



PALOUSE PRAIRIE CHARTER SCHOOL

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Palouse Prairie Charter School: Credit System

Palouse Prairie Charter School is in a three-year process of creating a credit system focused on academic rigor and excellence. Students will be expected to earn a minimum of 80% of their possible credits to graduate, but all students must pass all core academic courses in expedition and mathematics. This system will be put to use for the first time during the 2015-2016 school year, and by the 2017-2018 school year the system will be in full effect for all current 6th graders and future middle school students. When a student transfers to Palouse Prairie Charter School, their transcripts will be converted to this system.

1 Course per trimester = 1 Credit

8th Grade Graduation Requirements for SY16

Total of 18 Possible Credits

Humanities Expedition	3 credits
Social Science Expedition	3 credits
Science Expedition	3 credits
Mathematics	3 credits
Personal Development (<i>Passage is mandatory</i>)	1 credits
Enrichment	1 credits
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Total	14 credits

8th Grade Graduation Requirements for SY17

Total of 36 Possible Credits

Humanities Expedition	6 credits
Social Science Expedition	6 credits
Science Expedition	6 credits
Mathematics	6 credits
Personal Development (<i>Passage is mandatory</i>)	2 credits
Enrichment	2 credits
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Total	28 credits

8th Grade Graduation Requirements for SY18 and Beyond

Total of 54 Possible Credits

Humanities Expedition	9 credits
Social Science Expedition	9 credits
Science Expedition	9 credits
Mathematics	9 credits
Personal Development (<i>Passage is mandatory</i>)	4 credits
Enrichment	4 credits
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Total	44 credits



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Middle School Schedule

Time	Period	Classes
8:30 AM-9:30 AM	1st Period	Independent Study
9:30 AM-10:30 AM	2nd Period	Mathematics
10:30 AM-12:00 PM	3rd Period (<i>Lunch</i>)	Expedition 1
12:00PM-1:00PM	4th Period	Expedition 2
1:00 PM- 2:00PM	5th Period	Expedition 3
2:00PM-3:00PM	6th Period (<i>Not on Fri.</i>)	Enrichment

Trimester Calendar

Fall Trimester	Winter Trimester	Spring Trimester
September 1 st - November 20 th	November 30 th - March 11 th	March 21 st – June 3 rd

Expedition Cycles

	Fall Trimester	Winter Trimester	Spring Trimester
Humanities	7 th Grade	8 th Grade	6 th Grade
Social Science	8 th Grade	6 th Grade	7 th Grade
Science	6 th Grade	7 th Grade	8 th Grade

Grade Scale

3.5-4.0 Accomplished

2.5-3.4 Proficient

0.0-2.4 Unsatisfactory



Humanities Expeditions

6th Grade Expedition- The Hero's Journey

3 Credits

In this Expedition, students are involved in a deep study of mythology, its purposes, and elements. Students will start to read Rick Riordan's *The Lightning Thief*. As they begin the novel in Case Study 1, students also will read a complex informational text that explains the archetypal storyline of the hero's journey, which has been repeated in literature throughout the centuries. Through the close reading of literary and informational texts, students will learn multiple strategies for acquiring and using academic vocabulary. In Case Study 2, students will continue to build their informational reading skills through the close reading of texts about the elements of myths. This will create a conceptual framework to support students' reading of mythology. As a whole class, students will closely read several complex Greek myths. They then will work in small groups to build expertise on one of those myths. In Case Study 3, students shift their focus to narrative writing skills. This series of writing lessons will scaffold students to their final product.

7th Grade Expedition- The People Could Fly

3 Credits

In this Expedition students explore the life of Frederick Douglass, the escaped slave and noted abolitionist who wrote *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*. The Expedition focuses on the questions of what makes stories powerful and on understanding an author's purpose. In addition, students analyze how writers use figurative language and word choice to convey meaning. In Case Study 1, *The People Could Fly* introduces the topic that connects all three case studies. Next, students build the background knowledge that will allow them to more fully understand the context of the *Narrative*: they learn about slavery, Douglass's life, and the debate over slavery in the United States before the Civil War. They will learn how to read and analyze a poem, and introduced to the tools that poets and other writers use to make stories powerful. Case Study 2 centers on the analysis of excerpts from *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*. In Case Study 3, students will apply what they have learned to write a powerful narrative of their own.

