



ANIMAS HIGH SCHOOL

SCHOOL PROFILE 2016-2017

HEAD OF SCHOOL, SEAN WOYTEK

Our Mission

Animas High School prepares all students for college and post-secondary success by creating critical thinkers and engaged citizens through an innovative, student-centered, project-based curriculum. This is accomplished through:

- A rigorous academic program that inspires a love of learning and teaches habits of success.
- Engaging students through project-based learning and community partnerships that make education uniquely relevant to students.
- A commitment to a collaborative environment within the school.
- A culture of excellence that challenges and supports each student.
- The utilization of applied technology.
- A small school environment where strong faculty-student relationships develop.

Our School

Located in Durango, CO, Animas High School opened in 2009 to offer rigorous, individualized college preparation based on the design principles of the nationally acclaimed High Tech High model. Animas High School is a rapidly-growing public charter school serving 275 students in grades 9-12. In 2016, we graduated our fourth class of students. Our dedicated faculty and staff are life-long learners who are invested in our school and students. Of our 21 full-time faculty, over half hold advanced degrees.

Average Class Size: 17

Student-Faculty Ratio: 8:1

Open enrollment is through random lottery when the number of interested students exceeds the available seats.

Our Curriculum

Animas High School's project-based, interdisciplinary curriculum reflects our mission and values and prepares students for the 21st century. Our rigorous academic program exceeds state standards, ensures mastery of critical skills and content and promotes students' preparedness for college, career and lifelong learning. It prioritizes authentic engagement, thoughtful inquiry and in-depth analysis over rote memorization and broad coverage. Students at Animas High School emerge from our program with a depth of knowledge from a range of disciplinary perspectives.

Our faculty design projects that have real-world applications; students are asked to transform and apply knowledge that is relevant to their community and their lives. Students exhibit their work to authentic audiences, thereby refining presentation and communication skills. Exhibitions, Student-Led Conferences, and Presentations of Learning provide students the opportunity to reflect on and take ownership of their growth and learning.

Collaboration, combined with individual initiative, is a hallmark of our school. We use peer critique and socratic seminars across all disciplines, and students work both individually and in small groups to design and complete projects and solve problems.

Every day, students write. Assignments include essays, research papers, lab reports, analysis, reflections and creative writing. In math and science, students tackle both traditional and open-ended problems along with projects, such as building Rube Goldberg machines, and trebuchets, or designing an escape room that uses multiple mathematical concepts in authentic ways.

The Durango Community

Located in Durango, CO, we are a rural community of 17,069 residents in the Four Corners Region of the southwestern United States. The nearest major cities are Albuquerque (215 miles), Denver (340 miles) and, Salt Lake City (390 miles). The Durango community is composed of business, agricultural, and service industry residents. Fort Lewis College provides numerous educational and cultural advantages to the region.



School Culture

We support our students through a school culture that promotes the development of not only the intellect, but the whole person. As a learning community, we are dedicated to helping our students practice five effective **Habits of Heart and Mind**, which we remember through the acronym **PAPER**:

Perspective-*Have a point of view; respect and understand the points of view of others. Take a stand, but be willing to listen to other ideas than your own.*

Advocacy-*When you need help, or when you don't understand, ask questions. When you can't connect to a project, schedule a meeting with a teacher. Advocate for your classmates, for your community, for your planet.*

Perseverance-*Don't give up. Learn to work through difficulty. Demonstrate a growth mindset.*

Evidence-*Use it to back up your perspective. Require it from others who make claims. Make decisions based on it.*

Refinement-*Take pride in everything you do in class and make it beautiful, whether you are reading, writing, speaking, or creating.*

Advisory is a key component of our cultural program. We use advisory groups to strengthen our school culture and provide personalized academic, social, and emotional support for every student. Students are paired with a staff member who is his/her advisor for four years. Advisory groups are made up of 10-15 students in the same grade. Advisory groups meet weekly to cover curriculum and to check-in with each other. The Advisory program exists to nurture students' personal and academic development, develop a sense of belonging to the school community, increase accountability as the advisor is primary point of contact for parents, and provide guidance to students as they work toward their post-secondary goals.

Osprey Week is a student-chosen, faculty-led week-long adventure that allows students to broaden their horizons while participating in enriching experiences. AHS' student community is strengthened through shared travel and projects in mixed-grade groups, which also serve to build stronger relationships between faculty and students.

