

# Principal's Newsletter



**Linda Lelonek, Principal**

October 2011

Dear West Middle Community,

*The only way to have a friend is to be one.*  
~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

Each year at our August orientation for our sixth graders I anticipate many students listening only half-heartedly because often they are preoccupied. Thoughts abound, What will happen now? What will I have to do? Will I be able to handle this? They hold in their hand that new schedule – that one that identifies them as being the ONLY one on their team with absolutely NO friends to speak of. And, as we all know, with each new endeavor our load is made lighter if we have someone to share it with. We find comfort in the fact that there is someone out there like us – a friend. On that day, when 330 students were anxious to find their friends, I told them not to worry about how many friends they have on their team, but rather to concentrate on *being* a friend to others. I gave a few examples and I told them I would check with them later to see if they had a chance to *be* a friend to others at West Middle.

Over the next few weeks I watched our students and noticed the many times they reached out to each other. I caught spontaneous smiles when students were asked to join others at the lunch table. At the snack bar I noticed a few “You go first.” “No, you go first.” I have witnessed solicitous behavior at the lockers in the bustling halls. A few days ago I asked the sixth grade Communication Arts teachers if they could spend a few minutes talking about the “assignment” I gave at orientation. They graciously agreed and gave the students time to write to me. I was delighted to get the students’ responses. I had the opportunity to read each one. I wanted to share their thoughts with you.

*I introduced my new friends to my old friends. . . . I asked a new kid to sit with me on the bus. . . . I smiled at everyone, even teachers, even when I was nervous or sad - I wanted them to feel comfortable around me. . . . I decorated the locker of a new friend. . . . I joined someone alone at recess. . . . I continued explaining the teacher's instructions to others when they didn't understand it. . . . I comforted someone and then walked her to the nurse. . . . I stepped in and did the dishes for others in F.A.C.S. class. . . . I encouraged my friend when we were doing the rock-climbing wall because she wanted to come down but I knew she could make it to the top so I encouraged her and she made it to the top. . . . I was a friend when I encouraged someone on the horses when they were scared to get on. . . . I cheered on someone when he did the ropes course. . . . Someone was going to miss the bus and I saw her running and she dropped her books so I told the bus driver to wait and I went to help her with her books. . . . I laughed at someone's joke when no one else would. . . . During camp my friend got scared and I switched beds with her because my bed was by the counselor. . . . So far, instead of back-locking, I have put a friend's lock on the right way several times. . . . I was in Foreign Language and a girl came in and didn't have a place to sit. I said, "You can have my seat. I'll move." When I said this at first I was like what am I doing (because I was sitting right next to my best friend), but then I thought to myself that it was a good deed. . . . I showed someone how to access his flash drive, access the server, and save things. . . . I caught myself doing nice things to people that may not know me, but I helped them anyway.*

The kindnesses seemed to overflow and others benefitted as well, *I helped a sub (in spite of myself)*. There were words of wisdom, *A good friend is kind, honest, thoughtful, forgiving, and understanding. . . . Being a friend is thinking more of other people's feelings than yours. . . . Be a friend, not because you want something in return, but because it is the right thing to do.*

***Because that's what kindness is.  
It's not doing something for someone else because they can't,  
but because you can.***

**~ Andrew Iskander**

*I started talking with someone and we smiled and discovered we both had the same braces! . . . The key thing I did was listen and find out things we have in common. . . . We started talking to each other about where we're from and how great the lunches were here; we discovered that we were in all of the core classes together. . . . When my friend was sad I helped her out on making her feel better and she did because I did the one thing that I would want someone to do to me, I made her laugh!*

***Friendship is born at that moment when one person says to another.  
"What! You, too? I thought I was the only one."***

**~ C. S. Lewis**

Students were not only intent on telling me how they have been a friend to others, they were proud to demonstrate how others have been a friend to them. *Actually I am writing this on a piece of borrowed paper. . . . Someone turned it around for me – saying hi – you know you're not alone – a light bulb in your head goes on, clearing away your bad thoughts with lighter ones. . . . I saw a girl in Physical Education who did not like to run and it was hard for her and all her friends would say hi but then run past her. I decided to run with her and encourage her. Now we always say hi and run together. . . . I think that it is good to help people out if they need it only because it will be the right thing to do and they will do the same for you! . . . It's nice to go to school knowing there are people that will smile and laugh with you once you get there.*

***It is one of the most beautiful compensations of this life  
that no man can sincerely try to help another  
without helping himself.***

**~ Ralph Waldo Emerson**

And, as a pretty good gauge that the sixth graders were doing a mighty thorough job of taking care of each other, I came across this statement from one of them. *I was looking for someone to help or to be a friend to, but sadly, I couldn't find anyone. But I am still looking!* Isn't that what it's all about? We always should keep looking for ways to be a friend to others!

The entire list is long indeed and I have saved it on my desktop to revisit all the wonderful acts of kindness and friendship generated by our sixth grade students. I very much appreciated what one student wrote, *Thank you for challenging us to be a friend*. If our sixth graders are any indication of what the future holds, what a wonderful world this will be!

Sincerely,



Linda Lelonek

October 2011



### Don't forget...

- October 11 – P.T.O. meeting at 9:00 a.m.
- October 12 – Principal's Coffee at 7:00 p.m.
- October 28 – 6<sup>th</sup> grade T-shirt orders due



We still have open positions on the Executive Board – President Elect and Asst. Treasurer. We also need a parent to chair Career Awareness in the spring. Contact Libby or Ranu if you are interested.



Please remember to support our P.T.O. financially by...

- Submitting your donation to the “So Simple” fundraiser.
- Clipping and submitting “Box Tops for Education.”  
(Note: We do not currently process Campbell's Soup labels as a fundraiser. Consider donating these to your local elementary or preschool.)
- Having your eScrip swiped when shopping at Schnucks.
- Purchasing Spirit Wear (available in the School Store).





- To the 60+ parents who have volunteered to Chair a committee or assist the P.T.O. in all its activities that support our students and staff.
- To those parent volunteers that served ice cream at 6<sup>th</sup> grade Orientation.
- To those parents that manned tables for fundraising, spirit wear, principal's coffees and Buzz Book at Orientation and Open Houses.
- To those responsible for the catering and serving of conference dinners to our staff.
- To the parent/student committee who created our “Mixin’ It UpFloat” for the West High Homecoming Parade.

# West Middle School

## October 2011

### Parkway School District

#### Food Services

-- Monday --	-- Tuesday --	-- Wednesday --	-- Thursday --	-- Friday --	Daily
3 Bacon Cheeseburger on Bun Potato Puffs Pineapple Nuggets	4 State Fair Brand Mini Corn Dogs Baked Beans Succulent Pears	5 BBQ Pulled Pork on Bun Potato Spudsters Orange Quarters	6 Tyson Chicken Crispito Golden Corn Cry Baby Cup	7 Chicken Alfredo Hot Roll Flavored Applesauce Chocolate Chip Cookie	Salad Bar  Hamburger and Fry Plate  Fresh Fruit
10 Chicken Wings Celery Sticks w/ Ranch Dip Mixed Fruit Cup	11 Turkey N Cheese on Croissant Tiny Twist Pretzels California Raisins	12 Krunchy Chicken Fillet on Wheat Bun Pasta Salad Chilled Apricots	13 Toasted Ravioli w/ Marinara Sauce Spinach Salad Strawberry Cup	14 Spicy Chicken Patty on Wheat Bun Early Peas Jello w/Topping	Longhorn Line T/Th  Taco Salad TH  Nacho Boat  M/W
<b>National School Lunch Week - October 10 -14</b>					
17 Al dente Pasta Noodles w/ Red Sauce Shredded Cheese Fresh Plum Harvest Muffin	18 Chicken Nuggets Whipped Sweet Potatoes Vanilla Pudding	19 Mini Egg Rolls w/ Sweet N Sour Sauce Fluffy Rice Mandarin Oranges	20 White Castle Burger w/ Cheese Waffle Fries Luigi's Italian Ice	21 Sloppy Joe on Wheat Bun Corn Niblets Sugar Cookie	Brand Name Pizza M/W/F  Deli Bar Frito Lay Baked Chips
24 Crunchy Chicken Nuggets w/ Hot Sauce Broccoli w/ Cheese Sauce Yellow Cake w/ Icing	25 French Toast Sticks w/ Maple Syrup Sausage Patty Trix Yogurt Cup	26 Tangerine Chicken Steamed Brown Rice Pineapple Tidbits	27 Deluxe Chicken Patty w/ Bacon on Bun Crisp Corn Cinnamon Apple Slices	28 Whole Grain Spaghetti w/ Meat Sauce Hot Roll Cut Green Beans Fresh Grapes	Asst. Sports Drinks and Waters
31 Crunchy Fish Nuggets Mac and Cheese Fruit Snacks	 <p>Served Daily Fresh Fruit Side Salads</p>			<p>Self Serve Salad Bar Daily</p>	<p>Lunch Prices: Student - \$2.50 Adult - \$2.75 Extra Entree - \$1.75 Extra Bev - \$.50</p> <p>Breakfast Available Daily</p>

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## **PWMS P.T.O. SO SIMPLE FUNDRAISING**

Thanks to the PWMS P.T.O. SO SIMPLE FUNDRAISER, you don't have to worry about magazines, candles, chocolates, or wrapping paper sales. Let's pull out all the stops this year so we can meet our goal of \$12,000 and be fundraiser free for the rest of the year!

Thank you to all who have contributed to the P.T.O.'s So Simple Fundraiser so far. As of 9/16/2011 we have collected 28.6% of our \$12,000 goal.

If you need a So Simple form and instructions on how you can contribute to your child's school, it can be found here <http://westmiddlepto.webs.com/minutesforms.htm>. A list of companies who have matched contributions in the past is also listed here for your convenience. Check and see if your company will match your gift to West Middle!

**100% of your contribution goes toward PWMS P.T.O.**  
**and your child's future at West Middle.**

*Thank you for your continued support!*

**PARKWAY WEST MIDDLE SCHOOL**  
**“CLASS OF 2018”**  
**T-SHIRT ORDER FORM**

The P.T.O. will be selling long-sleeved t-shirts for the sixth grade students this year. The t-shirts will be navy blue with a design on the front (see example below) and the back of the shirt will have the names of all the current sixth grade students.

