

Spring 2025 Intensive Catalog



Secondary: May 5 - 21
Elementary: May 12 - 20

K-12 Dismissal at 2:00 May 5-21

Registration Request Window: March 20-30

Confirmations: April 4

Payment Deadline: April 25

Intensive Information

Intensives are a pillar within the Polaris Academic program— they offer a unique opportunity for teachers and students to learn and engage in new experiences, lessons, and activities while also providing a chance to dive deeper into content than our traditional core classes allow.

Our upcoming Spring Intensives will take the place of regular classes for our secondary students from Monday, May 5 to Wednesday, May 21. Secondary students have the opportunity to earn an entire .5 credit for their upcoming intensive courses. **Our elementary students will engage in their Spring Intensives from Monday, May 12 to Tuesday, May 20.**

Students and families are encouraged to read through the Intensive Catalog to preview our intensive course offerings and then complete the registration process via the [Intensive Registration Google Doc \[Linked Here\]](#). The registration window to submit requests will be from March 20 at 3:00 PM to March 30 at 11:59 PM.

Secondary Students— If you are interested in taking an Intensive that is not in your grade-level range, you may write a letter to the Intensive Course Teacher explaining why you want to take that particular course offering and why you feel you are qualified. If there is room in the course, the teacher will work with you and your family to accommodate your request.

Registration Information

The deadline for all intensive registration requests is March 30 at 11:59 PM.

All students & families must submit their registration requests via the [Intensive Registration Google Doc](#). Due to the limited number of seats available in each class, it is necessary for all students to select three (3) different choices, as prompted in the registration form. All requests received by the deadline will be given equal consideration. Any student who does not have a request in by the deadline will be automatically placed in an intensive that has an open seat. No exceptions will be made.

Intensive confirmations will be available to view on April 4 via Parent/Student Connect. All elementary students will also receive a paper confirmation in their family group.

Payment Information

Once you receive your Intensive confirmation, associated fees can be paid online via [ParentConnect](#).

Fees must be paid by April 25 to reserve your child's spot in their confirmed intensive.
Any student without intensive payment as of the first day of intensives will not be able to attend their intensive class until payment is received.

If your family needs financial assistance to cover or offset the cost associated with a given intensive, please fill out the [Intensive Scholarship Application \[Linked here\]](#).

Our school and our Polaris PTA works hard to raise scholarship money to provide equal access for all students to any given intensive. Please note, for intensives with large monetary costs, partial scholarships will be considered, but full scholarships are unlikely to be available in order to help support as many students/families as possible.

Scholarship applications are due April 11 at 8:30 AM.

Elementary Intensive Offerings:

Options at a Glance

Kinder	1st Grader	2nd Grader	3rd Grader	4/5th Grader
Creative Explorers Space Building Fractured Fairy Tales	¡Vamos a Argentina! Creative Explorers Space Building Fractured Fairy Tales	Flight: Part II ¡Vamos a Argentina! Creative Explorers Space Building Fractured Fairy Tales	Kites Worldwide Books & Boardgames Gaming Galore: BYOBGs Flight: Part II ¡Vamos a Argentina! Space Fractured Fairy Tales	Kites Worldwide Books & Boardgames Gaming Galore: BYOBGs Flight: Part II Space Fractured Fairy Tales

Creative Explorers: Arts & Craft Adventures

Grades: K-2

Do you love making things with your hands? Do you enjoy coloring, painting, and creating cool art projects? If so, then "Creative Explorers" is the perfect adventure for YOU!

In this exciting arts and crafts intensive, you'll get to try all kinds of fun art projects like painting, drawing, building sculptures, and creating collages! Each day, you'll learn new skills and use awesome materials to make your very own masterpieces. You'll have the chance to express yourself, explore your imagination, and discover how amazing your art can be!

So, grab your paintbrush, spark your creativity, and get ready to make art like never before. Let's create something special together in Creative Explorers – your art adventure starts here!

Instructional Goals:

- Encourage creative expression
- Develop fine motor skills
- Introduce basic art techniques
- Promote problem-solving and critical thinking
- Build confidence and self-esteem
- Foster a love for art and creativity
- Encourage collaboration and sharing

Course Instructor: Teagen Stewart, K/1 Teacher

Cost: \$20.00

Space

Grades: K-5

Meteors, planets, and asteroids, oh my! *Blast off* into the Space Intensive to learn all about the mysterious high frontier! We will complete research, create projects, and participate in shared discussions about all of your favorite *out of this world* topics! Hope to see you there!

