

Halfway There!:

I hope 2021 means a slow return to normalcy. It's been a long road! Hang in there!

We have passed the halfway point of the year. Remote learning has its challenges--most of us would prefer being in-person. But it **does** give students an excellent opportunity to work on **self-direction skills**. If students can thrive in **this** setting--getting to classes on time, managing their workspaces, completing assignments, participating in discussions, attending extra help when needed--in-school will be that much easier. As I tell students, it is their self-direction skills, more than anything else, that will determine if they hold or lose jobs in the future. I encourage you to look at their weekly Self Direction scores in Aspen for science (and other classes).

I talked briefly with one of the strongest students on the Aurora team this week. She admitted it has been tough to maintain her motivation since she has been home for so long. One would never realize this by looking at her school work, however. She has maintained her outstanding habits. I think as the days become brighter and warmer, and as the light at the end of the tunnel becomes more evident, we must strive to bear down, work hard, and do our best.

Making Sense of Aspen as we begin Astronomy:

Next week we move out of Ecology and into Astronomy (seventh grade science features fewer, longer topics than sixth grade science.) We ended Ecology with a comparison of weather and climate and completed a **line graph** on Central Park average temperatures over the past century.

SD (Self Direction):

ECO SD Week 11, 12, 13...: These weekly scores describe how well students did their jobs in class (followed directions, completed assignments, came to class on time with their science materials, remained on task, participated in discussions).

NYC Line Graph on time: (See above.)

Academic: (SPS--Science Process Skills):

NYC Line Graph accuracy

Next up--Astronomy:

Here are the Product Goals for our Astronomy unit.

I. Properties of Gravity:

- A. Define gravity.
- B. Explain two factors that determine the strength of a gravitational field.
- C. Explain how gravity is responsible for:
 - 1. The motion of planets around the sun
 - 2. The motion of the moon around the Earth
 - 3. The shape of different objects in space

II. Earth-Sun-Moon System

- A. Explain, using the Earth-Sun-Moon system, the phases of the moon
- B. Explain and model the cause of the seasons

As always, please do not hesitate to email me if you have any questions.
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Sincerely,

Doug Stith