**The t-shirts are \$15.00 each.** Payments for the t-shirts must accompany this order form. Checks/Money Orders are the preferred forms of payment and will also serve as your receipt. Checks should be made payable to **Parkway West P.T.O.** (Please send the exact amount if paying by case.)

T-shirts will be available for pick up at the Book Store in late November.

Return order form below with your payment to the school store no later than October 28, 2011.

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**PARKWAY WEST “CLASS OF 2018”**  
**T-SHIRT ORDER FORM**

**Student’s Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student’s Name as to be printed on back of t-shirt (only if different from above):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Team:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Size (Circle One):** Youth L Youth XL Adult S Adult M Adult L Adult XL

**Number of Shirts Ordered:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Cost @ \$15 each:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Cash** \_\_\_\_\_ **Check #** \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to Parkway West Middle School P.T.O for \$15.00 per t-shirt.  
If paying by cash, please pay the exact amount.  
Payment must accompany this order form.

Questions? Contact Mary Ellen Schoessel at [mejschoessel@charter.net](mailto:mejschoessel@charter.net) or  
Carie Volz at [scottandcarie@earthlink.net](mailto:scottandcarie@earthlink.net)



## PWMS P.T.O. Spiritwear On Sale Now In The Bookstore!

We are restocked on Sweatshirts so WE HAVE YOUR SIZE!  
New designs, affordable prices, and all purchases support PTO!

### New items available include:

- Sticker sheets to show your school spirit on book covers, in your room, etc.
  - Regular lead pencils and refillable mechanical pencils
  - Koozie's for your water bottles
- Short Sleeve Dry Wick Shirts available in both Men and Women's styles
  - Sling backs
  - Notepads
  - Headbands
- New Long Sleeve Columbia Blue T-Shirt
- Long Sleeve Black Dry Wick Shirt
- And a NEW Columbia Blue Sweatshirt design!



Check out some of our other designs here:

<http://westmiddlepto.webs.com/spiritwear.htm>

Book Store Hours: School Days 7:45 a.m.-2:15 p.m.

Contact Pam Levy at 314-415-7427 in the Book Store if you have any questions and she will be glad to help!

Other questions/concerns? Contact the Spiritwear Co-Chairs:

Mary Ellen Schoessel at [mejschoessel@charter.net](mailto:mejschoessel@charter.net) or

Carie Volz at [scottandcarie@earthlink.net](mailto:scottandcarie@earthlink.net)

## THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING PWMS P.T.O.!



**Parkway West Middle School  
P.T.O. Executive Board  
2011 – 2012**

Presidents:	Libby Dougherty	636-230-3647	<a href="mailto:allirkm@swbell.net">allirkm@swbell.net</a>
	Ranu Hubbard	636-220-4247	<a href="mailto:steveandranu@gmail.com">steveandranu@gmail.com</a>
President Elect:	OPEN		
Treasurer:	Michele Bredow	314-651-7679	<a href="mailto:michelec66@sbcglobal.net">michelec66@sbcglobal.net</a>
Recording Secretary:	Molly Piles	636-207-1614	<a href="mailto:dpiles@msn.com">dpiles@msn.com</a>
Corresponding Secretary:	Katie Crowley	636-207-1419	<a href="mailto:jkcrowley533@sbcglobal.net">jkcrowley533@sbcglobal.net</a>
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Vice President:	Jeff Todd	314-623-7000	<a href="mailto:jeff@jefftodd.com">jeff@jefftodd.com</a>
7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Vice President	Sally Tharp	636-220-6413	<a href="mailto:sahtharp@hotmail.com">sahtharp@hotmail.com</a>
8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Vice President:	Gloria Ransom	636-256-3102	<a href="mailto:Gloria.a.ransom@boeing.com">Gloria.a.ransom@boeing.com</a>
Past President:	Stephanie Hornsby	636-527-8344	<a href="mailto:rghsfh@sbcglobal.net">rghsfh@sbcglobal.net</a>

**P.T.O. Committee Chairs**













Book Fair:	Diana O'Connor	636-391-1358	<a href="mailto:oaks1133@aol.com">oaks1133@aol.com</a>
Box Tops for Education:	Kathy Engelmeyer	636-391-1758	<a href="mailto:k9113e@gmail.com">k9113e@gmail.com</a>
Buzz Book:	Debbie Clyne	314-307-9600	<a href="mailto:Debbie.clyne@ipsos.com">Debbie.clyne@ipsos.com</a>
	Kristina Karrenbrock	314-966-5051	<a href="mailto:krrnbrck@earthlink.net">krrnbrck@earthlink.net</a>
Career Awareness:	OPEN		
Conference Dinners:	Kim Glidden	636-391-0767	<a href="mailto:glid3@sbcglobal.net">glid3@sbcglobal.net</a>
	Ranu Hubbard	636-220-4247	<a href="mailto:steveandranu@gmail.com">steveandranu@gmail.com</a>
Fundraising:	Linda Giesecking	636-227-9969	<a href="mailto:TLGiesecking@charter.net">TLGiesecking@charter.net</a>
	Carie Volz	636-391-6169	<a href="mailto:scottandcarie@earthlink.net">scottandcarie@earthlink.net</a>
Hearing and Vision:	Lisa Fritz	314-579-0078	<a href="mailto:lisafritzphoto@sbcglobal.net">lisafritzphoto@sbcglobal.net</a>
Homecoming Float:	Libby Dougherty	636-230-3647	<a href="mailto:allirkm@swbell.net">allirkm@swbell.net</a>
Library Volunteers:	Kim Glidden	636-391-0767	<a href="mailto:glid3@sbcglobal.net">glid3@sbcglobal.net</a>
Principal's Coffees:	Amy Bonnett	636-230-6677	<a href="mailto:amybonnett@gmail.com">amybonnett@gmail.com</a>
	Diane Friedman	636-391-9839	<a href="mailto:5jardd@gmail.com">5jardd@gmail.com</a>
Principal's Newsletter:	Kim Beveridge	636-227-1307	<a href="mailto:beveridgebk@yahoo.com">beveridgebk@yahoo.com</a>
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Social:	Sharon Mason	314-909-9311	<a href="mailto:sharondds@aol.com">sharondds@aol.com</a>
	Devona Conger	314-432-2508	<a href="mailto:dconger1@sbcglobal.net">dconger1@sbcglobal.net</a>

7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Social:	Paula Smith	636-230-6123	<a href="mailto:psmith8@mindspring.com">psmith8@mindspring.com</a>
8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Social:	Tami Spurgeon	636-207-7063	<a href="mailto:mtcspurgeon@charter.net">mtcspurgeon@charter.net</a>
Relay for Life:	Annie Miller	636-227-4810	<a href="mailto:annemiller@pkwy.k12.mo.us">annemiller@pkwy.k12.mo.us</a>
Spiritwear:	Carie Volz	636-391-6169	<a href="mailto:scottandcarie@earthlink.net">scottandcarie@earthlink.net</a>
	Mary Ellen Schoessel	314-477-3342	<a href="mailto:mejschoessel@charter.net">mejschoessel@charter.net</a>
Staff Appreciation:	Karen McKnight	314-909-8591	<a href="mailto:mcknights@msn.com">mcknights@msn.com</a>
	Amy Santangelo	314-835-1375	<a href="mailto:amyjon111@charter.net">amyjon111@charter.net</a>
Volunteer Coordinator:	Kim Montgomery	636-227-9103	<a href="mailto:montgomeryk@earthlink.net">montgomeryk@earthlink.net</a>
Webmaster:	Jeanette Schillizzi	314-822-5476	<a href="mailto:schillizzij@wustl.edu">schillizzij@wustl.edu</a>
	Kristina Karrenbrock	314-966-5051	<a href="mailto:krrnbrck@earthlink.net">krrnbrck@earthlink.net</a>
Welcome to West:	Sally Hanson	636-527-4544	<a href="mailto:tssc-hanson@msn.com">tssc-hanson@msn.com</a>












### **District Committee Positions**

Alumni Rep.:	Lori LeDuc	636-227-3322	<a href="mailto:leduchome@hotmail.com">leduchome@hotmail.com</a>
Ambassador:	Sally Hanson	636-527-4544	<a href="mailto:tssc-hanson@msn.com">tssc-hanson@msn.com</a>
Government Relations:	Nikki Reeves	636-536-6575	<a href="mailto:nreeves1@slu.edu">nreeves1@slu.edu</a>
Safety Net/Block Home:	Debbie Clyne	314-307-9600	<a href="mailto:debbie.clyne@ipsos.com">debbie.clyne@ipsos.com</a>

# October 2011

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
A       3	B       4	A MOSAICS Academy Field Trip, Art Museum 10:00 a.m. - 2:15  B.O.E. Meeting 7:30 p.m. (Central Middle) 5	B       6	A       7
B   Columbus Day   10	A   P.T.O. Meeting 9:00 a.m.   11	B   Principal's Coffee 7:00 p.m.   12	A       13	B 8th Grade Band Performs at WH Football Game 3:30 - 9:00 p.m.    Deadline for Principal's Newsletter Articles!  14
A    WH Band, Orch., Choir visit WM 2nd - 3rd periods   17	B       18	A Wrestling Tournament 3:30 p.m., CM    Custodian Appreciation Week / School Bus Safety and America's Safe Schools Week	B       19	A       20
B       21	A       22	B       23	A       24	B       25
Red Ribbon Week				
B    Fleetball Tournament 3:30 p.m. WM   24	A       25	B   All District Secondary Vocal Concert (UMSL-Touhill Performing Arts)   26	A   Orchestra Concert 7:30 p.m. (WH)   20	B    MOSAICS Field Trip Truman Library 7:15 a.m. - 9:30 p.m.  21
A       27	A       28	B   Picture Re-take Day   27	A       29	B       30
A       31				

