

RLMS Curriculum Corner - November 2018

Cumulative Grading/Grade Posting Information

Your child's progress has been posted within your parent portal this week. The report cards on Infinite Campus will now be referred to as "Reporting Periods". The report cards on IC reflect our new cumulative grading process, and therefore will include different information than you may be used to seeing. For your child's full year classes, the grade represents a snapshot of the growth and progress your child has made in the first quarter of the year. Because these classes are cumulatively graded, the term grade does not represent a quarter of the assessments for the year and will not be weighted. Instead, it is meant as a progress indicator, and your child will have many more chances for growth and continued success as the year progresses. As always, contact your child's teacher if you have any questions. If your child has a quarterly class, the class grade you see is the final grade for the class. Students will be recognized for honors and high honors at the end of the year.

For more details on cumulative grading please see the attachment that was posted at the start of the school year.

[Cumulative Grading Information 18-19](#)

Counseling/Dean Curriculum Corner- Nov 2018

"80 percent of success is just showing up" —Woody Allen

In addition to academic skills, schools are a place where students learn important life skills as well. One skill that is highly correlated with future academic and occupational success is high rates of school attendance. The threshold for students leaving the home to attend school varies greatly between students. Factors that may impact a child's desire to attend school include social, medical, academic, and emotional issues. The best place for students to work on these issues is at school with the support of teachers, peers, counselors, and administrative staff. The following are important ways that a family can support a student's attendance:

- Encourage your student to enroll in activities in school and in the community that foster self-esteem, confidence, and social connections.
- Model responsible attendance with your own occupational, family, and community commitments.
- Ensure that your student gets the adequate sleep, exercise, and nutrition necessary for success in school.
- Validate your student's concerns related to school by listening. Encourage your student to take assertive steps to solve problems and to advocate for support from school staff and peers.

- Do not engage in lengthy conversations about the student’s concerns at the time they are expected to leave home for school. Keep the conversation short and reiterate the plan for the student to work on the issue with support at school.
- Enlist family and friends to express the importance of school attendance. Recruiting a friend to accompany your student to school can help with their transition away from home and to school.
- Reach out to your student’s teachers, administrative staff, and/or school counselor for consultation and support with issues occurring in school.
- Only excuse your student from school when there is an identifiable medical need to do so. Once your student believes that staying home is an option for non-medical reasons, they will be more likely to seek that option.

This is just a short list of strategies that are useful for supporting all students with their school attendance. Feel free to reach out to the Roger Ludlowe Middle School staff if you have further specific concerns and needs. The following is a useful handout as well:

https://attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Attendance_ESP1PG_English_062614.pdf

Kelly Cummings (6th grade counselor) kcummings@fairfieldschools.org

Karyn McNeil (7th grade counselor) kmcneil@fairfieldschools.org

Kate Harder (8th grade counselor) kharter@fairfieldschools.org

Kelly Renna (6th, 7th, & 8th grade counselor) krenna@fairfieldschools.org

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

Art Department

ART 6th:

6th grade art students are beginning the new quarter with an introduction to the principle of value. They are learning about various shades and tones, and how to apply different values in a drawing to show the illusion of 3D form on a 2D/flat surface. They will shade basic forms for practice, then choose an animal to draw for their final piece.

ART 7th:

The new quarter for 7th grade art students will begin with an introduction to color theory. Students will be learning and utilizing new color vocabulary, and learn how to mix and create new colors, which they will use to create a “kaleidoscope” painting. Emphasis will be placed on

color schemes, and learning how to mix desired colors and apply them through painting. This unit will take about 3-4 weeks, and then students will continue with a unit in 3D form.

2D ART 8th:

2D art students are embarking upon a drawing unit in pen and ink. They are learning and practicing a variety of mark making strategies and developing an understanding for how to create value and texture with ink. They will then select an image to reference to create a final pen and ink drawing using their acquired pen skills. This unit will continue for about 4 weeks.

