

8th Grade



**Mr. Cobb**  
Room 308

**(410) 929-5701**

**macobb@bcps.k12.md.us**  
School Phone: (410) 396-9146 x308

## **WELCOME!**

Welcome to 8th Grade Science! We have a busy, challenging, exciting, and fun year ahead. We will be able to achieve a lot together and as a class we will work hard to give everyone the opportunity to meet our big goals. This is your last stop before high school. If you produce quality work this year, you will leave prepared to tackle the challenges you will face throughout your educational journey.

## **RISE UP**

*"Our greatest glory is not in never failing but in rising up every time we fail."*  
- Ralph Waldo Emerson

**Science education teaches us how to think, learn, problem solve, and make informed decisions.** What you learn in science will be important in all parts of your life – your intellectual development, opportunities for future study in high school and college, and what you choose to do for a career. What you learn in this class will also help you make decisions about issues that affect your life now and in the future.

Our freedom only exists when leaders **RISE UP** and put truth to power. This classroom is a safe space for you to **discover knowledge, identify your goals, develop self-advocacy, challenge your ideas and the ideas of others, and passionately seek answers to what you do not understand.** This year, you will come to this classroom each day to learn, create, question, advocate, and **RISE UP** to the challenges that lie ahead of your transition into high school, college, and adulthood.

## **Our BIG GOAL**

It is important to set short-term goals throughout the year to make sure we are working to achieve our potential. We also must have a BIG GOAL that will remind us what we can achieve. This year, our BIG GOAL is:

**“TOGETHER, we will work hard to achieve an 85% or higher class average each marking period this year.”**

We will track our class average with each progress report and report card on our BIG GOAL tracker in our classroom. It will be very important to support each other to make sure our class average meets and surpasses our goal.

### **Investigating and Questioning Our World through Science and Technology (IQWST)**

This year all 8<sup>th</sup> grade students will investigate earth, life, and physical science concepts through IQWST. This curriculum emphasizes the importance of asking questions and conducting investigations to solve problems. We will work in teams to learn how to hypothesize, problem-solve, and study like scientists. By the end of the year, we will be able to design and perform our own experiments. Learning how scientists work and how science affects our lives will pave the way to explore science careers, high school courses, and college majors in the future.

We will take quizzes, unit assessments, the NWEA, and the Maryland Integrated Science Assessment (MISA). We will write scientific explanations (CERs) and lab reports to demonstrate our learning. We will use projects, class discussions, field trips, debates, and hands-on activities to help us learn.

**Students who complete IQWST coursework and a science fair project at the end of the year will earn honors-level credit from Baltimore City Public Schools.**

### **Course Objectives**

Upon completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Ask questions and define problems
- Create hypotheses
- Research scientific topics
- Develop and use models
- Use science tools/equipment
- Plan and carry out investigations
- Gather, analyze, and interpret data
- Use mathematics, information, and technology, and computational thinking
- Construct explanations and design solutions
- Engage in arguments using evidence
- Obtain, evaluate, and communicate information
- Maintain an organized binder
- Think critically
- Think about our thinking
- Track assessment data
- Set and meet personal goals
- Record relevant notes independently when reading a text or listening to a lecture
- Independently read scientific text from news and other media sources
- Demonstrate seven essential character traits
- Embody the Leaders Go Places Five Promises

## **Course Units**

**Unit 0:** How do scientists solve problems?

**Unit 1:** How is the Earth changing?

**Unit 2:** How will it move?

**Unit 3:** How does food provide my body with energy?

**Unit 4:** Why do organisms look the way they do?

**Unit 5:** End of year project

## **Grading System**

Your grade is composed of four main components:

- **CLASSWORK:** 35%
- **ASSESSMENTS / PROJECTS:** 45%
- **PARTICIPATION:** 10%
- **HOMEWORK:** 10%

### **Classwork**

Each week, you will complete a “Weekly Log” consisting of “Catalyst” responses, exit tickets, and “Questions of the Day.” This log will be submitted each week for a classwork grade. Many of the investigations we conduct will require written observations, analysis, and reflection responses in the computer-based lab manual that will be submitted online for classwork grades. We will also complete a variety of activities out of the manual that can be graded as classwork.

### **Assessments/ Projects**

Each unit will include different forms of assessment to determine how well you understand what we are learning in class. Assessments can take the form of weekly quizzes, quarterly unit tests, group lab projects, individual portfolio projects, and writing assignments (CERs).

### **Participation**

Coming to school on-time every day is the first step to taking advantage of the opportunity you have to prepare for high school next year. You are expected to complete every assignment to the best of your ability and participate in class by asking and answering questions and working productively on assigned tasks with your classmates.

