

St. Eugene School

Middle School News

From Mrs. Webster

Algebra One

The eighth graders are off to a great start in both their enthusiasm and responsibility. We have spent much of these first few weeks of classes working on how to learn math. We learned how to be active learners and to connect new ideas to those we already know. We explored how to represent math ideas with numbers, with variables, with words and with pictures. We discussed expecting, respecting and inspecting our mistakes. We are learning to balance our effort and ease to challenge ourselves without frustration. It's all about learning in a variety of ways and taking responsibility for our own learning!

Please find time to read the Algebra handout from parent night so you can better understand my expectations, methods and grading policy. It would be great if parents would also find the time to look through their student's math binder and ask questions about what they are doing and why. Please focus on the positive! If you haven't already, ask your child to show you their Algebra textbook on the iPad. It is truly an amazing resource. Students have so

many different tools and modes for learning that it is mind boggling. I will ask parents to sign their child's first chapter packet so they can show you how we are organizing our work.

Technology

Sixth graders spent their first weeks of technology classes setting up their email accounts and learning some iPad basics. They have learned how to use apps to complete assignments, use a quiz response system called Socrative, complete worksheets using PDF Expert and turn in homework assignments via Google Classroom.

In conjunction with these tech skills, I also have 6th graders once a week for Power Hour where we focus on their organizational skills. We have looked at their organization of lockers, books, folders and iPads and each student has set their own organizational goals. All students should have labelled accordion folders for organizing any papers they have. They should not have loose papers in their lockers, backpacks or bedroom floors. We will work on setting personal goals and improving these skills.

Seventh graders will spend a good deal of time this year focusing on personal finances and spreadsheets. Their first assignment is to track how they spend money for two months. They set up a spreadsheet on their iPads to keep this data. Last week, they did an online interested survey which will help them to determine a possible future career which they will research in depth.

Eighth graders began the year by exploring an important new piece of technology - their TI 84 calculators. As a math teacher, I always try to emphasize first the importance of learning to do calculations themselves and to not rely too much on calculators. However, once they are secure in knowing how to do the calculations, they should learn to use calculators as a time saving device. They were given a list of skills and exercises to do over several weeks. They worked on them both at home and in class. They also shared ideas with classmates using a closed online forum in Google Classroom.

Math Challenges

Our MathCounts program for 7th graders starts this week! I am so happy to see so many enthusiastic participants. Next week on September 28, the 8th grade veterans will be joining us as well. Also, 7th and 8th graders were invited to participate in the Marquette High School Fall Math Meet on October 15. I still have a few places open if anyone else wants to join us. There is no better way to grow your math brain than by exploring these types of challenge opportunities.

Middle School Parent Survey

Thank so much to all of the parents who responded to our online parent survey. I

really thought your answer were insightful and will help us to create a better learning environment for you child. I particularly loved many of the goals you have for your child. I plan to make a spreadsheet of all of them and adopt them as my goals too! If you did not respond to the survey yet, you can still do so by clicking on the following link: <https://goo.gl/forms/k9so4R1aOFVEpFOP2>.

From Ms. Luangrath

Welcome back to another great school year! I hope your summer was relaxing and enjoyable. It was great to meet some of you at Parent Night and to see some familiar faces again! Hopefully you were all able to read through my syllabi to see what's in store for Math and Science. If you ever have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me. I look forward to a great year with you and your student!

Retest policy

I just wanted to reiterate my retest policy. If a student gets below 80% on quizzes and below 60% on tests, they will need to take a retest. They will fill out a form, do extra practice, and get a parent signature. Only one retake will be given for each concept. If a student was above the minimum required score, they will not be required to retake, but they are welcome to if they'd like. They would still need to fill out a form, do extra practice, and get a parent signature.

Math Joke: Why should you never talk to pi? Because he'll just go on forever!

Judo Math

My Math classes this year will be run with a Judo Math design! Within this system, students advance to the next belt level as they master concepts (get an 80% on a quiz), and then start “training” for the next belt. If students don’t reach our 80% goal—which is fine since everyone learns at their own pace—he/she goes through the retake policy stated above. This is a great way for me to differentiate within my classroom, and the ending goal is that the each student individually strives to become a black belt without worrying about what belt color their classmates are on. Please refer to my syllabus for more information, and don’t be afraid to ask if you have any questions!