3D ART 8th:

3D art students are beginning a unit in hand built coil pottery. They will be learning the process to create a balanced, unique, 3D form using clay coils. Coils will be stacked to create the walls of their vessel and then smoothed. Students will need to place coils strategically to achieve their desired design form. Additionally, students will be learning about the stages of clay in order to have a foundational knowledge of the material with which they are working.

Computers

COMPUTERS: Mrs. Walker

6th 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 are also learning 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.

8th Grade Computers:

Students are learning to code/program. We are progressing through the Lessons in the “Express Unit,” 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!

COMPUTERS: Mr. Boocks

6th Grade Computers :

Students began with an introduction to Typing Pals, an online typing skills training and practice software program. Each class starts with time spent typing ending with a Friday test of each successive skill level. Students are graded on Accuracy more than Speed although those with speed difficulty will be encouraged to try to move faster. Sections of class time are given over to

more general skills learning about various Google and Microsoft products by creating a Letter to an official or role model, collaborating on a class wide calendar project, and various other Graphic based projects.

COMPUTERS: Mr. McAleese (Mr. Mac)

6th Grade Computers :

Students began with an introduction to Typing Pals, an online typing skills training and practice software program. Each class starts with time spent typing ending with a Friday test of each successive skill level. Students are graded on Accuracy more than Speed although those with speed difficulty will be encouraged to try to move faster. Sections of class time are given over to more general skills learning about various Google and Microsoft products by creating a Letter to an official or role model, collaborating on a class wide calendar project, and various other Graphic based projects.

Family and Consumer Science

FOOD LAB: Mrs. Kempton

6th Grade:

Students begin learning the importance of Home and Life Safety. We will introduce our website on our RLMS homepage with exciting materials. Students will also get a visit from our town's Fire Chief, Captain Edmonson when he comes in as our guest speaker. The next unit is proper measuring techniques while exercising their kitchen math skills. Students will then bake a tasty and healthy cookie with their lab teams.

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 begin foods with making a roux for their cheese sauce and finishing up with homemade Mac & Cheese with broccoli. Then we use our stand mixers for making pizza dough with a fresh marinara sauce. We focus on independent cooking skills from omelets to grilling chicken. Cake decorating and our multicultural cooking projects will take place next month.

SEWING LAB: Mrs. Flashman

6th grade

The sixth graders are so pleased with their shoulder sack bags and mastery of the sewing machine. Some of them had time to make extra projects.



7th grade

Seventh grade students make boxer shorts. They have to measure themselves and follow a pattern.



Many make a pillow to match!

8th grade Fabric Art

Here are some of the quilts that students made in Fabric art this quarter. They are very proud of their work and now have an heirloom.



Someday Emma will have a chic apartment with this flamingo hanging on the wall.

Health Department

HEALTH - Mr. Dickenson

Health 6th: In November we will be learning about all forms of tobacco use including vaping. We will also learn about empathy, bullying and sexual harassment.

Health 7th: In November we will learn about eating disorders, diversity and tolerance, and alcohol.

Health 8th: In November we will learn about binge drinking, opioids, designer drugs (pills), and sexual assault,

HEALTH - Ms. Maline

Health 6th: We begin the marking period with a basic set of vocabulary that covers all areas of health. Our first unit will be the Friendship unit. Within this unit we cover: How to make friends- communication skills, identifying bad friendships, peer pressure, bullying/cyberbullying, and sexual harassment. Next we will begin the drug unit which will include; Marijuana, Inhalants, Alcohol and Tobacco-vaping.

Health 7th: We begin the marking period with a basic set of vocabulary that covers all areas of health. Students will be creating a Happiness Project. Topics this month will include; Self Talk, Self Esteem, Body Image , Eating Disorders, Popularity, Online Safety, Cyberbullying and Sexting.

Health 8th: We begin the marking period with a basic set of vocabulary that covers all areas of health. We begin with the topic of Perseverance and Resilience. Our first unit will be on Relationships which will include Healthy, Unhealthy and Abusive Relationships. Topics of Setting Boundaries, Sexual Assault, and Flirting will be covered.

Music Department

Music-BAND:

Band 6th: Mr. Jeffryes

The sixth grade Band students were wonderful on the field trip to Jazz at Lincoln Center. They learned about the truly American music style of Jazz. This concert focused on music of the Count Basie Band and featured the vocal style of Joe Williams. Students were yet again introduced to swing style which they will perform in their December Concert.

Band 7th:

The 7th grade band students took a fantastic field trip to New York City to see a concert in the Jazz for Young people series at Jazz at Lincoln Center November 2nd. The band students were introduced to the swing music of Count Basie and Joe Williams by the world class Jazz at Lincoln Center musicians - we had a great day!!

We currently working on a new scale: Concert Ab. as well as our music for the upcoming December concert which will take place on

Band 8th: Mr. Bilotta

We just finished our first marking period, and the students have been working very hard at learning their winter concert pieces. Several students have signed up to audition for the Western Region Middle School Music Festival and are preparing for the auditions on December 1st at Ponus Ridge Middle School in Norwalk.

We just took a trip this past Friday to Jazz at Lincoln Center in New York City. We watched an amazing performance by the Lincoln Center Orchestra and learned all about American jazz singer, Joe Williams. This was a wonderful experience for our students to get to see such a high caliber performing ensemble and at the prestigious Lincoln Center, nonetheless!

We just started two new motivational contests with the students as part of our *Bulldog Band Battles*. The first event is called Lesson Wars, and is a group competition to see which lesson group can earn the most points each quarter through lesson attendance. The second event is called Practice Pass, and is an individual competition where each student can earn points by doing various musical activities such as: practicing 60-120 minutes in a week and getting a parent signature, playing scales (even more points for memorized scales), recording their parts to band pieces and sharing them with Mr. Bilotta and more! Both of these competitions are meant to encourage students to attend lessons and increase their individual practice times and they can earn perks and rewards in the process to add to the fun!

Don't forget the winter concert is quickly approaching. The concert is on Thursday, December 13th at 7PM. I'm looking forward to meeting many of you there. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me: mbilotta@fairfieldschools.org

Check out the band website: rlmsgrade8band.weebly.com

Music-KEYBOARD: Mr. Albright

Keyboard 6th:

In November we will introduce Sight Reading as a concept, and start practicing it, eventually scoring and grading basic exercises. We will finish performing and learning our 1st level 1 song and begin working on our second song.

Keyboard 7th:

In November, we will further explore Sight Reading 4 measure exercises. Music Theory continues to be an area of focus. We will finish learning and performing our 2nd level 2 song.

Keyboard 8th:

In November we will finish learning and performing our 1st level 3 song. We will continue to work on Music Theory and Sight Reading skills. We will move into our third Garageband project combining specific piano notes for a melody track, chords for an acoustic guitar track, an assigned bass line, quantize the 3 tracks, and add a drum track to follow the quantized tracks.

Music-ORCHESTRA: Mr. Kroqi

Orchestra 6th: We are making a great progress on the preparations for the Winter Concert. We are working hard on all three selections, “Frosty the Snowman”, “Twilight Express” and “Cindy”. This will continue to be our main focus in the month of November. We are doing a lot more finger position exercises to help with the intonation.

Small group lessons attendance is also improving. Students are getting used to the routine of coming for lessons.

Orchestra 7th: We are making a great progress on the preparations for the Winter Concert. We are working hard on all four selections, “Twilight Express” , “Spartacus”, “Dona Nobis Pacem” and “Postcards From Russia”. This will continue to be our main focus in the month of November. We are doing a lot more finger position exercises and scales to help with the intonation.

Small group lessons attendance is also improving. This month, during the lesson, we basically will focus on the orchestra music.

Orchestra 8th: We are making a great progress on the preparations for the Winter Concert. We are working hard on all four selections, “Twilight Express” , “Spartacus”, “The Cold Of The Winter” and “Postcards From Russia”. This will continue to be our main focus in the month of November. We are doing a lot more finger position exercises and scales to help with the intonation.

Small group lessons: This month, during the lesson, we basically will focus on the orchestra music.

Educational trip (Austria-Slovakia-Germany):

The second payment installment for the Educational Trip to Austria (Vienna, Vorau, Graz, Hallstatt and Salzburg), Slovak Republic (Bratislava), and Germany (Munich) is due on 11/5/18.. Information regarding the trip (Itinerary, activities, payment schedule...), are posted on the RLMS Music Website. For more info, please feel free to contact me at anytime.

Music - CHORUS: Mrs. Lafond

<https://sites.google.com/a/fairfieldschools.net/rlms-music/chorus>

Chorus 6th: Students are working very hard in chorus to prepare for their first middle school concert coming up on Tuesday December 11th at 7:00 pm. Our program includes an African American Spiritual “The Storm Is Passing Over,” which is an impressive piece that will open the program in three part treble harmony. Next, we will perform a piece that is inspired by Mozart that opens with unison singing and turns into a four-part round called “A La Cart.” Our third selection will be a foreign-language piece called “Sisi Ni Moja” that includes a descant harmony, which will be performed by a small group and a beautiful piano accompaniment. We will close with a fun jazz arrangement of Jingle Bells, but in a 5/4 time signature called “Jingle Bell Swing.” Students have been practicing conducting 4/4 time signatures and 5/4 time signatures as we rehearse this number.

Chorus 7th: Students are really coming along on their concert preparations! Each day gets closer to memorization of notes and lyrics that we will perform on Wednesday December 12th at 7:00 pm. Our program includes three big numbers for the largest chorus in the school. We will open with “Oye,” which means “listen” in Spanish. The lyrics were written by children and are about having a voice and a message to share with the world, no matter how small or young you are. Our second number is “Winter Song,” a pop ballad written by Sara Bareilles and Ingrid Michaelson with a dramatic four-part ending. The final number is the classic Paul Simon song, “Bridge Over Troubled Water,” whose message about friendship is an important reminder at this time of year, or any time of year. Each number will be performed in three-part harmony, with several boys singing in the bass clef this year.

Chorus 8th: *“They say the neon lights are bright on Broadway!”* The 8th grade chorus has until Tuesday November 20th to turn in their permission slips, emergency forms and checks in order to reserve their ticket to see “COME FROM AWAY.” If you haven’t filled it out yet, please click on the link above, print, and have your child turn it in before the deadline.

The chorus is enjoying singing Queen’s “Somebody To Love” in class as we prepare for the winter concert. We are also preparing a Gospel number in four-part harmony called “Angels Watchin’ Over Me,” a fun holiday song titled, “Have a Merry Little Jingle” and a familiar favorite composed by John Williams from the movie Home Alone, “Somewhere In My Memory.”

Technology Education Department

TECH ED: Mr. Boocks

Technology Education 7th:

Our new batch of students is hitting the ground running and our first lab will be creating notepads! Students will be split between three teachers this year. In my classroom they will be making notepads, learning how to create technical drawings, exploring the systems model and completing small labs.

Communication 8th:

Students began working on a short, paper cutout film. They will be writing and designing their own film, and then shooting that film. We use a stop motion process to create the animations. Students will also be competing labs in programming, game design and electronic media over the next ten weeks.

Transportation 8th:

We started the semester with a refresher in Orthographic Projections. Students will be creating blueprints of every lab that they complete. They will also utilize the Systems Model to track each build. We will be building cars, rockets and aerostats this semester.