- **ALL STUDENTS START WEEK WITH 10/10 (100%) participation pts.**

- **ALL STUDENTS WILL END THE WEEK WITH 100% PARTICIPATION WHEN THEY ARE...**asking and answering questions in class (both when volunteering to do so and when called upon), working cooperatively with peers, and turning in assignments on time.
- **STUDENTS WILL LOSE UP TO 2 POINTS EACH DAY WHEN THEY ARE...**failing to show effort to complete work during a class period; classwork assignments, lab reports, and projects are submitted late or incomplete; students earn two or more demerits during a class period.

### **Homework**

You will have homework nearly every weeknight which will be recorded in your agenda book at the end of class each day. Homework will be checked every day for completeness and for accuracy. It is your responsibility to complete homework each night and have it in class the next day. You can earn up to 3 points each day for completing your homework with observable effort. Students who do not have their homework will receive a 0 / 3 homework points that day.

### **Study Hall**

**Study hall will take place every day after school from 2:50 – 3:30 pm.** If you do not complete a homework assignment, you will be required to attend **mandatory study hall after school that day.** **Students who submit their late homework after study hall can earn up to 2/3 points for that day's homework grade.**

### **Student Portfolios**

All students at Hampstead Hill Academy are required to submit a portfolio that contains nine pieces of student work (three from each class) that show hard work, creativity, and accomplishment. In science,

you will submit specific assignments and projects to your portfolio binder which will be kept in your homeroom. Portfolio projects are meant to showcase your best work. Teachers and administrators will review portfolio projects during and at the end of the school year.

### **Coach Class**

It is your responsibility to seek extra help when you need it, as well as commit time outside of school for studying. If you need extra help outside of class, Mr. Cobb will stay after school for Coach Class most Thursdays until 4:00 pm. You can also schedule another time with Mr. Cobb if you are unable to attend on Thursdays.

### **Late Work**

It is expected that all assignments are turned in on time. Late homework will only be accepted if completed during study hall and submitted the next day. Each day an assignment is late you will lose one participation point (see above). After five days, the assignment will not be accepted and you will receive a zero unless your absences are excused.

### **Absences**

**You are expected to be in class EVERY DAY ON TIME.** You are responsible for making up work after being absent from class. Every day the Absent Advisor will write the Question of the Day, activities covered in the lab manual, worksheets completed outside the lab manual, and the homework. This information will be posted on the Week-At-A-Glance Board.

When you return to school it is your responsibility to check the Week-At-A-Glance Board to determine what work was missed. Worksheets out of the lab manual will be collected in a bin with a folder numbered for each day of the month. You should take one of each worksheet and complete those along with the lab manual activities

and homework that was missed. Questions about the assignments can be answered by the Absent Advisor.

For each day you are absent you will have one day to return the missed work for full credit. *For example: if a student is absent for one day, the assignment will be due the following weekday. If a student is absent three days, the assignment will be due within three weekdays.*

**Turning in late work past the deadline will result in a zero.**

**Students who miss more than three days in a row must meet with Mr. Cobb to discuss a make-up timeline.**

### **Bathroom / Water Policy**

Students are expected to use the bathroom and water fountain before school and during lunch or recess to avoid missing class time. Students are encouraged to bring a water bottle to school that can be filled and carried throughout the day.

### **Google Classroom**

This year our science classroom will also be a GOOGLE classroom. This means that you will use a Google Chromebook to complete some assignments during class. Mr. Cobb will be able to upload questions, worksheets, assessments, and other exciting activities that you will be able to complete and submit all online. You will use your personal @hha47.org log in and password to use for managing assignments. You can learn more at

<https://www.google.com/edu/products/productivity-tools/classroom/>

### **The Maryland Integrated Science Assessment (MISA)**

The 8th grade Maryland Integrated Science Assessment, or MISA, is held in March and will cover material in earth and space, life, and physical science learned throughout middle school. We will be learning each of these topics in-depth to help us prepare for the exam.

## **Required Supplies for Science\***

- 2 Sharpened pencils
- 3 Pens (one blue, one black, one red)
- 1 Highlighter
- 1 3-ring binder, 1-inch
- 1 Set of 5 tabbed dividers (for binder)
- 1 Pack of Index Cards

*\*These are the same supplies listed on the Grade 8 Supply List, so if you have already purchased those items you are all set!*

**Please contact Mr. Cobb if these required supplies create a financial hardship for your family. We have some extra supplies available!**

## **Our Daily Motivation**

**"I AM SOMEBODY.  
I WAS SOMEBODY WHEN  
I CAME. I WILL BE A  
BETTER SOMEBODY  
WHEN I LEAVE.  
I AM POWERFUL,  
AND I AM STRONG.  
I DESERVE THE  
EDUCATION THAT I GET  
HERE. I HAVE THINGS  
TO DO, PEOPLE TO  
IMPRESS, AND PLACES  
TO GO."**

### **Behavioral Ex**

**Intelligence plus Character: that is the goal of a *true education*.**

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

In addition to HHA's schoolwide expectations, Mr. Cobb believes that developing a strong character is as important as learning academic skills. In fact, a wide body of research proves it!