# November 2011

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	<b>B</b> Vision Screening (7th Gr., New 6th)  1	<b>A</b> Cross Country Meet at SM 4:00 p.m.  B.O.E. Meeting 7:30 p.m. (Central Middle) 2	<b>B</b> END OF FIRST TRIMESTER (K-8) 3	<b>NO SCHOOL</b> <b>RECORDS DAY</b> (K-8) 4
<b>A</b> <b>BEGIN SECOND</b> <b>TRIMESTER</b> (K-8) 7	<b>B</b> Election Day  P.T.O. Meeting 7:00 p.m. 8	<b>A</b> Fall Play Preview 3:15 p.m. 9	<b>B</b> Fall Play 7:00 p.m.  10	<b>A</b> Veterans' Day  Fall Play 7:00 p.m. 11
<b>B</b>  Project Parkway South High 7:00 p.m. 14	<b>Team 6-Blue Camp Week</b> <b>American Education Week</b>			<b>B</b> Deadline for Principal's Newsletter Articles! 18
	Missouri Recycle Day  15	16	 17	
<b>A</b> 21	<b>B</b> 22	<b>NO SCHOOL</b> (K-12) 23	 <b>THANKSGIVING</b> 24	25
<b>A</b> Hearing Screening (7th Gr., new 6th & 8th Graders)  28	<b>B</b> 29	<b>A</b> Winter Orchestra Concert 7:00 p.m.  30	<b>November</b> <b>is</b> <b>Random Acts of</b> <b>Kindness Month</b>	

# Team 6-Blue Owls

Marcum, Schulze, Hagle, Eisele, Burkemper

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Team 6-Blue Owls are off to a spectacular start! Our students have all survived the transition to middle school and have settled into their new 6<sup>th</sup> grade routine. Please help your child stay on top of assignments by checking the homework hotline and/or the team website daily. It is also recommended to check each teacher's individual website for homework worksheets, handouts, or notes. Also, a reminder that the Outdoor School Meeting, for parents only, will be held on Wednesday, October 19, at 6:00 p.m.



unit by examining what we already know about the area and then trying to improve our mental map of the region by completing a Geography Alive! Mapping Lab. Students can look forward to traveling through Mexico and learning about its history, culture, and people, as well as Central America, the Caribbean, and South America. Please remember to check the Homework Hotline, Ms. Burkemper's website (<http://sites.google.com/site/msburkemper>) and Infinite Campus daily; they are a great link to your student success.

## **Communication Arts – Mrs. Marcum and Mr. Schulze**

In Communication Arts we continue to work diligently on Independent Reading, Writer's Workshop, No Excuse Words, and grammar skills. Ask your child what they are reading for their independent novel! We will be wrapping up our first unit, Reading to Understand Myself this month. In Unit One our focus was reading strategies, Hillock's Levels of Reading Response, main idea and details, summarization, and using relevant details from text to support a claim. Coming up in Unit Two, Writing to Understand Myself, students will be exposed to the four modes of writing. Students will work through the writing process to compose a narrative about their own personal experiences.

## **World Geography – Ms. Burkemper**

This month students are finishing up their travels of the United States and Canada. Students reviewed a number of landforms as well as learned about the major physical features of both countries and how they impact the people who live near them. The next stop on our travel agenda will be the region of Latin America. We will begin the

## **Science – Ms. Eisele**

We are studying one of Earth's most valuable resources: Water. We are learning about the unique properties of this amazing substance, and are continuously discussing what we can do to preserve it. We are also doing some activities...Who knew that putting celery into colored water would be so scientific? How does the water get to the top of the celery? I hope your students have been coming home talking about the oil, water, & vinegar demonstrations we have been doing in class and using words like "polar molecule" and "surface tension" to explain everyday phenomenon dealing with water. If you want to get them talking, ask them about why soap is so awesome and how it works to get oil and grease off your hands. We will also be studying how humans impact the water supply, and how that affects the water cycle. We will simulate being a drop of water, and travel through glaciers and rivers, and stay a while in the ocean. Your students have access to the online textbook, so ask them to show it to you! Loads of good resources and study resources are available here. If you need help accessing this, please let me know!

**Math – Mrs. Hagle**

We are almost finished with Chapter 1, Number Sense and Algebraic Thinking, where we are working with exponents, variables, and estimation. We also learned the four steps to problem solving to enhance our number sense. We will soon begin our in- depth study of fractions. First we cover number patterns, such as divisibility, prime factorization, greatest common factor, and

least common multiple. We will use these skills to compare fractions and write equivalent fractions. Then, we will round, estimate, and add and subtract fractions. Finally, we will multiply and divide fractions and mixed numbers. As always, please consult Mrs. Hagle's personal web page for extra help sessions and assessment dates. To access my web page go to [www.pkwy.k12.mo.us/soo](http://www.pkwy.k12.mo.us/soo)



# Team 6-Red Penguins

Mondschein, Oliver, Gardner, Granger, Unland

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The penguin team began our year with a blast...**camp!** Both students and staff had a great opportunity to learn about each other as we reveled in the beauty nature offers this time of year. Thank you to Mr. Unland, Ms. Goldman, Team teachers, and parent volunteers who helped make this experience a success.



After camp, **academic rigor** will increase. Help your student stay on top of their learning by visiting our web pages on a regular basis. Keep in mind **Homework Center** is available for students needing a little extra help after school.

**Parent/teacher conferences** will take place **Thursday, September 22, 5:00-8:30 p.m. and Tuesday, September 27, 3:45-7:15 p.m.** Contact the front office for more information.

Finally, our team schedule of **field trips** will be coming home the week after camp. Be looking for the letter!

## Science – Mrs. Granger

Penguin students have been learning what science is, the tools of the scientist, the skills of the scientist, and who the scientists are that have made the quality of our lives rich and productive. We have also experienced the enjoyment of learning environmental science by attending sixth grade camp where we participated in learning science in the out of doors. We have returned with a new respect and love for our environment, and we plan to use the knowledge we gained at camp to help our families and communities manage our natural resources more constructively.

## Math – Mrs. Gardner

We are off and rolling in math class. Chapter 1 was a review of fundamental skills. After camp we will wrap up Chapter 1. Our next unit is fractions. Students will explore the ratios of parts to whole as we learn how to add, subtract, multiply, and divide fractions and mixed numbers. Students will learn these processes by hand and then also explore how to do them on the calculator. Fun times in math class!!

## World Geography – Mr. Unland

In World Geography, we started off the year reviewing the 5 Themes of Geography and exploring many of the physical features of the U.S. & Canada through an activity called, “Geography Alive!” This activity has the students sharpening their map and chart reading skills. We have also been doing some lessons and answering questions about Parkway's Outdoor Education Program (6th grade camp.) We were all excited about camp and are still thinking about the experience.

## Communication Arts – Mrs. Mondschein

After our week at camp, our students have grown socially, emotionally and intellectually. Therefore, they were given the opportunity to express this in a poem. Using precise and vivid details were emphasized in the revision stage. Look for these masterpieces hanging in the hall when you visit us for parent teacher conferences.

During reading, we are continuing the practice of nine different context clues as we read articles and self-selected novels. We will also learn how to question our reading at a deeper level. Be on the lookout for the “100 Minutes” which is handed out and due on Wednesdays.

### **Communication Arts – Mrs. Oliver**

Sixth grade readers are off to a great start. During independent reading, students have practiced choosing books that are a “good fit” to help them grow as a reader. In addition, students have taken several baseline assessments to help them understand where they are as a reader at the beginning of sixth grade. Students will use this information to help them set realistic, measurable goals for independent reading. During instructional time, students are reviewing the steps in the reading process. Annotating a text to improve comprehension and using context clues has been emphasized. Next, students will begin to

extend their understanding of reading strategies, such as predicting, questioning, and visualizing.

Sixth grade writers have begun setting up a Writer’s Notebook as a storehouse of tips, tricks, and ideas to make them stronger independent writers. During instructional time, students have reviewed the beginning steps in the writing process: task, audience, and purpose. Also, students have spent time reviewing and practicing the simple sentence structure which will be the basis for most of our work this year. After camp, students will begin a personal narrative based on their experiences at camp.



# Team 6-White Wolves

Lievanos, Babb, Tines, Hensley, Welker

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Team 6-White Wolfpack is off to an amazing start of the 2011-2012 school year. Our students have all survived the transition to middle school and have settled into their new 6<sup>th</sup> grade routine. Please help your child stay on top of assignments by checking the homework hotline and/or the team website daily. Most handouts and notes are available on our team website; these are available for print out, which is particularly helpful if your child is absent for any reason. Some teachers do attach their notes and handouts to their individual websites from time to time. We would like to thank all of our parents who attended conferences. It was a pleasure meeting with you and sharing information about your children.



## **World Geography – Mr. Lievanos**

Students have jumped into studying the U.S. & Canada. We have continued our trek of the countries this week by studying the land and water features, as well as climate and vegetation. Expect weekly quizzes on Fridays and possibly Thursdays. Students are expected to have quiz, test, and due dates recorded into their planners. We will continue our journey by studying the cultures and regions of the US & Canada.

## **Science – Ms. Babb**

What a first 6 weeks it was! Our students are just about finished with exploring the world of living organisms. I sure hope that they have come home to use their advanced science vocabulary on you and their siblings. We will be getting into Ecosystems and Populations this month, a favorite unit of all. Students are busy writing in their science notebooks and having many discussions about our science topics. Ask your child about what we are learning in class!

## **Math – Ms. Tines**

In Math class we are finishing Chapter 1, Number Sense and Algebraic Thinking, where we have been working with exponents, variables and estimation. We also have learned the four steps to problem solving in order to enhance our number sense and approach to solving real-life situations. Next, we are going to explore fractions. First, we will cover number patterns, such as divisibility, prime factorization, greatest common factor, and least common multiple. We will then use this information to compare fractions and write equivalent fractions. Then, we will round, estimate, add and subtract fractions and finally move on to dividing and multiplying fractions and mixed numbers. As always, please feel free to contact me with any questions. Don't forget to check homework hotline and the White Team's website daily. ([www.pkwy.k12.mo.us](http://www.pkwy.k12.mo.us)). This will be useful in encouraging success with your student.

## **Communication Arts – Mrs. Hensley and Mrs. Welker**

Our students have been focused on eight "I Can" skills this trimester, including annotating text, recording relevant information, summarizing, and choosing details for evidence to support the claim. They are learning to analyze the elements of fiction as they continue to refine and apply their reading strategies, such as making connections, asking questions, visualizing, and making inferences.