Finally, our school's use of restorative approaches in handling conflicts and student issues contributes to our positive school culture. The **Animas Restorative Team** is a student-led group that facilitates restorative circles to help peers resolve issues in a way that is inclusive, supportive and solution-oriented.



LINK Internships

Leading Internships for New Knowledge

At Animas High School, learning is connected to the world beyond our classrooms. As a graduation requirement, all juniors complete a 3 week internship in the field of their choice. In preparation for their internship students participate in a year-long curriculum that prepares them for the experience. Students create resumes, engage in mock interviews, and document the internship experience through digital portfolios. Through an internship, students connect their coursework to the working world, learn how to thrive in a professional work environment, refine college and career goals, and give back to the local and global community. Students have interned in businesses and organizations locally and further afield.

Senior Project

Senior Project is an in-depth study of a focused research topic chosen from among the academic disciplines students have studied throughout their career at Animas High School. Senior Project consists of a research paper, exhibition, action project, and thesis defense. The research paper promotes high-level research and writing skills, intellectual discovery, and creativity. It provides students with an opportunity to engage in personal research within a topic of their own choice, under the guidance of a Senior Project Advisor. After the research and writing is complete, students complete a self-designed action project that puts their research into action for a larger community. Students deliver their findings in a professional and engaging TED style presentation, and orally defend their research methods and findings to a panel of peers and teachers.



Course Offerings

Animas High School is characterized by a rigorous curriculum. Classes are offered on a semester and yearlong basis. Honors options are available to juniors in Humanities (English and Social Studies) and Chemistry, and to seniors in Humanities (English and Social Studies). As of 2016 two AHS classes (Astronomy and Consumer Math) provides students dual credit through Pueblo Community College. Students are also able to pursue other concurrent enrollment options at local colleges.

Humanities: (yearlong) English 9, English 10, English 11, English 12. Social Studies: Social Studies 9, Modern World History 10, US History 11, Government/Economics 12

Mathematics: (yearlong) As of 2016: Math 1 (9th), Math 2 (10th), Math 3 (11th), Math 4 (12th) Students are required to take cohort math with their class. Classes integrate math concepts from Algebra I& II, Geometry, Statistics, and Trigonometry all four years.

Lab Sciences: (yearlong) Physics (9th), Biology (10th), Chemistry (11th)

Foreign Language: (yearlong) 2009-2013 Spanish I, Spanish II, and Spanish III. **In 2014** we started offering Spanish IV and 2015 we started offering Conversational Spanish. **As of 2016** we are now offering Spanish V and French II.

Arts: (semester and yearlong) Digital Art, Studio Art, Advanced Digital Art. **As of 2016** we are offering Advanced Digital Arts II.

Academic Electives: (semester and yearlong)
As of 2016: Advanced Algebra, Advanced Chemistry, Anatomy and Physiology, Calculus I, Calculus II, Creative Writing, Environmental Science, Journalism, LINK 2.0 Senior Internship, Materials science 1, Materials Science 2, Math Foundations, Music performance/Theory, Personal and Career readiness, Pre-Calculus, Project Application, Psychology, World Religions, Yearbook.

Concurrent Enrollment Options: Astronomy and Consumer Math

Exploratory: (quarterly) Student Interest Group, **No longer available as of 2016**

X-Block: (quarterly, as of 2016 semester) Physical Education

LINK: Internship 11th grade

Senior Project: College Research Paper, TED Talk, and Action Project

Grading Scale

AHS uses a 4-point grading scale to evaluate academic work, where a grade of "A" equals 4 points, "A-" equals 3.7 points, with the scale continuing as indicated below. The minimum passing grade is "C-." No credit is assigned below a C-, but points are still calculated into the GPA. The highest attainable grade is an "A." We do not award "A+" grades. Grades and grade point averages are **not weighted. A grade of "A" represents academic achievement of 94% or higher.**

A = 4.00	C = 2.00
A- = 3.67	C- = 1.67
B+ = 3.33	D+ = 1.33
B = 3.00	D = 1.00
B- = 2.67	D- = 0.67
C+ = 2.33	F = 0.00

Some non-core elective classes are graded on a credit/no credit basis. The average GPA for 2016 is 3.15. The standard deviation is .70