8th Grade Expedition- Finding Home

3 Credits

In this Expedition students will develop their ability to read and understand complex text as they consider the challenges of fictional and real refugees. In Case Study 1, students will begin *Inside Out & Back Again*, by Thanhha Lai, and analyze critical incidents to reveal the dynamic nature of the main character. The novel will challenge students to consider the impact of specific word choice on tone and meaning. They then will read informational text to learn more about the history of war in Vietnam to learn about historical context. In Case Study 2, students will build knowledge through informational texts that convey universal themes of refugees' experiences across various times and cultures. In Case Study 2 students examine how the universal refugee experience causes trauma in



the life of a refugee. In Case Study 3 will collaborate in research groups to study the experiences of refugees from one of several cultures and work towards final product.

Social Science Expeditions

6th Grade Expedition- Back to Business

3 Credits

This expedition is an in-depth study of economics, nonprofit management, and rural economic development. The central threads of this unit are the concepts of sustainability and multiple stakeholder perspectives. The first case study will focus solely on basic economic principles. Specifically we will be focusing on supply/demand and scarcity, free market, mixed, and planned economies, and GDP as a measure of economic growth. In addition, the students will participate in a 'crew economy' where the entire classroom is transformed into a functioning economy. The second case study will focus on nonprofit management and rural economic development. Students will be working with local organizations and businesses to compile a 'needs assessment' for the Clearwater Resource Conservation and Development Council. The culminating product of this expedition will be a strategic vision plan for the CRCDC's rural economic development involvement in Latah County.

7th Grade Expedition- The Blackfish Effect

3 Credits

The Southern Resident Killer Whales are a genetically, culturally, and linguistically distinct group of orcas. During the course of the first case study students will gain an understanding of oceanography, marine mammal biology, and the legal aspects of governmental agencies and policies. In the second case study students will also develop an understanding of the role of killer whales in the Coast Salish cultures as well as traditional formline art. The central thread woven throughout this expedition is the use of art for expression. Each student will create several art pieces throughout the expedition that range in topic and medium. The final product of this expedition is an art show to raise awareness and funds for killer whale recovery.

8th Grade Expedition- War and Poetry

3 Credits

War and Poetry is an expedition that examines the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The central theme of this expedition is perspective. In the first case study students will analyze the conflict through the eyes of multiple viewpoints. In addition, students will gain a historical perspective of the conflict by analyzing historical documents and maps. The second case study will focus on the analysis and synthesis of slam poetry. The final product for this expedition will be a live poetry slam in downtown Moscow. Each student will create a three-minute slam poem from a unique perspective in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.



Science Expeditions

6th Grade Expedition- Water is Life

3 Credits

Sixth graders explore water quality through the guiding question: *How clean is clean enough?* After building background knowledge and exploring conceptual models of the water cycle and desertification, we will visit the McCall Outdoor Science School (MOSS) to begin answering the question, *how do physical and chemical parameters affect water quality?* We will work with PCEI and other community organizations to conduct an actual watershed project. We'll collect real water-quality data and work to become experts with regards to what measurements such as turbidity or macro-invertebrate diversity is telling us about water quality. Our final product will showcase student work and provide a community service.

7th Grade Expedition- Farm to Food

3 Credits

In this expedition, Farm to Food, 7th Graders explore the Guiding Question: How do we feed ourselves and the world into the future? We read the young adult version of *Omnivore's Dilemma* by Michael Pollen as an anchor text to learn about plants, what plants need, and to evaluate different food chains of the American food system. The learning focuses on the carbon and nitrogen cycles to understand photosynthesis and how the two cycles interact. We also conduct hands-on plant experiments to evaluate first hand the role of nutrients and making scientific observations. Literacy is embedded in the expedition; student work culminates with a personal argumentative essay to defend which food chain can best feed us into the future. Our final product will involve expanding the hydroponic bed system built by 7th graders last year for the school's lunch program.

8th Grade Expedition- Plugging Into Sustainability

3 credits

Plugging into Sustainability' focuses on energy: what it is; how do we use it; and what makes our use of energy sustainable. We spend the first part of the expedition examining the fundamental components of energy, atomic structure, and energy transfer. We'll visit the UI Steam Plant, the WSU nuclear reactor, and the Moscow Recycling Center to observe and evaluate energy transfer first hand. Then we focus on the components of our energy system, our reliance on carbon-based energy, the carbon cycle, and the impact on global climate. Finally, we examine our energetic impact by determining our ecological footprint. We'll brainstorm ideas around how to reduce our footprints and develop a compelling final product.



Mathematics Courses

Mathematics I

3 Credits

In Grade 6, instructional time should focus on four critical areas: (1) connecting ratio and rate to whole number multiplication and division and using concepts of ratio and rate to solve problems; (2) completing understanding of division of fractions and extending the notion of number to the system of rational numbers, which includes negative numbers; (3) writing, interpreting, and using expressions and equations; and (4) developing understanding of statistical thinking.

