

## **RLMS Curriculum Corner - September 2017**

### **Crew 6 LMS-May Update**

**Language Arts Grade 6** - As we launch our year in language arts, students are establishing good habits as readers and writers. For writing, students are working on ways to brainstorm ideas and we are reviewing several grammar skills. For reading, students are working on annotating texts and learning how to write cohesive, well-supported reader's responses.

**Math Grade 6** All sixth grade math classes will be starting the year with a launch in which we review skills taught in elementary school. We will be reviewing two digit multiplication, long division and exponents. We will also review operations with decimals, adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing fractions. Finally, we will look at recognizing improper fractions and mixed numbers.

Once we complete the launch, we will start unit 1. Unit 1 will deal with operations with positive rational numbers. Included in this will be understanding operations with decimals and fractions. Students will be able to multiply and divide decimals and fractions. They will also be working with powers and exponents, order of operations, prime factors, greatest common factors and least common multiples.

**Social Studies Grade 6** - In geography class, students will learn about basic map skills and spatial relationships including map components, latitude and longitude, and parts of a map. Students will explore the classroom atlas in order to enhance their ability to locate places and regions. At the end of September, students will take part in the Webquest, Think Like a Geographer. Students will then begin to learn about the 5 Themes of Geography and 6 essential elements, or key ideas, to study physical processes and human systems. By the end of this unit, students will be able to apply newly learned geography skills and concepts to the World regions they will be studying going forward. In October, we will begin our World Regional Studies on the Middle East and North Africa.

**Science Grade 6-** Grade 6 science students are off to a great start. Our first unit of study is the scientific method. The students completed a Learning Style Inventory lab which is the first of many labs we will complete this year. They gathered, organized and analyzed data to help them identify what kind of learner they are. Then, the students came up with strategies they could use this year to be successful based on that information. They will also use this information to help create a google slideshow about themselves to share with the class. By the end of this unit, the students will be well versed in the steps of the scientific method.

## **7LM - Sept 2017**

**Language Arts:** In grade 7 we have established the writer's notebook and have had an opportunity for imaginative writing. We have also begun closely reading short texts using highlighting and annotating as strategies. We will be crafting written responses working toward deepening insights as students read.

### **Math:**

**Pre Algebra 7** - In Pre-Algebra 7 we started the year off with a review of working with expressions and operations with integers. We then began our unit on solving one-variable equations and inequalities, which we will continue through mid-October. After that, we will apply these concepts to solving and graphing two-variable equations as we begin our unit on linear relationships and functions.

**Math 7** - In Math 7 students will begin the year with adding and subtracting integers then we move on to adding and subtracting rational numbers. After that, we will continue with multiplying and dividing integers.

**Science:** In the month of September, 7th grade science will practice inquiry skills and use of scientific tools. Students will measure worms and design and implement a plant growth lab. Near the end of the month, students will discuss the characteristics that all living things share and create organisms that possess those characteristics.

**Social Studies:** In geography class, students have learned about basic map skills and spatial relationships including map components, latitude and longitude, and parts of a map. Over the next few weeks, students will begin to learn about the 5 Themes of Geography and 6 essential elements, or key ideas, to study physical processes and human systems. Additionally, students will continue to explore the classroom atlas in order to enhance their ability to locate places. Near the end of October, we will begin our World Regional Studies on Middle East and North Africa.

## **8LMS September Update**

### **Language Arts:**

As part of our first unit, students are establishing good habits as readers and writers. For writing, students will be working on ways to brainstorm ideas for writing and will develop a few of their “seed” ideas into longer pieces. For reading, students are working on annotating texts and writing cohesive, well-supported reader’s responses. They will be taking a close reading assessment and the Star Reading test mid-September.

**Math PA:** The Pre-Algebra classes are starting the year by reviewing integer operations and how to work with algebraic expressions. We will then begin our first unit of the year, which is solving one-variable linear equations.

