

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.
- Ask pertinent questions to Polaris representatives in order to clarify my understanding of what Polaris has to offer.

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 6th – 8th
 - 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.

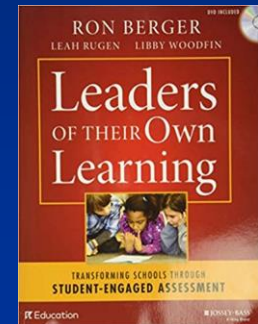
- Options: Due to our small size we have fewer options when it comes to making course selections, but there are choices to be made within classes.
- We do our best to provide elective experiences with our three weeks of Intensives and Adventure weeks and providing choice within each classroom



- 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:

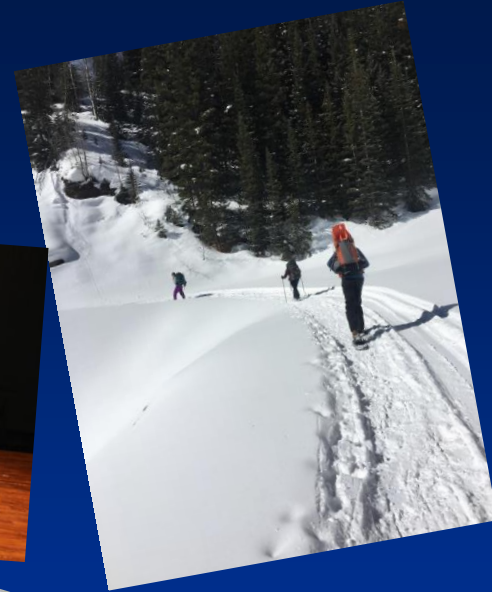
- [Middle School Schedule / Intentional 6th Grade Transition](#)
 - Early Release Wednesdays / 1:25 release
- Electives – Honoring student passions and supporting exploration of interests
- We do not give credit for “D” level performance
- We don’t rely on textbook learning to deliver content
- Students will interact with field experts, businesses and organizations on a regular basis

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



Adventure, Intensives, & Fieldwork



Results / Performance

2019 School Performance Framework

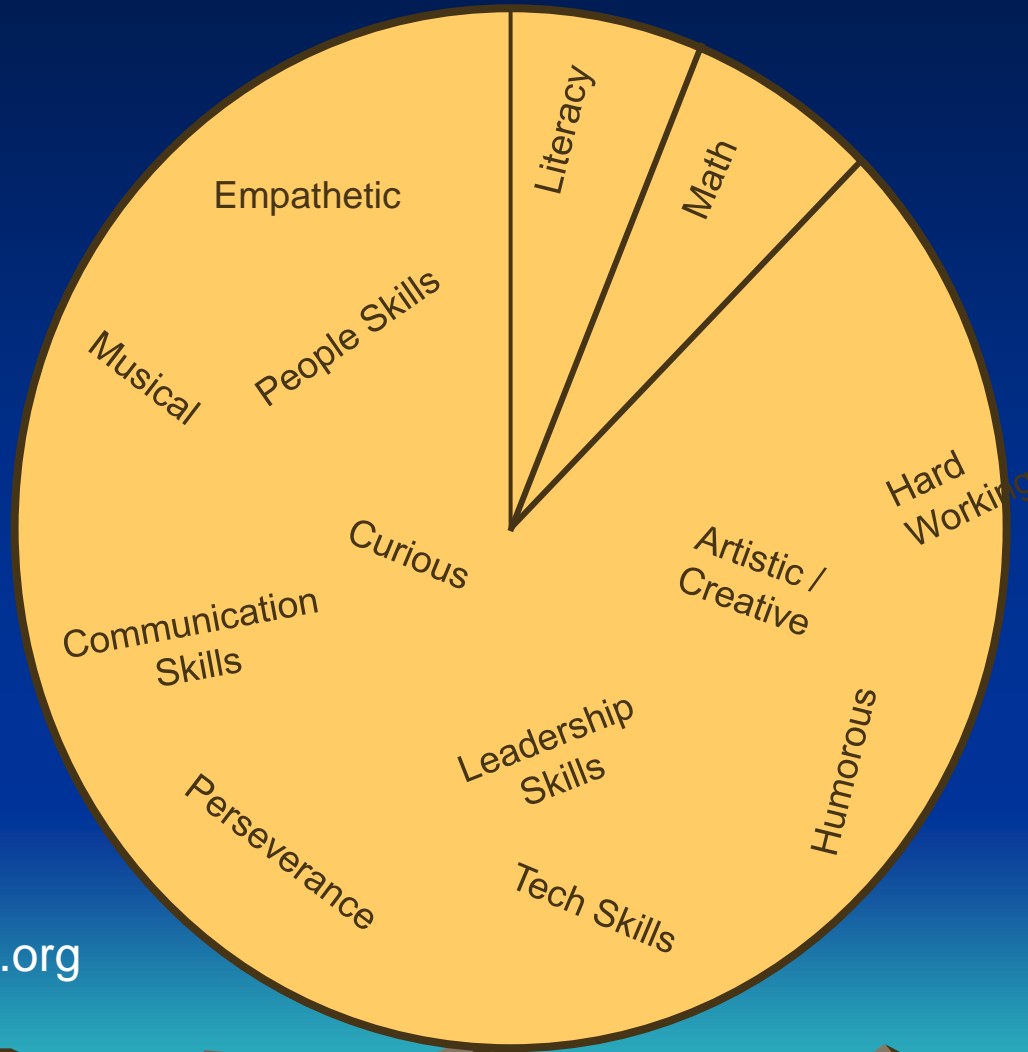
K-12 = 76.2 / 100

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	Polaris HS	71.1
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	Polaris MS	68.3	HS D	57.9
Polaris Elem	85.8	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				

EL Strategies Honoring the Whole Learner

“What gets measured, gets managed”



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