

## COURSE EXPECTATIONS

*Grade 8 Science*  
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*Room 110*

### *I. Course Overview:*

The focus of this course is to expand scientific literacy, critical thinking, communication, and teamwork skills. Frequent hands-on group activities allow students to discover the laws of physics through their own experimentation. Most tasks will allow students to work in small groups during the discovery process, and then students will individually document their own learning. Activities coincide with the writing of formal lab reports and mathematical analysis of data. Students will independently design and carry out experiments to extend the learning and skill development process. Students will communicate their findings and thought processes with classmates so that the entire class can practice critical thinking and problem solving skills during a group discussion. Students will be assessed in a variety of formats including lab reports, written tests, research projects, class presentations, and performance tasks. In March, all students will take the CMT, which will include both a science content component as well as questions that refer to a performance-based laboratory experiments that were completed in the classroom. After the CMT, students will begin to explore ninth grade topics relating to energy and energy resources, which will help them prepare for the CAPT in tenth grade. Topics include the earth, sun, moon system, bridges, forces and motion, work, power, simple machines, energy, and electricity.

### *II. Overall Course Objectives:*

The following essential questions from the CT State Science Content Standards will be addressed in this course:

- Core Scientific Inquiry, Literacy, and Numeracy – How is scientific knowledge created and communicated?
- Science and Technology in Society- How do science and technology affect the quality of our lives?
- Earth in the Solar System – How does the position of Earth in the solar system affect conditions on our planet?
- Forces and Motion – What makes objects move the way they do?
- Energy Transfer and Transformations- What is the role of energy in our world?

### *III. Materials Required:*

- Assignment book
- Science Notebook
- 3-ring binder with a section for science, a 2-pocket folder and 3-hole lined note paper
- Pens (black or blue ink) and pencils and erasers

#### IV. *Class/Behavior Expectations:*

- Arrive on time and prepared for class; you will not be allowed to go to your locker once class has begun.
- Show respect, both physical and verbal, for faculty members, visitors, substitute teachers, peers, and property at all times.
- Be attentive and quiet while other people are addressing the class. Distractions to avoid include interrupting, talking with your neighbors, crumpling papers, and sharpening your pencil.
- Let me know any time you leave the room during class. Why? In the event of a fire drill or emergency, I need to know where everyone is.
- Safety: Over the course of the year we will perform many laboratory exercises and experiments. There are basic safety guidelines that must be understood by every student in order to ensure a safe lab experience. It is your responsibility to understand and follow all of the safety guidelines listed below. If you violate the safety contract or engage in any unsafe behavior, you may be removed from class, be given a detention, receive a failing grade on the lab assignment, or be subject to other disciplinary action.
  - Conduct yourself in a responsible manner at all times.
  - Do not touch any equipment or supplies until directed to do so.
  - Follow all written and verbal instructions.
  - If you do not understand something – ASK! Do not assume.
  - Do not eat or drink during the lab.
  - Be prepared for the lab. Read all procedures before beginning the assignment.
  - Never fool around during the lab. Horseplay, practical jokes, and pranks are dangerous and prohibited.
  - Keep the walkways clear. Push in your chair when it is not in use.
  - Clean up after yourself. Keep the work area clean and tidy.
  - If there is an accident or spill, no matter how small, tell the teacher immediately. Do not clean up without permission.
  - Know the locations and operating procedures for all the safety equipment in the room.

#### V. *Attendance Policy – as stated in handbook:*

A maximum of twenty (20) absences (excused or unexcused) will be permitted without academic penalty. Students who exceed the maximum twenty (20) days may be considered for non-promotion. In an effort to inform parents/guardians of the importance of regular school attendance the school will:

1. Inform the parent/guardian in writing after ten (10) absences are recorded.
2. A meeting will be scheduled with the parent/guardian after fifteen (15) absences are recorded.
3. A letter will be sent to the parents/guardians after twenty (20) absences have been recorded indicating that the child may be considered for non-promotion.

