

RLMS Curriculum Corner - January 2019

Counseling/Dean Curriculum Corner- January 2019

Happy New Year from the RLMS Counseling Team! We begin 2019 with a continued focus on optimizing student wellbeing here at RLMS. As the cold of winter nudges us toward rest and inside activities, consider that an essential health-giving part of our day is the night time.

Sleep...a “powerful restorative process that helps better functioning both physically and emotionally. It helps us consolidate and form memories and has a direct effect on attention and behavior”.. all are important for health and academic success.

Sleep is “free” and it comes naturally for many people however not everyone manages to get the recommended quota of sleep, which is 7 to 9 hours, a night. When kids wake up feeling grumpy, unhappy or just exhausted after not having a good night’s sleep, it goes without saying that they are likely to struggle to be their best in school.

Here are some helpful tips for improving sleep, including some habits that support restful sleep:

- **Routine** - Aim to establish a regular routine before bedtime. It is most effective to go to bed roughly at the same time with the same routine preceding bedtime every night (brushing teeth, reading, listening to soft music etc.) Consider that kids are different and finding a routine that works for one child may not work for another.
- **Winding Down** - The goal is to go to bed already feeling drowsy. Most days for middle schoolers are busy, knowing how to relax and wind down is important. It is difficult to fall asleep after stimulation from television, video games and texting. The bedtime routine should involve some screen-free time before bed, (at least 1 hour) to help teens unwind.
- **Environmental Factors** - The bedroom should be dark and without distractions. The blue light emitted from technology devices stimulates the brain and inhibits melatonin production which is the hormone needed for sleep. All technology devices should be kept out of the bedroom to avoid distraction (or use) during sleep hours. This may be difficult to change if already a habit, however, consider how technology during the evening hours may be impacting your child’s restorative sleep.
- **Consistency** - One of the biggest obstacles to getting kids to fall asleep is inconsistency. Once a routine has been established, help them stick to it.. predictability itself is soothing to children. Teens can also learn self-soothing techniques that can help them relax and

fall asleep (calming strategies; music, relaxation breathing etc.), which can be incorporated into their bed time routine.

*If your child is having a difficult time falling asleep or staying asleep and a consistent routine is not working, it is always a good idea to consult with your pediatrician.

**To read more on tips for teens and good sleep habits go to: www.childmind.org

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7LMS - Jan 2019

Language Arts: Students will be moving into closely reading non-fiction articles to determine positive v. negative vocabulary, main idea, and intentional and unintentional bias in preparation for argumentative writing.

Math: Pre Algebra 7 - Students will be working on two & three dimensional geometry and will be introduced to the Pythagorean Theorem. Student will continue to build upon 6th grade concepts of perimeter and area of polygons and explore volume and surface area of right prisms and polygons in depth.

Math 7 - Students will be working on proportions, ratios, rates and unit rates. The main goal is for students to be able to recognize mathematical characteristics of proportional situations and to identify, represent and interpret such relationships.

Science: In January, 7th grade science will be continuing our exploration of the cell by looking at cellular movement. We will be conducting a lab to show how water molecules move in and out of a cell. We will begin our new evolution unit and explore along with the students.

Social Studies:

An Nou Fericit! În această lună, RLMS Geographers vor începe să studieze cultura și populația! Geografia nu se referă numai la învățarea locurilor pe o hartă; este vorba despre înțelegerea

complexității peisajului uman și a diversității culturale largi care există pe Pământ. În plus, vom fi la finalul școlii din 2019 National Geographic Geography Bee!

Happy New Year! This month, RLMS Geographers will begin studying culture and population! Geography is not just about learning where places are on a map; it's about understanding the complexities of the human landscape and the broad cultural diversity that exists on Earth. Additionally, we will be holding the school final of the 2019 National Geographic Geography Bee!

8LM Jan Update

Language Arts: Students are concluding their work in looking at various perspectives in literature; they have been rewriting a portion of a picture book of their choice in order to combine their use of non-fiction research and their own creative writing in a way that conveys a perspective of a character whose story is untold. During January we will move into our personal narrative unit. Students will read short shared personal narratives, book length memoirs and write their own personal narrative.

Math PA: In Pre-Algebra, students are continuing to study linear relationships, using slopes and intercepts to establish shortcuts for graphing that don't require making a table. Students will also use different forms of linear equations and write equations from graphs, tables, and word descriptions.

Math Algebra: The Algebra students are beginning to learn the properties of exponents and how to use them to simplify exponent expressions. Then, students will learn how scientific notation allows us to express large and small numbers in a succinct way. Finally, the students will prepare for and take a mid-year exam, which will be a great way to review and reinforce all of the concepts we have learned so far this year.

Math Geometry: The Geometry class is wrapping up our study of writing indirect proofs. The class will then prepare for and take a mid-year exam before moving on to the next unit on similarity in polygons, with a focus on similar triangles.

Science: The 8th grade science students are beginning to study electricity and magnetism. They are conducting experiments to explore static electricity, lighting bulbs, circuits, conductivity and magnetism.

Social Studies: Students in grade 8 Social Studies are currently analyzing the impact of Reconstruction on the nation after the Civil War. They will present their findings in an essay,

How Successful was Reconstruction? Mid-January students will begin a new unit, The Development of Industrial America (1870-1900). They will conduct an independent research project to create a museum exhibit for the project *Promise, Problems, Progress*.

Crew 6 LMS- Jan Update

Language Arts Grade 6 - Students are now immersed in writing their first literary essay focusing on character change using a student selected short story. Using “Shells” by Cynthia Rylant as a mentor text, students are learning the prerequisite skills necessary for crafting a well-written literary essay. Some of the skills that will be modeled in class include writing a clear controlling idea, integrating direct quotations, and culminating with a strong conclusion.

Math Grade 6 - Math 6 is continuing to work on different aspects of geometry. We will examine what we have already learned and apply those concepts to 3 dimensional figures. We will be working on new geometric concepts such as volume and surface area. Once we complete our unit on geometry we will be moving on to ratios and rates.

TPA - TPA classes are working on our unit on proportions and will take a more in depth look into percent. We will be looking into a variety of ways to solve a percent problem then explore percent increase and decrease. We will be working on items such as discounts, markups and simple interest. After completing the unit on percent we will move onto applications of geometry.

Social Studies Grade 6 -In 6th grade Social Studies, students are wrapping up Unit 2 on Southwest Asia and North Africa by discussing some modern day issues in this region. We will be starting our next unit of study, Europe. By the end of January, students will begin the Ancient Roman and Greek Research Project. This is a very important project in which students will be learning the research process in order to write an informational essay, create a visual project, and to present the topic of choice to their class and at the crew fair.

Science Grade 6- The 6th grade scientists are busy investigating the fundamental principles of meteorology and weather forecasting. They are learning about clouds, air masses and fronts, severe weather and weather forecasting. The students will begin a severe weather research project, becoming an expert on a hurricane, comparing their data with other hurricanes, and presenting their findings to the class.

World Language - Jan 2019 Curriculum Update

French/Spanish

6th Grade Level 10A Spanish and French

As we move into the second half of the school year, students can not only describe their preferences as they relate to extra-curricular activities, but they can provide key Why? When? Where? With whom? detail. After learning how to describe their own physical characteristics sixth-graders will soon incorporate personality traits. As students move beyond the overarching question: 'Who Am I?' they will be able to identify, describe, and ask about family, friends, and pets in the target language.

7th Grade Level 10B Spanish and French

Students are able to list typical musical instruments in the U.S. as well as the target culture. We have begun investigating artists, musicians and genres of music and art in the Spanish and French speaking world.. The learners are able to express their opinions about a wide variety of artwork and music as well as make comparisons with their own culture.

8th Grade Level 20 Spanish and French

Students are continuing to define the meaning of responsible consumerism. They are examining how a responsible consumer could maintain a healthy environment. Students will reflect on how their habits affect the environment and give suggestions to others on how to reduce, reuse and recycle. As a culminating project, they will create a public service announcement about the importance of considering the environment as a consumer.

UA- Art/Computer/FCS/Health/Music/PE- Jan 2019 Update

Art Department

ART 6th:

6th graders are finishing up the marking period with a unit in 3D sculpture. We are studying the artist, Alberto Giacometti, and using a variety of sculpting materials to construct a piece in his style. Students will also be utilizing their creative skills to write an accompanying story that reflects the pose of their sculpture, and they will present these in class

ART 7th:

7th graders are wrapping up their 3D sculpture unit, and will be moving on to a final drawing unit in self-portraiture. They will learn about the proportions of the human head/face, and learn

how to draw facial features and shade to accurately represent themselves in a portrait. On January 11th, students will be taking a field trip to the New Britain Museum of American Art, where they will tour the museum, learning about artistic dialogue and critique, and also reinforcing their knowledge of color theory. For more about the museum, please see here: <http://www.nbmaa.org/>

2D ART 8th:

2D art students are in the final stages of their acrylic paintings. They have been mixing paint colors to match sources, painting in backgrounds and utilizing various painting techniques. Students will continue working on these paintings until the end of the marking period. Additionally, students have been working independently on finishing their pen and ink drawings, which are due by Jan. 11th

3D ART 8th:

3D artists are now in the process of applying glazes to their bisqueware ceramic pieces. After many weeks of constructing their pottery, they are now finally ready for glazing. In addition to glazing, students are also constructing a relief sculpture made from 3D paper shapes, which are hot glued to create a 3D composition. All projects are due on January 16th.