Instructional Goals:

- Speaking and Listening
- Informational Reading & Writing

Course Instructor: Sarah Ottum, 2/3 Teacher

Cost: \$30.00

Building

Grades: K-2

Boxes, legos, popsicle sticks, and so much more will be utilized to build and create whatever your imagination brings! We will learn about bridges, buildings, and more to determine what helps create stronger builds.

Instructional Goals:

- Science: building and structure
- Math: geometry, problem-solving, recognizing patterns
- Art: creative building, dioramas
- SEL: sharing, taking turns, communicating with peers

Course Instructor: Zada Maruskie, 4/5 Teacher

Cost: \$25.00

Fractured Fairy Tales and Beyond

Grades: K-5

This intensive will showcase a surplus of fairy tales told in different perspectives, with a spin that's beyond the "CLASSIC" told stories we know well. Writing scripts and acting out plays will be a huge focus. There will be art incorporated in making puppets and we hope to collect "beautiful stuff" (junk drawer items) from families to open up more freedom to create stages, characters, trade cards and so on. We will play games outdoors and will incorporate STEM activities into our day. Don't miss out on the fun of reinventing stories!

Instructional Goals:

- Reading, writing, listening/speaking based on the Common Core State Standards

Course Instructor: Marie Lacher, K/1 Teacher

& Keana Graves, 4/5 Teacher

Cost: \$0.00 FREE*

*Families will be asked to donate 'beautiful stuff', such as fabrics, fake flowers, etc. More information will be sent following enrollment confirmation

¡Vamos a Argentina!

Grades: 1-3

Students will explore a different facet of Argentine culture daily. This intensive will incorporate beginning Argentinian Spanish skills, introduction to Tango, listening to traditional and modern music, making and tasting traditional recipes, researching unique flora and fauna, and celebrating Argentinian soccer legend Lionel Messi with two *whole* afternoons of playing fútbol. We will culminate the intensive with a virtual field trip to Patagonia, Argentina, via WhatsApp and a potluck of Argentine foods.

Instructional Goals:

- Cultural awareness and appreciation
- Academic: Reading, writing, and math
- PE

Course Instructor: Kyla Wilkinson, 2/3 Teacher

Cost: \$35.00

Flight: Part II

Grades: 2-5

Join me for Flight Part II! During our first intensive together, we learned about the properties of flight and the history of aviation. We built different types of airplanes, launched items at great distances, and experimented with all the ways in which things move through the sky.

While Flight II is open to everyone, students who joined me in Part I will be given priority if they choose to participate in Flight Part II. During this time, we will apply everything we learned from the first intensive to real life experiences, including but not limited to, flight simulators, RC airplanes, drones, and more!

Instructional Goals:

- Students will be able to use positive communication and social skills to interact effectively with others.
- Students will be able to use effective decision-making skills.

Course Instructor: Tess Vandiver, 2/3 Teacher

Cost: \$40.00

Kites

Grades: 3-5

Can you make a kite that actually flies? You will be able to do so after this intensive!

We'll discover why they fly (or won't fly), what the best materials for kite building are, and how to design a winner. We'll make several kinds of kites, big to small, simple to complex. People have made kites for hundreds of years, sometimes for fun and sometimes to do science experiments. Kites even helped people figure out how to invent airplanes. We'll learn about that history and see examples of kites from around the world.

Instructional Goals:

- Art standards
- Mathematical standards: measurement and geometry
- Science standards: aerodynamics, wind and weather, material science

Course Instructor: Kelly Hebert, K-12 Art Teacher

Cost: \$20.00

Worldwide Books & Board Games

Grades: 3-5

Readers will visit each continent exploring reading genres, stories (fiction & non-fiction) and historical games unique to different cultures. As we travel, we will create dishes, build our own games, and work with secondary students to explore the globe further. This intensive is active, with the added luxury of reading quietly in our student-created book nooks at the start of each day-be prepared to enjoy uninterrupted time with self-selected books! Time permitting, we hope to preview next year's Battle of the Book titles and begin prepping for next year's reading!