**Math Algebra:** In Algebra we are starting the year with a unit that reviews one-variable linear equations and inequalities. We will then transition to studying functions, which launches us into all of the other topics that we will learn about throughout the year.

**Math Geometry:** The Geometry students are starting the year with an introduction to the building blocks of geometry, including points, lines, planes, angles, and segments. We will use compasses and straightedges to construct geometric elements. Later, we will begin to utilize reasoning and proof to make inductive and deductive arguments.

### **Science:**

Eighth grade science students have been learning about properties of matter such as mass, volume and weight. Science classes will be completing density before moving on to physics. Physics will start with observing and measuring motion, followed by forces. For more details, see the topics lists/study guides posted on the website.

### **Social Studies:**

In U.S. history class, students have analyzed the founding documents in an effort to identify how the documents helped shape and define American values and the American Dream. In October, students will explore westward expansion of the 1800’s to identify its social impact on various groups in the U.S.

## **World Language - Sept Curriculum Update**

### **French/Spanish**

#### **6th Grade Level 10A Spanish and French**

During this first marking period, 6th-grade Spanish and French students are using the target language to greet others and to exchange information about themselves. This includes asking for and providing information related to age, dates, phone numbers, etc. We are also exploring geography and nationality in French and Spanish-speaking countries around the world.

### **7th Grade Level 10B Spanish and French**

Students continue to take on a new cultural identity to investigate a typical school day and a typical weekend in the life of a student in the target culture. Learners will identify school schedules, courses taken and extracurricular activities available to them in the target culture. All 7th grade French and Spanish students will soon complete a project in using technology demonstrating cultural comparisons of a Fairfield student and a student from the target culture.

### **8th Grade level 20 Spanish and French**

Students are navigating their way through a target culture city to determine what makes the city special. They will identify places in the city, describe the purpose of these places and ask and give directions from one point to another in a city. Students will compare cities around the world to identify common and different elements. Both French and Spanish students will prepare a Google Earth project on their target culture city.

UA- Art/Computer/FCS/Health/Music/PE- Sept Update

### **Art**

#### **6th grade art:**

Students are finishing up their tone & value packet and beginning to grid draw their animal drawings. They are drawing an animal of their choice and using shading techniques to make it look realistic.

#### **7th grade art:**

Students have finished the layout stage of their Kaleidoscope paintings and are beginning to mix paint.

Color theory instruction is underway. They will continue painting and move onto a clay unit.

#### **8th grade 2D art:**

Students are completing their pen & ink practice packets for homework, and beginning to layout grids and start penciling their pen & ink objects. They will be creating a final pen and ink drawing of a subject of their choice, which we will be working on for a few weeks.

## **8th grade 3D art:**

Students are working on coil pottery construction. They are learning various clay building methods and techniques to construct a unique vessel. This project will take us through the mid-point of the marking period.

## **Computers**

**6<sup>th</sup> Grade Computers: Mr. Boocks:** Students began the semester creating their first E presentation. Students may use Google Docs, Power Point or any other school approved E-presenter. The focus for the lesson is on simple and uniform presentations, with a large focus on the physical presentation.

Students will start learning proper keyboarding skills sometime this week. Students will keyboard for part of each day and then move to other lessons throughout the semester.

## **Mrs. Walker:**

### **6<sup>th</sup> Grade Computers:**

Students are using MS PowerPoint to create a presentation called All About Me. It is a five-slide presentation about each of us. The title slide has three action links: Past Me, Present Me, Future Me. Students have also learned how to use Typing Pals, and are now working independently through the lessons. Speed is not that important; accuracy and proper typing technique are very important.

**8<sup>th</sup> Grade Computers:** Students are learning to code/program. We are progressing through the “Stages” in Unit 2, using an online program called CODE.ORG. Students work independently to complete the lessons. It sure feels like an accomplishment when we figure out how to get the code to work properly for us!