TECH ED: Mr. McAleese:

Technology Education 7th: (Mr.McAleese):

The class started out with a lesson in general safety in the Materials Processing Lab (MPL) and moved on to specific lessons on the proper use of each machine. As part of the Universal System Model, students will experience additive and subtractive manufacturing as they proceed through fabrication of a wooden memo holder. Additional machine lessons will be added as we progress through more and more complex projects. Students will later learn about 3D Drawing using a Computer Aided Drafting (CAD) program called Sketchup. They begin by drawing a nameplate to attach to their memo holder box. From my room they circulate through, learning more about the Universal System process, by moving on to Mr. Richards' class finishing finally with Mr. Boocks' class

Transportation Tech 8th (Mr.McAleese):

The class starts out with a lesson in general safety in the Materials Processing Lab (MPL) and moves on to specific lessons on the proper use of each machine. Additional machine lessons will be added as we progress through more and more complex projects. Students will draw up plans for a Mousetrap powered vehicle in the style of Engineer drawings, providing specific

constraints for their vehicles and labeling all of the parts of the drawing correctly. They will move to constructing their Mousetrap Powered Vehicles collaboratively while considering ideas about aerodynamics, weight reduction, friction reduction among others. From here students will design and build compressed air powered rockets, create a Powerpoint presentation about a dream vacation and build a final land based vehicle for testing before the end of the marking period.

Manufacturing 8th (Mr. McAleese):

The class starts out with a lesson in general safety in the Materials Processing Lab (MPL) and moves on to specific lessons on the proper use of each machine. Additional machine lessons will be added as we progress through more and more complex projects. Students will move to the computer lab with a lesson in graphic design utilizing Microsoft Publisher software to design a plaque of their initials or numbers or some meaningful graphic. They then advanced to the MPL to select wood, rough cut material, detail cut material and are now progressing to the sanding and finishing stages of the project. Students have been learning to use the various tools and machines throughout the MPL. From here through to the end of the marking period students will research and design their own final projects to be fabricated during the remaining time.

Technology Education 7th (Mr. Richards):

Students are beginning class with a series of activities intended to build their understanding of teamwork to the design, manufacturing and overall systems flow required for most projects. They work in various teams to develop class norms, evaluate and prepare notepads for production, all of the while developing both critical thinking and communication skills as they do short presentations and use rubrics to both assess themselves and their peers.

Physical Education: Mr. Cunningham, Ms. Delahunt, Ms. Glogan, Mr. Syrop

After two months of the fitness tests we are finally moving on to our first units (Floor Hockey, Project Adventure and Handball) All classes will rotate through each unit for 3 weeks. All students will complete all of these activities by the Holiday Break.



8LM Nov Update

Language Arts: Students in L.A. are reading short shared texts and viewing visual texts with a focus on developing and writing about theme. They are learning that theme is developed as they consider the characters' conflicts and what they learn and realize as they experience those conflicts. Students continue to learn grammar, usage, mechanics in weekly lessons.

Math PA: Students in Pre-Algebra are finishing up a unit on Congruence and Similarity, but will continue to study geometric concepts in their next unit on Angles, Polygons, and Using Similar Triangles. At the end of the month we will wrap up this unit and move on to a unit on Algebraic Functions, exploring how we determine if a relationship between two variables is or isn't a function.

Math Algebra: The Algebra classes are exploring Linear Functions in depth, using different forms to express these functions and analyzing the slopes of parallel and perpendicular lines. This unit includes an interactive motion sensor activity using graphing calculators and CBR devices, as well as a Logo Design mini-project. The following unit, which we will start after Thanksgiving, will be a study of Systems of Linear Equations.

Math Geometry: The Geometry students are completing a short unit on transformations in the coordinate plane before moving on to a unit on Triangle Congruence. Throughout these units, we will continue to add to our ever-growing list of definitions, postulates, and theorems, and we will continue to write geometric proofs.

Science: Students in 8th grade science classes are currently working on force and motion including the topics of gravity and Newton's laws of motion.

Social Studies: Next week students will begin a unit on Civil War and Reconstruction. In studying the causes of the Civil War, students will focus on how the North and South differed and how politics and ideologies led to the conflict. Reading Day of Tears by Julius Lester will be a highlight of the unit.

7LMS - Nov 2018

Language Arts: This month in 7th grade Language Arts students are engaging in writing formally about literature and independent practice in analytical reading, theory creation, and shared discourse. They will take the skills that they have developed in our analysis unit and take the next step to develop a solid formal explanation of their chosen theory. They will work through the writing process and apply lessons of revision. From there we will engage students in

a book group activity which students will have guided choice among a list of books from a variety of genres. Within this activity students will practice their own analytical skills and share those ideas in small groups and in writing.

