

Greetings Mathematicians:

Welcome back for year two of Algebra II! I would like to acknowledge from the outset your willingness to challenge yourself with a difficult course like Algebra. While I realize many of you may not enjoy math, I cannot stress enough its importance in the real world.

In a conversation with my cousin, he expressed his lack of interest (and even dislike) for math in high school. However, in the very next breath he explained how those same concepts he struggled to grasp in high school were now so essential for him to do his job. He is a feed nutritionist for dairy cattle. He explained to me how critical his knowledge of proportions and ratios were in mixing grain components to maximize high quality milk production in cows.

In a second conversation with the parent of an FCS graduate, I was encouraged to hear how prepared his son felt while pursuing a welding degree at Alfred State. This particular student loathed this course when he started with me in ninth grade, and it was a daily grind for him to see how he could possibly use the concepts we were talking about in the real world. However, he stuck with the course. He grew to tolerate it and embraced its worth, choosing to take Algebra 2 with me as a senior. The skills he was able to hone in this course set him on a path toward success for the rest of his high school and post-secondary career, and he is now working for a company with great wages and benefits.

With this in mind, I encourage you to view this course as a necessary stepping stone toward a successful future. While it may not come easily for you, realize that I am always willing to support you as long as you are willing to try and to ask for help.

Course Logistics:

Materials:	Grading:
Pencils 3 Ring Binder (At least 2 inches) Graphing Calculator (School Issued) Laptop (School Issued)	Tests: 55% Review Quests / Quizzes: 20% Problem Sets: 20% Class Participation / Attendance: 5%

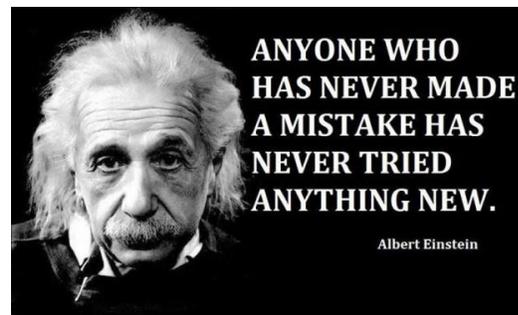
Grading Philosophy:

Test grades are worth 55% of your quarterly averages. Tests are where you prove what you have learned in an objective way. By making tests the largest percentage, your course grade is a more accurate indicator of what you genuinely know.

Quests are what I call my review packets. These are cumulative and the best preparation for the Regents at the end of the year. They will be completed during Math Lab and will be due approximately every three weeks. They must stay in the classroom. If you need more time to complete them, you must come in outside of your scheduled lab time. You may not correct Quests, but can ask me for help on them at any time before they are due. Most students have earned full credit on every quest before the assignment is due. Quizzes may be sporadically given to assess progress on a topic mid-unit. They are quick check-ins to ensure adequate progress before moving ahead in the unit.

Math is a subject of repetition and practice. As a result, you become proficient at math the same way you get good at playing a sport or instrument: practice. As a result, approximately every other day in class we will complete a "homework" assignment. Whatever you do not finish during class becomes homework for that night. Because the main goal of homework is to give you opportunities to practice, I believe you should have the opportunity to correct mistakes you make. For this reason, homework assignments and late-work may be corrected and submitted for partial credit within one week of their initial due date.

Finally, I reserve a very small portion of your grade for class participation and attendance. In talking with industry leaders in Allegany and Cattaraugus counties this summer, the biggest indicator of success in a job in these areas was the employee's ability to show up to work each day. In much the same way, your job as a student is to be present and willing to learn each day. To encourage development of this important soft skill, the final 5% of your course average is



earned as follows: 0-2 absences per quarter - 5%, 3 absences per quarter - 4%, 4 absences per quarter - 3%, 5 absences per quarter - 2%, 6 absences per quarter - 1%, 7+ absences per quarter - 0%. Because this is such a small portion of your quarterly grade, and given there is an allowance of two days per quarter to still earn the full attendance grade, missing all or part of a class for any reason (including absences such as field trips, band lessons, doctor's appointments, illness, etc.) will count as an absence for the purpose of this grading policy. If you are going to be absent for any reason, it is essential and **your responsibility** to get any work you are missing before planned absences and immediately following unplanned absences.

Lastly, I encourage you to come to me before school, after school, or during first, fifth, or eighth periods if you are having trouble. This course is difficult, but with hard-work, grit, and perseverance, you can be successful. We learn by asking questions, so ask them early and often. I look forward to working with you this year!

Sincerely,

Mr. Vosburg

Parents / Guardians: Please sign below indicating your child has shown you this letter. If you shoot me a brief email at jvosburg@fillmorecsd.org so I have your email address, I will also give them 5 bonus points. Even if we already have each other's email address, send me a message to say hello and I will still give them the bonus points. I look forward to working with your child this year! If you ever have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me!

Signature

Date