## **Family and Consumer Science**

### **Foods Lab**

**6<sup>th</sup> Grade:** Our first Unit is having students learn the importance of Home and Life Safety. We use a Fire Safety Webquest located on our Virtual Library. Students are then treated to our towns Fire Chief, Captain Kessler as he comes and to speak to our 6th graders about safety in the home. The next unit is proper measuring techniques while exercising their kitchen math skills. Students will then baking a tasty and healthy cookie with their lab teams.

**7<sup>th</sup> Grade:** Students begin to plan for their healthy breakfast menu for their Family Meal Projects. They are required to plan, shop, cook and clean for their family breakfast. Students are so proud to complete this task all by themselves. In school, students learn the importance of a

healthy breakfast while preparing whole wheat pancakes, breakfast burritos, and scrambled eggs. Students will plan, collaborate and use teamwork for each lab.

**8th Grade:** As we begin the school year, students will practice making a roux for their homemade Mac & Cheese with broccoli. All 8th graders did an amazing job on their first lab! Then students will start using yeast and the stand up mixers to make their individual pizzas from scratch. Students will mince, chop and simmer as they prepare their marinara sauce. In October, students will have practiced their knife skills so we take their learning to a new level. Independent cooking now begins as they prepare a multicultural dish with their lab teams. Then we are off to the computer lab to learn where our food comes from.

### **Sewing Lab** - Mrs. Flashman

**6th grade** is learning to thread and operate the sewing machine. They will be making a shoulder sack bag after successfully practicing with the sewing machine. They will also create a word art design and apply it with a heat press machine using iron on transfer paper. The students will employ several new computer skills to accomplish this.

The quarter began with a home and life safety unit that includes a visit from Capt. Kessler, our Asst. Fire Marshall in Fairfield.

**7th grade** has chosen their material to make boxer shorts. They will create a 5D design to embroider. This year the students will use the serger for the first time to finish the seams on their garment. They also take their measurements to fit the pattern.

**8th grade** is designing an art quilt and will be creating an embroidery on the computer. Currently, they are choosing motifs for their fabric art. There is quite a bit of creativity and math required during this process.

### **HEALTH - Mr. Dickenson**

**Grade 6:** In September we are learning about tobacco use prevention, HIV prevention, empathy, bullying and sexual harassment.

**Grade 7:** In September the 7th graders will be learning about eating disorders, tolerance, alcohol, and marijuana.

**Grade 8:**..In September the 8th graders will be learning about binge drinking, designer drugs and prescription/OTC drug abuse, and reducing risk of sexual assault.

## **Health -Maline**

**6th grade: Maline-** We are in the friendship unit which will include ways to identify good and bad, the different kinds of peer pressure, empathy and bullying. We will also cover sexual harassment. We will then start our drug unit which will take a few weeks to cover prescription/over the counter drugs and classifications. The class will cover tobacco, e cigs, inhalants, marijuana, and alcohol.

**7th grade: Maline-** We are covering self-talk, body image and eating disorders. Students will present their happiness inventory project to the class. We will discuss rumors, accusations, popularity and cliques. We will also cover responsible choices with technology.

There will be a speaker to address the dangers of e cigs and tobacco and we will begin the unit on Diversity.

**8th Grade: Maline-** We discussed the importance of resilience and began healthy relationships. We will work on and share our WHO I AM Projects with the class. We will then cover unhealthy /abusive relationships. Students will be covering love vs. infatuation, abstinence, date rape drugs and a unit on alcohol.

## **Music**

**Band 6:** Students have begun playing their instruments after a long summer of for most, but not all, inactivity! We are working out of “Standard of Excellence” Book 1, reviewing pieces from elementary school and getting used to playing as a 100 piece ensemble. Lessons have begun on a temporary schedule, and when all students are assessed for level, a permanent rotating schedule will be handed out. In addition to period 2 band, all band students will receive a ½ hour lesson each week. I look forward to working with this wonderful group of students, we should be exceptional. It won't be long before we have our concert in December, so let's get practicing!