Instructional Goals:

- To further reading skills and foster a love of reading in our students with multiple reading standards.
- To further cultural awareness and strengthen our knowledge of history, global placement and global awareness.
- SEL standards will be addressed through stories and daily routines.

Course Instructor: Rachel Gregory, K-12 Librarian

Cost: \$40.00

[Elementary Catalog Continues on Next Page]

Gaming Galore: Build Your Own Board Games!

Grades: 3-5

Do you love playing board games and card games? Have you ever wanted to make your own? We will explore classic board and card games like Monopoly, Sorry, Guess Who, and more before designing and creating our very own games! We'll dive into different types of games, learn what makes them fun and fair, and then bring our own ideas to life. By the end of the intensive, students will have a completely original game to share and play with friends. Get ready to roll the dice, think creatively, and play your way to victory!

Instructional Goals:

- Solve problems involving multiplication and division
- Generate and analyze numerical patterns in game mechanics
- Use measurement tools to design game boards and pieces
- Interpret and represent data (if games involve tracking points or statistics)
- Understand and create grids, paths, and spatial reasoning in game layouts
- Write clear, organized game instructions
- Use precise vocabulary to describe game rules and play
- Explain game ideas and rules to peers
- Engage in collaborative discussions during game testing
- Use artistic techniques to create visually engaging game boards and pieces
- Develop a unique design aesthetic that enhances gameplay
- Develop a structured and balanced set of game mechanics
- Iterate and refine designs based on feedback

Course Instructor: Sam Bucher, 4/5 Teacher

Cost: \$40.00

Secondary Intensive Offerings:

Options at a Glance

6-12	Specialty
Outdoors, Anyone? Spring Hiking Intensive Bike Anchorage 2025 World Building Exploring Our World: Explorando Nuestro Mundo The History of Animation	Math is Life (by invitation) Find Your Future (all 11th graders automatically enrolled) Glacier Bay Kayaking (enrollment closed)
9-12	
Civil War (9-12; 7/8 with permission from instructor) Analog Horror	

Outdoors, Anyone?

Grades: 6-12

Golfing? Rock climbing? Hiking? Camping? Disc golf? Geocaching?

Oh, wait: How about all of the above?!

Join Greg and Andrea for two and a half weeks of non-stop challenging, skill-building activities. We want to provide opportunities to benefit students for a lifetime, and inspire and build a love of physical activity. We'll climb at the AK Rock Gym, golf at Fox Hollow, geocache and disc golf at Kincaid, hike Bird Ridge, and overnight camp at Bird Ridge campground. We'll also do service projects around our community. Join us for this beautiful AK Spring Intensive!

*****This intensive will require parent/guardian assistance transporting students to/from offsite locations most days. Details of the course will be sent by email after registration.**

Instructional Goals:

- PE: Learn new skills and persevere through challenges
- SEL: Working with and supporting peers in unique settings and circumstances

Course Instructor: Andrea Evans, Secondary Science Teacher

& Greg Hobson, K-12 PE Teacher

Cost: \$200.00*

*price to include admission & lessons at Fox Hollow, 3 days at the Alaska Rock Gym, and Camping Fees & Food

Credit: 0.5 Physical Education Elective

[Secondary Catalog Continues on Next Page]

Spring Hiking Intensive

Grades: 6-12

Join us this spring for an exciting hiking adventure! This intensive is perfect for all hikers and students can gain confidence in their hiking abilities, regardless of prior experience. We'll explore trail systems such as Turnagain Arm, Eagle River, Eklutna, and more.

Details:

- **Transportation:** Parent volunteers are needed to drive students to and from the hikes. Once intensive placements are confirmed, a hike schedule will be shared, and families will be asked to volunteer for 2-3 hikes. This collaboration with parents ensures a safe, supportive, and sustainable intensive experience.
- **What to Bring:** A backpack with food and water, a rain jacket, a hat, warm layers, socks, and waterproof boots or trail shoes.

Instructional Goals:

- Physical Education

Course Instructor: Arika Drake, Secondary Science/Math Teacher

Cost: \$20.00

Credit: 0.5 Physical Education Elective

World Building

Grades: 6-12

Every fictional work begins with cultural geography and the building of a world. Whether working on your first science fiction/fantasy novel or building a world for tabletop role playing, World Building is an intensive that will help unlock your creative potential.

