the classroom. Garbage is not left on the floor for someone else to pick up. Materials loaned to students will be returned in the same condition they were borrowed (including pencils). This is one of my pet peeves!
- **Contributing to class discussions:** Raise your hand and wait your turn to speak. I will do my best to call on students equally. Do not call out!
- **Behavior:** Disruptive behavior (including talking, passing notes, or leaving one's seat) will not be tolerated in class as it interferes with others' right to learn.
****** Students choosing not to adhere to student expectations will be warned. Continued poor choices will result in more serious consequences—detentions, parent contact, and/or referrals.
- **Group Work/Cooperative Classroom Activities:** The amount of group work done in the classroom will be determined based on the overall behavior and attitudes of all students. Doing cooperative activities in the classroom is a privilege that must be earned through good behavior and mature decisions.

DO I REALLY HAVE TO SHOW MY WORK ON EVERYTHING? YES!

- Simple answer: NO WORK = NO CREDIT!!! (Yes, even if you got the correct answer!). Doing the work in your head does not count.
- If you were writing an essay, not showing your work would be the equivalent of not including body paragraphs in the essay. The math problem is your introduction, your work is your body paragraphs, and your answer is the conclusion.

WHAT IF I DON'T UNDERSTAND SOMETHING? *Get help!*

- I make all attempts to be available to students before/after school, during Cougar Skills, and during lunch. Sometimes there are meetings/other commitments that are beyond my control, so please check with me before stopping by!
- You should also familiarize yourself with the other resources available to you—peers, textbook, internet, and peer tutoring. Seek help as soon as you have a problem, do not wait until test time!

FINAL NOTES

As a teacher, my role is to guide student learning and assist in any way possible. I have high expectations for each and every student entering this classroom. Accepting "good enough," is selling yourself short. I will give 100% effort every time I walk into this room, and I expect the same of all students. Together, we will grow to meet our goals and expectations.

Part of giving 100% effort as a teacher is being available to students and parents. If there are any questions, concerns, suggestions, comments, or you just want to say hi, my door is open. Email is the best way to reach me (especially during the school day), but you can reach my voicemail by calling the school's main phone as well. I look forward to getting to know each and every one of you this year.

Jessica Furman

Combs 8th Grade Academy Math Teacher (8th Grade and Algebra)

jfurman@jocombs.k12.az.us ~ (480) 882-3540

Important Information – 8th Grade Math/Algebra (Ms. Furman)

Email: jfurman@jocombs.k12.az.us ~ (480) 882 – 3540

Web Address: <http://www.combscougars.org/teacherpages/jfurman44/>

(All class notes/documents will be posted on website)

Classroom Buddy:

Name _____

Phone _____

Email/IM _____

Syllabus Signatures (Ms. Furman—8th Grade Math and Algebra)
Return this page by Friday August 7th, 2009

Student Name _____

Language(s) spoken at home: _____

Other countries/states you have lived: _____

Number (and ages) of brothers/sisters: _____

Hobbies/Interests: _____

Future Job/Career: _____

My favorite subject is _____

Do you have internet access at home? Yes or No

What grade do you usually receive in math? A B C Below a C

What grade do you *want* to receive in math? A B C

Is there anything else you want me to know (medical problems, random facts, etc.)?

Please print and sign below acknowledging that you have read and understood the class syllabus.

Student Signature _____ Parent Signature _____

Parent/Guardians Names _____

Phone Number(s) _____

Relation to Student: _____

Parent Email Address(es) _____

** Each afternoon I email parents with the daily homework assignments. Would you like to be included in this email? Yes or No

Best Way to Reach Parent/Guardians during the school day _____