

New Paltz Middle School Physical Science 8 - Syllabus

Mr. Burns

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Course Overview:

Throughout the school year, you will be studying a broad range of science topics geared toward Physical Science. For example, expect to learn about not just Physics, but Chemistry as well. Sections of the course will address the New York State Physical Science Learning Standards by design, to help prepare you for the New York State 8th Grade Science Exam. This exam will expose you for the first time to the rigors of the NYS high school science Regents Exam series. 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 and engineering challenges.

Course Goals:

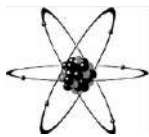
1. Challenge you intellectually throughout a range of topics to include for example: force, Laws of Motion, electricity, magnetism, sound, light and atomic structure.
2. Involve you in a variety of genuine inquiry problem solving science tasks tied to real-world applications.
3. Expose you to technology as an aid into scientific investigations.
4. Prepare you to be successful on the NYS 8th Grade Science Assessment
5. Complete a capstone project as part of the cumulative end of year Authentic Assessment
6. Complete weekly class readings of relevant science literature.
7. Complete weekly labs and laboratory write ups with an emphasis on the 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.
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 plenty of 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 32.
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

Preparation (Prep):

Prep Tasks will be given several times a week and may take 15 to 20 minutes to complete. These assignments may include reading, skills checks or completing unfinished class or lab work and, of course, studying for quizzes or tests. There will be periodic checks to ensure that you are coming to class prepared. Class preparation includes you 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 or laboratory assignments. Preparatory tasks are not graded, however a minimum of ten will be checked for completion each term for classroom credit.



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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. These tests are longer and usually contain several parts including multiple choice, short answers, and structured responses. You will be given several days’ notice, typically in the range of an entire week 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.

Labs/ Coursework:

You will be working on lab exercises each week. These will require a lab write-up to be completed by each individual.

Grading:

Lab/ Class work - 30%

Test and Project Grades - 30%

Quizzes - 25%

Skills Checks - 15%

Required Materials:

- 3-ring binder (must be maintained)
- Pen/ 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. My door is always open. 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. If absent, making up missed assignments, work or labs is your responsibility. If improving your grade is genuinely your desire, then complete quiz and test corrections and see me for help. If all assignments are complete and no work is outstanding or incomplete, then extra credit can & may be arranged to improve your score.

- ✓ **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