6th Grade Math

After spending the first week getting situated with being in middle school, the 6th graders are ready to go and are cruising right along. We’ve already all made it to our yellow belts by mastering opposites, integers, and the coordinate plane. Now, we are working on our orange belt by covering absolute value, prime factorization, greatest common factor, and least common multiple.

7th Grade Math

The 7th graders are off to a strong start working with integers and expressions. We’ve reviewed our integer operations, three properties (associative, commutative, and distributive), and have used those pieces of knowledge to simplify variable expressions. This is a big concept because it will come into play later when we solve equations. After we wrap up with a summative test on those concepts, we’ll focus on fraction operations (involving negative integers) starting next week.

Intro to Algebra

The 8th graders started off this school year with a bit of a review chapter to get them into the swing of things again. We reviewed concepts such as integer operations, powers and exponents, roots and real numbers, order of operations, and expressions. All of these skills will help us throughout the year, so it’s important that the students continually review these. Next, we’ve headed into—and already almost finished—radicals and exponents: integer exponents, scientific notation, properties of exponents, and radical exponents! After we wrap this up, we’ll take one final summative test on everything we’ve done so far before moving on to equations.

Science Joke: What do clouds do when they become rich? They make it rain!

This year, we will still be using our Discovery Education techbook! The techbook is online (discoveryeducation.com), and it contains a variety of resources, articles, reading passages, videos, explorations, and hands-on labs to enhance student learning. All returning middle schoolers should be familiar with it as both Mrs. Dewey and I used it last year.

6th Grade Science (Earth Science)

Sixth grade will be devoted to Earth Science, and we’ll start the year with a Weather and Climate unit. Within this unit, we will discuss topics such as the water cycle, meteorology, climate regions, and climate change. It’ll be a good topic to start the year, especially as we get to watch our own weather change within the next few months! We’ve started with the water cycle and energy transfer and have already been busy

using lab equipment to evaporate water and condense water within the classroom like magic! We even tried to make a cloud in a bottle! Next, we'll head into meteorology and watch the weather throughout the country within the next couple of days to see how it changes!

7th & 8th Grade Science Fair

Two months! That's all the time we have until our annual Science Fair! This year, the Science Fair is being held on November 15th. That being said, it's time to start thinking about what experiment you'd like to run. Science Fair information came out last week, and parent letters and topic approval forms are due today!

7th Grade Science (Life Science)

Seventh grade will be devoted to Life Science, and we'll start the year with a unit on the Structure and Function of Cells. Within this unit, we will talk about things such as cell theory, prokaryotic and eukaryotic cells, cellular respiration, diffusion, and osmosis. We've already covered the cell theory and used yeast and plant cells to find evidence to support the theory. Next, we'll head into looking at structure of life—an in-depth look into cells!

8th Grade Science (Physical Science)

Eighth grade will be devoted to Physical Science, and we'll start the year with a unit on Matter. Within this unit, we'll talk about things such as properties of matter, states of matter, atomic theory, chemical reactions, chemical bonding, and acids and bases. We've started the year off by talking about characteristic properties of matter—physical and chemical properties—and we've already conducted an experiment on one such

physical property (solubility) to see what effect temperature has on it. The chapter test on the material didn't go as planned for a lot of students, so they are filling out retake forms, if necessary, to try again. To help review, encourage your student to take 10 minutes every night to look over what we talked about, read, and/or watched in class. This will hopefully help reinforce ideas from class.

From Mrs. Tulley

6th Grade Social Studies

The class has completed their study of maps and has begun their study of prehistoric times this week. We will probably have some lively discussion on what was the most important discovery of prehistoric man – fire or the wheel. We'll also look at the beginning of farming, the development of cities and what characteristics does a civilization need to possess.

I have assigned the class their 1st project, which is to draw a map and include at least 3 elements. We spent time in class discussing the project and seeing examples of maps done by former students. I sent home a criteria sheet for you with your child (hopefully your child gave this to you). **The map is due Oct. 11th.** If you have any question about the project please don't hesitate to talk to me.

6th Grade Religion

The class is working on their overview of the Bible. We'll be talking about the differences between the Old and New Testaments and how difficult it must have been to copy the Bible by hand. We will also discuss how beautifully these bibles were illuminated and the class will now have a chance to illuminate their own bible verse.