Up next, students will focus on the four basic reasons for writing and four basic genres of writing that result from these reasons; the point is to have students understand how purpose influences their own writing. Sixth grade reading classes have been focusing on our Independent Reading Program. During this structured silent reading time, students

read a book of their choice and then complete activities designed to apply reading strategies that have been introduced, modeled, and reviewed during mini-lessons and our “Read- Alouds.” Be sure to ask your student about the book their teacher is currently reading aloud to them in class; this is definitely one of our students’ favorite times of the block! Our wolf pups have also been hard at work learning the first of their many new spelling/vocabulary lists of words. All 6<sup>th</sup> grade students have begun the year learning what we fondly call our “No Excuse Words”. This means as the year progresses we will expect to see these words correctly spelled and used in context in their writing. Our first lists are of commonly misused homophones. We will also begin an at home reading program in the next few weeks.

Students will have the opportunity to participate in the Saint Louis Blues Bookworm Reading Club, earn a ticket to Six Flags to be used during the summer, and earn free pizzas at Pizza Hut. Be on the lookout for those instructions.

### **Outdoor School**

Mark your calendars for our Outdoor School week, February 27 - March 2, 2012. It is a very exciting week of learning outdoors, even in the cold weather. Bills from Parkway Finance for the camp fee of \$280 may start arriving at houses. You can wait until January or February to pay for the week, but starting early may help out your pocketbook in the long run. You will receive more information next month regarding our outdoor school experience.



# Team 7-Blue Tigers

Lautenschlager, Leach, Heilich, Di Fiori, Jackson

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## HELLO BLUE TIGERS!

The Blue Tiger Team teachers of West Middle School extend a warm welcome to you and your child! We are looking forward to working with everyone (parents too!) assigned to our team and sincerely hope that the school year will be a very successful one! A great deal of thought has gone into using consistent guidelines and expectations, and cooperative teaming time allows us to reach our goal of providing each student with the best possible opportunity for success. We are looking forward to a great field trip to the Zoo with both the students and parents who make our team so successful! As we begin 7<sup>th</sup> grade, the Blue Tiger team teachers recommend these powerful, yet simple words of wisdom for our students:



been focusing on Experimental Design and its components and how this applies to all fields of Science. This month, we will be studying "Sound and Light". Get ready, this is a "bright" group!

*“Do the right thing... because it’s the right thing to do!*

*We Trust You, Be Responsible, Work Hard, Be Nice to Each Other!”*

\*\*\*\*\*

Regarding friends, family, and others... ☺

If it is not true... not kind... or not necessary... you don’t need to say it.

Particularly when they are not around to be in the discussion.

\*\*\*\*\*

## BLUE TIGER TEAM TEACHER NOTES...

### Science – Mrs. Di Fiori

Science classes are reliving a bit of the summer... We have been studying HEAT! We are jumping into lots of activities and labs studying the properties and characteristics of heat transfer, temperature, kinetic energy, and much more! Be sure to ask your students about all of their "hot topics" from class during this unit. We have also

### World History – Mr. Jackson

This year we are starting out by quickly reviewing topics covered in the past grades: 5 Themes of Geography, maps and other geographic terms. Students researched and collected current events examples as we introduced a standard format for discussion and assignments. In addition to daily discussion of current events, we will also be reading THE BREADWINNER, a story of a girl living in Afghanistan while under Taliban rule. In WORLD HISTORY, our schedule began with the study of early man and the people of Mesopotamia. The study of 9-11 was awesome and some family homework led to a timely discussion. As always, peruse the TV shows for something pertinent, especially on the History Channel, or articles from the newspaper or magazines you may have at home.

### Communication Arts – (Reading / Writing) - Mrs. Leach

This month we are finishing our first unit; “Reading to Understand My Community”. We’re reading several short stories to apply the pre-reading skills of setting a purpose for reading, previewing, and planning; as well as the during reading skills of making inferences, recognizing cause and effect relationships, and making text connections. We will continue to respond to daily writing prompts in preparation for our second unit based on writing strategies (Six Traits of Writing). Our specific theme is writing to learn about our community. Our goal is to connect the strategies that effective and proficient readers and writers use on a daily basis. Check my website on the West Middle webpage if your child needs copies of the reading log or handouts and directions for assignments.

**Communication Arts – (Reading / Writing) – Ms. Lautenschlager**

This month we are continuing to discuss reading strategies in our first unit, Reading to Understand My Community. We have enjoyed reading various fiction and nonfiction texts and have begun thinking about the importance of communities and the individuals within them. In October, we will begin transferring our knowledge of good text as we begin our second unit, Writing to Understand My Community. Our weekly vocabulary studies will continue, as we begin to

use the parts of speech to help us grow our vocabularies.

**TIGER TEAM – PASTA HOUSE READING PROGRAM**

Each child has a daily homework assignment to read 30 minutes from their own personal novel selection. Our Reading Program assignment will continue all year long! Our Reading classes completed their autobiographical “Baby” poster project, and also will continue to study the key literature elements of short stories.

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**TEAM TIME...** *Feel free to make an appointment or call us any time.*

*During 7<sup>th</sup> hour from 1:45 – 2:15    Phone (314) 415-7421    Mrs. Heilich’s Room # 3612*

Mrs. Heilich - Math	#5-5410	Ms. Di Fiori	- Science	#5-5458
Mr. Jackson - World Hist.	#5-5450	Mrs. Leach	- Com. Arts	#5-5467
Mrs. Eckhard - SSD	#5-7471	Ms. Lautenschlager	- Com. Arts.	#5-5443
Mrs. Burks - counselor	#5-7418	Mr. Swartz	- principal	#5-7405

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**\*\*TIPS FOR SUCCESS\*\***

***To ensure a positive and productive 7<sup>th</sup> grade year, each student must:***

- \*respect self, peers, adults, and school property
- \*have positive parental support
- \*have regular attendance
- \*check the Team Web Page or call West Middle’s Homework Hotline at (415-7400)
- \*or even call a responsible friend if absent
- \*have the proper supplies *with* him / her in class
- \*complete **all** homework

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☺ **Behavior Basics** ☺

- \*Courteous and respectful behavior is **expected**.
- \*Follow the teachers’ directions the **first** time.
- \*Bring **all** textbooks to class **every** day.
- \*Leave cell phones, book bags and coats **in** your locker.
- \*No **unauthorized** gum chewing, eating, or drinking is allowed in the classroom or hallways.

**Citizenship Grade Guidelines**

**S** - satisfactory                      **O** - outstanding  
**I** - improvement needed        **U** - unsatisfactory

Most students are good citizens who respect others and practice good behavior.  
They also participate in class, and contribute to their learning groups.  
These students receive an **S** citizenship grade.

Some students demonstrate exceptional leadership, cooperation, and/or concern for others and the school.  
These students receive an **O** for outstanding citizenship!

An **I** is earned by students who disregard the rules, disrupt learning, or have been **tardy** to class **3** times.

Students who continually break the rules, or have been **tardy 4** or more times receive a **U**.

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⊗ **Team Detentions** ⊗

Behavior that is inconsistent with the above guidelines will result in assignment of a Tiger Team detention.

(held on Wed. after school **or** during lunch ... Monday – Friday)

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**SCHOOL TOOLS! WE SENT A SUPPLY CHECKLIST HOME  
AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SCHOOL YEAR.  
SUPPLIES NEED TO BE CHECKED AND REPLENISHED EVERY WEEK!  
THANKS. IT MAKES A BIG DIFFERENCE FOR IN CLASS WORK AND ACTIVITIES!!!**



# Team 7-Red Bulls

Lampen, Schmitt, Kraner, Swihart, Ash

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The Team 7-Red Bulls are off to a great start! The teachers very much enjoyed meeting the parents of our students at Open House and during Fall Conferences. Our team t-shirt design was drawn by Sierra Garner and we will be wearing the t-shirts throughout the year to show our 7-Red spirit. The Team 7-Red August student of the month was Rachel Friedman. Way to go Rachel! When first trimester mid-reports arrive, please review them with your child and contact us with any questions or concerns. Please remember that Infinite Campus is available to all students and parents to view progress in classes at any time. We appreciate your support, interest, and enthusiasm!!!



Ms. Kraner's **Pre-Algebra (Math 7)** students have been hard at work! We have completed Chapter 1: Number Sense, Patterns, and Algebraic Thinking. In this chapter, students learned how to describe patterns and use them to solve problems. We have also been working on applying the order of operations to evaluate variable expressions involving powers and exponents and to solve equations. The students have used these skills to find the perimeter and area of rectangles in order to solve real-world problems. We have also worked our way through Chapter 3: Data and Statistics. Students studied mean, median, and mode of a data set, and how each of the values represents an average of data. They also used bar graphs, line graphs, stem-and-leaf plots, and histograms to display and analyze the distribution of values in a data set. The next unit is Understanding Proportionality. Students will compare and order fractions, mixed numbers, and decimals, and will also write fractions as decimals and vice versa. They will also learn about ratios, and extend this concept to rates and unit rates. We're

only just beginning this great year of Pre-Algebra (Math 7)!

Ms. Kraner's **Challenge Pre-Algebra** students have been busy learning! We have completed our Integers and Operations unit.

In this unit, students used order of operations to evaluate numerical and variable expressions, including expressions with powers. They wrote variable expressions and wrote and solved equations using mental math. The students used formulas to find unknown values. Also in this unit, students were able to use a number line to explore integers and absolute value, and they added, subtracted, multiplied, and divided integers. They found the mean of data sets and used the commutative, associative, and distributive properties to evaluate expressions. They are also able to find and plot points in the coordinate plane. Our next units will be Linear Patterns and Relationships and Understanding Proportionality. We're excited for a great year of challenging our minds in math!

The **Math** textbooks are available on-line. Please have your child ask Ms. Kraner for a sheet with the directions on how to register their book if they have not done so already. There are great resources available such as lesson reviews, homework hints, section quizzes, and chapter tests.

Ms. Schmitt's and Mrs. Lampen's **Communication Arts** classes are finishing up a short story unit that focuses on literary elements and emphasis on honing inferencing skills through the use of text evidence. Students are also working on a descriptive writing assignment to develop their use of sensory details coupled with vivid word choice and sentence fluency. As always we encourage all students to spend

30 minutes a day pursuing their own independent reading outside of class.

In **Social Studies “World History”**, students began the month of October with their study of the Fertile Crescent and all the major civilizations that inhabited the area known as Mesopotamia. As we have moved through the month of October, Team 7 Red Bull students have continued their sojourn through the mysteries of the ancient river valley civilizations. As we end this month, we will finish our exploration of the Egyptian river valley civilization along the

Nile River, and move our way into India and the Indus River valley civilization.

