

RLMS CURRICULUM CORNER – SEPT/OCT 2016

Crew 6 LM- Sept/Oct Update

Language Arts - As part of our first unit, students are establishing good habits as readers and writers. For writing, students are working on ways to brainstorm ideas and then are developing a few of their seed ideas into longer pieces. For reading, students are working on annotating texts and learning how to write cohesive, well-supported reader's responses.

Math 6 - We have begun the year with the launch into middle school. In what we call Unit 0, we have worked on reinforcing math skills that are necessary for the success of future units this year. We have reviewed double digit multiplication, long division, adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing decimals. We also reviewed exponents and recognition of fractions and mixed numbers.

In Unit 1 we are doing operations with rational numbers. We are multiplying and dividing fractions. We have also worked to strengthen students' understanding of numerical operations. Finally, we will be working on order of operations, exponents, prime factorization, greatest common factor and least common multiple. After we complete unit 1, we will move on to unit 2 involving understanding of expressions and equations.

Math TPA - We have begun the year with the launch into middle school. In what we call Unit 0, we have worked on reinforcing math skills that are necessary for the success of future units this year. We have reviewed double digit multiplication, long division, adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing decimals. We also reviewed exponents and recognition of fractions and mixed numbers.

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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.

Science - There is excitement in the air as Grade 6 Science students are getting ready to explore the estuary on October 5. Students have been researching an estuary organism and will be creating a web page that will display their research and technology skills. Lessons in class have been focused on learning new estuary vocabulary and there have been hands on experiments that have introduced students to scientific inquiry. The goal of the unit is to give all students a new appreciation of the Fairfield wetlands and how we can all work together to make sure the estuaries continue to be healthy and productive.

7LMS -Sept-Oct Update

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 a written response around theme as a culminating activity and summative assessment.

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 - Students are adding and subtracting integers this week then we move on to adding and subtracting rational numbers.

Science: In the month of September 7th grade science practiced inquiry skills and use of tools. Students measured worms and designed and implemented a plant growth lab. Coming up in October, students will be learning about animal interactions in terms of food chains, food webs and energy flow. Near the end of the month, students will begin learning about the very small cells that make up every living organism.

Social Studies:

In Social Studies we have been exploring the Essentials of Geography, including Spatial Thinking, The 5 Themes of Geography, and map skills. Students have created 5 Themes of geography collages, and participated in various activities using their map skills to solve geographic questions. We will be looking at Map projections, types of maps and using various geographic tools to solve problems.

8LM Sept-Oct Update

Language Arts: In LA we have begun the year practicing close reading strategies using shared texts. Students have been reading and annotating texts with a close look at author's craft and specific literary elements; they have been identifying, discussing and writing about symbolism in shared texts. Moving forward students will investigate the concept of theme while reading, identifying, and discussing shared texts to analyze how readers develop theme.

Math PA: In Pre-Algebra we began the year by reviewing expressions and integers and incorporating these topics into a unit on solving one-variable linear equations. In October we will begin a unit on congruence, similarity, transformations, and properties of parallel lines and polygons.

Math Algebra: In Algebra, students finished a unit on solving equations and linear inequalities. They also completed a project to investigate the relationship among equations, tables and graphs. We will now use these findings to explore additional features of functions.

Math Geometry: In Geometry we completed our introductory unit on the building blocks of geometric concepts, including points, lines, planes, segments, and angles. We also did constructions using a ruler and compass. Over the course of October we will look at mathematical reasoning and proof, which are essential to the study of the rest of the topics this year.

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, 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-Oct Curriculum Update

French/Spanish

6th Grade Level 10 French

Students will...

6th Grade Level 10 Spanish

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

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 complete a project in October using technology demonstrating cultural comparisons of a Fairfield student and a student from the target culture.

8th Grade

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-Oct Update

Art

6th grade art:

Students have learned the fundamentals of value and how to use and apply shading techniques to create realistic graphite drawings of animals. They then continued to use their knowledge of value, applying it to a colored drawing of fruits and vegetables. These drawings were done through observation. Students are moving onto a design unit, carving into linoleum and making multiple prints of the same image.

7th grade art: Students began by studying masks of different world cultures. They drew and designed their own mask and then constructed it out of clay. They learned about relief and profile, and various methods for working with clay. They then moved on to a unit on color theory, learning how to mix and apply tints, shades, and tones of color to a radial symmetry “kaleidoscope” painting. Once the clay masks are fired, they will then use their color theory knowledge to paint them.

8th grade 2D art: Students are working on their line drawing unit. They have learned and practiced a variety of line techniques in pen, such as stippling, hatching, and cross-hatching, focusing on building textures and values. They then selected an image to draw, and are creating realistic pen and ink drawings that feature a range of textures and values. Next, they move onto a unit on acrylic painting.

8th grade 3D art: Students in 3D art are using handbuilding clay methods to construct coil pottery. They first drew a design for the shape/form of their vessel, focusing on function and form. Then they learned how to properly attach and join coils to build up their vessels and are now beginning to finalize and smooth the forms. Students will then add embellishments to their vessels through additional clay sculpting and/or color application.

Computer

6th Grade Computers:

Students are learning document creation and editing. They are using MS Word and Google Docs to create and edit their documents. This coming week students will be adding Google Sheets and MS XL to their skill sets, and then learning to combine tables and inserting tables into a document.

6th Grade Computers/Mrs. Walker: Students are using MS PowerPoint to create a presentation called All About Me. They have designed a 5 slide framework for their presentations. 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 important; accuracy is very important.

8th Grade Computers/Mrs. Walker: Students are learning to code/program. We are progressing through the “Stages” in Unit 2, using an online program called CODE.ORG. At the end of each Artist stage, students complete a project on their own. The students are also working independently through the lessons.

Family Consumer Science

Foods Lab

6th Grade: Students learn standard units of measuring and proper techniques while exercising their kitchen math skills. Then it’s off to baking a tasty and healthy cookie with their lab teams. They begin their introduction to knife skills while preparing a Vegetable Cheesy Quesadillas and enjoy them with their classmates.

7th 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: Students will practice making a healthy dessert and celebrate their successful learnings on pastry crust by enjoying their apple pie with a lattice crust. By October students 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 as we share in cuisine from 5 different cultures. Then we are off to the computer lab to learn where our food comes from. Students will then practice the 4 C’s of cooking as they learn the importance of Food Borne Illness by making Grilled Chicken Caesar Salad on our 5:1 Griddlers.

In the sewing lab:

6th grade is starting to assemble their shoulder sack bag after successfully threading and practicing with the sewing machine. They also created a word art design and it was applied with a heat press machine using iron on transfer paper. The students had to employ several new computer skills to accomplish this.

The students switch to foods on Monday, Oct. 10th. They will need to finish their project during homeroom when possible. The quarter began with a home and life safety unit which includes a visit from Capt. Kessler, our Asst. Fire Marshall in Fairfield.

7th grade is finishing up their boxer shorts and created a 5D design to embroider. The students 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 has completed designing their quilt and will be creating an embroidery on the computer. Currently, they are sewing their center blocks. There is quite a bit of creativity and math required during this process.

Health

Grade 8 Dickenson - In October we will be learning about the following topics: Abstinence, marijuana, HIV review, coping with depression, suicide prevention, body image, and abusive relationships.

Grade 7 Dickenson - In October we will be learning about the following topics: Sexual harassment (review from grade 6), coping with death/loss, marijuana, bullying violence prevention, and family communication.

Grade 6 Dickenson - In October we will be learning about the following topics: Friendships, alcohol, marijuana, inhalants, puberty, and Lyme disease.

6th grade: Maline- Just finished friendships; good and bad, peer pressure, empathy and bullying. We started 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- Finishing up self-talk, body image and eating disorders. Students presented their ME project to the class. We discussed rumors, accusations and popularity and cliques. We are covering 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- Students just finished health basics and healthy relationships. Presented their WHO I AM Projects to the class. We began discussing unhealthy /abusive relationships. Students will be covering love vs. infatuation, abstinence, date rape drugs and a unit on alcohol.

Music

Band 6: In September, the 6th grade band students focused on learning the procedures of the band classroom, learning the process of band lessons and make up lessons, and building skills playing in a large ensemble setting.

In October, we will begin to focus our learning in rehearsals on pieces for our Winter concert and continue settling into our lesson routine, spending time learning new scales, exercises, and pieces from our Standard of Excellence lesson books.

Band 7: We are working on review material from last year (scales/rhythms/tone quality and articulations) and have begun working out of the new lesson book Essential Elements Book 2. Concert prep is beginning as well, early December will be upon us very soon, especially with all of the vacation days along the way. Students are reminded to attend lessons and do makeups when needed (home room Tuesday/Wednesday). So far the band is off to a great start and will be getting new concert pieces shortly.

Band 8: We are continuing to review and build upon the techniques used in 7th grade band and have started working on two compositions that will be presented at the winter concert.

Chorus

6th grade chorus: 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 took 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 learning “Ode to Peace,” which is a variation of Beethoven’s 9th Symphony and an upbeat Latin music style song about the joys of winter called “Hot Chocolate.” In October, more concert selections will be introduced.

7th grade chorus: 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 classes have been learning a fun and challenging Latin style song called “La Vida,” which is sung in Spanish and English. In October, we will incorporate percussion instruments to this piece to really spice it up! 7th graders are also studying pop music this year, and “Wintersong” is a pop ballad that was recorded by Sara Bareilles and Ingrid Michaelson. Students are singing in unison two-part harmony. In October 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 October, more concert selections will be introduced.

8th grade chorus: 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 well underway as students have been learning “A Charlie Brown Christmas,” a highly energetic song celebrating Hanukkah titled “A Candle for Peace” and John Lennon’s classic song, “Imagine.” One more concert selection will be added in October. Also in October, information regarding this year’s 8th grade chorus Broadway trip scheduled for Wednesday April 19 will be posted on the music department website.

Keyboard

6th Grade - 7th Grade - 8th Grade

We are using a new program this year. Piano Suite Premier teaches how to play piano, using instant visual and audio feedback. It's a comprehensive, interactive music learning, playing, and composing system. Our Yamaha MIE (Music In Education) setup has been replaced with 15 new PC's and Casio LK-260 Keyboards. This is the same software and hardware setup used at FLHS and FWHS. This means that 9th graders are starting at the same point as 6th, 7th, and 8th graders this year.

Click here to learn more about our new [Piano Suite](#) software.

Songs learned in September were, *"Old Grey Goose"*, *"Yankee Doodle"*, *"Row, Row, Row Your Boat"*, *"Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star"*, and *"Get Up"*. October songs are, *"Sing To Yoo"*, *"Mary Had A Little Lamb"*, *"Little Brown Jug"*, *"Little Boy Of China"*, and *"On Top Of Old Smokey"*.

All three grades are also in the process of reviewing the essential elements of music. This will continue through the first marking period. September covered the Staff, difference between High and Low pitches, the Treble Clef, Bass clef. October will cover Ledger Lines, the Grand Staff, Time Signatures, Rests, Notes. All of these topics are to be completed during class, and are also available to look at on Infinite Campus.

Orchestra

Grade 6 orchestra: Orchestra now is in full swing. We have started with the regular rehearsals and small group lessons. Everything is going very fine. Most of the students are attending lessons regularly. Please remind your kids to come to the make-up lesson in case they miss the regular lesson. Please check the Grade 6 Pamphlet for the materials needed for class and send in the signed contract. Students are receiving the Scales book from me this week.

Main goal for this month is set up (instrument hold, bow hold, left hand facility), using a lot of bow and scales. Reading music will be our main goal for the year. We have started a new piece Wooden Shoe Dance. I will be adding more pieces shortly. Luminescence is the next one.

Grade 7 orchestra: As expected everything in this class is going fine. We have started with the regular rehearsals and the small group lessons. Students are attending regularly.