### **Band 7:**

After a few quick reminders about band procedures and classroom routines, we began the year by reviewing material from 6<sup>th</sup> grade (scales/rhythms/tone quality and articulations) right away. Over the next few weeks, we will be transitioning to working out of the new lesson book Essential Elements Book 2.

We will also be starting preparations for the Winter Concert this month, as December will be upon us very soon - especially with all of the vacation days along the way! Lessons are under way and students are encouraged to attend makeups when needed (home room Wednesdays as

well as additional Tuesday/Fridays as posted). We are off to a great start – thank you for your continued dedication to supporting your child’s musical career in the RLMS band!!!

### **8th Grade Band:**

The 8th Grade band is looking forward to a great year! We are working on the major scales that are required for the high school curriculum. Also, we are choosing

music for the winter concert. We are working hard on creating a full, more mature overall tone. This requires concentration and extensive practice.

**Grade 6** - In September, 6th grade students have been learning basic singing techniques such as posture, breath, tone and diction. Students are learning the basics of how to navigate a choral score using music vocabulary such as bar line, measure and system. Full-time chorus classes will take a benchmark assessment in naming notes in treble and bass clef and score navigation. 6th graders are learning several rounds including “Taco Salad,” “Sing a Joyful Song” and “Viva La Musica” to practice singing in unison and two-part harmony. Concert preparations are underway as classes have been introduced to some of their winter concert repertoire. In October, more concert selections will be introduced.

**Grade 7** - In September, 7th grade students have been reviewing basic singing techniques such as posture, breath, tone and diction. Students are learning to navigate a choral score with repeat signs and first and second endings. Part of the 7th grade curriculum is to study multicultural music and pop music. Students are excited to help choose the pop selection for the winter concert! This month we will incorporate a fun and uplifting traditional Zambian song called “Bonse Aba” into our warm-up routine to practice singing together in three part treble harmony. In 7th grade, boys’ voices are starting to change noticeably and concert selections and vocal exercises are tailored to suit this development. In October, more concert selections will be introduced.

**Grade 8** - In September, 8th grade chorus students have been reviewing choral techniques and focusing on blending voices through a three-part SAB vocalise called “Viva Musica” in addition to vocal exercises that focus on tone production. Concert preparations are underway as students have begun rehearsing their winter concert repertoire. More selections will be introduced in October.

### **Keyboard Music 6, 7, 8**

Grand Staff notation and developing skill in placing written notes on the piano keyboard are our main goals for September. After practicing recognizing 20 notes on the grand staff, we will start



working towards our next goal - timed worksheets. Expectation is that students will accurately write 20 notes within one minute.

7th and 8th grades will play 6 songs by ear with both hands: *Hot Cross Buns; Mary Had A Little Lamb, Go Tell Aunt Rhody, Pierrot, Lightly Row, London Bridge.*

6th Grade will learn C position in both left and right hands.

Our song of the month:

Grade 8: *When The Saints Go Marching In* (level 2)

Grade 7: *London Bridge* or *Twinkle* (level 2)

Grade 6: *Beyer Etude #006* (level 1)

## **Orchestra**

**Grade 6 orchestra:** We started playing. For now the focus will be on reading music. We will be using Essential Elements (red Book) and "I Can Read Music". After the tryout lessons, we will begin working on technique, scales and solos (Suzuki book). Orchestra music for the first concert will be given soon. Focus will be on Baroque and Fiddle Music.

**Grade 7:** Main focus for the month of September will be reading music. We will be using Essential Elements Book II and "I Can Read Music" that we started last year. Orchestra music for the first concert will be given soon.