#### VI. *Grading Policy*

- Quarterly Grades: Your quarterly grade will be determined by a points system. Each assignment will be worth a certain number of points, for example a quick activity may be 10 points, a lab 20 points, a quiz 50 points, and a test 100 points. Your quarter grade will be calculated by comparing how many points you earned to the total points possible. Points will be awarded based on the following expectations:
  - Answers are written accurately in your own words; direct quotes from other sources are used sparingly and are appropriately cited.

- Work is detailed, supported with data and evidence, clearly explained, and thoughtfully completed.
  - Work is done neatly. Papers are not torn, wrinkled, dirty, and they do not have “fringe” or doodles on them. Writing is neatly done using a regular pencil or black/blue pen. Drawings and diagrams are attractive and appealing. In-class work is reasonably correct in spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Assignments completed outside of the classroom should be edited and should have no errors in writing mechanics.
  - Work should be submitted on time. There are two consequences for late work, (1) You will lose 10% of the possible points, (2) You will not be allowed to resubmit that assignment to improve your grade.
- Improving Your Work: You have the opportunity to improve almost all of your work and resubmit it for additional points. You may resubmit work at any point before the close of each quarter until you are satisfied with your grade. For example, say you earn 20 out of 30 points on a lab report. You can make improvements and resubmit it and I will award you up to 10 more points based on your new work. Another example would be if you got a 25 out of 50 points on a quiz. You can retake it and I will replace your new score with your old one. There will be some assignments that you will not be able to earn additional points on like end of the quarter exams and in class activities that are time sensitive.
  - Above & Beyond Assignments:

Each quarter you will be given the opportunity to earn up to six extra points to your quarter average by completing Above & Beyond assignments. These assignments are related to the course material and require you to spend significant time and effort outside of the classroom to complete them. They are entirely optional and can only help your grade.

Note: In order for a student with an average of 97 or higher to earn an A+, he/she must also complete an Above and Beyond assignment each quarter.

- Exams

In an effort to prepare students for high school, all eighth grade students will take exams. The exams will be worth a single test grade. Organization and study skills will highlighted in class.

- Quarter 1 Exam will cover the material from Quarter 1.
- Midterm Exam will cover the material from Quarter 1 & Quarter 2.
- Quarter 3 Exam will cover the material from Quarter 3.
- Final Exam will cover the material from Quarter 3 & Quarter 4.

## VII. *Academic Integrity Statement:*

The faculty and administration of Wheeler Middle/High School demand high standards of academic performance and academic honesty. Anything less would jeopardize quality education and allow our students to deny themselves needed skills and knowledge. For this reason students who cheat on their assigned work, reports, research papers, quizzes, tests or examination risk prompt and punitive action by both their teacher and the school. Examples of violations may include, but are not limited to:

- Giving or receiving aid on tests and graded assignments
- Unauthorized talking during tests
- Copying regular homework/exercises

- Unapproved discussion of examinations/assignments contents
- Cheating on peer reviews of student work
- Misuse of technology

Documentation of all sources is important to avoid plagiarism, which is the stealing of another's ideas, words, writing, or academic work, and implying that it is original. Both quoting and paraphrasing information from an outside source, including any technology without crediting that source is a form of plagiarism. Students who are found cheating or plagiarizing will be subject to the following guidelines:

First offense:

- Academic penalty up to and including zero.
- Parent contacted.
- Administration notified (by teachers completing a discipline form).

Subsequent offenses:

- Academic penalty up to and including zero.
- Parent contacted.
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Disciplinary action by administration which may include office detention or suspension

*VIII. Teacher Availability for Extra Help*

I would be more than happy to stay after school to help you and am available most days. Please make arrangements with me ahead of time to make sure I will be available on the day you choose.

*IX. Wheeler High School Academic Expectations met by this course:*

1. Take responsibility for their learning and demonstrate independent learning.
2. Listen and read actively and critically; write and speak effectively; view media perceptively.
3. Think critically, make decisions, reason, and solve problems independently.
4. Demonstrate the ability to evaluate and critique their own work and the work of their peers.
5. Develop knowledge of world cultures and examine America's role in the world community.
9. Use appropriate technology in preparation for life-long learning.