Graduation Requirements

Subject Area	Requirement
English	4 years
Social Studies	4 years
Mathematics	4 years
Science	3 years of Lab Science
Foreign Language	2 years of the same language
Art	1 year
Academic Electives	2 years
LINK Internship	1 year
Exploratory/X-Block	3 years
Senior Project	1 year



Extracurricular Activities

AHS students have many extracurricular activities to choose from, and we encourage them to start groups and clubs when they don't already exist. Teams and clubs include: yearbook, newspaper, student council, student ambassador program, bridge mentorship program, peers owning wellness, Animas Restorative Team, Rotary Interact club, Knowledge Bowl, solar car design team, Gay-Straight Alliance, mountain biking team, and San Juan Mountain Tribe backcountry skiing. Students may also participate in athletics and extracurricular activities in partnership with Durango High School.

A College Going Culture

The primary goal of AHS is to ensure that all students graduate from AHS prepared for success at the college or university of their choice. The Class of 2016 had a 100% acceptance rate to post-secondary institutions. Additionally \$2,000,000 dollars was awarded in scholarships last year to future college attendees.

Academic Standing

Animas High School **does not report rank in class. Courses taken with Honors Option are not weighted.** GPA is calculated based only on AHS classes excluding pass/ fail classes (LINK Internship, Project Application, Exploratory, and X-Block)

College Entrance Exams

Our students perform above state and national averages on college entrance exams, and we believe that being engaged in their learning is a key contributing factor. We do not place a lot of emphasis on direct teaching-to-the-test preparation for standardized tests; rather, our teachers are intentional in the way they teach content and skills that the ACT and SAT measure, and this has proven to be successful. The average ACT composite score for the class of 2017 to date is 23. 99% of the Class of 2017 took the ACT. The 2016 Colorado statewide average score is 20.4.

School Statistics

Total Student Population: 275
First Generation College: 21%
Free & Reduced Lunch: 11%

Demographics

White 86%
Hispanic/Latino 10%
American Indian/Alaska Native 3%
Black/African American .4%
Asian .4%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander .4%

Post-Secondary

Attend a Four Year College 69%
Attend a Two Year College 2%

Class of 2017 Statistics

Total students in class: 64
Average Class GPA: 3.25
Average Class ACT Score: 23



2016 College Acceptances

Baylor University, Berklee College of Music, Brevard College, Bryn Mawr College, California Polytechnic State University-San Luis Obispo, Champlain College, Chapman University, College of the Redwoods, Colorado Mesa University, Colorado School of Mines, Colorado State University, Columbia University, Denison University, Drexel University, East Carolina University, Eckerd College, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University-Prescott, Flagler College, Fort Lewis College, Franklin Pierce University, Franklin University Switzerland, Goucher College, Grand Canyon University, Hamline University, Hampshire College, Humboldt State University, Lees-McRae College, Lewis & Clark College, Marlboro College, Miami University Oxford, Montana State University, Northeastern University, Northern Arizona University, Pensacola Christian College, Portland State University, Pueblo Community College, Quest University Canada, Reed College, Regis University, Rollins College, San Juan College, Sarah Lawrence College, Seattle Pacific University, Seattle University, South Dakota School of Mines and Technology, Syracuse University, The College of Wooster, The Evergreen State College, The George Washington University, The New School, Union College, University of Aberdeen, University of California-San Diego, University of California-Santa Cruz, University of California-Irvine, University of Cincinnati, University of Colorado at Boulder, University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, University of Colorado at Denver, University of Denver, University of Glasgow, University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth, University of New Hampshire at Durham, University of Northern Colorado, University of Oregon, University of Puget Sound, University of Redlands, University of Southern California, University of Utah, University of Vermont, University of Victoria, Ursinus College, Washington University in Saint Louis, Wellesley College, Western State Colorado University, Wheaton College, Whitman College, Willamette University

Awards & Accreditation

- Accredited through the Colorado Charter School Institute.
- Colorado Charter School Institute Distinction School, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, 2015-2016
- John Irwin School of Excellence, named among the top 8% of all Colorado public schools and one of only four high schools honored on the Western Slope
- Member of Coalition of Essential Schools and Teacher Powered Schools
- National Merit Scholar, 2012, 2016
- Boettcher Scholarship Alternate, 2016
- Daniels Fund Scholarship Finalist, 2016
- DaVinci Science Center Student Award, 2016

Contact Information

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