

Holston Middle School

Mrs. Askins

8th Grade Science Syllabus

COURSE HYPERLINK: http://www.tn.gov/education/standards/science/SCI_Grade_8.pdf

Our current eighth grade science curriculum encompasses a broad variety of topics. Successful completion of this course will enable a student to answer such questions as:

- What tools, skills, knowledge and strategies will enable a person to complete an experiment or scientific investigation?
- How do science, engineering and technology work together to create products that make our daily lives easier?
- How does natural selection explain how living things have changed over time in response to environmental changes?
- How do different properties of matter influence its chemical and physical behaviors?
- How can I use the periodic table of elements to predict outcomes of chemical reactions and to balance chemical equations?
- What basic science principles describe and explain forces such as gravity, magnetism and electromagnetism?

Please refer to my Canvas web page for links to the eighth grade science curriculum and state performance indicators. These indicators will tell you specifically what you should be able to do by the end of the year. <http://knoxschools.org/Page/6261> This is a link for parents to help their student with our curriculum. Please feel free to continue to reinforce learning at home.

INSTRUCTION

- Students will be exploring the following general science concepts throughout the school year: **Scientific Inquiry and Experimental Design, Technology and Engineering, Biodiversity and Change, Properties of Matter, Chemical Reactions, and Forces in Nature.**
- Materials:** The following materials should be brought to class: Something to write with, something to write on, and somewhere to put it. I'm not picky, but I've found it easiest and most efficient for students to use mechanical pencils, a binder or paper folder, and loose-leaf paper. Please do not use red ink pens on your written assignments. Blue or black pens or pencils are preferred.
- Fees:** There are no fees associated with this course. Donations of lab supplies are greatly appreciated. We use things like baking soda, vinegar, table salt, paper towels, food coloring, vinegar, diet coke, mentos, distilled water, Kleenex, and hand sanitizer. You may donate these if you wish.

RESOURCES

- The textbook that will be used is Holt Science and Technology. The approximate cost to replace the text if lost or damaged is **\$37.25**. *My students will utilize a class set of textbooks. If for some reason a student needs to take a book home (illness, etc.), he/she may check one out with me at the end of their class time.*

- Occasionally, there will be a science video that I feel is educational and supplemental to the science learning objectives listed above. The videos are from the HMS library collection or from a school approved educational website such as Discovery Education or Brainpop.

- I frequently like to use text from a variety of sources to enhance student understanding of content. The texts may come from National Geographic, Scientific American or other reputable sources.

- 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. This request should include your name, the child's name, the specific activity or material in which you do not want your child to participate or to which you do not want them exposed, and the nature of your objection.

SAFETY The safety procedures for this course can be found in the safety contract that each student and guardian is responsible to read, sign, and return.

ASSESSMENT

- **Grading:** For grading purposes, I use the Knox County grading scale. Students will be assessed by the completeness and accuracy of all assignments on a total point scale. This means that total points earned divided by total points possible will determine the student's grade. All students' science TCAP scores will count for 15% of their second semester grade.

- Make-up procedures for class work and assignments are according to Knox County policy. The student has three days to make up all work once returning to school. Arrangements will be made for extended absences.

- Late work is accepted for credit until the deadlines established prior to the end of first semester and at year's end. However, students are expected to complete assignments and turn them in within the time frame instructed. Though turning in assignments late and out of sequence may help a student's overall grade, it has far less lasting educational impact.

- One way in which I am able to communicate with the student and parent is through the grade portal. In order to give timely feedback, I will update grades at least once a week, usually on Friday.

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

- **Norms:** Respect our school. Respect each other. Respect yourself.

- **Honor Code:** According to Harbrace Handbook, 15th Edition, "Plagiarism is defined as presenting someone else's ideas, research, or opinion as your own without proper documentation,

even if it has been paraphrased.” Plagiarism is a form of stealing and academic fraud. Students found guilty of plagiarism will have the option of either redoing the assignment within a specified time with a letter drop in the grade or earning a zero for the assignment. Parents should be involved in making that decision.

- **Board Policy I-431 Issued: 7/95 Revised 6/08**

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.

I am looking forward to teaching my students and I know this will be an eventful and exciting year. As we progress, questions and comments from parents/guardians are welcome. Feel free to contact me 594-1300 or by email at august.askins@knoxschools.org. I am available for parent calls from 2:30-3:30 each day. I will maintain and periodically update my Canvas page, so please visit it often. If your student is having difficulty in my class, please have him or her communicate that with me. We will figure out a time and place to help.

Please sign and date below AND on the safety contract (ON THE BACK), stating that you have read the information in the syllabus and safety contract. Please return this page only to Mrs. Askins by Friday.

Student Name (printed): _____

Student Signature _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Name (printed): _____

Parent Signature _____ Date: _____

YOUR Contact Information, should I need to speak with you during the school year. Also, please include the best time to contact by phone.

Phone: _____ **Email:** _____ **(best time of day:** _____ **)**