**Grade 8:** Main focus will be reading music, using Essential Elements Books II (blue) and III (Green). We will work this month also on specific technique, shifting, vibrato and tone. We also will be reading a lot of new music from different composers, classic and contemporary. Small group lessons will start to prepare for Fairfield County String Festival. Auditions for FCSF will be held on January 3rd, 2018.

## **Technology Education Department**

### **Boocks:**

**Technology Education 7th (Mr. Boocks)** Students spend the first

**Communication (Mr. Boocks)** This class focuses on the communication process, that is the transferring of an idea from one entity to another. Students will be creating video games, Lego robots, stop motion films, EMedia presentations and oral presentations throughout the semester.

Students spent their first week creating "sprites" to use in video games and a short stop motion film. Over the next few weeks students will be looking at different stop motion film methods and choosing one method to utilize for a large project.

**Transportation (Mr. Boocks)** This class will focus on transportation and the outside forces that act upon all forms of transportation. This is a very focused class that utilizes the band saw, drill press, hand saws, hand drills, wood rasps and other various tools to create, study and alter vehicles.

Our first vehicle is mid-process. Students are learning how to create technical drawings, plans that utilize a set amount of materials, tools and tool safety and how to record the design process. For this lab the teacher creates and vehicle along with the class to show them step-by-step the entire process. Students will be recording these steps and then utilizing them again in the future to design and build thier own projects with outside support only when needed.

### **Technology Education Department Mr. McAleese:**

**6th Technology Education Computers( Mr.McAleese):** Students primarily for the first few weeks will focus on Typing Pal, a computer driven software that teaches finger memory and basic keyboarding skills forming the backbone of the Computers curriculum.

Eventually they will be learning document creation and editing. They will use the Google Suite of products and Microsoft Office suite to create and edit their documents. Students are being introducing to Desktop Publishing and the production side of graphic design.

### **7th Technology Education (Mr.McAleese):**

7th Graders are learning Production Lab safety skills and the proper use and care of tools and machinery. Students utilize the Universal System Model(USM) or Design Loop to design and produce a functional toy “Buzzin’ Bee”. This introductory lesson gets them used to the power tools so they will not be nervous when we start production on the memo holder box and pad. Again, focus on the various stages of the Design Loop is central to each of these and future projects. The USM is utilized throughout a student’s Tech career and is linked directly with the High School curriculum.

### **8th Transportation Tech (Mr.McAleese):**

Students are learning Production Lab safety skills and the proper use and care of tools and machinery. Students will utilize the Universal System Model(USM) or Design Loop to design and produce and test two prototype “rockets”, one from a simple drinking straw, the other from rolled up and folded paper. Taking the knowledge gained forward, students are using various hand tools to fabricate the parts for and assembling a bottle rocket to be launch-tested outdoors in the coming weeks, weather permitting. Students are focusing on aerodynamics, symmetry, balance and will move on to a mousetrap powered vehicle in the coming weeks.

### **8th Manufacturing (Mr. McAleese):**

Students are learning Production Lab safety skills and the proper use and care of tools and machinery. Students utilize the Universal System Model(USM) or Design Loop to design and produce a 2-3 letter/character wood plaque on Microsoft Publisher. Students will go through safety testing in the Production Lab and eventually will learn to select and measure material appropriately. They will then follow a system or process (again the USM) in order to properly use the chop saw, band saw, scroll saw, sand paper, wood rasps, belt sanders and palm sanders to fabricate their plaque from ¾” pine stock material. Students have already been tasked with thinking of their next project which should have some personal meaning for them. They will have to present a written proposal to me for the project before beginning any work.

### **Physical Education:**

The PE department is working on training for the CT Fitness Test. Testing will begin the week of October 2nd. Testing areas include mile run, curl ups, push ups, and sit and reach. Testing will go through to the second week in November.

