

New Paltz Middle School Accelerated Physical Science 7 - Syllabus

Mr. Burns

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Course Overview:

Throughout the school year, you will be studying a broad range of physical science topics. Emphasis will be placed on expository science reading and reflection that consider real world applications of concepts explored during lab. Laboratory time will focus on procedural and practical hands-on tasks in combination with post laboratory write-ups. Formal lab write-ups will typically involve the analysis of experimental data obtained during laboratory explorations. Expect to learn about not just Physics, but Chemistry and other topics as well, as lessons will pursue a range of exploratory science topics. Expect to be reading and writing in this science course, but do not fret, a large proportion of the course is reserved for hands-on inquiry type experimentation, problem solving, engineering and design challenges.

Course Requirement:

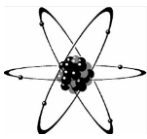
The course is designed to prepare you for the rigors and challenges of the Biology Regents course which, if you are successful here, you will be enrolled in next year. Note, the course is not designed to be *preparatory*, rather a journey unto itself. The course is "*Accelerated*." As such, you are required to maintain an 88% overall average for the course. At the five week marking period of each quarter, your average will be assessed. If you fall below the 88% requirement, a sit down will be scheduled with myself to help improve study habits moving forward. If at the conclusion of the first quarter marking period the student's cumulative average still falls below the required minimum, more formal counsel and documentation will be required. If at the year's end your final cumulative average falls below the required 88% minimum, you will likely not be *recommended* for promotion to the Regents Biology Course in 8th Grade.

Course Goals:

1. Challenge you intellectually across a range of topics to include for example: force, Laws of Motion, electricity, magnetism, sound, light and atomic structure.
2. Involve you in a variety of genuine inquiry problem solving science tasks tied to real-world applications.
3. Expose you to technology as an aid into scientific investigations.
4. Facilitate academic and executive functional skills that will promote success next year in the H.S. level Regents Biology Course.
5. Complete a capstone project in conjunction with the course end of year Authentic Assessment
6. Complete weekly class readings of relevant science literature to draw course corollaries.
7. Complete weekly labs and laboratory write ups with an emphasis on analysis of data.

Expectations:

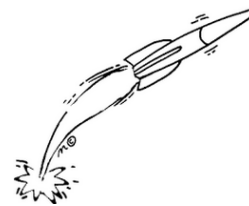
1. Come to class prepared to learn every day. Passes to lockers will not be given (School Policy).
2. Attendance is taken daily. If you are absent, you are **STILL RESPONSIBLE** for all assignments and notes taken that day. It is your responsibility to ask and go to the missed work folder for the day(s) you were absent to find notes and reading materials.
3. Please, do not talk to the people around you while class instruction is taking place. Please raise your hand and wait to be called on if you have something to contribute to the classroom discussion. There will always be ample group and open forum discussion time each and every day after instruction.
4. Fooling around is **NOT** tolerated in the classroom! We will be using a variety of lab equipment in class and safety is of the utmost importance at all times. No running, ever in Room 33.
5. We are to show respect to each other by using proper language and tone of voice. When asked to sit, please take your seat. Being seated is not optional as sight lines can be limited in this classroom. I make it my responsibility to facilitate a learning environment which feels secure, comfortable and safe for all students.
6. Abide by the New Paltz CSD Code of Conduct at all times.



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Preparation (Prep):

Prep Tasks will be given several times a week and may take 15 to 20 minutes to complete. These assignments will include: reading and completing assignments, vocabulary, studying for tests and quizzes, and completing unfinished class or lab work. There will be periodic checks to ensure that all students are coming to class prepared. Preparatory tasks are not graded, however a minimum of ten will be checked for completion each term for classroom credit. Class preparation includes students coming to class on time, bringing required materials, and participating in discussions, labs, and having prep tasks complete. School policy requires attendance of GOAL after school for incomplete preparatory tasks. We will have periodic skills checks of a lower stakes nature to assess skill oriented mastery of content each term.

Labs/ Coursework:

You will be working on lab exercises each week. These will require a lab write – up to be completed by each individual. Write-ups may include, recording of data, data analysis, graphical presentation of data and short answer or multiple choice type responses to laboratory investigations.

Quizzes:

Expect several traditional quizzes each quarter. These are multiple choice, matching, short answers and typically have 20 – 25 questions per quiz, but also be prepared for more hands-on skills checks as well to demonstrate laboratory tasks we have practiced, for example, calculating speed of a given object given pertinent variables. You will be given advance notice of all upcoming quizzes. If you are absent and arrive to class the following day on the date of a quiz, you are expected to participate in the quiz. It is at my discretion, but a makeup alternate quiz can be arranged. There are no “pop-quizzes.” If present the day of a quiz, you must take the quiz

Tests and Projects:

Tests will be given at the end of each unit and are worth 100 points each. Tests contain several parts including multiple choice, short answers, and structured responses. You will be given advanced notice, for all upcoming tests. If you were absent and come to school on the day of a test, you are required to take the test, unless some other prior arrangement has been made due to extenuating circumstances.

Grading:

Lab Reports - 25%
Class preparedness/ other assignments - 5%
Test and Large Project Grades - 25%
Quizzes - 20%
Skills Checks - 25%

Required Materials:

3-ring binder (must be maintained)
Pens, color pencils, calculator, highlighter
2 pocket folders
Planner (school issued or other)
1 open mind

Keep in Mind:

Be proactive, not reactive. If you need help, just ask. Prioritize and make time to attend review sessions and lab make up days (typically Thursdays after school). See me for make-ups, overdue work, lost work, after absences or simply if you want to talk.

- ✓ Read/review/study the syllabus (you will have a skills check to make sure you understand the information we have covered in class).
- ✓ Ask a parent/guardian to read/review the syllabus with you too.
- ✓ Sign the RECEIPT OF SYLLABUS / LAB SAFETY handout and ask a parent/guardian to sign the form as well. See lab safety form for signature blocks.
- ✓ Return the RECEIPT OF SYLLABUS / LAB SAFETY AGREEMENT to me and retain this syllabus in your 3 ring binder.

“Learning is organic, not linear.” Sir Kenneth Robinson