

# Polaris Expeditionary Learning School



*The mission of Polaris is to develop 21st century learners through [rigorous academic coursework](#), authentic experiences outside the classroom, character development, and leadership opportunities.*

# Open House Learning Targets

**As a prospective Polaris family, I can...**

- Identify the necessary steps involved to proceed through the School of Choice process.
- Gain a deeper understanding of Expeditionary Learning.
- Discern how Polaris structures, learning, and culture are unique when comparing it to other schools.
- Understand how Polaris prepares students for life after high school.

Our goal tonight is to provide accurate information so you can make the best decisions possible.



# I can identify the necessary steps involved to proceed through the School of Choice process.

1. Complete [School of Choice on-line application](#) on PSD website by noon on January 21, 2022
2. Anticipate communication from PSD the following week
  - Confirmation email first
  - Enrollment offers go out following day
3. If you get an “offer to enroll” email be sure to respond within 48 hours after receiving the email
4. If you get a “regret” email please know that we revisit the list again in April, June and early August
5. Priority of SOC applicants:
  - Applicants who live within PSD boundaries that have a sibling already enrolled at Polaris
  - Applicants who live within PSD boundaries that have a parent that works in PSD
  - Applicants who live within PSD boundaries but no sibling or parent at the school (lottery)
  - Repeat the process with families that live outside of PSD boundaries

We are not in a place where we can make predictions for openings at this time.



# Accurate information so you can make the best decision possible

- School Size: We are a smaller school, yet in some cases, class sizes may be of “average” size (MS Classes 18 – 24      HS Classes 18-24)
- We get to know our students well because they may have a teacher several times while attending Polaris. This structure helps to develop problem-solving skills as well.
  - All students have support through an Advisory class called Crew
  - MS Crew = Multi aged, stay with same teacher from 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>
  - HS Crew = Grade level Crews, stay with cohort & teacher
  - Our Small size = doing more with less / fewer “bells & whistles”

- Balance: There is homework, but we refrain from relying on homework to “cover” standards. Managing time during class reduces a student’s homework load immensely.
- We are striving for a healthy balance between work and play for students.

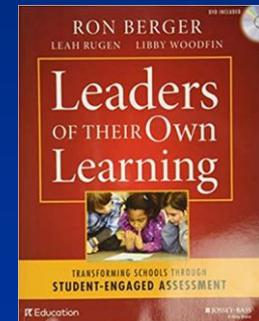
- Options: Due to our small size we have fewer options when it comes to making course selections, but there are choices to be made within classes.
- We do our best to provide elective experiences with our three weeks of Intensives and Adventure weeks and providing choice within each classroom



- We challenge kids in unique ways, but we don't filter students into "remedial / advanced" classes
- We do look for ways to think outside the box so that we can honor the individual student, to be entrepreneurial

## Students Becoming Leaders of Their Own Learning

- We support students but we also expect them to take charge of their learning
  - Standards Based Grading and Reporting
    - Separate behaviors from grades
    - Grade determined by *"highest level of performance reliably demonstrated"*
    - Encouraging students to revise assignments
    - 0 – 4 scale as opposed to 0 – 100% scale
  - [Student Led Conferences](#)
  - [Portfolios](#)
  - [Presentations of Learning](#)
  - [Celebrations of Learning](#)
  - [Peer Feedback and Critique](#)
  - [Expeditions](#) – *an in-depth study of a compelling topic over an extended period of time*



## Structures:

- Electives – Honoring student passions and supporting exploration of interests
- We don't rely on textbook learning to deliver content
- Students will interact with field experts, businesses and organizations on a regular basis through their projects
- We do not give credit for "D" level performance

## Fieldwork, Intensives and Adventure Trips:

- Fieldwork – day trips off campus that could be focused on academics, service, creativity or culture building
- Intensive Weeks
  - Three weeks per year (Sept, March, May)
  - Intensives are local experiences that don't involve over night stays
    - Funded through an annual \$125 Activity Contribution
  - Adventure trips are trips that typically involve over night stays that
    - Each trip comes with its own unique cost
    - PTO fundraising to help offset the cost to increase access (\$200 per year)
- Excellent for insights into many possible careers over time



## Structures:

- [Block schedule](#), four 84 minute, classes and on Crew class, 35 minutes each day
  - Early release Wednesdays (1:25)
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# Adventure, Intensives, & Fieldwork