Computers

COMPUTERS: Mrs. Walker

6th Grade: Students are completing their All About Me presentations using PowerPoint, and will present to the class on the last day of the marking period. We also created a document using Excel called Birthdays. Finally, we are completing the exercises in Typing Pals, so we will know how to keyboard correctly for the rest of our lives. Some of us will also have time to learn how to type properly using the numeric keypad.

8th Grade: Students are continuing to learn to code/program using CODE.ORG. We alternate between completing the on-line lessons using CODE.ORG, and working independently on our own projects, which have been sensational.

COMPUTERS: Mr. Boocks

6th Grade Computers :

Students are finishing with their typing assessments, only one sub-test and then the finals! This class will be finishing the semester with MS Paint, Word and the combining Word and Excel in one project. This class is a week ahead of the curriculum and have been doing a fantastic job of getting all projects completed and turned in before the deadline!

COMPUTERS: Mr. McAleese (Mr. Mac)

6th Grade Computers :

Students are finishing with their typing assessments, with their final test next week. The focus is on accuracy and students are able to access the program from home so they can practice, practice, practice. This class will be finishing the semester with some 3D computer Assisted Drawing, or CAD and if time allows will be printing keychains on our 3D printers. This class is a week ahead of the curriculum and have been doing a fantastic job of getting all projects completed and turned in before the deadline!

Family and Consumer Science

FOOD LAB: Lori Kempton

6th Grade: After learning “How to read a food label” students have been grocery market detectives to find healthy options. Thank you parents for all the e-mails!

Now they will assemble and bake off their Veggie Quesadillas (peppers & grape tomatoes) to share their healthy snack with their classmates. Then students hone in on knife skills and safety techniques as they prepare their favorite Apple Crisp.

7th Grade: Students practiced their knife skills and sauteed peppers and onions. They will use the veggies to make an individual omelet and enjoy with their lab teams. Students will also be making scrambled eggs and toast as they practice the importance of a healthy breakfast. Their confidence for individual cooking becomes more concrete during this time. Students will present their Family Meal Projects to the class next week.

8th Grade: Students have been working hard to plan their Multicultural Cuisine Projects. For this project students choose a country, a recipe, create the grocery list with costing out the items while remaining on a budget. Then students prepare and cook off their recipes they choose and present projects the class. We will enjoy learning about 4-5 new countries and sample the food from that origin. As the new marking period begins, students will begin with making a roux and a healthy Mac and Cheese with broccoli.

SEWING LAB: Mrs. Flashman

6th grade:



It is very challenging for six graders to learn the sewing machine as well as ironing. Step-by-step they do a great job.

7th grade: The students enjoy making extra projects after completing the step that has been demonstrated for the period. Many made Christmas gifts.



8th grade Fabric Art:



The students in 8th grade enjoy the freedom and creativity available to them now that they're accomplished sewers. Katie loves the hunger games and is making a quilt themed on this using a variety of mediums including quotes which are iron on transferred, the hunger games pin digitized and embroidered as well as creating the motif applied to fabric.

Health Department

HEALTH - Mr. Dickenson

Health 6th: The final few weeks of the marking term we will be learning about puberty and the reproductive systems, inhalants, risky behaviors, and finishing up with marijuana.

Health 7th: We will finish up with conflict resolution, coping with death/loss, birth, and family communication.

Health 8th: The last 2 weeks we will finish with coping with depression, suicide prevention, marijuana, and a review of vaping.

HEALTH - Ms. Maline Finishing Marking period 2

6th Grade : We will begin the Puberty unit, (I sent more detailed information in Messenger.) and there will be a test on this. Afterwards, we will discuss Communicative diseases including HIV/Aids and then stress management techniques.

7th Grade : We will be taking the Diversity test and will begin the Family life unit. We will review Puberty, discuss pregnancy, and the cycle of life including discussions on death. I am very much aware that this can be a particularly sensitive topic for some. I can be reached by email for any concerns you may have.

8th Grade : During the last 2 weeks of the marking period will be finishing up our Who I am presentations and taking the Alcohol unit test. We will then cover Depression /Suicide prevention and stress management techniques.

Music Department

Music-BAND:

Band 6th: Mr. Jeffryes

After a very successful first middle school concert, the 6th grade Band students are playing in new keys (F, Bb, Eb, Ab), and new meters (4/4, 3/4, 2/4, and cut time 2/2). In lessons, each instrumental group is extending their range both low and high. Many of the groups have already started learning their chromatic scale. New rhythmic challenges include syncopation in songs such as “You’re A Grand Old Flag” from their new method book entitled: Essential Elements Book 2. Students are also receiving copies of new Band music which include: Coldwater Creek, Handclap, Happy, Eclipsys, and Top Secret. Instruments should be coming home regularly as there is so much music to practice!

Band 7th:

I was so proud of the 7th grade band at our concert last month and I thank you all for your support at home encouraging your students with their musical studies, providing them with the supplies they need, and coming to support the band at our performance!

I have handed out a number of new pieces of music and we are currently working on learning about the topic of cut time music (counting, enumerating, and playing) through a calypso tune you may have heard before called “Jump In the Line”. We are also learning new scales - some of which will be on our Spring scales test: Ab Major, C major, G minor, and Chromatic scales. When looking at these scales, we are beginning to see at how they fit within the context of the Circle of Fifths.

Jazz band rehearsals are off to a great start and it is so exciting to see the creativity and energy each student brings to this smaller ensemble!!

Have a great January and don't hesitate to reach out with any questions!!

Band 8th: Mr. Bilotta

Happy new year! I would like to say thank you to each and every one of you who came out to our winter concert last month. I am so proud of our students and all they have achieved so far this year. We are now shifting gears and beginning to work on our spring concert music. Jazz Band rehearsals have also begun and the students are already sounding great!

One area we are always looking to improve upon is our lesson attendance and practicing at home. Any support you can give your child in these areas is greatly appreciated. As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me. I'm looking forward to a productive 2019 working with your children!

Contact Mr. Bilotta: mbilotta@fairfieldschools.org

Band website: rlmsgrade8band.weebly.com

Music-KEYBOARD: Mr. Albright

Keyboard 6th:

We begin to focus on playing etudes using both hands together. Our goal for this month is to master Beyer Etudes #1 - 10.

Ferdinand Beyer was a German composer and Pianist. Well known in his day for his piano arrangements of popular orchestral works, he is now mainly known for his book *Beginning Piano School* or (Elementary Instruction Book for the Piano).

Keyboard 7th:

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Keyboard 8th:

We begin to focus on playing etudes using both hands together. Our goal for this month is to master Beyer Etudes #1 - 10...and by June #30

Ferdinand Beyer was a German composer and Pianist. Well known in his day for his piano arrangements of popular orchestral works, he is now mainly known for his book *Beginning Piano School* or (Elementary Instruction Book for the Piano).

Music-ORCHESTRA: Mr. Kroqi

Orchestra 6th: After a successful performance at the Winter Concerts, grade 6 orchestra will focus on music reading skills, notation and music theory. Students will start working on the new book - "Sound Of Innovations" and scales. Orchestra will also start a new piece "Mystical Quest". Small groups will focus more on scales and solos from Suzuki books. Students should bring instruments home regularly! Please ask your child to practice every day for a minimum of 20 minutes.

Orchestra 7th: After a successful performance at the Winter Concerts, grade 6 orchestra will focus on music reading skills, notation and music theory. Students will start working on the new book - "Sound Of Innovations" and scales. Orchestra will also start a new piece "Mystical Quest". Small groups will focus more on scales and solos from Suzuki books. Students should bring instruments home regularly! Please ask your child to practice every day for a minimum of 20 minutes.

Orchestra 8th: After a successful performance at the Winter Concerts, grade 8 orchestra will focus on music reading skills, notation and music theory. Students will start working on the new book - "Essential Elements". The main focus of the book is positions, third position for violins and violas. Third and fourth position for cellos and bass. We will intensify also the work Theory of Music (Intervals, Key signatures, meter, music symbols...). Orchestra will also restart working on "Harry Potter Suite", and "Jupiter". Small groups will focus more on scales in third position, vibrato and solos from Suzuki books. Students should bring instruments home regularly! Please ask your child to practice every day for a minimum of 20 minutes.

Music - CHORUS: Mrs. Lafond

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

Chorus 6th: Happy New Year! This month chorus students are learning about different genres of music and how to program concert repertoire by mixing styles, tempos and textures to create a fun, exciting concert program. Students are given the opportunity to offer song suggestions and help design their spring concert program. Students will learn score navigation and note names by reading and analyzing the sheet music to a wintry song called “Hot Cup Of Cocoa.”