7th Grade Literature

We have begun working on the short story by Ernest Hemingway called "A Day's Wait". While reading the story we will look at the literary elements of internal conflict, the rising action and the climax of a story.

I have assigned the first trimester book reports to the class. **The biography is due by Oct. 11th**. This is a presentation book report with written questions and answers. They must have all the questions into me by Oct. 11th. They may present this book report any time before the due date though. They have been given a criteria sheet for this book report and I sent home a sheet for you. (hopefully you got it) We have had an extensive discussion about this report in class, but if there is anything you or they are unsure of please ask me. **The choice and mystery books are due by Nov 1st / Nov. 28th**.

7th Grade Social Studies

We are beginning the year with a quick look at the Middle Ages. We are going to look at the 3 periods of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. We'll also look at the Dark Ages, the rise of Feudalism, and the rise of monarchies among other topics.

8th Grade Social Studies

We are beginning the year reviewing the Revolutionary War using the musical Hamilton. It is a fun way to review the history of the revolution. I hope you have a chance to listen to the musical – it is fantastic! Next we will begin looking at the preCivil War era. The class will learn about the important issues in the years preceding the Civil War, such as, the Compromise of 1850, the Kansas –

Nebraska Act, the Dred Scott decision, and the formation of the Republican Party, and the election of Abraham Lincoln.

From Mrs. Ricker

7th Grade Religion

We have started off to a great year!! We will be exploring our religion workbook called *Finding God, following Jesus*. The students have begun the first unit on the Trinity, and found a prayer to the Blessed Trinity that they made into 'locker art'. We have also begun to write in our new Faith Journals, reflecting on the Homily and Gospel reading from Thursday's school Mass.

October is dedicated to the Holy Rosary, and we will take some class time to reflect on Mary and the Rosary. I will ask the students to bring a rosary to class every Thursday as we will be praying one decade of the Rosary (and learning about the Joyful Mysteries) during class. If they do not have one, I will lend them one for the month. They will also be learning (and memorizing) the beautiful prayer said at the end of the Rosary; *Hail*

Holy Queen.

God Bless!!

From Mrs. Prendergast

6th Grade

In literature we finished reading Tuck Everlasting and starting comprehension work and discussing living forever. These discussions are always fun and enlightening on what students would do if they lived forever. *Please remind your child to bring home their independent reading sheet to be signed by you. They should probably do this after each book

so they don't forget. All students should always have an independent reading book of their choice that they should be reading.

Friday is the first LA test. It's on sentence parts, predicate adjectives and nouns, and direct and indirect objects. We reviewed today, but they should always have their book at home before a test to look over the parts to be tested. Retests will be giving if grades are a C or lower. A retake form will be sent home with extra practice on the parts that need more work, and this form also needs to be signed by you before the retake can be given.

7th Grade

We finished the first LA unit on sentences, and the grades are in Option C. We have started work on writing a realistic fiction piece. Like last year, we will brainstorm, practice needed skills, and look at examples as the students strive to write the best story they can for a final grade. Please feel free to look at your child's practice composition notebook and iPad to see what they're writing. Parental help is always welcome!

8th Grade

These students have finished their first unit on LA on nouns. We move quickly through grammar units as they are mostly review. We are starting the first major writing piece on investigative journalism. We will write a lot of practice pieces to get in the mood for the final essay. The students will use realistic fiction to make a journalistic statement. We start small and end big. Please always feel free to look at your child's composition notebook and iPad and give good feedback on their writing.

In literature we are reading a variety of short stories as the students take notes on the story elements of plot, character, setting, theme, and point of view. There will be a test at the end, and along the way I will look at comprehending, inferencing, and predicting skills (to name a few). We are finishing up talking about character this week and will start reading stories that use setting to help tell the story.

In religion the 8th grade is moving quickly through the first unit of the textbook. We will break in October to do a study on the miracle at Fatima and review the rosary. October is the month to pray the rosary for peace, and the 8th graders will find out more about why this is done. Today was our first Worship Circle with our Guardian Angels. This year the 8th graders will take more of a leadership role in talking to the Guardian Angel about the readings and the pictures they draw. It will be nice sharing their religion with their 2nd grade Angels and getting closer to them too.