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Powell Middle School  
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### Course Description

In this course, we will follow the curriculum guidelines established by the state of Tennessee and Knox County Schools. The curriculum can be found at <https://www.tn.gov/education/instruction/academic-standards/science-standards.html>.

### Instruction and Pacing

This curriculum will build on what you have learned in your past science courses and help prepare you for future science courses at the high school level. Below, you will find a tentative schedule of the main topics we will study throughout the year (dates subject to change):

| Dates       | Module                                      |
|-------------|---------------------------------------------|
| 8/5-8/16    | Pre-Module: Lab Safety & Lab Equipment      |
| 8/19-10/4   | Module 1: Interactions of Matter & Energy   |
| 10/14-11/15 | Module 2: Waves & their Properties          |
| 11/18-12/6  | Module 3: The Universe & its Origin         |
| 12/9-2/21   | Module 4: Plate Tectonics & Geologic Change |
| 2/24-4/3    | Module 5: Changes over Time                 |
| 4/6-5/21    | TCAP Review, TCAP, Chemistry                |

### Class Supplies

Plenty of lined paper  
Pencils  
Color pencils  
Post-it notes

Dry erase markers (for individual use)  
Optional: 1.5 inch binder w/ dividers  
*Wish list: quart sized zip bags, white balloons, metal slinky, AA and D batteries*

### Textbook

Pearson Tennessee Interactive Science  
The loss of the textbook may cost up to \$80 to replace

### Audiovisual

Throughout the year, instructional videos may be shown in class. These videos may include educational products produced by: Teacher's Video Company, Disney (Oceans) (Bill Nye the Science Guy), National Geographic, Discovery Education, and BBC (Life and Planet Earth). Students may also view mini-videos from Brainpop.com. If you do not approve of a specific resource listed in this syllabus, please make your request to me in writing and an alternative assignment will be provided.

### Bell Ringers

Students will be required to begin class each day with a bell ringer question or activity. These questions shall be recorded on a log and checked at the end of each week. Bell ringers may be sent home periodically for parent signature. Students are responsible for bell ringers even when absent.

## Notebook

As organization is an integral component of optimal learning, it is suggested that you maintain a notebook (3-ring binder) with space dedicated to this class only. In that space, your notebook should be organized by assignment categories. Specifically, it should have dividers labeled:

- Bell Ringers
- Notes/Vocabulary
- Labs/Homework/Classwork
- Quizzes/Tests

## Class Website

You may access the class website through Aspen. It will be used to inform you and your parents/guardians of important information such as grades, assignments, tests, presentations, and other information pertinent to this course. Grades will be updated every 7-10 days. If you have any questions outside of school, please do not hesitate to email me through Aspen or at [tuyen.tran@knoxschools.org](mailto:tuyen.tran@knoxschools.org)

## Grades

One way in which I am able to communicate with both parent and student is through the parent portal. In order to give timely feedback, I will update grades every 7-10 days. Missing assignment reports will also be distributed at regular intervals.

Each semester, student performance will be evaluated based on daily work, quizzes, tests, and projects. The breakdown for student grades is

10% Bell Ringers, 40% Assignments/Labs, and 50% Assessments/Projects

Please see the student handbook for the school policy on cheating.

The Knox County grading scale is as follows:

A: 100-93

B: 92-85

C: 84-75

D: 74-70

F: 69 and below

Gradebook codes:

M: Missing, calculated as 0

N: Excused by teacher, NOT calculated in grade

C: Cheating, calculated as 0

## Late and Make Up Work

**Late Work:** Late classwork, homework, and lab assignments will be accepted for up to two days after the assignment's due date with 10% deducted from its grade. After two days, 50% credit can be earned until the grading period ends. After the grading period ends, **no** credit will be earned.

**Make-up Work:** Due to the hands-on nature of this course, attendance is very important for your success in this class. However, the following policies should be followed if an absence is necessary:

1. It is *your* responsibility to obtain the work you missed during your absence(s) upon returning to school. Please see the make-up work hanging file folder. I also encourage you to speak to your classmates about the class you missed. Remember, according to school policy, for an excused absence(s), you have ten days after the due date to turn in make-up work. After ten days following an absence, your work is considered late. However, the sooner it is turned in, the better.
2. Any assignment due on the date of your absence is due the day you return to school. Do not rely on Aspen to determine if something was due on the date of your absence, as assignments are not always graded the day they are due.
3. If you miss a test or quiz, it is your responsibility to schedule a make-up with me on the day you return.
4. An alternative assignment may be assigned for any in-class hands-on activity or lab you missed.

## **Classroom Rules**

These guidelines for appropriate behavior are expected at all times. Students who do not adhere to the class behavior guidelines will be subject to the consequences of the Powell Middle School discipline plan.

1. Behave respectfully to teachers and peers.
2. Get permission to get out of your seat
3. Follow directions the first time they are given.
4. Raise your hand for permission to speak or contribute to class.
5. Bring all materials to class, including assignments that may be due.
6. Stay on task.
7. Enter the room quietly, orderly, and on time.
8. Obey all other school rules.

## **Classroom Expectations**

1. It is expected that you will follow school and class rules at all times.
2. Please be prompt and prepared for class. When the bell rings, please be in your assigned seat and note the board for the Bell Ringer activity.
3. Although participation and collaboration is highly encouraged, please be respectful if anyone else is speaking (i.e., do not talk or walk around during teacher instruction or when a classmate is speaking).
4. Your academic progress can be monitored online, and it is your responsibility to address concerns or questions about your grades in a timely manner. However, please do not rely on Parent Portal as your sole source for turning in assignments—you must listen for teacher instruction and note the board for required assignments.

## **Lab & Safety**

The 8th grade laboratory will be used often for activities. In addition to the classroom rules, appropriate behavior is expected in the lab. Students who do not adhere to lab rules may be excluded from that day's activities and be required to complete an alternative assignment. The lab safety contract signatures must be returned in order for students to participate in the lab after passing the lab safety quiz.

## **Discipline**

Class discipline will follow the school rules. See student agenda for detailed descriptions. Generally speaking, the following sequence of interventions will occur:

1. Verbal warning
2. Discipline Log Entry/Parent contact
3. Silent lunch/Parent Contact

\*Severe disruptions will be sent immediately to the office.

## **Extra Assistance**

I will be available for extra tutoring and to supervise your completion of hands-on activities before school each Wednesday at 7:30. If you are unable to attend at this day/time, please contact me in advance to arrange another day/time.

## **Plagiarism**

According to the Harbrace Handbook (15<sup>th</sup> edition): Plagiarism is defined as “presenting someone else’s ideas, research, or opinion as your own without proper documentation, even if it has been rephrased.”

It includes, but is not limited to:

1. Copying verbatim all or part of another’s written work;
2. Using phrases, figures, or illustrations without citing the source;
3. Paraphrasing ideas, conclusions, or research without citing the source;
4. Using all or part of a literary plot, poem, or film without attributing the work to its creator.”

## **Consequences of Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is a form of stealing and academic fraud. Students who are found guilty of plagiarism will have the option of completing an alternate assignment within a specified time period and accepting a grade letter drop or taking a zero on the assignment.

## **Religion in the Classroom**

The Board affirms that it is essential that the teaching about religion—and not of a religion be conducted in a factual, objective and respectful manner in accordance with the following:

- Music, art, literature, or drama with a religious theme or basis are permitted as part of the curriculum for school-sponsored activities and programs provided it is essential to the learning experience in the various fields of study and is presented objectively;
- The emphasis on religious themes in the arts, literature and history shall be only as extensive as necessary for a balanced and comprehensive study of these areas. Such studies shall never foster any particular religious tenets or demean any religious beliefs; and
- Student-initiated expressions to questions or assignments which reflect their beliefs or non-beliefs about a religious theme shall be accommodated. For example, students are free to express religious belief or non-belief in compositions, art forms, music, speech and debate.

## Signature Page

### Syllabus

In order to verify that both students and parents have been informed about the classroom policies and procedures, please sign and return this sheet.

Student signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent preferred method of contact:

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Or

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

### Lab Safety Agreement

I, \_\_\_\_\_, (student's name) have read and understand each of the attached safety rules set forth in this contract. I agree to follow them to ensure not only my own safety but also the safety of others in the science classroom or laboratory. I also agree to follow the general rules of appropriate behavior for a classroom at all times to avoid accidents and to provide a safe learning environment for everyone. I understand that if I do not follow all the rules and safety precautions, I will not be allowed to participate in science activities.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parent or Guardian:

We feel that you should be informed of the school's effort to create and maintain a safe science classroom/ laboratory environment. Please read the list of safety rules. **No student will be permitted to perform science activities unless the attached contract is signed by both the student and parent/guardian and is on file with the teacher.** Your signature below indicates that you have read the attached Science Safety Contract, reviewed it with your child, and are aware of the measures taken to ensure the safety of your son/daughter and his/her classmates in the science classroom.

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Important questions:

Does your child wear contact lenses? Y or N

Is your child color blind? Y or N

Does your child have any allergies? Y or N

If so, please list: