Physical Science
Syllabus

Instructor: Mr. Tindall

Plan Periods: A1 and B2
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Course Description
Physical Science is an inquiry-based course designed to expose students to selected concepts in chemistry, physics, earth, and space science. Topics include matter, energy, forces and motion, Earth in space, and Earth structures and processes. This course provides a foundation for other science courses.

Integrated Reading and Writing Experiences
Students will be expected to complete written assignments such as lab reports and research papers. Daily practice with words and their definitions will be included in classroom assignments. Students will be asked to read and summarize using the classroom textbook.

Major Course work (Evidence of Learning)
Expect to:
• Have homework several times each week.
• Participate during in class discussion and cooperative learning opportunities.
• Complete a formal lab write-up.

Safety Expectations
Physical Science is a lab-based course with safety as an essential component. The safety guidelines support and encourage an investigative approach and laboratory instruction, while at the same time assisting in the development of a safe learning environment. Students will follow the Omaha Public Schools district guidelines on safety that is published in the science safety contract. Students will be provided a copy of the guidelines. The students, parents and/or guardians are expected to read the guidelines and sign and return the signature portion of the contract. The student will not be allowed to participate in the lab activities until the signed contract is returned.

Planned Assessments
• Major tests and/or writing projects are to be expected at the end of each major unit outlined above.
• State Testing: As per the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act, all 11th-grade students are required to complete the Nebraska State Science (NeSA-S) test.
• District Testing:
  ○ The Acuity™ test will be administered at intervals as a predictive test. The test will be similar to the NeSA-S in terms of content, structure, and administrations. The Acuity™ test will be administered in high school during May of 10th grade and December of 11th grade.
Grading Policy (Standard Based)

Grading Scale
Grades will be determined using trend scores. A trend score looks at the progression of learning throughout the unit of study or the course and puts greater emphasis on the increased learning at the end of learning. All coursework and assessments are important for student learning and will be completed to provide evidence of learning. All coursework and assessments are judged against a proficiency scale for that topic, which judges the level of student learning from “below basic” to “advanced.” Courses will be taught at the proficient level and will provide multiple opportunities to achieve at the “proficient” or “advanced” level. Students are compared to the standard and not other students. An example of a proficiency scale for this course is attached. At the end of a grading period, scores will be converted to a letter grade using this grading scale for the 2011-2012 school year. The final score is compared against this scale:

A 3.26 – 4.00  
B 2.51 – 3.25  
C 1.76 – 2.50  
D 1.01 – 1.75  
F 0.00 – 1.00

Redoing student work –
(In progress will include when committee work finished)
1. Students are responsible for completing all coursework as assigned to the best of their ability.
2. Students who have demonstrated desire to learn will be given opportunities to redo/revise coursework within the unit of study.
3. Students present in class are expected to complete assessments when given to the class, not at the student’s discretion.
4. Students must show they have completed some type of corrective (deliberate practice, peer tutoring, study guides, additional reading or coursework, a review in class, etc.) before they will be afforded an opportunity to attempt an alternative assessment.
5. Redoing, retaking or revising will be done with teacher/student/parent agreement. Teachers may schedule students before, during or after school to address needed areas of improvement if not convenient during class.
6. Scores for student work after retaking, revising or redoing will not be averaged with the first attempt at coursework; but will replace the original student score.

Class Expectations and Policies

Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be Responsible
- Rules and guidelines set forth in the student handbook will be followed in this class. Any student who distracts other students or the instructor interferes with the learning environment and should expect consequences.
- Attendance: Being in class, on time, is important for student success. Anyone entering the classroom after the bell has stopped ringing is tardy. Per school policy.
- Electronic Devices: No electronic devices (cell phones, mp3 players, games, etc.) are permitted to be seen, heard, or used in the classroom at any time, per school policy.