In **Science** class we started off the 2011-2012 school year by continuing our journey of understanding experimental design. We then moved on to our first large unit on Heat. This unit will create great background knowledge for our upcoming unit on Electricity. As we are just about to finish Heat, our focus will change to Sound and Light with October taking us through Waves and the beginnings of our Sound unit.

## Team 7-White Eagles

Curran, Ramirez, Jaques, Schmidt

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**Welcome** to 7<sup>th</sup> grade! Team 7-White is thrilled to start the year with such an enthusiastic group of 7<sup>th</sup> graders. Our team is dedicated to the success of each of our students. We are looking forward to working with all of our students and families toward a successful school year!



**The Team Homework Center** meets after school on Mondays and Wednesdays from 3:15 – 4:15 p.m. All students on the Eagle team are encouraged to stay and work on homework, organization, and/or study skills with a team teacher. Monday’s Homework Center is held in Ms. Jaques’s room and Wednesdays are in Mr. Schmidt’s room.

**Team Website** Check out our team website! You can link to it through West Middle’s homepage under the Teachers link. On our website you will find team updates, daily

homework, and links to the teachers’ individual websites.

### **Science – Mrs. Curran**

Our students will be studying Energy this year. We began our year with the study of "heat." We have experimented with the ways heat is transferred (conduction, convection and radiation). We've also worked with how heat affects matter. The kids really appeared to enjoy working with flames...YIKES! Our next "energy" burst will be the study of "waves" which will take us into the areas of "sound" and "light!" We're hoping to see lots of light bulbs appear above students' heads as they continue to learn.

In addition, our 7<sup>th</sup> Grade **Challenge** students will be delving into current science. Students will be identifying innovations in science via reporting out on current science articles. For the remainder of the trimester,

students will be submitting one article analysis per week to share.

### **Pre-Algebra 1 – Mrs. Ramirez**

It has been a great first half of the trimester in Math 7. The students in will be working with ratios and proportions, starting with comparing and ordering fractions and decimals. Then we will be solving problems using rates and proportions. Students should be doing all math assignments in pencil and grading homework with red pen. Please help make sure they have the necessary materials at

### **Challenge Pre-Algebra – Mrs. Ramirez**

The students are starting Unit 2 Ratios and Probability. They are currently working on fraction operations. Next they will move into solving problems using rates and proportions and will be doing a lot of work with percents. Students should be doing all math assignments in pencil and grading homework with red pen. They should also have their textbook with them every day. Please help make sure they have the necessary materials at school.

### **World History – Mr. Schmidt**

World History students will examine the river valley civilizations of Mesopotamia and Ancient Egypt. Focus will be on how the geography of each of these areas influenced the development of civilizations in these areas; why those civilizations rose, developed, and fell; how the achievements of those civilizations affect lives today; and an analysis of beliefs, religions, customs, writing, and art of these areas.

### **Communication Arts – Mrs. Jaques**

Students have had a brilliant launch to the school year, demonstrating impressive organizational, social, and academic skills. Thank you, parents, for helping them to come to class prepared with materials and the mindset necessary for a successful

learning mission. In our first Unit, “Reading to Understand my Community,” they’ve explored challenging territories such as summarization of fiction and nonfiction text, drawing conclusions when information is not directly stated, making claims in writing and being able to support those claims with evidence, working collaboratively in groups, and the sometimes daunting task of public speaking in front of a group of peers. Students will carry on the journey uncovering the variety of viewpoints possible on a given topic, before embarking on a multi-genre writing unit next month. Hats off to students and parents for a great start to the Independent Reading Marathon, as well: so far everyone is on track and nearing the finish line!

**Thank you** to each of the parents on the Eagles Team 7-White for your continued support of your student’s education!



# Team 8 - White Eagles

Curran, Ramirez, Ryon, Schmidt

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**Welcome** to 8<sup>th</sup> grade! Team 8 White is very excited for the opportunity to work with our amazing 8<sup>th</sup> graders! With such a great start to the year, we are looking forward to working with all of our students and families toward achieving success this year!



Please help make sure they have the necessary materials at school.

## **U.S. History – Mr. Schmidt**

8<sup>th</sup> Grade students have spent the last couple of weeks looking at the first explorers to the "New World", beginning with the Vikings and continuing all the way up to the European colonization of North America. We will begin this month with a more in depth look at the English colonies that became the original thirteen states of the United States and the events leading up our war for Independence.

## **Communication Arts – Miss Ryon**

Have you been receiving a copy of the weekly comm arts newsletter? In an effort to keep you updated on all our classroom news, a newsletter is sent home at the end of every week. It is sent to the e-mail addresses listed in Infinite Campus. If you are not receiving this newsletter, first check your "spam" folder. If it is not there, contact me at [cryon@pkwy.k12.mo.us](mailto:cryon@pkwy.k12.mo.us), and we'll trouble shoot.

In comm arts, we have been working to build a tool box of strategies to improve our writing, practicing these techniques in groups and independently. Our focus has begun with participles and appositives, and we will soon be working with adjectives shifted out of order and absolutes. See if your student can identify the brushstrokes, the tools that we use to make our writing more interesting, in this blurb!

Studies show the importance that independent reading has on student success in school and later in life. Students are participating in daily Silent Sustained Reading where they spend time reading independently and responding to their

## **Trouble completing homework on time?**

Stop by our team Homework Center on Mondays and Wednesdays. Students can stay after school for extra help or simply for a quiet place to work. Mondays are in Ms. Jaques's room and Wednesdays are in Mr. Schmidt's room.

**Team Website** Homework somehow not making it from school to the planner? No problem! Encourage your student to take responsibility for their success. Check our team website for daily homework, team updates, and links to the teachers' websites.

## **Science – Mrs. Curran**

We began our year introducing the concept of "motion." How do we know when we're moving? We're measuring speed, velocity and re-working our own definitions of acceleration (did you know that there's negative acceleration?). From that point, we're taking a brief pit-stop to review measurement concepts and skills. We'll be moving on to study "forces."

## **Mathematical Modeling 8 - Mrs. Ramirez**

It has been a great start to the year. The students are starting Unit 2 Ratios, Probability, and Data Analysis. They are solving problems using rates and proportions, then will be doing a lot of work with percents. Students should be doing all math assignments in pencil and grading homework with red pen, they also should have their textbook with them every day.

reading through periodic quizzes. Through our independent reading program, Indy 500, each student needs to read 500 pages by the end of the trimester. Students should be halfway toward completing this goal by October 5. Thank you for recognizing the importance of independent reading and encouraging your child to read every night.

We are finishing Unit 1 – Reading to Understand Our World. In this unit, students used Hillock’s levels of questioning to study summarize (Who? Wanted what? But? So?), determine author’s viewpoint, and find theme, while also uncovering the

real world issues hidden in many texts. Our second unit will focus on multi-genre creative writing.

Forgot your homework at school? Sick and missed a day of school? No problem! Check out my Moodle page for electronic copies of handouts, study guides, and other helpful extras. You can link to it from my webpage or by going to [www.parkwayone.org](http://www.parkwayone.org).

**Thank you** to each of the parents on the Eagles Team 8-White for your continued support of your student’s education!



# Team 8-Blue Pathfinders

Kelly, Roff, Goldman, Litteken, Lorenz

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Team 8-Blue teachers thank you for joining us at Open House! We are grateful for the opportunity to welcome you to a day in the life of your West Middle eighth grader and to share our goals for the year. Thanks for your support! August and September days found us cementing study skills, challenging thinking, and building our learning community. The highlights follow.



look at mentor texts to better our own writing. As we work through this unit, we will continue to introduce brushstrokes and strategies of organizing ideas in writing through our WOWs (Writing of the Week Assessments).

In addition to our units, students will be expected to read everyday from a book of their choice. This reading allows students to practice the reading strategies we discuss during class while giving them choice and agency in the learning process. Studies show that independent reading improves not only reading skills, but also overall academic achievement. Please encourage your student to read at home in addition to the reading completed at school. Thanks!

**Pre-algebra 2** students are finishing Unit 1.

We have been focusing on using the order of operations to evaluate expressions with variables and integers, writing and solving equations, and using formulas to solve for unknown values. In Unit 2, students will learn how to write and solve proportions and solve real world problems involving percents.

**Challenge algebra** students are working on solving linear equations with paper/pencil, tables, and graphing calculators. We are exploring one-step, two-step, multistep & absolute value equations, their graphs, and much, much more.

At the beginning of the year, Ms. Kelly's and Mr. Roff's **communication arts** classes studied the qualities a good reader by utilizing skills such as summarizing, author's viewpoint, and theme. To aid us in our study, we discussed Hillock's Hierarchy of Questioning. We then applied the concepts while reading various short stories and articles about our world.

As we move into October, we will begin to study the qualities of a good writer through Six Traits of Writing. We will learn about various genres of writing and how, often, our audience and purpose will determine the genre we choose for our writing. We will

This year, **science** students began by establishing themselves as a community of learners. Each class initiated its own set of norms and expectations. Then, the students spent a week investigating their Multiple Intelligence learning styles. As a team, we are going to incorporate students' strengths into our teaching styles. It was amazing to learn how many of our students learn best through paired visuals and auditory. The first topic covered this year was the format of Experimental Design (an updated version of the Scientific Method). We are reviewing many concepts learned in sixth and seventh grade. This year, our focus will be to create data tables, graphs, and write a conclusion paragraph for most of our experiments. Our first science unit will be Force and Motion. During this unit, concepts such as the four types of motion, speed, unbalanced forces, and acceleration will be investigated. Next, students will spend several class periods reviewing Heat and Chemistry concepts: finding mass, volume, and calculating

density. Finally, we will explore how the transfer of heat energy is responsible for the water cycle and how it impacts our air. All of these motion, chemistry, and heat basics will lay the foundation for the next unit, weather and climate.

As an answer to the question “What is History?” **American history** classes introduced themselves by creating a personal time line. Students submitted their time lines electronically on the Parkway Moodle, our private online classroom. Although it is accessed using the internet, only the students enrolled in the class can post or read information. This classroom forum allows all students to display their work! The moodle is also a student resource center with links to American history readings, websites, and current event articles. August and September activities analyzed the initial meetings of three worlds that shaped America’s early history - America, Europe and Africa. Topics researched and discussed included the cause and effect of exploration and the geography,

religion, economics and politics of the first colonies.

