

## **Eighth Grade Science 2016-2017**

### **Mr. Wadnizak**

Hello, my name is Mark Wadnizak and I will be your student's Science teacher this year. Eighth Grade is an exciting year for students and the curriculum is excellent for this age. In addition to the content listed below, we will also be integrating engineering and science inquiry into many of the units. Our main goal this year is to increase interest in science and learning while developing the necessary skills to help succeed in high school and beyond.

#### **Website** ([www.mrwadnizak.weebly.com](http://www.mrwadnizak.weebly.com))

This is the first place to look for information. See the [class blog](#) for an idea of what we are doing on a daily basis. You can also find [links](#) to documents and other resources we are using in class. You can also find a link to this document.

#### **8th Grade Earth Science Content topics**

[Earth in Space](#) - moon, seasons, day and year, tides, etc.

[Exploring Space](#) - earth's position in the universe and how we have discovered what we know

[Rocks and Minerals](#) - rock cycle, formations, minerals

[Weather and Atmosphere](#) - weather, climate, atmosphere, water cycle, oceans, clouds, sun

[Erosion and Deposition](#) - topography, erosion, deposition, landforms

[Plate Tectonics](#) - plate movement/system, earthquakes, volcanoes, earth structure

#### **Grading policy**

Grades will be determined by assessments and performance related to the learning targets. Homework and classwork are not included in the grade, but will be reflected in the personal management behavior targets. There is usually a direct correlation between consistent work and effort and grades. Please check my website ([www.mrwadnizak.weebly.com](http://www.mrwadnizak.weebly.com)) for more information. I will also send out more information prior to our first progress report.

#### ***The scale for this standards based assessment is as follows:***

(HP) Highly Proficient: Thorough and enhanced evidence of meeting the learning target. These scores often reflect the ability to tie many concepts together and go above and beyond what is covered in class in a significant way.. A relatively few number of students perform at this level.

(PR) Proficient: Evidence of meeting learning target. This is where students should be for their grade level and most students that show consistent effort tend to perform in this area. With standards based assessment, students who perform at this level of work can be considered successful.

(CP) Close to Proficient: Partial evidence of meeting learning target. This usually means that students understand parts of the material, but may be missing some knowledge or are unable to put it together into a coherent whole. Often, students need to put more effort in to get to the next level.

If the student is working hard but is still struggling, I will work with these students to help get them to the next level.

(DP) Developing Proficiency: Demonstrating little understanding of learning target. This usually means that students aren't able to show that they know the material. Usually, this is due to lack of effort, but occasionally the material is too challenging for the student. I will work closely with these students.

Throughout the year, students will track their progress in meeting these targets.

Overall, working hard, completing work and participating in class will help your student to earn a good grade and be prepared for the next level.

## **Next Generation Science Standards**

Portland Public Schools is in the process of implementing these new national standards. In addition to science content, the new NGSS standards include 'crosscutting concepts' that apply across all aspects of science. These include:

1. Patterns
2. Cause and Effect
3. Scale, proportion and quantity
4. Systems and system models
5. Energy and matter: flows, cycles and conservation
6. Structure and function
7. Stability and change

The NGSS also include a focus on science and engineering practices. These include:

1. Asking questions and defining problems
2. Developing and using models
3. Planning and carrying out investigations
4. Analyzing and interpreting data
5. Using mathematics and computational thinking
6. Constructing explanations and designing solutions
7. Engaging in argument from evidence
8. Obtaining, evaluating and communicating information

## **Classwork**

Students will be given a science journal/notebook. This should be brought to class everyday since much of our work is done in it. Consistent engagement in class is the best way to be successful in science. With proficiency grading, there is sometimes the attitude that classwork isn't graded, so it doesn't matter. Classwork and homework provide the building blocks for student learning as well as a chance to work on important skills.

## **Homework**

Most homework will consist of finishing assignments from that day in class or completing larger projects. Once or twice a week, students may be given work that is specifically to be done at home. Using class time wisely will assure that your student has a reasonable amount of homework. We will start the year using student agendas on a regular basis, so this would be a good place to check to see what they need to be doing.

## **Late Work**

One of the goals of this year is to keep students caught up with their work. Classwork/homework is generally not accepted late, although the student may still do it. Much of this work is meant to build on what was learned and or introduce what is coming next. If we have already moved on, doing the work does not help as much. For larger projects and assignments, I will work with individual students to come to a fair agreement about how late something can be turned in. It is extremely important that the student comes to talk to me about the assignment if he/she would like an extension. I understand life gets busy and unexpected things happen, so I make every effort to be fair and flexible. Contact from home in extreme cases helps the problem. Our goal in middle school is emphasize the importance of keeping caught up and engaged.

## **Missing Work Due to Absence or Illness:**

If your student is sick or has an excused absence, it is his/her responsibility to speak to me the first day he/she is back at school to get any missed work. The amount of time your student has to turn in an assignment is roughly equal to the number of days he/she was gone. If there is an extended illness or family situation, I will work with the student to come up with a timeframe for catching up.

If you are taking a family vacation, please let the school know.

## **Extra credit**

I generally do not give extra credit and it doesn't fit with standards based assessment. Students are encouraged to do strong work on a daily basis. I can work with students to review concepts if something was missed. Students may be given multiple opportunities to show proficiency in the learning target.

## **Academic Integrity**

Using other people's work, whether it is a friend or a published author, is not allowed. You will not receive any credit for work that is not your own. Repeated offenses can result in referral to administration.

## **AVID**

Advancement Via Individual Determination is a program that helps support students with their academic skills and prepare them for college and career. AVID is an actual class for some students, but the whole school will be integrating some aspects of the AVID program. This involves organization, long-term planning and other academic supports. In science, we will be focusing on note-taking strategies as well as ways of interacting with those notes and other content.

## **Progress Reports and Report Cards:**

Progress reports and report cards will be sent home periodically throughout the year. A good way to keep up with your student's grade is to sign up for and check ParentVue. Please see the Hosford or PPS website for more information on this. I will also be sending additional progress reports home at other times in the year.

## **Electronic Devices**

Students are responsible for all cell phones, iPods, or any other electronic devices that are brought to school. Hosford requires that these items be turned off and put away from 9:10 AM to 3:45 PM. If the device is out or disrupts class, students will get one reminder. After that, the device will be taken to the office. Repeat offenses may require parents to come pick up the device.

## **Classroom environment**

By now, students should be aware of the correct way to act in class and at school in general. We are here first to learn, ideally in a stimulating and enjoyable way. Every effort will be made to deal with problems on a student to teacher level, with the hopes that your student will be able to handle themselves responsibly. There are certain situations where I may have to make contact with you or get administrators involved.

I look forward to having your student in class. If you have any questions or comments feel free to contact me. Email generally works the best.

My Contact Information:

Phone: (503) 916-5640

E-mail: [mwadnizak@pps.net](mailto:mwadnizak@pps.net)

Website : [www.mrwadnizak.weebly.com](http://www.mrwadnizak.weebly.com)

Thank you,  
Mark Wadnizak

***Eighth Grade Earth Science***

***Mr. Wadnizak***

Share this syllabus and expectations with a parent/guardian. Both you and your parent need to sign the attached form, and you will need to return the completed form to me by our next class. Keep the other pages for your records and please return this page to me.

Student & Parent/Guardian Sign-Off

I have carefully read through this syllabus and I understand Mr. Wadnizak's expectations.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

I have reviewed the syllabus and understand what is expected of my child in Mr. Wadnizak's class.  
(Parents: Thank you for your support!)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent e-mail address:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent evening phone:

Any information you would like me to know about your child: