

Characteristics of Effective Learners

(adapted from Skip Downing's *On Course*)

STUDENT NAME _____ Classroom Teacher _____

Students: Review this list of characteristics of effective learners. Check how each one describes you.

Effective Learners...	Usually	Some- times	Seldom
DISPLAY A WILLINGNESS TO LEARN , taking information taught and applying it in ways that are meaningful to them; expanding upon the information to make it fit into their interests and surroundings.			
SET GOALS , knowing what they want to achieve, identifying they have to work on, seeing their progress toward each goal, and taking pride in achieving each goal.			
ACCEPT SELF-RESPONSIBILITY , seeing themselves as the primary cause of their outcomes and experiences.			
DISCOVER SELF-MOTIVATION , finding purpose in their lives by discovering personally meaningful goals and dreams.			
MASTER SELF-MANAGEMENT , consistently planning and taking purposeful actions in pursuit of their goals and dreams.			
EMPLOY INTERDEPENDENCE , building mutually supportive relationships that help them achieve their goals and dreams (while helping others to do the same).			
DISPLAY INDEPENDENCE , feeling comfortable in a learning environment that places emphasis on individuals taking responsibility for their learning process.			
GAIN SELF-AWARENESS , consciously employing behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes that keep them on course.			
SELF-ADVOCATE AND COMMUNICATE , taking responsibility for their learning by asking questions and voicing their confusion, frustration, concerns, absences, etc.			
ASK QUESTIONS , willing to ask for and accept assistance; realizing that there is always more to know.			
DO NOT FRUSTRATE EASILY , showing perseverance, resilience, and a willingness to work hard, make mistakes, and even fail; learning from setbacks.			
ADOPT LIFE-LONG LEARNING , finding valuable lessons and wisdom in nearly every experience they have.			
DEVELOP EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE , effectively managing their emotions in support of their goals and dreams.			
BELIEVE IN THEMSELVES , seeing themselves capable, lovable, and unconditionally worthy as human beings.			
MEET DEADLINES , turning in assignments on time and taking time to produce work that looks good and shows pride in their work.			

INTEREST IN ADVANCED WORK (Circle One)

Low

Medium

High

COURSE REQUESTING (Circle One)

8th Grade Science

Advanced Physical Science

Student Signature _____

Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

Advanced Science Pathway

**Alternative pathways exist, but students must fulfill graduation requirements).*

8th: Advanced Physical Science

9th: Biology

10th-12th: Chemistry and/or Science Electives including Advanced Placement offerings

Course	Course Description	Should I enroll in an advanced class?
<p>Advanced Physical Science (New 2018-19, same title as 9th grade course)</p>	<p>SCI851 This is a high school level course with a focus on middle and high school Physical Science, Engineering Technology and Earth-Space sciences concepts as outlined by the Iowa Core standards. Students enrolled in this course will experience a compacted, in-depth, and rigorous learning environment inclusive of standards associated with middle school and high school physical science. This course leads to enrollment in Biology at the 9th grade. This course is for high school credit and fulfills 2 credits of the Physical Science graduation requirements.</p>	<p>Deciding to take an advanced class is a challenging and exciting decision to make. Most often the best decisions are made when they are well informed and considerate of as many sources of information as possible. Prospective students are encouraged to consider input from their parents/guardians, current and former teachers, counselors, and administration. Please consider the following when weighing a decision to take an advanced class.</p> <p>Students should anticipate that Advanced courses are often conducted at a quicker pace with compacted learning experiences. Students should expect a rigorous learning environment.</p> <p>Key Learner Characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High interest in learning academic subject at an advanced level • Positive attitude about engaging in challenging academic work both at school and outside of school • Successful managers of their time (able to multitask, to prioritize activities, to make deadlines, and to balance academic & extracurricular activities well) <p>Enrollment Considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A pattern of strong classroom performance • Supportive assessment performance Examples: Iowa Assessments, Cognitive Abilities Test, Belin-Blank, Summative Assessment Tools (Final Course Exams) • Student ability to self-advocate

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Directions for Staff:

1. Provide each student a hard copy of the learning characteristics document with the Advanced Physical Science course description on the back. Request that this document be returned during the first week after Winter break with their decision as to take Advanced Physical Science or not.
 - a. *Does this need to be integrated into any registration documents or timeline?*
2. Review all requests to screen for “misguided efforts”
 - a. Example: Students who are academically struggling wanting to take the advanced course.
 - b. Discuss with team any students who you will need to have further conversations about advanced placement.
3. Provide student selections to counselor.

Frequently Asked Questions:

- Q1: Is the teacher making the final decision on students being placed in Advanced Physical Science?
 - A1: No- The final decision is in the hands of the parent and child. Teachers are to assist in providing evidence relative to predicting student success.
 - Reference page 2 of Self-Assessment tool.
- Q2: Can you still be in the Honors Program if you do not take Advanced Physical science in the 8th grade.
 - Q2: Yes, you will have to double up on some of your science classes in 10, 11, and or 12th grade.
 - Traditional Pathway
 - 8th Grade Science
 - 9th Grade- Physical Science
 - 10th Grade- Biology
 - 11th Grade- Chemistry/ AP Biology or AP Physics
 - 12th Grade- AP Chemistry/ AP Biology or AP Physics
 - Advanced Pathway
 - 8th Grade - Advanced Science
 - 9th Grade- Biology
 - 10th Grade- Chemistry/AP Biology or AP Physics
 - 11th Grade - Science Electives (AP options)
 - 12th Grade - Science Electives (AP options))
- Q3: What are the Science Scholars Pathway requirements?
 - A3: Must take 8 credits of science, from an approved list (see page 10 of Valley course catalog); complete 2 AP courses (Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Environmental Science); maintain overall GPA of at least 3.5; maintain GPA of 4.0 in all science courses; take all semester exams without Pass/No Pass; take the AP exam of each AP course; complete a “Capstone” experience.
- Q4: Does Advanced Physical Science count towards their high school transcript?
 - A4: Yes, the course will be calculated in their high school GPA. Student's performance will need to be closely monitored to ensure appropriate placement.