In all classes **study skills** are essential. We encourage continued use of student daily planners. A student would also benefit by finding a class ‘study buddy’, who could be called with questions about assignments. Additional homework resources include the Homework Hotline (314-415-7400, 5-3-1), the Team 8-Blue assignment webpage and teacher web pages (both accessed through the West Middle website <http://www.pkwy.k12.mo.us/westmiddle/index.cfm> ). Major assessments are announced in advanced. Review and study time is included in classes to help prepare for assessments. In addition, after school help sessions are often available. Our first progress reports will be sent during the last week of September. Please feel free to contact us with any questions. Our daily teaming time is 8:20 to 8:55 a.m. (314- 415-5416). We welcome your communication. Together we can make a difference.

## Team 8 -Red Star Dragons

Byrd, Schloeman, Schulz, Zurek, Wilson

We have experienced a great beginning to the 2011-2012 school year. Reviewing procedures, getting acquainted, and delving into our curriculums has occupied our first few weeks together.

In **mathematical modeling**, students just completed Unit 1 where they used the order of operations to evaluate expressions, including expressions



containing integers; they wrote and solved equations and used formulas to solve for unknown values. In Unit 2 students will learn how to write and solve proportions and solve real world problems involving percents.

In **algebra**, students just completed Unit 1 where they wrote and evaluated expressions, equations,

and inequalities. They learned to apply order of operations to real world problems, classify numbers, and apply the distributive property to write equivalent expressions. In Unit 2 students will learn to solve multi-step equations while using the distributive property and solve real world problems using proportions.

Students are concluding their introductory study of building community in **science** and studying the forces of and heat to review the foundational components of scientific investigations. Physics will be the focus of the coming weeks. Mr. Zurek has also been working with the students to observe how physics is at work in their daily lives.

An overview of geography, the first Americans, and the Age of Exploration are the topics being examined in **history**. As we round out this month, colonization will become our theme.

In **communication arts** students are aiming to reach their goal of reading 500 pages as part of our Indy 500 program. Students are held accountable for what they are reading every 100 pages and are given 15-20 minutes in class each day.

As far as **writing** is concerned, students have been writing in a variety of genres as we focus on ideas, organization, word choice, fluency, voice, and conventions- the six traits of good writing. We are wrapping up our first unit with a focus on revision of our work. Students are sharing their pieces

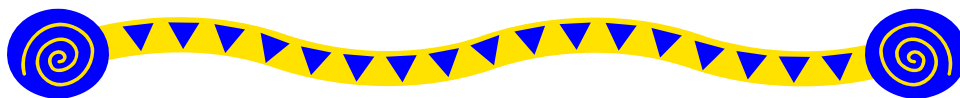
with their peers and learning how to give constructive feedback.

In addition to the work we are doing in our writer's notebooks, we are learning how writers are artists who improve their sentences by painting with five brush strokes- participles, appositives, absolutes, active verbs, and adjectives. This revision of sentences has been a major focus of our first unit- you'd be amazed at the impact these brush strokes are having on the students' writing.

We really enjoyed meeting so many of you at Open House. It's important to meet our families and establish contact early in the year. Seeing parents experience a day in the life of their eighth graders is exciting. We hope you enjoyed the evening as much as we did.

If you haven't paid the front office a visit to get access to your child's grades through Infinite Campus, please do so. It provides you with the tools you need to continually monitor their progress and keep the lines of communication open.

Feel free to notify us if you have questions or concerns. Our team meets Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 10:45 a.m. - 11:20 a.m., and we can be reached at 314.415.5469 during that time. Thanks for all you do at home to support our efforts at school. We look forward to a rewarding and successful school year!



# DEPARTMENTS

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## World Languages

We're busy in World Languages establishing and cultivating relationships with students and their families. We appreciate the interest shown in all of the Open Houses. We have a few things that will hopefully serve as a reminder for you and your student as he/she enters a new or another year of exciting language learning.

### How to contact us:

Mrs. Schacht-Spanish	Conference Period: 12:49-1:34 p.m.	Phone: ext. 5-7462
Mrs. Myers-Spanish	Conference Period: 12:49-1:34 p.m.	Phone: ext. 5-5470
Ms. Siess-German	Conference Period: 12:01-12:46 p.m.	Phone: ext. 5-5418
Mrs. Miller-French	Conference Period: 2:25-3:10 p.m.	Phone: ext. 5-5494
Ms. Jones-Latin	Conference Period: 12:49-1:34 p.m.	Phone: ext. 5-5403

**Homework Hotline:** We have a spot on homework hotline for your child to check assignments and special announcements. Please dial (314) 415-7400, press 5, press 4, press 1 and listen for your teacher's name. Our names are listed alphabetically.

**Study Tips:** As a parent of a World Language student, you can help him/her study by quizzing vocabulary and phrases. Give your child the English and let him/her tell you the word/phrase in the World Language. Students are then recalling vocabulary on their own and practicing pronunciation of that particular word/phrase. Practicing every night will insure a strong vocabulary base. Just because there isn't any written work doesn't mean reviewing isn't important!

**Websites:** Along with our book series is a website that your child can use to review and access his/her online text. For Spanish and French it is [www.go.hrw.com](http://www.go.hrw.com). Your child will need to click on his/her language, level and textbook. For German see Frau Siess' website to find the Deutsch Aktuell hyperlink. For Latin the website is [www.cambridgescp.com](http://www.cambridgescp.com).

**We look forward to another great year** of language learning! We are happy you are working with us. Please feel free to contact us anytime!

## Fine Arts



The eighth grade Arts and Crafts students began the year by making a realistic drawing of a tree branch with black and white conte crayon (compressed charcoal) on 18 x 24 inch construction paper. They are finishing up on a commercial art assignment which is a black and white cover for the 2011 -12 "Buzz Book."

The seventh/eighth grade Fine Arts Block (art) students started by drawing realistically a glass bottle with charcoal pencil. Shading and

shadows were included. They moved into creating a mandala design using abstract shape within a circle of eight divisions that had a square for the parameter. The mandala symbolizes the universe as derived from Asia. Markers were used to add color.

The sixth grade Fine Arts Block (art) students made a design based on geometric or organic shapes that were repeated in black marker on colored paper to become an abstraction. Their colored pencil drawing followed as a copy of a magazine photograph that they chose.

The sixth grade Future Pathways (art) students developed a fine art combined commercial art assignment by developing a collage from newspaper and magazine print. They had to be aware of proportion, rhythm, and craftsmanship. They then went to a fine arts approach by constructing pottery using the slab method with a design carved on the surface.



## Choir

Congratulations to those who sang at the St. Louis Cardinal's baseball game on September 10. You sounded great and behaved very professionally. We are proud of you and hope you are proud of yourselves!

8<sup>th</sup> Choir will attend a rehearsal for their All District Concert on Wednesday, October 26, from 11:45 a.m. to 2:20 p.m. at the Touhill Performing Arts Center (UMSL). The All District Concert is that night at 7:30 p.m., also at Touhill. Permission forms will be coming home and must be returned on time. Parent tickets for the concert can be purchased through the Fine Arts Coordinator, Sandy Collins. This rehearsal and concert are mandatory for 8<sup>th</sup> grade singers.

Please check your child's choir webpage for an updated calendar. There are a few typos on the version that was sent home. Dates on the web pages are correct.

Students can look forward to the High School Music assembly in October, featuring the WHS Jazz Choir. The World Music assembly will also be in October, featuring music by the 7<sup>th</sup> grade Choir and 8<sup>th</sup> grade Band and Orchestra

Pam Silverio and Megan Roland





In sixth grade, students have been learning about and creating their own tessellations. After Red Team camp, students will learn about kaleidometrics and kaleidocycles. Then they will each choose one of the three to use for their final first trimester project, which is due October 27 for A day and October 28 for B day.

Seventh grade MOSAICS' students have been working on short stories from Ray Bradbury's *The Illustrated Man*. After an essay test at the end of September, students will begin building and programming BOE-bots, robots.

For seventh graders who are interested, information regarding the Duke TIP Talent Search can be found at [www.tip.duke.edu/7gts](http://www.tip.duke.edu/7gts). The qualifications and information is all available on line. Mrs. Carter does have some pamphlets available for students who are interested.

In eighth grade, after reading "The Lady or the Tiger," students participated in a series of trials (logic puzzles) to try to survive being eaten by the tiger. They also read about and discussed how to deal with stress using *Fighting Invisible Tigers: A Stress Management Guide for Teens*. Then they read *October Sky*. Using supporting evidence from the book, students had to write an essay explaining which three characters they felt were most gifted and why. The second half of the trimester students participate in The White House Decision Center. They work through modules to prepare for a field trip to The Truman Library on October 21. In the culminating event at The Truman Library, students take on the roles of Truman's cabinet. It is 1950, and North Korea just invaded South Korea. After viewing copies of original documents, they have to decide how the United States will react and hold press conferences. We leave at 7:15 a.m. and return around 9:30 p.m. If you would like to chaperone on this field trip, please contact Donna Carter at [dcarter1@pkwy.k12.mo.us](mailto:dcarter1@pkwy.k12.mo.us) or 314-415-7456. Students will write a paper about the Korean Conflict that will be due October 27 for A day and October 28 for B day.

Congratulations to Stephen Zhang who was our student of the month for August. At nomination time, he was one of the top scorers in "The Lady or the Tiger" trials. Stephen is always willing to help out in class.

Also, congratulations to Naomi Kodama, who traveled to the capital of the country of Mali last May to deliver stuffed animals to the children. In September, Naomi traveled to Germany to give a presentation about NothingButNets, the campaign against Malaria, of which Naomi is one of the champions. During the General Assembly of JCI Germany, Naomi was introduced by the JCI Germany President, Tobias Schuhmacher, to share what she had done. She received a standing ovation from the audience and went up on the main stage to receive a token of appreciation from President Schuhmacher.



## Physical Education

All physical education students are up and moving this fall as we have started our individual and team sport activities. The sixth grade classes started with soccer and golf, and are now covering fleetball and tennis. The seventh and eighth grade classes began in fleetball and tennis, and are now in soccer and golf. The two main units for these activities are health-related fitness and sports skills and skill-related fitness. Details of the content of these units can be found on the online curriculum guide via Inside Parkway Website under curriculum. Other activities during the month of October will include ultimate frisbee and frisbee golf, orienteering and hiking, and non-traditional sports such as tchoukball (a popular game from Finland), Kinball (Canadian), and Team Handball. Students will also begin rotating in the fitness room to cover fitness based concepts, and will also be able to establish personal fitness goals based on first trimester fitness test results.



## Health

Welcome back to health class, it's good to see all of the students back and eager to learn about being physically active and their health. Currently seventh graders are rotating between health and physical education classes, during the second trimester, sixth graders will rotate back and forth and the last trimester and eighth graders will do the same. This year we have two teachers per grade level teaching the subject matter. The seventh grade teachers are Ms. McClinton (teaches A day health) and Mr. McNabb (teaches B day health). At this point in the year we have settled in to our every other day routines and the students are doing great at remembering which class they are headed to. In the first months of school, we have covered the units of personal health and wellness, nutrition, and we are working on the personal safety unit. Disease prevention, substance education, and healthful relationships and sexuality are the units to follow as we close out the first trimester. If you would like, you can access the descriptions of the units through the online curriculum guide on the Parkway School District website. Please know that, if you would like your child to be exempt from a particular unit, all you need to do is contact your child's teacher and we will make other classroom arrangements. Before we go, we would like to leave you with a fun fact! We are no longer studying about "my pyramid" in nutrition. The new dietary guidelines have been changed to "my plate"...we encourage you to look over this new change and learn with us and your children. You can access this information by going to [choosemyplate.gov](http://choosemyplate.gov).



## Intramurals

During the fall months we will have several activities going on at West Middle. Fleetball (similar to flag football and ultimate frisbee) is underway with sixth grade meeting on Mondays, seventh grade meeting on Wednesdays, and eighth grade meeting on Thursdays. There will be a fleetball competition held at West Middle for all three grades on Monday, October 24, from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Wrestling is meeting all three days and is open to all grades in preparation for the upcoming wrestling meet on October 19 at Central Middle. The meet will begin at 3:30 p.m. and will end around 6:00 p.m.

Cross Country is also meeting all three days during the months of September and October to prepare for the upcoming cross country meet on Wednesday, November 2, at South Middle. The meet will start at 4:00 p.m. and will end around 5:30 p.m.

Beginning tennis is also starting this fall and is open to all student wanting to learn the game of tennis. It meets every Thursday.

All students interested in staying after school for any intramural activity or club must sign-up prior in the cafeteria each time.



## Counselor's Corner

6<sup>th</sup> Grade: Leigh Klawiter [lklawiter@parkwayschools.net](mailto:lklawiter@parkwayschools.net)  
314.415.7416

7<sup>th</sup> Grade: Lisa Burks [lburks@parkwayschools.net](mailto:lburks@parkwayschools.net)  
314.415.7418

8<sup>th</sup> Grade: Chris White [cwhite@parkwayschools.net](mailto:cwhite@parkwayschools.net)  
314.415.7417

## Upcoming Events

- **October 24 – 28 Red Ribbon Week**
- **November 21 – 22 8th Graders Begin High School Educational Planning**

The exhilaration and anticipation of a new school year has settled into a smooth routine. While we hope your child encounters the excitement of new learning each day, we know there is comfort that comes with being familiar with schedules and expectations. Thank you for all of the ways you supported this positive transition into a new school year. Your role in establishing positive, healthy habits is essential! Children benefit from maintaining regular times for meals,

study, rest and play! We hope you will be able to carve out some unscheduled “down time” each day.

Grade level principals and counselors, have helped to create this year’s positive learning community by visiting classrooms to welcome the students, talk about our roles and help establish personal and class goals for the coming year.

As our year continues, we encourage you to contact us at any time you have a question or concern. We are available to meet with students individually and in small groups to address specific issues. In addition, we will facilitate a variety of lessons and activities within the classroom setting. Our goal is to support the development of “capable, confident and curious” learners.

## **MEASURING ACHIEVEMENT**

Sixth and seventh graders have just completed the Stanford Achievement and Otis Lennon School Abilities Tests. The eighth graders completed the Otis Lennon School Abilities Tests and the EXPLORE. These assessments provide indications of the progress students are making in their academic and cognitive development. You can expect to receive a copy of the results by mail sometime in the last part of this calendar year.

At this time, you should have received your child’s individual student MAP (Missouri Assessment Program) scores from last spring. If you have not received this information, or have any questions about your child’s results, please contact the grade level counselor. This year’s test will be administered again in the month of April. More specific information will be provided when our school finalizes this year’s schedule.

These tests are two of many different ways we work to measure and monitor student learning. In addition to district and subject specific assessments, daily assignments and performance all contribute to the evaluation of individual growth and development.

## **COMMUNICATION IS KEY**

Keeping in contact with your child’s teachers is an important step in supporting your child’s success. Telephone and e-mail are useful tools in reaching teachers and other school staff. Teams and teachers create web sites that provide the answers to many questions. Make sure you know how to access that. Our own web pages can be found at this address:

<http://www.pkwy.k12.mo.us/westmiddle/homepages/home.cfm?userid=wmscounselors>

One additional tool that will provide much information is Infinite Campus. This is a data management program used to process all student information. One function is its access to individual student scores and grades. Once you have an account established, you may view the grade book entries for your child in each class in which he or she is enrolled. Students are assisted in creating a secure username and password, and so may monitor his or her progress. If

you need assistance in establishing a parent account, please contact Mrs. Mary Van Winkel at 314-415-7424.

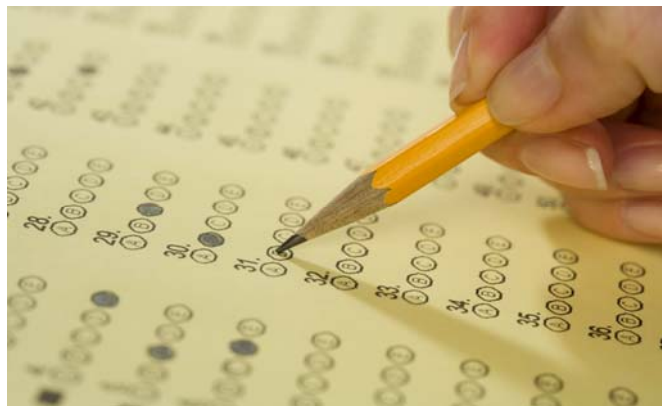
### **NOW nL8tr FOR 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE**

Our eighth grade students all participated in the Now n L8r (Now and Later) program during the week of September 12. Now n L8r is an activity based program that is presented to all eighth graders in the Parkway School District. Now n L8r was established in 1998 and is part of Parkway's Safe and Drug Free Schools programs. The discussions emphasize the decision-making process, helping students to realize that decisions we make now can and will affect us later.

We believe that students can and do make good decisions. These decisions are often positively influenced by parents, peers and other adults in their lives. However, we also recognize that negative influences such as substance abuse, peers and even the media can have an effect on this process. We are very excited about the program and the opportunity to strengthen this very important life skill. Following your child's participation in the Now n L8r program we encourage you to discuss it and hope you will view this as another way to reinforce your family's values. Thanks for your support!

### **DUKE TIP FOR 7<sup>TH</sup> GRADE**

Duke University sponsors a Talent Identification Program for seventh grade students. Qualified participants are eligible to take either the SAT Reasoning Test or the ACT Assessment College Entrance Examination. For students who consistently score at the highest percentiles on standardized tests, taking these advanced exams can provide an opportunity to more fully measure academic abilities. Eligible students must have scored at or above the 95<sup>th</sup> %ile on the math or language arts subtests of nationally normed assessments, such as the Stanford Achievement Test. If you would like additional information or application materials, please contact Mrs. Lisa Burks at 314-415-7418 or [lburks@pkwy.k12.mo.us](mailto:lburks@pkwy.k12.mo.us).



# West Middle Library Media Center



The Library Media Center has a blog! Check us out @  
<http://librarypwms.blogspot.com/>!



## West Readers' Achievement Program (W.R.A.P.)

Be a part of the West Readers' Achievement Program and earn rewards for READING!  
Please visit the Library webpage to learn about the 2011-2012 Mark Twain and Truman  
nominee books. Quizzes can be taken for each book at:

<http://www.quia.com/pages/kruzicka26/page1>

**The 2<sup>nd</sup> level W.R.A.P. deadline is November 4!**

# Congratulations



### TO THE WINNERS OF THE 1<sup>ST</sup> LEVEL OF W.R.A.P.

- Nishant Agarwal
- Dana Alshekhlee
- Karina Bao
- Connor Brunig
- Carolyn Crowley
- Renae Farrow
- Ronny Fields
- Trenton Geiger
- Alex Hubbard
- Naomi Kodama
- Haran Kumar
- Kristen Mason
- Victoria Marshall
- Taylor Murphy
- Jamie Poppen
- Nadira Shabbir
- Kaleigh Stanfield
- Liza Tarakanova
- Betsy Wait
- Lauren Zhao

Mrs. Ruzicka will be participating in Scholastic Book Clubs this year. If  
you would like to order online, go to

[www.scholastic.com/bookclubs](http://www.scholastic.com/bookclubs)

Class Activation Code: GJLVQ



# ANNOUNCEMENTS

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## Student of the Month

One way that West Middle recognizes our students' achievements is through "Student of the Month" awards. Each month, each team, as well as each subject area that is not part of a team will choose a student to recognize as "Student of the Month". These students are chosen for various reasons: academic achievement, improvement in grades, citizenship, participation, or special projects.

The students who are chosen for the month will have their picture placed in the glass case near the main office each month (August through April), and a certificate will be presented at the Awards ceremony in May at the end of the school year.

Congratulations to our August Students of the Month: Clay Bierk, Madeleine Bishop, Drew Bonnett, Connor Brunig, Andrew Engelmeyer, Maggie Feder, Rachel Friedman, Sarah Goldblum, Wyatt Harlan, Katie Hornsby, Ruthie Jia, Aerin Karrenbrock, Lana Kuziez, Taylor Murphy, Jordan Neisler, Jason Sauer, Evan Shukers, Alex Snyder, Taylor Torbett, Betsy Wait, and Stephen Zhang.