Science: In November, we will be kicking off our Genius Hour where students will be devoting learning time to a topic of their choosing. This will continue on a bi-weekly basis throughout the second and third marking period. Additionally, we will be continuing our journey into the cell. Students will be diagramming DNA and discussing how cells make more DNA as well as more cells through mitosis. Finally, at the end of the month, we will begin our discussion of Genetics.

Social Studies:

Students in Geography are currently studying the question “Why does the Earth look the way it does?” We have learned about the different physical processes that shape the Earth over time, and the landforms and bodies of water that are created. Students have learned about and created contour maps of their own to help them understand the types of tools geographers use to study the topography of the Earth. Next, students will be exploring culture, cultural norms, and demographics to better understand the humans that live on this one strange rock.

Crew 6 LMS- Nov Update

Language Arts Grade 6 - Students are finishing their book club books and book club meetings. They have been engaging in discussion about character development with a focus on analyzing how the main character changes and determining what causes that change to happen. Throughout this unit, students have continued to work on their written responses to text utilizing the ACED strategy. Within the context of their writing, students are also continuing to practice using proper capitalization and are learning about complete sentences and fragments. To culminate this book club unit, students will work cooperatively with their groups to create a multimedia presentation that shows the character’s change and the cause, including multiple pieces of relevant and specific text evidence.

Math Grade 6 - Math 6 students will begin to explore some algebraic concepts as we will be starting a unit focusing on expressions and equations. Students will learn the abstract concept of a variable and learn to solve problems using variables to represent the unknown.

TPA students will begin to explore ratios, rates and proportional relationships. They will see the relationships between fractions, decimals and percent. Emphasis will be placed on applying these relationships to real world problems.

Social Studies Grade 6 -Grade 6 Social Studies students are in the process of completing the “Seeds of Change” webquest on the agricultural revolution. Students will create a written response on what were the positive consequences of agricultural development for humans. We will also be in the beginning of studying our first region, North Africa & Southwest Asia. Students will be learning about the physical geography, such as river systems, mountains, deserts, climate, etc. They will explore the history of Ancient Mesopotamia and Ancient Egypt with focus on the traits of a civilization. Through activities and our discussions, students will be exposed to the various cultures of this world region.

Science Grade 6- The 6th Grade Science classes have finished the Scientific Method unit and have started our unit on the atmosphere and weather. The students will be able to describe the atmosphere’s composition and explain how pressure and temperature are related to altitude. They will discover how the atmosphere can be divided into four layers based on temperature changes at different heights and having them create a model while practicing graphing skills. We will study the circulation of energy in the atmosphere and the greenhouse effect, as well as how global winds impact weather and climate. The students will also have the opportunity to complete a quarterly “independent study”. This a project where they get to choose any topic relating to science that interests them. The students will research their topic and then choose what type of “end product” they will share.

World Language - Nov 2018 Curriculum Update

French/Spanish

6th Grade Level 10A Spanish and French

Sixth grade Spanish and French students are learning vocabulary for different extracurricular activities. They are expressing what they like and don’t like to do. Students will also compare typical extracurricular activities in the United States with those of their target culture.

7th Grade Level 10B Spanish and French

Students continue to practice and improve upon their interpretive and communicative skills in the target language through a variety of listening, reading, speaking and writing tasks related to school and free time activities. They can now talk about what they feel like doing with their peers and make plans stating where and when. The 10B students are comparing and contrasting a typical day at school and weekend activities of students from their target culture.

8th Grade Level 20 Spanish and French

Eighth grade Spanish and French students are finishing their projects about their target culture cities. Next, they will be learning how to get around a city. Students will follow and give directions to different places in a city. In order to do this, Google maps and navigation in the target language will be used. Students will give directions to get around Fairfield as well as their target cities.