

## **RLMS Curriculum Corner- February 2017**



### **Crew 6 LM- Feb Update**

Language Arts Grade 6 - Students are now immersed in our poetry unit. With a focus on author's craft and the deeper meaning found in poems, students are analyzing, writing, and sharing a variety of poems throughout this highly enjoyable, creative unit. Students will then move into the narrative writing unit, where they will create interesting and realistic characters, while incorporating author's craft learned in the poetry unit to lift the quality of their writing.

Math 6 - We have started our unit on geometry in the Math 6 classes. The students have been investigating the area of polygon shapes and have come to see patterns and develop rules/formulas for finding area and perimeter of triangles, parallelograms and trapezoids.

Math TPA - The TPA students have completed the unit on rates and ratios, and in this unit they are learning to reason proportionally. The use ratios as a basis of comparison between two sets of data. They plotted the paired data points to see a graphical representation, and wrote equations that further shows the relationship of the data.

Social Studies Grade 6 - Students are currently involved in the Ancient Greece/Rome research project. They have used both books and online websites to research their topics. After research is complete, they will write an informational essay based on their notes. Students will eventually work with a partner to create a visual project related to their topics, which will be presented at the crew fairs scheduled for late February. Parent invitations will be sent home with each student. We hope to see you there.

Science Grade 6- Students have begun a severe weather research project, becoming an expert on a hurricane and presenting their findings to the class. Science classes were buzzing with excitement as students were given their hurricane name and data started to be collected. Ivan, Rita, Katrina and Andrew are just some of the storms being studied and students will be working in groups to analyze data, create individual slides and be able to discuss the journey of the hurricane and its impact on the people and environment. What hurricane did your child get? Do you remember the category and where the hurricane hit?

## **7LMS -February Update**

Language Arts : The entire seventh grade has begun reading our whole class novel by S.E. Hinton, *The Outsiders*. We will be having lots of class discussions, activities, and writing around this classic novel. If you have read *The Outsiders* yourself, feel free to have conversations with your child at home! There will also be a culminating project option and movie.

Math:

Pre Algebra 7 - In Pre-Algebra we are studying square roots and cube roots and learning how to classify numbers in the real number system. We will then learn about the Pythagorean Theorem and its many applications. Soon we will study the circumference and area of circles and expand these ideas to the perimeters and areas of composite figures.

Math 7 - In Math 7 we are studying Percents, Ratios and Proportional Relationships. Students will compare and order fractions, decimals and percents. We will then learn to find percent increase and percent decrease. Soon we will study markups and discounts.

Science: In February 7th grade science will explore what makes us sick by studying bacteria, viruses and their affects on our bodies. We will spend about a week on a project where each student will explore a bacterium or virus in more depth and present their findings. Students will have a wide variety of choices as to what kind of project they want to complete in order to best share their information. After that we will continue to work through the different kingdoms of living things.

Social Studies: Geography class has been humming lately, learning about topics that include population statistics and demography. Students spent a couple of classes with Swedish statistician Hans Rosling. We examined questions like, “Is the world overpopulated?” and “How can we lower population growth rates?” We have studied fertility rates, birth rates, life expectancy, infant mortality and death rates. Additionally we looked at population pyramids as a way of examining trends in populations. Next week, we will be diving into a study of East Asia, looking at culture & geography of this important region.

## **8LM February Update**

Language Arts: Students are investigating elements of memoir. They have been reading short shared-texts as well as their own choice book-length memoir. While reading these texts, students are employing close reading strategies in order to recognize how writers craftily express their discoveries about life & the world around them through their various experiences. This reading with a “writer’s lens” will help students as they form ideas of what they will write their own personal narratives on during the next few weeks.

Math PA: Students are finishing their study of functions and will soon move on to a unit where we will solve systems of linear equations. The unit will include a group project that utilizes many concepts about systems as well as concepts from previous units of study.

Math Algebra: Students are learning how to analyze data by completing a unit on linear modeling. As part of this unit, students are completing a group project to investigate and analyze correlations between variables. Following this unit, students will be exploring polynomials.