<http://www.corestandards.org/Math/Content/6/introduction/>

Mathematics II

3 Credits

In Grade 7, instructional time should focus on four critical areas: (1) developing understanding of and applying proportional relationships; (2) developing understanding of operations with rational numbers and working with expressions and linear equations; (3) solving problems involving scale drawings and informal geometric constructions, and working with two- and three-dimensional shapes to solve problems involving area, surface area, and volume; and (4) drawing inferences about populations based on samples.

<http://www.corestandards.org/Math/Content/7/introduction/>

Mathematics III

3 Credits

In Grade 8, instructional time should focus on three critical areas: (1) formulating and reasoning about expressions and equations, including modeling an association in bivariate data with a linear equation, and solving linear equations and systems of linear equations; (2) grasping the concept of a function and using functions to describe quantitative relationships; (3) analyzing two- and three-dimensional space and figures using distance, angle, similarity, and congruence, and understanding and applying the Pythagorean Theorem.

<http://www.corestandards.org/Math/Content/8/introduction/>

Algebra I

3 Credits (high school credits)

This course will deepen and extend understanding of linear and exponential relationships by contrasting them with each other and by applying linear models to data that exhibit a linear trend, and students engage in methods for analyzing, solving and using quadratic functions. Students will also learn about graphs, polynomials, basic statistics, rational expressions, and other non-linear functions. This class will be given through the Idaho Digital Learning Academy.



Enrichment Courses

Ethic of Service

1 Credit

Service and compassion is one design principle that calls our students to action. Over the course of their elementary expeditions, students have served their community in a variety of ways as a whole crew. This course is designed to complete a service project fully directed by the student. The student will learn the skills necessary to lead a self directed project, planning and deadline development, effective communication and presentation skills, and the value of service.

Independent Studies

1 Credit

Primacy of Self Discovery is one design principle that reminds students that learning is a personal endeavor. This personal development course is designed to give students an opportunity to work on the academic skills that they are lacking or interested in pursuing. This course will be used to provide academic interventions and to satisfy language arts IEP goals.

Spirit of Scientific Inquiry

1 Credit

The development of critical thinking skills and problem-based learning is at the center of scientific inquiry. This course is designed to help students develop their understanding of scientific inquiry. Students will learn about the Scientific Method, lab safety and other foundational skills for scientific investigations.

Passage Portfolio (8th Grade Only)

1 Credit

In the final trimester of their 8th grade year, students will be asked to review their portfolio of middle school work and create a Passage Portfolio. The Passage Portfolio will be used in their passage presentation, or their defense of their preparation and readiness for high school, college and career. There will be components of all their courses within their portfolio, and once their passage has been completed and approved. Students will craft a final word to be shared at their graduation ceremony.



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Physical Education

1 Credit

Middle school Physical Education is a combination of sporting activities and fitness education. The objective of the class is to give students the knowledge they need to be physical active throughout their adult lives. We also touch on lifelong fitness by going through workout routines that accomplish a specific purpose. We will do different workouts to help specific parts of the body as well as stretches. We also get into workouts such as yoga and Pilates. The goal is to improve every day and experience a fun and exciting trimester of physical fitness.

Pathways to Success

1 Credit

Pathways to Success is a course designed to help the students learn important skills to be successful in both school and life including goal setting, study skills, dealing with the pressure that teens face, and planning for a future career. It also covers skills to navigate in the 21st Century including communication, Internet usage and safety, and digital citizenship. This course will be provided by *Idaho Digital Learning Academy* and delivered online with in-school support.

Introduction Chinese

1 Credit

This class is for middle school students who have had little or no experience with Chinese. This class will give students an introduction to the Chinese language and Chinese culture. Students will learn the basics of the Chinese language, including the Chinese Pinyin system, basic Chinese characters, and simple everyday Chinese including greetings, self-introduction, describing one's family, expressing gratitude, simple requests, likes and dislikes, and apology. They will acquire a basic Chinese vocabulary around numbers, animals, body parts, personal items, food, and ways to address family members and friends. Moreover, students will learn about various aspects of Chinese culture, including Chinese names, ethnic groups, geography, Chinese Zodiac, Chinese martial arts, Chinese music, etc. Students will work together with classmates in games, songs and various projects throughout the semester to accomplish these objectives. Chinese language classes are taught by instructors from the University of Idaho Confucius Institute and the South China University of Technology. Instructors are all bilingual and have at least a Master's degree in teaching Chinese as a foreign language.



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