

Parent and Student Lab Safety Letter

The purpose of this letter is not to make you think I'm mean or try to scare you. (If I want to scare you, I'll let you smell my breath.) I wrote this letter to make sure that all of us are on the same page as far as labs and lab safety are concerned. Without a doubt, labs are the best part of science. However, they are also the most dangerous part of science. You need to know that labs are not a right. They are a privilege. If your child cannot be safe, he or she will be ejected from lab, get a zero and you'll get a parent phone call. If the behavior continues, the child will get an office report and you'll get another phone call. If I see a pattern of lab behavior problems, the child won't be allowed to do any more labs. Below you will find my lab rules. Once again, what I'm trying to do is make sure everyone understands them so that we can have a great and safe year of labs, with no one getting into trouble. When you've read this entire letter, I would like the parent to sign it and return it to me with the student. This lets me know that you understand exactly what I expect, as well as the consequences for not meeting these expectations. Well, enough of the legal mumbojumbo, let's get to the rules.

Lab Rules

1. Have fun! Hey, labs are fun. It's your chance to see and do things you've probably never done. Enjoy them. Trust me, they will be your favorite days in science, and we'll be doing lots of them.
2. No eating. Sorry, but many of the labs use harmful chemicals that you really don't want to eat. Don't worry, you'll get enough harmful chemicals in your school lunch.
3. When we're using fire and heating glassware, you must wear your goggles. I'll give you goggles that are sterilized between every class that you need to wear. Hey, I'm not doing this because I like to see how dopey you look in plastic goggles. It's a state law that requires goggles during fire labs. I know you look like a goof in goggles. Everyone looks like a goof in goggles!
4. Don't act dumb in lab. This is really important because something that seems pretty harmless could lead to a really big accident. For example, you may think that it's pretty funny to fill up an eyedropper with water and squirt the kid behind you, but the dropper might be contaminated with chemicals that could burn his skin or eyes. Or, he could jump back to get out of the way, hit someone, and cause a nasty spill or splash. What I'm trying to say is that, even though you may think what your child did was just silly and harmless, I won't! He or she will still get ejected, still get a zero, and you'll still get a phone call. I won't sit and argue whether a particular dumb action would have hurt anyone or not, I'll just assume it could have. Please think before you push someone, shoot a spit wad, pretend to stab them with scissors, try to trip them, and so on, because it's a shame to end up in trouble when you were only playing around. And, by the way, the fact that the kid you were trying to trip is your best buddy or someone who shoved you in the hall won't keep you from getting ejected. Please, oh pretty please, use your common sense and we won't have any problems at all. I really don't want to scare you, as long as you think before you act, you'll never get into trouble.

5. No stealing! I've had problems in the past with kids taking lab stuff out of the room. This includes expensive things like stopwatches and brass weights, and inexpensive things like rubber bands and balloons. Know this: If I catch a student stealing things from the lab, I'll call home and that student is done doing labs for a while. The same punishment will happen if you're caught with stolen lab materials out of class. I simply cannot tolerate theft of any kind in my classroom. (Ooo, I sound so serious in this part!)

6. This last rule covers breaking stuff. We'll use lots of glassware and equipment, and there's a chance that you'll break some of it. I won't freak out if something gets broken, as long as you just made a mistake. I happen to be the guy who orders the stuff, and your science fee is large enough to allow for replacement equipment. However, if you're messing around doing something stupid and you break something, I'll make you replace it. Our science fee is not designed to support reckless behavior, and I don't think that all of the other students should be paying for one child's lack of self-control. Trust me, this stuff gets expensive. Some of the glassware we're using costs nearly \$15.00 a piece, balances are nearly \$100.00, and the microscopes cost about \$400.00. Also, because we have to order this stuff out of catalogues, the shipping and handling costs can be quite high. Remember, I'm not talking about mistakes here. I'm talking about shoving a thermometer into the fire to watch it pop or spinning a beaker on your fingertips to impress the kid in front of you. Getting ejected, a zero and a parent phone call is bad enough without having to shell out money on top of it, so be careful.

Well, that's about it. I certainly look forward to a great year of labs in science class. Parents, please feel free to call me at the school at 885-2370, or email me at **kbeuther@kbeuther.com** if you have any questions at all. Kids, don't worry. As long as you use common sense and good judgment, this will be a great year of labs.

Thanks for your time,

Mr. Beuther

Parent's signature

Child's name

(Because I can never read the parent's signatures!)