Math Geometry: In Geometry students are learning special properties of polygons, including the classification system for quadrilaterals and different theorems that can be used to prove that a figure is a certain type of quadrilateral. We are also going to learn how to write a coordinate proof, which uses the coordinate geometry concepts of slope, distance, and midpoint.

Science: Students in science class are learning about energy and then will be studying bridges. After studying bridges students will take the physics final.

Social Studies: Students in U.S. history are studying World War I and exploring the difficulties of maintaining neutrality while also wishing to foster democracy around the world. Soon students will explore the prosperity of the 1920s and the social and economic tensions that define the time period.

## **World Language - February Curriculum Update**

French/Spanish

6th Grade Level 10A Spanish and French

As 6th graders continue to explore the question, Who Am I?, they have learned how to express personal preferences as they relate to extra-curricular activities in the target culture and their own. To expand what students can say about themselves, 6th-graders are learning ways to describe their own physical appearance and personality traits. Moving forward, students will be able to identify family members and ask about and describe what they are like and how they are related.

7th Grade Level 10B Spanish and French

Learners are wrapping up the *How do I use my imagination?* unit. Students enjoyed researching musicians and artists from their target cultures. Each student created presentations for their peers to view. The level 10B students were then asked to write about the presentations and make cultural connections and comparisons.

Our classes are beginning to explore our next unit, *What makes a travel destination special?*

8th Grade level 20 Spanish and French

The essential question for the current 8th grade unit is: **What does it mean to maintain a balanced lifestyle?** Students will examine foods and meals in different countries, compare them to what we eat in the United States, and discuss what is important to eat to stay healthy. They will also look at daily activities and how they are part of a balanced lifestyle.

#### **UA- Art/Computer/FCS/Health/Music/PE- February Update**

### **Art**

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

6th grade art students are working within their first unit in drawing. They are learning about value, and how to shade using a variety of tones from the value scale in order to make their drawings look realistic. They have been practicing shading on a flat surface to create the illusion of 3D form. They will also be learning different techniques for drawing in proportion, and will move on to a final graphite animal drawing of their choice.

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

7th grade art students are working on their clay masks, part of their unit in 3D form. They drew and designed their mask on paper, focusing on elements of relief and profile. They then began translating their drawing into a 3D mask form using various clay sculpture methods and techniques. They will finish these up within the week and move onto their unit in color theory.

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

8th grade students in two-dimensional art are in the midst of a pen and ink drawing unit. They have been practicing different methods and techniques for drawing in ink to create value and texture - stippling, hatching, cross-hatching etc. They are moving on to applying these methods to a final drawing of their choice, which they will continue for the next couple of weeks.

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

In 3D art, 8th grade students are working on creating a hand built piece of coil pottery. They drew and designed their vessel on paper, and are now using their drawing to guide their clay building. They are utilizing coil building methods (scoring, knitting, smoothing) to properly build their forms. An embellishment of their choice will also be added to the forms, and the pottery will be glazed.

## **Computers**

### **6<sup>th</sup> Grade Computers: Mr. Boocks:**

Students have begun working with Typing Pal, an online computer keyboarding training software. Weekly, student's progress using various specific keys, building finger memory much as a pianist does on a piano. Tests are administered each Friday with a culminating test at the end of the Marking Period. Students have also been creating stop-motion films in class. They have created characters and backgrounds and are not moving onto the animations. We will be starting MS Excel at the end of this week.

**6<sup>th</sup> Grade Computers (Mr. McAleese):** Students have begun working with Typing Pal, an online computer keyboarding training software. Weekly, students progress using various specific keys, building finger memory much as a pianist does on a piano. Tests are administered each Friday with a culminating test at the end of the Marking Period. Additionally, students have experimented with collaborative projects on their Google Drive accounts and are currently engaged, again collaboratively, on designing a year long calendar full of important dates, including their own birthdays.