### **Counseling/Dean News- Sept**

#### **Welcome back from the Counseling/Dean Departments!**

We understand that getting back into the swing of school life is hard for kids and their parents. It's hard for us too! Below are some great tips from an article by Jim Fannin of *The Huffington Post*

**([http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jim-fannin/11-back-to-school-parent-\\_b\\_11411518.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jim-fannin/11-back-to-school-parent-_b_11411518.html)):**

- 1. **Set academic goals.** Establishing well-defined goals is one of the hallmarks of a champion. Each student needs these academic goals with corresponding strategies and tactics for reaching them. Set goals for each class and hold your student accountable.*
- 2. **Identify priorities.** Football games, dances, playing video games, watching television, social media, homework, sports, extracurricular participation and friends are all part of each school year. Does academics top the list of priorities? When is homework to be accomplished? Before dinner? After school? After dinner? When can I watch my favorite TV shows? This 90-minute to 120-minute homework routine needs to be placed in your student's schedule before the school year. Sunday night is a great night to prepare for the upcoming school week. This is a routine they can take into their adult life.*

3. **Social media.** *This activity gets its own mention. I believe Smart phones aren't always smart. This device is your student's pipeline to the rest of the world with emphasis on their peer group. Self-discipline and concentration don't always mesh with the cell phone. No cell phone usage during homework. Period. No cell phone usage after certain hours (you decide the nightly cell phone curfew). As a student or guide to a student, you need to know three things about social media. What is my responsibility? What is my authority? And lastly, what will I be held accountable. Monitor this activity. You don't need surprises. Keep abreast of where and when your student goes on the web and with whom they communicate.*

4. **Risk and reward.** *This subject needs to be addressed frequently with your student. Everything they do or don't do has a positive or negative consequence. What is the risk of doing this activity? What is the reward (or consequence) of doing this activity? The risk and reward "talk" needs to be given and repeated often.*

5. **Ask questions.** *Tell and yell does NOT work as a form of communication. Many of us have been raised with this form of information delivery. In order to turn your student into a viable and responsible decision-maker, then great questions will eventually produce great answers and ultimately great actions. Asking questions that can easily be answered with a terse and or mumbled yes or no are NOT great questions. Prepare this type of communication and be consistent. "What are your goals for grades and how are you going to accomplish this?"*

6. **The peer group.** *Birds of a feather flock together. Interview, research and keep tabs on ALL of your student's friends during the school year. This definitely includes monitoring ALL social media. If you're paying the phone bill, then it's your phone NOT their phone. Your student's "circle of friends" is the main influencer of how they approach homework, speech, dress, music and any other behavior. Police the peer group. Also, meet all parents of your child's friends. This will tell you a lot.*

7. **Get ready Mom and Dad.** *Yes, as parents we need to prepare to assist our live-in students in setting, organizing and managing the best routines for maximum learning. This also pertains to family activities such as dinner, chores, family outings, sibling behavior, and community service. Of course, your student's priority is preparing for their academic year and maintaining good grades. But do NOT forget family. This institution is the fabric of our country and needs constant building and repair. Make your student an integral part of the family. Keep them in the loop of all upcoming activities. Make the family name a brand each family member is proud to showcase in the community.*

8. **Allow for freedom of choice.** *Academic champions study with great self-discipline and commitment. They make sacrifices and choices. However, all students need some time to blow off*

*steam and just hangout with friends or do nothing while chilling alone. Allow your student the time in their busy schedule to do this. Just be moderate. Grades first.*

*As parents we have the sole responsibility, accountability and the authority to oversee the education of our children. We can become best friends with them later in life. For now, we are the guides, mentors and coaches. We must be consistent in this endeavor. Be the coach. Be the teacher. Be the guide. Parent! This verb is NOT always cool, but it will reap dividends.*

***Pay now or you and your student will pay later.***

*Good luck Mom and Dad. You are the role models our students, schools, and communities need. Our country's future depends on it.*

Follow Jim Fannin on Twitter: [www.twitter.com/jimfannin](http://www.twitter.com/jimfannin)

We are excited for a great year ahead! Don't hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns:

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