Chorus 7th: Happy New Year! This month chorus students are learning about different genres of music and how to program concert repertoire by mixing styles, tempos and textures to create a fun, exciting concert program. Students are given the opportunity to offer song suggestions and help design their spring concert program. The 7th grade chorus curriculum emphasizes multicultural music and pop music. Students are having fun as they learn Bob Marley’s “Three Little Birds” as one of their concert selections! Students are learning harmonies to this song through the use of solfege.

Chorus 8th: Happy New Year! This month chorus students are learning about different genres of music and how to program concert repertoire by mixing styles, tempos and textures to create a fun, exciting concert program. Students are given the opportunity to offer song suggestions and help design their spring concert program. Students are focusing on solfege and singing the classic standard “Blue Moon” this month to practice sight reading and score navigation.

Technology Education Department

TECH ED: Mr. Boocks

Technology Education 7th:

The students have had an outstanding semester and are finishing strong! For the remainder of the semester students will be completing lateral thinking challenges to problem solve. They will be coming home and talking about their lab challenges, please discuss these challenges with them at home and help to inspire ideas!

Communication 8th:

This class will be finishing the semester building and programming Lego robots. They have had an extremely strong semester and hopefully you have heard about the board game that they made, and seen the movies that they have created. The Lego robots we use rely on the NXT platform and students will be learning to build, follow very specific directions and write basic coding.

Transportation 8th:

Students have just finished creating Aerostats. They took the design challenge into their own hands and created the largest balloon this classroom has seen to date! The lab was entirely student driven with very little need for input from their teacher. Our last lab is rocketry. Students will be designing and building rockets that rely on fins for straight flight. We will be looking at momentum and laminar flow and how the two work together to form the perfect (or not so perfect) flying machine.

TECH ED: Mr. McAleese:

7th Technology Education (Mr.McAleese):

This is the final rotation through all 3 Tech Ed 7th grade teachers and in my class, students are progressing quickly through the production phase of their memo holder boxes. Students designed and manufactured pads with Mr. Boocks and are now making the boxes to hold the pads with me. The next steps are on to staining, assembling and finishing with polyurethane. All the while students have been modeling the Universal System Model learning how technology is used in design and manufacturing to create products.

8th Transportation Tech (Mr.McAleese):

Nearing the end of a very busy semester students have fabricated, tested and operated Hot Air Balloons, Mousetrap Powered land vehicles and Water Pressure propelled bottle rockets. Each step along the way presented different challenges specific to the manner of transportation. For the final project students are designing a Fantasy Trip to a place of their choosing and will present to the class a Powerpoint Slideshow. The Trip must include a spreadsheet itemizing costs for travel, room and board, and excursions, as well as a Chart showing the Big picture of the costs. Finally, the trip must include three different modes of transportation showing their understanding of Intermodal Transportation.

8th Manufacturing (Mr. McAleese):

Students have now used the chop saw, band saw, miter saw, miter box, scroll saw, drill press and various sanding machines and tools to complete a myriad of Independent projects ranging from gumball machines, to skateboards, letter plaques for the Library, custom shelving and others.. Some students have gone further in their Independent projects and used the biscuit cutter, the jig saw, and various specialty bits and tools. The final steps are staining, assembly and packaging.

Students who finish early with their independent projects will be taking on smaller projects to round out the class such as design and fabrication of a pair of dice, or a nameplate or picture frame. All students will be drafting up drawings of their Independent Projects along with

material lists and step by step instructions as an analysis of how well their design worked (part of the last stages of the Universal System Model...or design Loop).

Technology Education 7th (Mr.Richards):

Students are working in groups to demonstrate an understanding of the Universal Systems Model(USM), which is used to model complex Technology processes. Pupils are working in teams, where they are using variety of skills that include summarizing, presenting and evaluating. They are doing this task by creating lessons showing how USM is truly *universal*, as it can even be readily applied to situations and technologies of their own choosing. In a few days they will also be using these skills as they work on notepad projects that combine this understanding with both design and computer-based skills.

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

The PE first winter rotation is underway. Students in all three grade levels are participating in indoor soccer, project adventure, and collaborative games Some sixth grade classes are receiving instruction in our state of the art fitness center. The emphasis is on developmentally appropriate resistance training as well as cardiovascular endurance training. Additionally, students will learn proper technique and form as well as safe use of the weight and cardiovascular machines.