COURSE EXPECTATIONS

Grade 8 Science
Mrs. Mason
masonm@northstonington.k12.ct.us
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 scientific phenomena 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 analytical 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 April, all students will take the NGSS (Next Generation Science Standards) assessment. After the NGSS test, students will begin to explore ninth grade topics relating more to Newton's laws of motion and the Sun. Topics this year include the earth, sun, moon system, forces (contact and non-contact) and motion, energy, waves and their applications and electricity.

II. Overall Course Objectives:

The following essential questions from the Next Generation Science 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 does science and technology affect the quality of our lives?
- Earth's Place in the Universe – 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?
- Waves and Electromagnetic Radiation- Why are digital signals a more reliable way to encode and transmit information than analog signals?

III. Materials Required:

- 2 spiral-bound notebooks, one for semester 1, one for semester 2
- 2-pocket folder and 3-hole lined note paper
- Colored pencils
- Pens (black or blue ink) and pencils with extra erasers

IV. Class/Behavior Expectations:

- 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 up to and including a zero 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. After signing the safety contract, if you are found being unsafe in the lab you will be asked to leave and will receive a zero for the assignment.
    - 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. 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 15 points, a quiz or notebook check for 20 points, and a test 100 points. Your quarter grade will be calculated by calculating 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 using MLA format.
    - 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 20% of the possible points (2) You will not be allowed to resubmit that assignment to improve your grade**
- **If an assignment is not turned in, the student will receive a 40% for the assignment. The assignment will be marked as "missing" in PowerSchool.**

- Improving Your Work: You have the opportunity to improve almost all of your work and resubmit it for additional points if an original assignment is scored below an A. 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. I will notify in advance if an APS form is not applicable for a specific assignment.

  To improve your grade, you must first submit an Action Plan for Success (APS) form. On this form, you will need to specifically explain the mistakes you made on the original assignment and how you will plan to not make the same mistakes again when you reattempt the assignment. In other words, on this form you will list the actions you will take so that you can be successful. The APS form must be submitted to me with your parents'/guardians signature before you can re-do the assignment. This must be done and submitted within one week of when I return the assignment to students. The revision must then be completed within one week of the submitted APS form.

- Enriching/Alternative Assignments:

  Each quarter, based on discussions and observations between student, home and teacher, enrichment assignments will be issued if an opportunity arises. These assignments are related to the course material and require you (the student) to spend time and effort outside of the classroom to complete them. Although these assignments require said work, they offer students an opportunity to discover topics in science that might not be specifically covered in the day to day class setting. These assignments will be factored into the student's grade in PowerSchool.

- 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 and advisory periods this year.

  - 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.

VI. 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:

<u>First offense:</u>

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

<u>Subsequent offenses:</u>

- Academic penalty up to and including zero.
- Parent contacted.

Disciplinary action by administration which may include office detention or suspension

VII. Teacher Availability for Extra Help

I would be more than happy to stay after school to help. Please make arrangements with me ahead of time to make sure I will be available on the day you choose. If I am not available to help, please seek other resources such as Remind (7:15am-4:45pm) and email to get in touch with me.

VIII. Wheeler High School Academic Expectations and Social/Civic met by this course:

Academic:

Analysis: When arriving at a solution to a question or problem, a student uses a variety of resources, makes inferences, collects, communicates and evaluates information. They also consider the validity of results to draws appropriate conclusions.

Literacy
Communication
Collaboration

Social/Civic:

Demonstrate honesty: Tell the truth, speak what you believe, admit when you are right/wrong
Demonstrate Responsibility: Do what you are supposed to do, plan ahead, think before you act.
Demonstrate Respect: Be tolerant and accept differences, be considerate of feelings, don't threaten
Demonstrate Safety: Know how you are feeling, know how to assess situations for possible hazards, follow ALL lab safety rules!

CUT HERE

*******Please detach, sign and date below acknowledging that you have read the 8th grade science course expectations and grading policy. ******

Student:_____ Date:_____

Parent:_____Date:_____