

## **RLMS April Curriculum Corner**

### **Counseling News**

Welcome to our Spring edition of Counseling News. The Roger Ludlowe Middle School Counseling team is often asked for resources that are available for parents to help navigate through the world of middle school and for support when unexpected moments of real world difficulties take place. Below is a link to the ***American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry's "Fact for Families Guide"***. The guide provides resources on a variety of topics which include: adolescent development, peer pressure, grief, divorce and other information relevant to middle school. As always, please feel free to contact the Counseling Team directly for support at any time you deem necessary at 203-255-8343.

[http://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families\\_and\\_Youth/Facts\\_for\\_Families/FFF-Guide/FFF-Guide-Table-of-Contents.aspx](http://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Facts_for_Families/FFF-Guide/FFF-Guide-Table-of-Contents.aspx)

### **Crew 6 LMS**

Language Arts:

In LA, students have been working on a nonfiction reading unit throughout the past several weeks. Using a variety of thought provoking texts, students were asked to read with the following three questions in mind: What surprised me? - What did the author think I already knew? - What challenged, changed, or confirmed what I already knew? Reading with these big questions in mind, students were encouraged to take a critical, more attentive stance as they interacted with nonfiction texts. These three guiding questions became the foundation upon which text features, text structures, evidence, and word choice were examined to determine how effectively the author conveyed and supported his or her purpose.

Next up, students will be "springing" into a poetry unit! With a focus on author's craft and the deeper meaning found in poems, students will analyze, write, and share (through technology) a variety of poems throughout this highly enjoyable, creative unit.

Math 6 -

Math 6 is just finishing working with positive and negative numbers. They are about to start a new unit on statistics and distribution, including measures of central tendency.

### Math TPA -

Transition to Pre-Algebra classes are winding up a unit on geometry. They will begin understanding and operating with positive and negative numbers. They will learn how to work with negative numbers and also deepen their understanding of positive numbers.

### Social Studies -

The 6<sup>th</sup> grade Social Studies classes are in the process of finishing up the Ancient Greece unit of study. Students were able to take a close look at Greek Mythology, the Olympic Games, and the city-states of Athens and Sparta. Over the upcoming weeks, students will enter the great civilization of Ancient Rome who defeated the Ancient Greeks. During this time, they will extensively research a certain aspect of the Roman Civilization and complete a project on Ancient Rome to highlight their understanding.

### Science -

The grade 6 science students have moved out of the atmosphere to Inside the Restless Earth this month and we have many hands on interactive activities planned. In this unit they will be learning about the structure of the Earth and the forces that continually reshape the crust of our planet. The unit was kicked off with a nebula lab the students performed using everyday ingredients like coffee, salt, sand and cornmeal to mimic the layers of the Earth. The students will create a model of Pangea, use blocks to model the forces that move tectonic plates, and research a mountain to identify how it was formed.

### **Crew 7LM**

Language Arts: Students are continuing to work on their writing, revising, and editing skills. We're also focusing on crafting thesis statements and writing an argumentative essay, as well as responding to literature using text evidence to support ideas. Students will also close read challenging text of different genres, including poetry and short stories, and then craft their own creative pieces in a variety of genres.

### Math:

#### Pre-Algebra 7 – Three Dimensional Geometry and Volume

- Use Scale Models to solve problems
- Identify cross sections of three dimensional drawings
- Find Surface Area and Volume of Prisms and Pyramids
- How Prisms and Cylinders alike and how are they different

#### Math 7 – Two and Three Dimensional Geometry

- Use Scale Drawings to solve problems
- Draw shape to satisfy given conditions
- Identify cross sections of three dimensional figures

- Use angle pairs to solve problems
- Circumference and Area of circles
- Perimeter and Area of composite figure
- Surface Area and Volume of prisms

Science:

In April, 7th grade science will be finishing up the plant unit with an activity on invasive species and then starting the human body after April break. The human body units will begin with muscles and bones and students will work through worksheets, articles and labs related to the muscular and skeletal system.

Social Studies:

7th grade geography: April is an exciting month in Geography class. We wrap up our unit on Population and Standard of Living. Students learn about issues like life expectancy and child survival. Looking beyond that, students will begin an extensive unit on Human Environment Interaction. During this unit, students will put their persuasive abilities to the test by writing a persuasive paper about a hot topic in the field of the environment and how people interact with it. Some topics include invasive species, fracking, and deforestation.

### **8LMS**

Language Arts: language arts classes have begun our whole-class read of *Night*. Our active reading activities include read-alouds, developing and responding to open-ended discussion questions, identifying and crafting theme statements, looking at craft and symbolism, and considering how the events and facts surrounding the Holocaust impact our lives today.

Math PA:

The pre-algebra classes are finishing a unit on the Real Number System and The Pythagorean Theorem. After April break we will begin our unit on Exponent Properties and Scientific Notation.

Math Algebra:

In algebra we are completing our Polynomials unit. These concepts will then be applied to our unit on Quadratic Equations and Functions, which we will start after April break.

## Math Geometry:

In Geometry we have started our Trigonometry unit. We will use indirect measurement and the trigonometric ratios to find the height of various objects throughout town. After April break we will begin our unit on area, surface area, and volume.

Science: 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Physical Science classes are wrapping up physics by studying the design and construction of bridges and other structures. Next, we will begin chemistry by studying the physical and chemical properties of matter. Make sure you have closed-toed shoes and pants in school for labs!

## Social Studies:

8<sup>th</sup> grade social studies students will select and research an influential American from the 1950-1960s era of U.S. history. Using the research, they will develop an argumentative essay focusing on how their topic enhanced or inhibited the American Dream. Students will then design a thoughtful memorial, and presentation, to deliver to their classmates.

## World Language

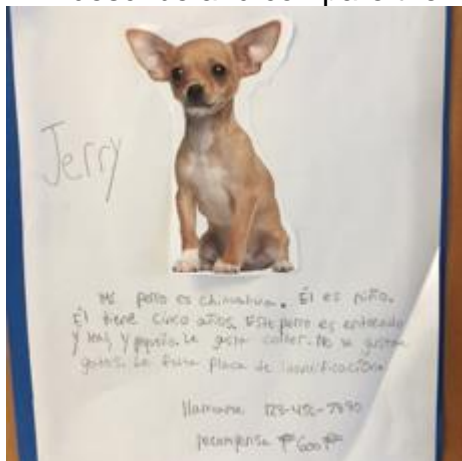
### French/Spanish

#### 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester the Essential Question has shifted from “Who am I?” to “How do family and community influence me?”

Sixth grade French and Spanish language students have been learning how to...

- identify and describe family members and friends
- compare family members and friends
- describe and compare the role of family pets in the target cultures and the U.S.



Students continue to describe personality traits and physical attributes as they explore professions. They are currently identifying and describing their parents' professions and

exploring future professions both in the U.S. and in the target cultures (Francophone countries and Latin America)

As we move toward the end of the year students will explore cultural celebrations and compare/contrast these to celebrations from their own families and/or traditions.

## **7th Grade**

We have been exploring “How I use my imagination” in Level 10 French and Spanish. Students have researched and presented target language cultures’ artists and musicians and their works. They have described these works and expressed their preferences and opinions about them. After April break, we will explore “What makes a travel destination special.” Students will investigate travel destinations in the target cultures and compare them to Fairfield. They will describe the weather and regional dishes there, as well as choose activities to do.

## **8th Grade**

We are finishing our unit on what “What does it mean to maintain a balanced lifestyle?” in Level 20 French and Spanish. After April break we will begin our unit on “What makes a person a hero or heroine”. Students will summarize events in a person’s life, discuss common characteristics of heroes and heroines, discuss why these people were considered heroes, and talk about how a hero influenced them.

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

## **Art**

6<sup>th</sup> grade - 6<sup>th</sup> grade art students are completing their water color flower paintings and beginning the process of their metallic drawing. This project will combine what the students have learned about composition, shading and color.

7<sup>th</sup> grade - 7<sup>th</sup> grade art students are completing the painting portion of their geometric designs in their color theory unit of study. Next, they will paint and embellish the mask form that they created at the start of the quarter.

8<sup>th</sup> grade 2D Art - 8<sup>th</sup> grade 2D students have completed their pen and ink compositions and continue to work on their acrylic painting. They have been using their knowledge of color theory and composition.

8<sup>th</sup> grade 3D - 8<sup>th</sup> grade 3D students have completed building their hand built coil pottery form and these projects are air drying. The students are working on the form of their animal sculptures.

## **Computer**

6<sup>th</sup> Grade Computers: Students have continued to learn more features of MS PowerPoint, such as inserting and editing pictures, changing the indent using the ruler, inserting action buttons, and copying formats using the format painter. They have learned all the tips and tricks of MS Paint, and then each student drew an original Future Me illustration. Independently, students have continued to practice their keyboarding skills using Typing Pals.

8<sup>th</sup> Grade Computers: Students have just completed a unit using MS Excel. Each student completed a data sheet and chart having to do with snowfall amounts in Connecticut over a decade. Skills learned included using functions such as SUM, AVERAGE, MIN, and MAX, changing the attributes of cells, columns, and rows, filling and stacking the bars, inserting comments, freezing panes, and adding and removing gridlines from the screen and printout. Each student also completed a second project using MS Publisher, which was to create a business card.

## **Family Consumer Science**

### **April - Foods Lab**

**Grade 6** - Students will enjoy a visit from Captain Kessler our Fire Chief of Fairfield. He will share his insights on Home & Life Safety. Students will utilize the RLMS Virtual Library to research the safety unit and complete their packets at home. Then it's off to baking a tasty and healthy cookie. Students will learn the standard units and proper measuring techniques.

**Grade 7** – 7th graders gain independence as they begin planning their Family Meal Projects. They are required to plan, shop, cook and CLEAN for their family breakfast. Students are so proud to complete this all by themselves! In April we will be cooking pancakes, omelets and breakfast turkey burgers. What fun!

**Grade 8** – Students will celebrate their successful learnings on pastry crust by enjoying their healthy apple pie with a lattice crust - WOW! 8th graders really have chef skills! After the break students will start learning how to use a food processor and how to make a healthy cake. Parents will get to sample their creations when students bring home a cake to share.

In the sewing lab: 6th grade: The 6th grade students are finishing up their bags and will practice using other features of the sewing machine to make projects



7th grade: The 7th grade students make a garment ~ boxer shorts. This project reinforces much of what they learned in 6th grade such as making a casing and 5/8ths seam. The emphasis is on reading and following directions.



8th grade: The 8th grade fabric art students have a variety of patterns to choose from. Their design decision is determined by their inspiration and is supported by color theory they learned in 7th grade Art. The students will create their design using Electric Quilt software and embellish their project using 5D embroidery software.

## **Health**

Health class with Mr Dickenson

GRADE 6 - When the new marking term begins we will be starting with Tobacco use prevention, and empathy. This will be followed by HIV and bullying.

GRADE 7- We will begin with eating disorders and tolerance and diversity - followed by alcohol.

GRADE 8 - We will begin with binge drinking and designer drugs. This will be followed by sexual assault prevention.

Health class with Mrs. Maline

6<sup>th</sup> – We are finishing up Puberty and will take the test this Friday. We will finish up the marking period with communicative diseases , stress mgt and anger mgt. The new marking period will begin with the friendship unit.

7<sup>th</sup> –. We are discussing Death and the circle of life, we will then discuss goal setting. A presenter from St. Vincent's hospital will be discussing why tobacco products and e cigarettes are products to stay away from. The new marking period will begin with body image and eating disorders.

8<sup>th</sup> - We are discussing Depression and suicide prevention and then will talk about stress management techniques and the value of learning to manage it. The new marking period begins with Healthy Relationships.

## **Music**

Band 6- we have been working on the concept of ear training during rehearsals. Ear training is the development of basic music skills from the aural perspective. Musicians use these skills all the time to tackle tasks such as making transcriptions of recordings, arranging music, and also improvising.

We began by using the context of the Bb scale to practice listening for simple melodic patterns and rhythms, and playing them back in an echo. Next we used common folk songs with the same process, and have just added an improvised component to our studies, as well.

Band 7 -

- Preparing for the spring concert
- Completing note reading/musical terminology assessments
- Preparing for the Memorial Day Parade
- Computer lab work on Finale music notation/writing software

Band 8 - The 8<sup>th</sup> Band will be attending a Clinic on April 5<sup>th</sup> at RLMS with the world renown John Phillip Sousa specialist- Keith Brion. We are preparing for our May 9<sup>th</sup> concert. The



students are compiling a video game presentation involving writing and editing music and video.

## Chorus

6<sup>th</sup> grade chorus: Preparations for the spring concert are well underway. This month, students have been focusing on memorizing song lyrics, rhythms and melodies to the concert selections. Vocal technique continues to be a focus in 6<sup>th</sup> grade chorus, as students have been practicing diaphragmatic breathing and voice placement strategies and applying those strategies to the literature. Auditions for the solo in “Everlasting Melody” took place this month and the turn-out was fantastic! Many students have volunteered to sing solos and duets in front of the class in March, which proved to be a useful “Master Class” experience for students to receive constructive criticism and feedback on their singing. Students who play instruments have volunteered to learn guitar and drum parts, so this should be an exciting concert in next month! In other news, several 6<sup>th</sup> grade chorus members who are also members of the RLMS Chamber Choir worked very hard this winter in preparation for the 2016 Fairfield Town wide Choral Festival which took place this month. Six hundred twenty nine students from grades five through twelve performed an hour-long concert at FLHS. What an amazing choral experience!

7<sup>th</sup> grade chorus: Preparations for the spring concert are well underway. This month, students have been focusing on memorizing song lyrics, rhythms and melodies to the concert selections. Vocal technique continues to be a focus in 7<sup>th</sup> grade chorus, as students have been practicing diaphragmatic breathing and voice placement strategies and applying those strategies to the literature. Auditions were held for solos in two of our concert songs, “Riptide” and “For Good.” The songs differ stylistically, which allows different singing styles to be featured in performance. Many students have volunteered to sing solos and duets in front of the class in March, which proved to be a useful “Master Class” experience for students to receive constructive criticism and feedback on their singing. Our student instrumentalists have the chance to shine as well as they’ve formed their very own rhythm section that will accompany the chorus on “Riptide.” These students have been practicing guitar, piano and drums in class while the chorus sings. In other news, several 7<sup>th</sup> grade chorus members who are also members of the RLMS Chamber Choir worked very hard this winter in preparation for the 2016 Fairfield Town wide Choral Festival which took place this month. Six hundred twenty nine students from grades five through twelve performed an hour-long concert at FLHS. What an amazing choral experience!

8<sup>th</sup> grade chorus: This month one of our concert selections, “All Ye Who Music Love” was replaced with “Brave” by Sara Barelleis. The 15<sup>th</sup> Century madrigal is a challenging four-part harmony piece that we have been learning for the spring concert, but being at a high school level, it wasn’t pulling together to be performance-ready by May. Students suggested “Brave” and it has turned out to become a class favorite! We are excited to add it to the program. Solo auditions were held this month and each number will feature singers for their last middle school concert. This month we were fortunate to have two former students who are now studying music in college come to RLMS to visit chorus classes and perform for our students. Diana Smith, RLMS class of 2005 and Jarred Hahn FLHS class of 2015 brought their instruments, songs and stories to share with chorus

classes. Jarred is the older brother of two of our current students, Davin and Camryn, who joined in the performance as well. What a talented bunch and a wonderful experience for our students! Chorus students are continuing to work on memorizing lyrics, adding more complex musical elements to concert selections and fine-tuning tone production skills during classes. In other news, several 8<sup>th</sup> grade chorus members who are also members of the RLMS Chamber Choir worked very hard this winter in preparation for the 2016 Fairfield Town wide Choral Festival which took place this month. Six hundred twenty nine students from grades five through twelve performed an hour-long concert at FLHS. What an amazing choral experience!



## **Keyboard**

6th Grade - Starting to work on improving speed and accuracy when reading and playing notes. Students start at basic level with 25 notes in Bass and Treble clefs. They are timed and graded on number of correct notes and how long it takes to name and play them.

In our Beginning Piano book, students start working at their own rate of comfort, with the goal of getting as far as they can before end of Marking Period 4.

7th Grade - Work on intervals, chords, theory elements continues including performance assessments. From now through end of Marking Period 4, each student works at their own pace and tries to get as far as they can in our Beginner Piano book.

8th Grade - April is Super Hero month. Students choose a song (Friday, 4/1) from *Superman*, *Rocky*, *James Bond*, or *Batman* to learn and perform. Assessments are based on notes, rhythms, fingerings, and level of effort. Clips from the movie scenes that use their chosen tune are viewed and analyzed.

## Orchestra

**Grade 6 orchestra:** We will continue to focus on technical skills and music reading skills using the Essential Elements book 1, bow technique and left hand skills. Also during lessons will continue working on the solos from Suzuki books but also certain parts of the orchestra pieces. Our main focus is still on different and challenging rhythm patterns, intonation, bow distribution, dynamics and more than anything ensemble skills and phrasing.

The orchestra pieces that we will perform on the Spring Concert are: “Fox In the Chicken House”, “Cello Rondo” and “Serenata Espagnola” and Brandenburg Concerto No. 5.

**Grade 7:** Main focus remain music reading skills using the Essential Elements book 2, bow technique and left hand skills. Small group lessons will focus on the solos from Suzuki books and will start the second round of performing solos in the beginning of each orchestra rehearsal.

The selections for the Spring Concert are: “Entrance of the Queen of Sheba”, “Orange Jam”, “Danny Boy”, “Harry Potter and the Goblet’s of Fire”.

**Grade 8:** Main focus remain on music reading skills using the Essential Elements book 2, bow technique and left hand skills. Small group lessons will continue working on solos from Suzuki books. Small group lessons will start the second round of performing solos in front of the class.

Selections for the Spring Concert are: “Pirates of the Caribbean”, “Finale from Mozart Symphony – Posthorn”, “Allegro In D”, “Ashokan Farewell”.

## Physical Education

During the month of April the Physical Education classes will be finishing up their units in Project Adventure and Archery while starting Volleyball. Our Hoops for Heart program was a success and we would like to thank all those students who raised money for the American Heart Association. We are looking towards warmer weather so we can get outside for some of our classes.

## Technology Education

8th Grade Communications Technology:

Students are working on their final project. This semester every student has elected to create a stop-motion film. For the last week we are completing final edits and inserting voices and music.

8th Grade Transportation Technology:

Students have just finished creating pneumatic rockets. These were designed to utilize fins to fly straight, and students were graded on a point by target system. This week we begin hydro-pneumatic rockets. These will be built out of 2 liter bottles. The focus on these rockets is ‘hang time’, seeing how long we can keep a rocket in the air.