Please check the Grade 7 Pamphlet for the materials needed for class and send in the signed contract. Students are receiving the Scales book from me this week.

Main goal for this month is set up (instrument hold, bow hold, left hand facility), using a lot of bow and scales. Reading music will be our main goal for the year. We have started a new piece "A day at Disneyland". We will start Brandenburg Concerto No. 2 this week and will be adding more pieces shortly.

Grade 8 orchestra: We are up to a very good start. As expected, everything in this class is going fine. We have started with the regular rehearsals and the small group lessons. Students are attending regularly.

Please check the Grade 8 Pamphlet for the materials needed for class and send in the signed contract. Students are receiving the Scales book from me this week.

Main goal for this month is using a lot of bow and scales. Reading music will be our main goal for the year. We have started a new piece “A day at Disneyland”. We will restart practicing “Posthorn” and start Brandenburg Concerto No. 2 this week and will be adding more pieces shortly.

Physical Education:

The PE department is working on training for the CT Fitness Test. Testing will begin the week of October 3rd. Testing areas include mile run, curl ups, push-ups, and sit and reach. Testing will go through to the second week in November.

Technology Education 7th

These students spent last week working on developing and creating notepads. The last part of last week and for the remainder of this week students will be using the chop saw, jig saw, T-square, speed square, sand paper and wood rasps to create a box to keep their pads in.

Communication (Mr. Boocks)

Students are creating and programming Lego robots. Last week students learned the basics by creating a simple robot and programming it to do a simple task. This week students will be choosing a much more complex robot to build and then will have to program it to do a series of complicated tasks. The following week students will be learning to develop and create a video game.

Transportation (Mr. Boocks)

Students finished their propeller car on Friday. This week students used skills learned in the last lab to design, orthographically draw and then build a mousetrap powered vehicle. Students will be using the chop saw, band saw, jig saw, sand paper, wood rasps and hot glue to complete this lab.

6th Grade Computers (Mr. McAleese a.k.a. Mr. Mac a.k.a. Mr. Mac and Cheese):

Students are learning document creation and editing. They are using the Google Suite of products and Microsoft Office suite to create and edit their documents. Students have created tables, surveys and drawings (About Me poster or slideshow) and are currently learning about the collaborative benefits of the Google by designing and creating a calendar with classmates sharing their birth month. All of the months will be joined together at the end to create a school year calendar thus introducing students to Desktop Publishing and the production side of graphic design.

7th Technology Education (Mr. McAleese a.k.a. Mr. Mac):

These students started with the design and production, utilizing the Universal System Model or Design Loop, and produced a functional toy “Buzzin’ Bee”. They then moved onto and are currently in the sanding/finishing stage of fabrication of a 2-3 letter character plaque. Again, focus on the various stages of the Design Loop is central to each of these and future projects.

8th Transportation Tech (Mr. McAleese a.k.a. Mr. Mac):

Students have finished building and testing 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 a.k.a. Mr. Mac):

These students started with the design and production of a functional toy “Buzzin’ Bee” (utilizing the Universal System Model or Design Loop). Students then designed on Microsoft Publisher a 2-3 letter character plaque. Again, focus on the various stages of the Design Loop is central to each of these and future projects. Students used the chop saw, band saw, scroll saw, sand paper, wood rasps, belt sanders and palm sanders to fabricate their plaque from $\frac{3}{4}$ ” pine stock material. They are currently in the sanding/finishing stage of fabrication. The next project will be for these students to present a written proposal to me for their next and final major project of their choosing for the term.

Counseling News- Sept-Oct

The Counseling Center is excited to welcome back all of our students to RLMS. We are currently working on updating our website to reflect current information for each grade. The Counseling Center is preparing our Developmental Guidance themes for the year and will develop lessons to deliver to students throughout the school year. Please check back for an update on when the Developmental Guidance will happen. Within Developmental Guidance, we will continue our work with our students learning Naviance as part of our Student Success Plans. Here is an overview of Student Success Plans:

If there are any future topics you would like our Counseling News to cover; please email or contact your grade level counselors.

Please contact us anytime with any questions.

The Counseling Center
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