6<sup>th</sup> 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 on-line 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**

### **Food Lab**

**6<sup>th</sup> Grade:** Students learn the standard units of measurements and proper techniques while practicing their kitchen math. Then it's off to baking a tasty healthy cookie with their lab teams. Next students are introduced to knife skills/safety while preparing a healthy snack (applesauce) to enjoy with their classmates. Vegetable Cheesy Quesadillas will be made at the end of the month which will further help students practice knife skills.

**7th Grade:** Students have worked hard planning 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. Knife skills and stove top cooking are the focus of this unit.

**8th Grade:** Students have been very busy making pizza dough from scratch, marinara sauce from scratch and sauteing an array of healthy veggies to top their pizzas. 8th graders were also introduced to thickening agents (gelatin), how to boil, simmer and design their individual plated desserts. Chocolate pudding towers are on tap this week for Valentine's Day! Students will then head to the computer lab to research where our food comes from and the global connection of our choices.

**In the sewing lab: Some lovely examples of fabric art quilts**



**Hannah shaped feathers into a circle surrounding her initials.**

**Laura sewed her soccer patches to squares to**



**make her keepsake quilt**



There is sewing club every other Thursday. Students are working on an infinity scarf made from 3 or 4 of their own t-shirts or may catch up on their projects.

## **Health**

**HEALTH - Mr. Dickenson**

**Grade 6 -** In grade 6 we completed tobacco use prevention and HIV prevention. In the coming weeks we will be learning about empathy, bullying, sexual harassment, and alcohol.

**Grade 7 -** In grade 7 we have completed eating disorders and diversity. In the coming weeks we will learn about alcohol, marijuana, and decision making.

**Grade 8 -** In grade 8 we have completed binge drinking. Still to come in February, will be designer drugs, sexual assault awareness, and healthy relationships.

## **Health - Ms. Maline**

**6th Grade -** We are presently in our friendship unit which includes peer pressure and bullying. The test date will be announced in IC. Upcoming is sexual harassment and then the drug unit will begin.

**7th Grade-** We have been discussing self-esteem, self-talk and body image which then lead to Eating Disorders. That test date will be announced in IC. Upcoming is popularity, online safety and sexting. The “Me” project has been pushed ahead a week due to the snow day and delays. We will be going into the lab week of 2/20 to film our projects.

**8th Grade-** We discussed the importance of self-esteem and resiliency. Presently we are discussing healthy relationships with a focus on boundaries (physical and emotional) . Upcoming is unhealthy relationships and abusive relationships. The “Who I am “assignment is due Thursday, Feb. 16th.

## **Music**

**Band 6:** The band students are preparing three scales for a scales test which will take place next month: the Bb, Eb, and F major concert scales, as well as the Ab major for extra credit. We are learning about overtures while working on an arrangement of the 1812 Overture by Tchaikovsky, a new key signature (6/8) in “Irish Jig for Young Feet” and working on meter changes in a three part piece called “Asian Folk Rhapsody”. We are also in the process of coordinating an exciting field trip to the High note Festival at Lake Compounce on June 2nd, and are still looking for more chaperones. If you are interested, please let us know: [jbrion@fairfieldschools.org](mailto:jbrion@fairfieldschools.org)

**Band 7:** Students are working on 3 scales Ab, C and Bb chromatic, for their scales test that needs to be completed by the end of the month. All scales need to be memorized. In addition, we are working on band music theory terms and note reading. Band selections are being rehearsed and we will be getting 2 new pieces shortly in addition to the Memorial Day Parade piece “Yankee Doodle”. Honors band students have begun rehearsals and will participate in the “Town wide Band Festival” in March.

**8th Grade:** Band The students are working on new time signature and multiple meters as they tackle their new concert music for the May 8<sup>th</sup> concert. We are exploring new scales and studies to implement into our new literature. Through the democratic process the students chose to play a Star Wars Medley for the concert. 2<sup>nd</sup> and third choices were Careless Whisper and Uptown Funk.