Instructional Goals:

- National Council for Geography in Education Standards: The World in Spatial Terms, Places and Regions, Physical Systems, Human Systems, Environment and Society, The Uses of Geography.
- Understanding and use of these terms and standards and how they relate to cultural geography.

Course Instructor: Jeff Bevier, Secondary Social Studies Teacher

Cost: \$20.00

Credit: 0.5 Social Studies Elective

Bike Anchorage 2025

Grades: 6-12

Join us on an epic adventure as we explore Anchorage's extensive bike trail system on two wheels. We will be covering basic bike riding, shared trail etiquette and safety, and a comprehensive introduction to Anchorage's paved trail system. Be prepared to RIDE! Last year we logged over 180 total miles. We will begin with a few moderate rides and our bike mileage will increase daily, with an end goal of biking THE MOOSE LOOP for all students who are ready for that 35-mile ride.

Safety is our number one priority. Students are expected to adhere to all ASD behavior expectations on and off campus AND any additional safety regulations put in place to ensure the safety of the individual and the group. Disregard for personal/group safety will result in immediate action, likely resulting in removal from the intensive. We want this to be a safe and positive experience for everyone!

We are excited to be partnering again with Anchorage Parks & Recreation to bring a service learning component to our intensive as we work collaboratively in city-wide clean-up efforts and city park maintenance.

Required equipment:

- Bike with gears (*good working order and tuned up*)
- Helmet (*mandatory ANY time a student is on a bike*)
- Day/backpack with lunch/snacks/water
- Weather-appropriate clothing (*moisture wicking and layers*)
- Well-fitting bike appropriate shoes (*no sandals!*)

[Description Continues on Next Page]

Optional, but recommended:

- Spare tube/tire; patch kit
- Hydration pack or water bottle with frame cage
- Small first aid kit
- High visibility clothing/reflectors
- Gloves (preferably biking gloves)
- Eye protection (*sunglasses/clear lenses*)

Optional, for comfort:

- Padded bike shorts/tights
- Wicking jersey or top

Instructional Goals:

- Physical Education & Activity
- Basic Bike Operation
- Bike Safety
- Biking Etiquette

Course Instructor: Christian Haich & Akara Anglin, Secondary Math Teachers

Cost: \$0.00*

*See required and suggested equipment

Credit: 0.5 Physical Education Elective

Exploring Our World: Explorando Nuestro Mundo

Grades: 6-12

Develop a positive attitude towards exploring new cultures and experiences through enjoyable and hands-on activities. Discover the geography, culture, and diverse ways people live around our world. Engage in interactive activities such as cooking, watching videos, documentaries, playing games, and trivia. These all showcase the fascinating places and culture around our globe. Novice Spanish will be integrated into this intensive.

Instructional Goals:

- Develop an understanding of other cultures, traditions, and lifestyles from around our world.
- Enhance our knowledge of world facts, geography, and well-known landmarks.
- Learn to prepare dishes from various cultures, and understand the cultural significance of these foods.
- Work collaboratively to promote communication and team-building skills.
- Learn and practice novice-level Spanish.
- Reflect on our own culture and our role as Global Citizens.

Course Instructor: Ilana Kerschbaum, Secondary World Language Teacher

Cost: \$100.00*

*Price to include food and cooking supplies as well as supplies for engagement projects (craft/activities) per day

Credit: 0.5 Social Studies Elective

The History of Animation

Grades: 6-12

Dive into the magical world of animation in this exciting and immersive intensive designed for students in grades 6-12! From the very first hand-drawn sketches to today's cutting-edge CGI, we will explore the evolution of animation through its most iconic films and groundbreaking techniques. Whether you're an animation fan, aspiring filmmaker, or curious about the craft, this course will ignite your imagination and inspire you to see the world through the lens of animation! Throughout the course, students will:

- **Watch Animation Classics:** Journey through the history of animation by watching key films from each era, from the early hand-drawn animations of the 1920s to the revolutionary CGI masterpieces of today.
- **Explore Different Animation Styles:** Learn about various forms of animation, including traditional 2D hand-drawn, stop-motion, and modern CGI, discovering the unique processes behind each style.
- **Hands-On Animation Creation:** Get creative and put what you've learned into action by making your very own animated short film. Whether it's a stop-motion sequence or a hand-drawn masterpiece, students will have the tools and guidance to bring their ideas to life.