# Results / Performance

## 2019 School Performance Framework

K-12 = 76.2 / 100

PSD Average = 72.4

| Elementary Results  |             | Middle School Results |             | High School       |             |
|---------------------|-------------|-----------------------|-------------|-------------------|-------------|
| Elem A              | 97.3        | MS A                  | 79.1        | HS A              | 85.7        |
| Elem B              | 94.8        | MS B                  | 77.7        | <b>Polaris HS</b> | <b>71.1</b> |
| Elem C              | 93.9        | MS C                  | 70.5        | HS B              | 67.8        |
| Elem D              | 92.2        | MS D                  | 70.1        | HS C              | 67.3        |
| Elem E              | 88.4        | <b>Polaris MS</b>     | <b>68.3</b> | HS D              | 57.9        |
| <b>Polaris Elem</b> | <b>85.8</b> | MS E                  | 67.2        |                   |             |
| G                   | 85.5        | MS F                  | 66.3        |                   | 69.7        |
| H                   | 84.9        | MS G                  | 60.1        |                   |             |
| I                   | 83          | MS H                  | 52.6        |                   |             |
| J                   | 82.7        | MS I                  | 42.2        |                   |             |
| K                   | 82.5        |                       |             |                   |             |
| L                   | 82.5        |                       | 65.1        |                   |             |
| M                   | 79.2        |                       |             |                   |             |
| N                   | 79          |                       |             |                   |             |
| O                   | 76.8        |                       |             |                   |             |
| P                   | 75.4        |                       |             |                   |             |
| Q                   | 73.4        |                       |             |                   |             |
| R                   | 73.1        |                       |             |                   |             |
| S                   | 69.5        |                       |             |                   |             |
| T                   | 68.4        |                       |             |                   |             |
| U                   | 67.5        |                       |             |                   |             |
| V                   | 65.9        |                       |             |                   |             |
| W                   | 63.8        |                       |             |                   |             |
| X                   | 60.7        |                       |             |                   |             |
| Y                   | 60.4        |                       |             |                   |             |
| Z                   | 58.9        |                       |             |                   |             |
| AA                  | 53.5        |                       |             |                   |             |
| BB                  | 53.2        |                       |             |                   |             |

# Preparation for Life

## College:

- On average, 30 – 35% of our HS student body takes concurrent enrollment courses each year. Earning both high school credit and college credit along the way.
- Collectively, Polaris students have earned an average of 525 college credits in the last three years.
- Campus Select Data (students taking college courses, with other college students, on a college campus)
  - An average of 23 students take Campus Select courses each year
  - Attained an average of a 93% success rate for these courses (getting a C or better)
  - Students earn an average of 200 college credits each year through the Campus Select option

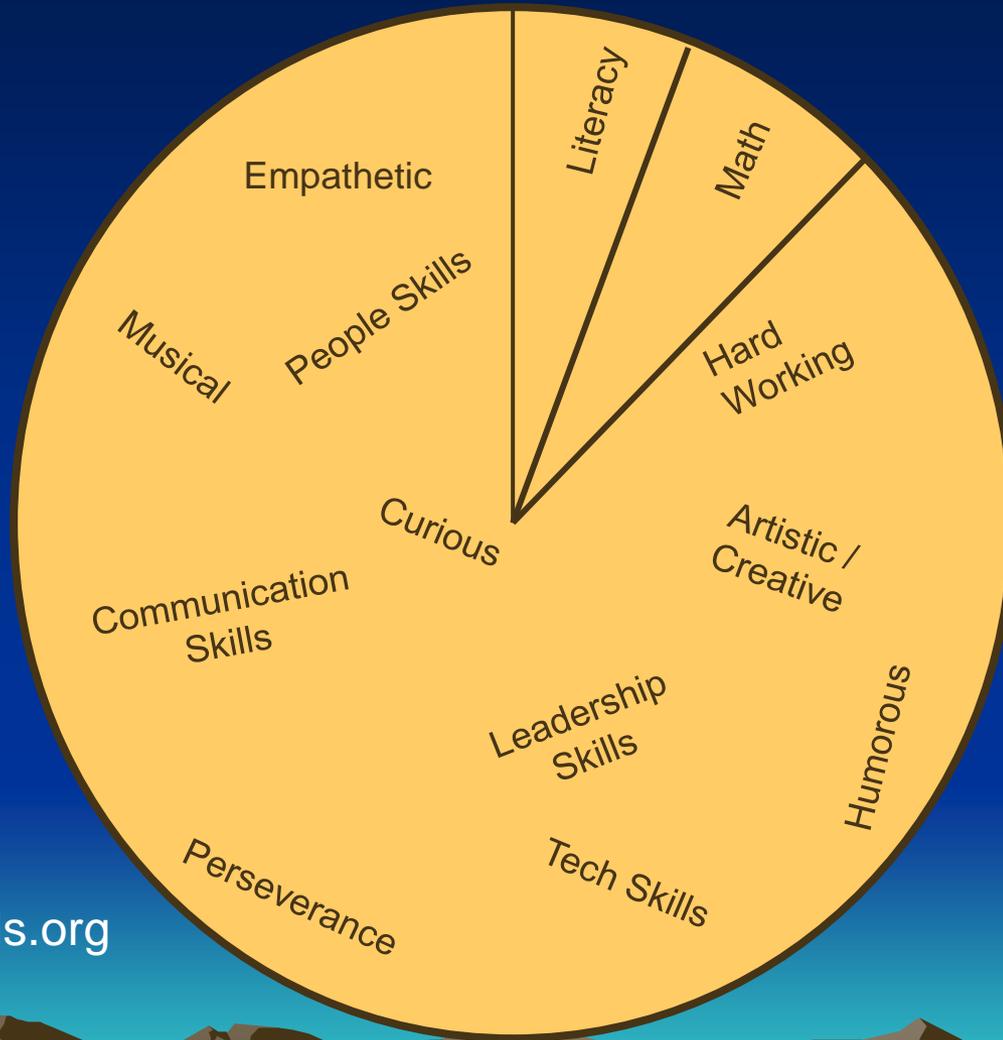
## Life / Work:

- Strong advocacy skills, adaptable, curious, assertiveness



# EL Strategies Honoring the Whole Learner

*“What gets measured, gets managed”*



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