Mr. Cobb has created a character education curriculum of mini-lessons that is adapted from the KIPP Charter School Network. In this class, we will focus on seven highly predictive character strengths that are correlated to leading engaged, happy and successful lives: **zest, grit, optimism, self-control, gratitude, social intelligence, and curiosity**. These traits will be introduced during the first weeks of school and discussed in-depth throughout the year. Students will frequently set and reflect on goals related to these character traits. Students will also receive a character report card each quarter.

**All students will develop and demonstrate the following traits:**

**Grit:** Completing something despite obstacles

**Zest:** Approaching life with excitement

**Self-Control:** Regulating what one feels and does

**Optimism:** Expecting the best and working to achieve it

**Gratitude:** Being aware of and thankful for opportunities and good things

**Social Intelligence:** Being aware of the motives & feelings of others & self

**Curiosity:** Taking an interest in learning new things for your own sake



**Rewards for Positive Behavior**

**Consequences for Negative Behavior**

Verbal Praise Praise Note* Phone Call Home* Lunch with Teacher Tickets for Weekly Drawings Leaders Go Places Merits Class Points Strong Participation Grade	Verbal Warning Demerit Teacher Conference Restorative Room Referral Seat Change Detention* Family Conference*
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*\*These rewards/consequences also involve family communication.*

### **Class Point System**

When our class is meeting expectations together each day, the Team Tracker will give the class points on the tracking board. The class with the most points at the end of each quarter will decide collaboratively on a fun incentive. Expectations include, but are not limited to:

BEHAVIOR	POINT VALUE
100% ON-TASK	<b>+2</b>
EFFICIENT TRANSITION	
ZESTINESS <i>(active participation, high energy)</i>	
SILENT/ON-TASK ENTRY	<b>+ 5</b>
100% HW COMPLETION	
100% ON-TIME ATTENDANCE	
BATHROOM BREAK < 7 MIN	
80% or HIGHER CLASS AVERAGE ON ASSESSMENTS	<b>+ 10</b>
ACHIEVE BIG GOAL <i>(85% class average at marking period)</i>	<b>+30</b>

### **Leaders Go Places**

Leaders Go Places (LGP) is Hampstead Hill's middle school leadership program. LGP focuses on three important pillars for student success:

**scholarship, leadership, citizenship.** LGP Leaders commit to Five Promises every day:

1. To contribute to the common good
2. To produce quality work
3. To conduct myself with honor and integrity
4. To persevere
5. To make no excuses

Meeting criteria in each of the three pillars determines if students are invited to attend special field trips and receive other exciting rewards. The Five Promises lay the foundation for the commitment students make to become leaders in our community.

The requirements to be “on-level” is the same as last year. Please see the chart below for the minimum GPAs, Performance Points, and Community Service Hour for each level.

<b>Level</b>	<b>Positive Dojo Points</b>	<b>Grade Point Average</b>	<b>Community Service</b>
Platinum	95% of points	3.9 GPA	6 hours
Gold	90% of points	3.6 GPA	5 hours
Silver	85% of points	3.3 GPA	4 hours
Bronze	80% of points	3.0 GPA	2 hours

**More information about Leaders Go Places will be explained at the first Community Circle and parent information session in late September.**

### **Class Dojo**

Mr. Cobb will use Class Dojo to track student behavior and to communicate with students and parents about daily positive and

negative behaviors. **If you were connected last year it should be already set up and you do not need to re-register.**

**Teachers at HHA also use Class Dojo to communicate when students have detention and study hall afterschool.** It is incredibly important that parents and guardians connect to Class Dojo to track student progress.

### **Contacting Mr. Cobb:**

You should contact Mr. Cobb whenever you have questions or concerns about anything. First, you **will ask Mr. Cobb in class** if you are having trouble or have a question. If you still have questions you will **go to coach class for extra help**. If you are not at school and have a question or concern, you are **encouraged to email Mr. Cobb at [macobb@bcps.k12.md.us](mailto:macobb@bcps.k12.md.us) or call/text his cell phone (410) 929-5701**. Parents and guardians are welcome to contact Mr. Cobb at any time via email, cell phone, or by calling the school. The school phone number is (410) 396-9146.

### **Contract of Excellence:**

- I have read the course syllabus.

- I understand what Mr. Cobb expects of me in class.
- I know what will happen when I meet expectations.
- I know what will happen if I do not meet expectations.
- I will work hard to be respectful, responsible, organized, and ready to learn.
- I will contribute to the common good of our class during activities, lectures, and discussions.
- I will **RISE UP** so I can achieve my best, now and in the future.

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Your Name (Print)

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Your Signature

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Date