[Secondary Catalog/Course Description Continues on Next Page]

Instructional Goals:

- Students will gain a better understanding and appreciation of the artistry, history, and technology that has shaped animation and the skills to start creating their own animation projects

Course Instructor: Katie Kratsch, Secondary ELA Teacher

Cost: \$30.00

Credit: 0.5 Art Elective

Civil War

Grades: 9-12; 7/8 with permission

Learn about the turning point of American History: The Civil War. This is an opportunity to learn more in-depth and immersive information about the Civil War. Students will engage in lessons, readings, films, and projects as they learn about the issues, people, battles, and impact of the Civil War.

Instructional Goals:

- Students will understand the issues leading to the secession of the South and the beginning of the Civil War.
- Students will demonstrate knowledge of the people, places, and battles involved in the Civil War.
- Students will understand the impact of the Civil War on modern American culture and government.

Course Instructor: Larry Frick, Secondary Social Studies Teacher

Cost: \$10.00

Credit: 0.5 Social Studies Elective

Analog Horror

Grades: 9-12

Step into the world of analog horror, where grainy VHS footage, cryptic messages, and distorted broadcasts blur the line between fiction and reality. In this immersive language arts intensive, students will analyze and deconstruct various analog horror series and videos, exploring how modern content creators use mood, tone, theme, and world-building to evoke fear and suspense through digital storytelling.

Instructional Goals:

- Analyze mood and tone in Analog Horror media
- Interpret themes in Analog Horror
- Write Analytical Responses on Analog Horror media

Course Instructor: Andrew Mullins, Secondary ELA Teacher

Cost: \$10.00

Credit: 0.5 ELA Elective

Math is Life

Grades: 6-8, By Invitation

This course is designed to help students enhance their math skills through a comprehensive, hands-on approach. If you're struggling with basic arithmetic, this class will provide the tools, strategies, and practice needed to improve your mathematical understanding and performance.

Instructional Goals:

- Develop Mastery of Fundamental Math Concepts
- Enhance Problem-Solving Abilities
- Strengthen Mental Math and Calculation Speed
- Promote Real-World Application of Math Skills

Course Instructor: Mike Simpson and Faith Housh; Secondary Special Education Teachers

Cost: \$20.00

Credit: 0.5 Math Elective

Find Your Future

Grade: 11; all automatically enrolled

What are your post-secondary plans? Whether you have an answer to this question or are still searching for an answer, this intensive is for you. You will have the time and learn the skills to develop a solid plan for your final year of high school as well as the next steps in your educational journey. You'll get a head start and a competitive edge on scholarships, admissions, resume writing, securing internships, and preparing for the work world. Work with your peers to develop a professional quality digital scholarship portfolio and a personal action plan with your goals and objectives listed by date. Hear from professional financial advisors, state financial aid counselors, admissions counselors, and former Polarians that are currently attending schools all over the country. This is the place to ask the questions that you have about how it all works after high school, regardless of whatever direction you are headed. You will also be given the opportunity to take a practice SAT or ACT test with Frontier Tutoring here at Polaris. They will provide you with a detailed score report that highlights trends and patterns in your performance. *(Single class enrollments at other schools will be accommodated for this Intensive. Please check in with Susy as soon as possible if that applies to you.)*

Instructional Goals:

- Critical thinking skills to make informed decisions; Self-motivation and self-direction for learning; Long- and short-term academic, career, and social/emotional goals; Decision-making informed by gathering evidence, getting others' perspective,s and recognizing personal bias; Effective oral and written communication skills and listening skills

Course Instructor: Susy Gullickson, Secondary Counselor

Cost: \$0.00 FREE

Credit: 0.25 ELA Elective & 0.25 General Elective

The class is a self-reliant expedition that will travel by kayak for up to 10 days in the remote wilderness of Glacier Bay. Students will live outdoors and care for themselves. The expedition format emphasizes hands-on learning and the application of skills that range from cooking and nutrition to setting up camp and traveling with minimal impact on the land. Cooperation and teamwork are a must and all members are expected to participate in camp chores.

Instructional Goals:

- Safety and Judgment, Leadership and Teamwork, Outdoor Living Skills, Environmental Ethics, Boating Skills and Safety

**Course Instructor: Bryan Smith, Secondary Science Teacher
& Allie Burris, Secondary Social Studies Teacher**

Credit: 0.5 Physical Education Elective