The band just received the information about the High Note Festival on June 2<sup>nd</sup>. The forms are due back mid-February.

## **Chorus**

**Grade 6 -** 6th grade chorus students are well underway learning new concert selections for the spring concert. “J’Entends Le Moulin” is a fast-paced French Canadian folk song sung in both French and English. “Circle Round the Moon” is a two-part treble voice song about the beauty of nature. In February, students will begin learning “How Far I’ll Go” from Disney’s “Moana.” 6th graders are learning how to read notes in both treble clef and bass clef and were introduced to enumeration (counting rhythms) in January.

**Grade 7 -** 7th grade students are especially excited for their spring concert because our curriculum focuses on pop music! In January, students have been working on a selection titled “Give Us Hope” by composer James Papoulis, whose work combines the music of his roots- classical and jazz - with the rhythms and influence of worldbeat, folk and multi-ethnic sounds. “Give Us Hope” examines the importance of a child’s world and how small steps can be made to improve it. “Here Comes the Sun” by George Harrison arranged by Mac Huff introduces three-part harmonies that are accessible to 7th grade singers. In this selection, students have been learning how to read time signatures in duple and triple meter. In February, students are going to begin learning “Don’t Stop Believin’” by Journey. We will use the sheet music to this song to learn how to navigate a choral score and identify elements such as repeat signs, first and second endings, D.S. al Coda and pop song form.

**Grade 8** 8th grade students have been learning about the Broadway show “Phantom of the Opera” through the medley we are preparing for the spring concert. In February, students will begin Leonard Cohen’s classic song, “Hallelujah” in an SATB arrangement with solo opportunities. Students have been reviewing music theory concepts learned in 6th and 7th grade and are being introduced to reading and identifying key signatures and solfège melodies in the keys of C and G.



## **Keyboard**

Marking Period 3/February: Focus for the marking period will be reading notes and finding them on the piano keyboard. We'll use a timed game called "Reverse Keyboard Note Identification", REVERSE for short. Students are timed and challenged to get correct answers in a 30 or 60 second window. Printed worksheets will help reinforce this important skill development.

We begin work on learning C, G, F Major and D Blues scales this month.

In Piano Suite Premier we begin an increased emphasis on "Theory Thinker", the rules of music theory.

Required reading is a new handout. "**HOW TO READ MUSIC NOTES**" to help students remember essential elements of music notation, pitch, time, articulation, dynamics, and finding pitches on the keyboard.

## **Orchestra**

**Grade 6 orchestra:** We are focusing on reading skills. Students have been using successfully "I CAN Read Music" and Essential Elements Bk 1. This month we will do the scales test student. Violins will have to play G Major and A major, Viola C major and D major, cellos C Major and D Major, basses D major and G Major. In Orchestra we have started two new pieces "Mabel Creek Overture" and "La Bocca Grande". New Pieces will be added soon.

**Grade 7 orchestra:** We are focusing on reading skills. Students have been using successfully "I CAN Read Music" and Essential Elements Bk 2. This month we will do the scales test student. Violins will have to play G Major and D major, Viola F major and G major, Cellos F Major and G Major, basses D major and G Major. In Orchestra we have started two new pieces "Brandenburg Concerto No. II", and "Toccata". New Pieces will be added soon. Small group lessons are performing in front of their peers in the beginning of each orchestra class.

**Grade 8 orchestra:** The main focus is on music reading skills and music theory. In Orchestra we started playing "Abduction From Seraglio", "Edelweiss" and "Light Cavalry". Many more pieces will follow. Small group lessons are performing in front of their peers in the beginning of each orchestra class.

## **Physical Education:**

Our Physical Education classes are continuing the rotations we started in January. Our activities include badminton, project adventure and archery. We will be adding a new unit in the middle of the month Floor Hockey. Students that will be rotating into Project adventure for a second time for the climbing part of the programs. We will also be handing out fundraiser sheets for our annual week long Hoops for Heart Campaign, which will run the second full week in March.

