



Eighth Grade Newsletter



News from the Core Classrooms

English Language Arts: Ms. Diehl

We've officially reached the third quarter and passed the halfway point of the school year! In our third unit of the Amplify curriculum, we will be exploring the Holocaust; examining how it happened and why it is important to remember. Throughout this unit, we will discuss the factors that led to the Holocaust, read and analyze excerpts from Holocaust survivors' memoirs, examine the impact of propaganda and explain the response to unfolding events. As we approach the end of the unit, students will write their third essay of the year, which will be our second informative/explanatory essay. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out! ellydiehl@gafe.fairfieldunion.org

Math: Mrs. Young

This quarter in 8th grade math students will be working on a geometry unit. We will discuss angle measurements, transformations, and Pythagorean Theorem. I think this will be a welcome change for most students. This quarter in algebra students will be working on exponential and quadratic equations. We will discuss exponential growth and decay with some fun activities. Quadratic equations will move us closer to the end of year and the excitement of making rockets for the fourth nine weeks. If you have any questions, please feel free to email me at deborayoung@gafe.fairfieldunion.org.

Reading: Mrs. Gatton

It is so hard to believe that our first semester has come to an end. We have spent the majority of the semester studying about Liberty and Equality with our Amplify Reading Program. The students have been actively participating in serious discussions about how people were treated and the causes of the Civil War. They have had the opportunity to read personal diaries, historical documents, and many other sources that gave a small glimpse into the lives of those living both in the North and the South during that time. We will conclude our study with a written response as a summary. In talking with students, I feel this has really opened their eyes and hearts to understand and humanize the battle. We will embark on a journey with Romeo and Juliette for this next quarter. I am looking forward to the discussions and questions that will come as a result of this reading. As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please email me at deboragatton@gafe.fairfieldunion.org

Science: Mrs. Thomas

This quarter in science, we will be exploring fascinating concepts about life and evolution. Students will learn how species change over time through gradual processes, with fossil records providing evidence of these changes. We'll also discuss the importance of reproduction in ensuring the continuation of species and how inherited traits from parents influence the characteristics of organisms. I'm excited to dive into these topics and encourage curiosity about the natural world!

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Social Studies: Mr. Miller

As we continue our "journey through history" we will be focussing this quarter on our country's early development and struggles with this new form of government. Looking at Washington's role as our first president, the peaceful transition of power, the War of 1812 and the beginnings of western expansion known as "Manifest Destiny", building up to the Civil War. As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please email me at jamesmiller@gafe.fairfieldunion.org

Advanced Word Study: Mrs. Khan

In the second quarter we worked with different syllable types. In single syllable and multisyllabic words. We were able to add suffixes to these words and identify vowel and consonant suffixes. This quarter we will be introducing a new syllable type (open syllables) to single syllable and multi-syllable words. A great way to help at home is by looking at the newsletter I send in emails when we begin a new unit.

Math Lab: Mrs. Miller

Second quarter we spent a lot of our time working on exponent rules and scientific notation. This quarter we will be working on functions and then slope and slope intercept. They are making great progress through some challenging math skills and I believe they are building some confidence in their Math abilities. Keep up the great work.

Resource Room Math: Mrs. Murdock

This quarter, we will focus on functional math concepts, starting with learning fractions using an analog clock. Understanding analog clocks helps children build key math skills such as recognizing fractions, counting by fives, and enhancing spatial reasoning.

Next, we will review integers and decimals through activities involving money. These lessons develop essential life skills, enabling middle schoolers to understand the value of money, manage finances, make informed purchasing decisions, and confidently handle everyday transactions, including calculating change. To reinforce these skills, we will continue our classroom economy, where students earn "paychecks" based on their grades and write checks to pay for purchases and classroom utility bills.

We will conclude the quarter by working on spatial awareness through map-reading skills. Students will learn to read maps of our building, local towns and cities, and larger maps of states and the country.

Resource Room Reading: Mrs. Grubb

Welcome to the 3rd quarter. Students will analyze in detail the techniques, examples, and anecdotes that the author uses to introduce and illustrate the topic of yellow fever in *The Secret of the Yellow Death: A True Story of Medical Sleuthing*. The skills we will be practicing are analyzing in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text and writing arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

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Wilson Reading: Mrs. Khan

In the second quarter we moved on from single syllable words to multisyllabic words with closed syllables! They were so excited to be reading bigger and harder words. We will continue working on this

skill for this quarter and eventually build into other syllable types. A great way to help at home is by looking at the newsletter I send in emails when we begin a new unit.

News from the Encore Classrooms

Art: Ms. Henderly

I enjoyed the first semester with all my students and I am looking forward to meeting my second semester classes! I am excited to explore the world of art with you during this semester! I teach 6th, 7th and 8th grade art at Rushville Middle School. The intent of this course is to provide you with the following: 1.) Ability to comfortably communicate through your own unique art style. 2.) The opportunity to apply critical and creative thinking. 3.) Many opportunities to create artwork both individually and collaboratively in a studio environment. In this course we will use a variety of mediums as we explore "creativity" within the world of art. I am excited to work with RMS students and showcase your artistic talents! Please remember that all students should be bringing their sketchbooks to class every day.

Band: Mr. Kitchen

We are going to continue expanding on all aspects of playing that we have been working on (intonation, tone quality, breath support, etc), while also preparing new repertoire for our spring concert.

We introduce having bi-weekly playing checks to monitor your progress as we move through the rest of the year. The progress you all have made on your instruments has been incredible and I am so excited to continue that trend!

Career: Mrs. Phillips

Welcome to a new semester! I look forward to getting to know you throughout the remainder of the year. This course is a semester (18 weeks) long and will help prepare you to make informed decisions about your future academic and occupational goal as you prepare for transitioning to high school.

Through direct instruction, interactive skills, demonstrations, practice assignments, and projects, you will learn how to assess your own skills and interests, explore career clusters and pathways, and develop plans for career and academic development. You will also work on improving communication, identifying leadership qualities, improving your ability to work with others, and setting goals for the future.

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Choir: Mr. Gregory

Our first semester of Choir has come to an end! We had a very successful Winter Concert and will now be starting to prepare for the end of the year concert. A few of the 7th/8th graders are also in this year's Spring Musical Shrek which will be performed at the High School in March. The students will continue to build on their singing abilities, music literacy abilities, and learn more challenging music.

Finance: Mrs. Jennifer Miller

Welcome to the world of Finance! The things you will learn in this class are very relevant to everyday life as you begin your journey through managing money. During this quarter we will begin with the topic of credit and how important credit scores are and managing credit cards. We will also talk about saving for your future retirement as well as for future purchases and emergencies that may come your way as you become adults. I am looking forward to working with you through the semester and I hope everyone finds this course to be a valuable experience.

Gym: Mr. Boucher

Our focus this semester will be learning and developing skills to improve and enhance our overall level of fitness. We will be participating in a variety of sports and activities for health, enjoyment, challenge, self expression and social interaction.

Health: Mrs. Leitnaker

Welcome to Health Class! I am excited to welcome your child to our Health class this semester! In this course, we will explore three key areas of health, with the ultimate goal of equipping students to make informed decisions that enhance their overall well-being. Throughout the semester, we'll cover a variety of important topics, including Personal Hygiene, Stress Management, Safety, Nutrition, Physical Fitness, and Alcohol and Drug Prevention. I'm looking forward to a wonderful and enriching semester with your child!

Human Geography: Mr. Sullivan

In Human Geography, we had a great first semester of the class. We are continuing to take a look at Human Geography and now looking into Religions. We will then be moving into the world of politics which I am excited to see what the students will think of how important politics are in our human geography.

Multimedia: Mrs. McCoy

During the second nine weeks in multimedia, students explored movie making by creating school news segments, music video remakes, and Lego projects. They learned animation techniques using Google Slides. Additionally, students worked on a vacation budget project and created commercials, applying their planning skills. They also used pixel art, which is a blend of art and tech.

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Robotics: Mrs. McCoy

During the second nine weeks in robotics, students were introduced to coding basics, learning key vocabulary and completing interactive activities on code.org. They worked with the EV3 robots, learning basic movements and navigating simple obstacle courses. Students applied their skills in engaging challenges and completed a Lego League mission, combining coding and robotics to solve real-world problems.

Wellness: Mrs. Marcia Miller

Greetings! I am the S.E.L. Wellness teacher. I look forward to meeting you all and getting to know you this spring semester. We will build on the life skills crucial to understanding ourselves, developing a positive self-image, taking responsibility for our actions and work on improving relationships with the people around us! Especially those that we might find are hard to get along with. Additionally, we will continue to focus on character traits and strengths and how they apply to each of us. The overall goal is to always become a better version of yourself each day, each week, each year.

Other News

Art Club: Ms. Henderly

Students in the Art Club have met several times with Ms. Henderly during the first semester. They have explored a variety of mediums and will be focusing on the world of clay and wheel throwing over the next few months. Please see Ms. Henderly for more details if you are still interested in joining the Art Club and coming to the workshops. The details are below for the upcoming workshops.

UPCOMING ART CLUB WORKSHOPS

When: 1/29/25, 2/26/25, 3/26/25 and 4/23/25

Time: After school until 4:00 PM

Where: Room 203 with Ms. Henderly

Leo Club: Mrs. Phillips

Over the next few months, our Leo Club members will be busy spreading kindness and making a positive impact in our school community. To kick things off, we'll be organizing a Valentine Grams fundraiser, where students can purchase special messages and treats to send to friends, teachers, or loved ones. All proceeds will support our community service projects. Additionally, we'll be working on a heartfelt project: making fleece tie blankets for our very own kindergartners. These cozy creations will provide warmth and joy to our youngest students, showing them how much they're cared for. We're excited to combine teamwork, creativity, and generosity to make this season meaningful for everyone!

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