## **Technology Education Department**

### **Technology Education 7th (Mr. Boocks)**

Students spent the first week learning to create orthographic drawings. They now know the front, top and side view and how to utilize those views to convey an idea. This past week students have been working on the Mid-Air Vehicle. In this lab students are given a list of materials and a challenge, and they must create a vehicle to complete this challenge. As they work through the lab students are required to track the design process using the “Systems Model” approach, and they are required to create a side view drawing of the vehicle.

### **Communication (Mr. Boocks)**

Students have spent the first two weeks creating drawings for their first stop motion film. They have created character cutouts and long, scrolling backgrounds. In the days to come students will shoot their film and then add music and vocals during the final editing process.

### **Transportation (Mr. Boocks)**

Students have been creating a “Mousetrap” vehicle. This is a mousetrap powered car. This first lab focuses the students on learning how to use the Band Saw, Chop Saw, Miter Saw, Miter Box, Sanding Table and other tools. Our primary focus is on safety and learning how to police our own classroom. The students have been doing an outstanding job thus far. Students will be moving on to a propellor powered vehicle in the very near future, and then on to a lighter than air vehicle.

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

Students have begun with an introduction to C.A.D.(Computer Aided Drafting) using Sketchup software, They designed a memoholder box, which they will shortly begin constructing. While doing so students will be learning Material Processing Lab safety and maintenance, proper use of tools and machinery and the role many different kinds of technology play in our world. Students will next move onto designing and fabricating notepads for the box. They will utilize Desktop Publishing software to achieve this goal.

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

Students have built a Lighter Than Air vehicle as a team project by fabricating a hot air balloon. When weather and time permit we will test and launch the balloons outdoors to see if students have overcome or correctly utilized various forces of flight (drag, gravity, lift, etc.). Students have already begun planning a trip and will soon be presenting specific information including transportation costs, housing, food, etc. as well as cultural or entertainment information about their destination through a combination of spreadsheets and Google Slides software.

### **8th Manufacturing(Mr.McAleese a.k.a. Mr. Mac):**

Following a few lessons on Desktop Publishing using Microsoft Publisher, students designed a two-character plaque of a personal nature (initials, team #, logo, etc.). This design was then taken into the Materials Processing Lab where students learned first about Lab safety and maintenance,

proper use of tools and machinery and the role many different kinds of technology play in our world. Next, they moved onto analyzing their letters for possible physical weakness when done in wood, and calculated and planned the best approach to laying out the letters, making relief cuts and actually cutting material on Band Saws, Scroll Saws, Drill Presses and Chop Saws as well as using various handsaws at some phase.

### **Counseling News - February**

February is always that time of year that the Counseling Department starts their preparations for the next school year. Half of the school year is behind us and before we know it, summer break will be here!

Counselors will be meeting with their students to disseminate information regarding the course selection process, student responsibilities and timeline. The 8<sup>th</sup> graders have been going through this process for the past two weeks and there should be lots of discussions going on at home too. :) Everything regarding the 8<sup>th</sup> grade Course Selection Process and Timeline can be located on the RLMS Counseling Department Grade 8 website. Use this link for a quick access to all the information, <http://fairfieldschools.org/schools/rlms/grade7counseling/>

From Tuesday, February 14<sup>th</sup> to Wednesday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>, the 8<sup>th</sup> graders will select their preferred electives and alternate choices via Infinite Campus. There is a helpful Course Selection Worksheet that all students were provided last week to assist them with this process. If they have misplaced their blue Course Selection Worksheet, you may print another one using this link, <http://schedn.fairfieldschools.org/schools/rlms/content/uploads/2015/10/Course-Selection-Worksheet-Courses-Available-to-FLHS-Ninth-Graders-2017.docx>

At this time, we also encourage parents/guardians to review their Infinite Campus parent portal. Please review and/update your Household Information and Family Members to make sure all addresses, email addresses and telephone numbers are current. Additionally, make sure your Contact Preferences and Notification Settings reflect your current needs.

Thank you for your time and attention!!!

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