Keep up the good work!



## Parent /Teacher Conferences



### NEW DATES:

Tuesday, February 21,

3:45 - 6:15 p.m.

Thursday, February 23,

5:00 - 7:30 p.m.

## **THREE WAYS TO GET PARKWAY NEWS ONLINE!**



1. Read the latest monthly e-newsletter online: [www.pkwy.k12.mo.us/eNews](http://www.pkwy.k12.mo.us/eNews)
2. Receive monthly e-newsletters via e-mail: Sign up for eNews at [www.pkwy.k12.mo.us](http://www.pkwy.k12.mo.us)
3. Read the latest Parkway news stories: [www.pkwy.k12.mo.us/news/getNews.cfm](http://www.pkwy.k12.mo.us/news/getNews.cfm)



## **Gearing Up to Make Good Choices**



This Fall Parkway's Safe and Drug-free (SADF) facilitators are bringing the Pack'n 4 Now n L8r program to every eighth grader in the district. In September they started facilitating their three lessons at West Middle during health and physical education classes. This program is the last in the series of Middle School SADF programs. Pack'n 4 Now n L8r focuses on making good decisions and preparing the students for high school. During this program, they look at three aspects of their lives: academics, relationships and personal health. They realize the impact stress can have on them, the importance of being in healthy relationships and that choices they are making now will impact them later. Pack'n 4 Now n L8r allows students to identify what is "weighing them down" and equips them with management strategies. A final session in the spring provides the eighth graders with an opportunity to talk with a panel of high school safe and drug-free role models. These informative conversations help them make a successful transition into high school.

# YEARBOOK 2011-2012

**ORDER NOW!!!!**



**DON'T MISS YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO ORDER A  
YEARBOOK AT A REDUCED PRICE (\$22). YOU  
CAN ORDER ONLINE AT  
[WWW.YEARBOOKFOREVER.COM](http://WWW.YEARBOOKFOREVER.COM) OR FOLLOW  
THE LINK ON THE BOTTOM OF WEST MIDDLE'S  
WEBSITE.**

***It's Back!!!!!!***



***50% Off***

***NIKE SPORTSWEAR SALE***

The Parkway South baseball team will once again sponsor the annual **50% off Nike sportswear sale** in the Parkway South high school's gymnasium C. (801 Hanna Rd., Manchester, Mo. 63021). The **pre sale** for the Parkway employees, community and friends will be **Friday, November 4, from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.** The sale will run Saturday and Sunday, November 5 and 6, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Apparel that will be sold at the sale will be **St. Louis Cardinal gear, University of Missouri, Kansas, Illinois, Oklahoma, Texas, Miami, Florida, North Carolina** and nearly 100 other schools sportswear will be on sale. There will also be non team wear as well. Sportswear will include hoodies, jackets, golf shirts, shorts, fleeces, hats, jerseys, sweat pants, ladies pink gear and much, much more. **Everything will be marked down 50% off. Cash, Checks, Visa, and Mastercard will be accepted.** Get a head start on your holiday shopping and do not miss out on the Best sale of the year! Tell a friend and we will see you at the sale.

# Join us for the Parkway North Craft Fair

hosted by the  
Parkway Alumni Association

**Saturday, Nov. 5**  
10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

**Sunday, Nov. 6**  
11 a.m. – 4 p.m.

**Parkway North High School**  
12860 Fee Fee Rd.  
St. Louis, MO 63146

Come by and do your holiday shopping! Strollers welcome!  
Lunch and snacks available. Free admission and parking.

**Are you interested in renting a booth?**

Download a crafter application online at [www.parkwayalumni.org](http://www.parkwayalumni.org).

**Questions? Please contact:**

Cyndi Clamp - 314-963-7519

Netta Silverstein - 314-518-3090

E-mail: [crafters@parkwayalumni.org](mailto:crafters@parkwayalumni.org)



Proceeds benefit the programs of the Parkway Alumni Association.  
To learn more about the PAA, visit [www.ParkwayAlumni.org](http://www.ParkwayAlumni.org).

# Middle Years

Working together for school success



## Short Stops

### Character challenge

Make family members aware of good character by challenging them to be “character scouts.” Ask everyone to be on the lookout for traits like gratitude and courage (saying “thank you” for a small act: facing fears to try new activities), and point them out. *Idea:* Choose a trait to find each week.

### Foreign-language tip

Is your middle schooler studying a foreign language? Encourage him to watch movies in the language he’s learning (he can find them at the library or on movie channels). He can also play games online. For example, at [www.languagegames.org](http://www.languagegames.org), he can play Hangman and do crossword puzzles and word searches in another language.

### Shifting moods

Tweens often go through ups and downs because of changing hormones. When your child seems out of sorts, that’s when she most needs you to remain calm. Showing you have control will comfort her and make her feel secure, even if she doesn’t realize it at the time.

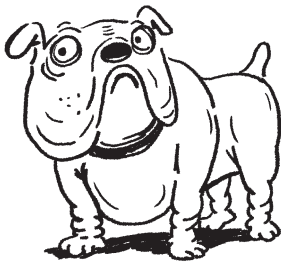
### Worth quoting

“The fragrance always stays in the hand that gives the rose.” *Hada Bejar*

### Just for fun

**Q:** Why are bulldogs so wrinkled?

**A:** It’s too difficult to iron them.



## Organized for success

It’s a big jump from elementary to middle school. Not only will your child have multiple classes and teachers, he’ll probably have more homework, papers, and books. Being organized can help him cope with these changes like a pro.

Share these suggestions with your middle grader.

**Do a “run through.”** Have him think through his day. What will he need for each class? Help him decide what to carry and to plan times to trade books and notebooks at his locker. At the end of each day, he should check his assignments so he knows what to take home.

**Avoid clutter.** Encourage your middle schooler to weed out what he doesn’t need by sorting papers and supplies every Friday, so he’s ready for the week ahead. Then, he can group old assignments, quizzes, and tests together for safekeeping.



**Have a daily plan.** Using a dry-erase board or an agenda book can help your child stay on top of how he spends his time. Suggest that he plan each day of the week with slots for school, studying, and other commitments (debate team, sports practice). If he doesn’t have some time to relax, he may need to cut back on something.

*Note:* Let your middle grader know that it’s okay to change his strategies until he finds the one that works best for him. 👍

## Be involved

You can help your child improve her grades and have a better attitude toward school simply by staying involved. Here are some ideas.

### At home:

- Provide transportation when necessary.

For instance, your middle grader may need to go to the library to do research or to a friend’s house to work on a project.

- Talk about what you’re learning (a new computer system at work, vegetarian cooking). You’ll show her that learning is a lifelong process.

### At school:

- Check the office for ways to volunteer. You might chaperone a field trip, help stock a parent-resource center, or set up or clean up after club events.

- Attend activities. Even if your child isn’t involved in the winter musical, for example, show your support by going as a family. 👍



# Simply noted

Taking good notes lays a foundation for learning. Writing the information down helps your child process what she hears. Reviewing it will help her remember it later. Share these ideas.

## Pick out what's important

Rather than writing down every word in a lecture, identify what matters most. If a teacher emphasizes a point by writing it on the board, repeating it, or raising his voice, chances are it could show up on a test. Lists (causes of the recession), dates (the year your state was founded), and time lines (history of the U.S. space program) are usually important.



## Create your own shorthand

It will be easier to keep up with what a teacher says if you use abbreviations and symbols. You might leave out the vowels in words (“btwn” for “between”) and use abbreviations such as “b/c” for “because” or symbols like “&” for “and.” Find sug-

gestions online by Googling “note-taking shorthand.” One helpful site is [www.english-zone.com/study/symbols.html](http://www.english-zone.com/study/symbols.html).

## Fill in what's missing

If you don't hear a key word or point, ask the teacher to repeat it. You can do this during the lecture, since other students may also need it repeated, or after class. Or you could compare notes with a classmate. 👍

# The rundown on rumors

Your middle schooler has probably overheard people telling a rumor about someone. Tell her that this is wrong—and that she can help stop the rumor mill.

Start by explaining that rumors are often untrue or greatly exaggerated. What starts out as a fairly insignificant comment can quickly get blown out of proportion as it spreads from one person to another.



When your child hears a rumor, she should ask herself if it could damage someone's reputation. Would she want people saying similar things about her? If not, she shouldn't repeat it.

Instead, suggest that she find a reason to excuse herself (“I have to get to class”) or change the subject (“What did you think of the science quiz?”). 👍



## Parent to Parent

### Showing up for school

Last year my son asked to stay home from school when he felt he needed a day off. I wanted him to know that I wouldn't allow him to stay home “just because.”

I explained how important attendance is. Being in class where he can learn every day will help him keep up with his work and be better prepared for tests. If he misses class, it could take him a few days to catch up.

Then, I told him I expected him to attend school every day unless he was sick or there was a family emergency. Just like in a real job, he needs an acceptable reason to be absent, and learning this now will benefit him when he starts working later in life. 👍



## Q & A Time for family

**Q** I work full-time, and my kids are busy with schoolwork and activities at night. How can we find ways to spend time together?

**A** Staying connected to your children can be difficult, especially for today's busy families. But it's important. Spending time together helps you stay informed about what's going on in their lives and keeps the lines of communication open so they're comfortable talking to you.

Make the most of small moments whenever possible. For instance, you might invite your youngsters to ride with you to the post office or join you while you walk the dog. If your family has a favorite TV show, record it and watch it together over the weekend.

Also, make family time a priority by scheduling it in advance. Let your children help choose an activity, such as playing Frisbee or miniature golf. 👍



### OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ideas that promote school success, parent involvement, and more effective parenting.

Resources for Educators, a division of CCH Incorporated  
 128 N. Royal Avenue • Front Royal, VA 22630  
 540-636-4280 • [rfeustomer@wolterskluwer.com](mailto:rfeustomer@wolterskluwer.com)  
[www.rfeonline.com](http://www.rfeonline.com)  
 ISSN 1540-5540

# Middle Years

Working together for school success



## Short Stops

### Engage your audience

The next time your child has to give a speech in school, suggest that she start with a question. For example, if her speech is about animals in Australia, she might say, "Did you know that a platypus is poisonous?" She'll grab her classmates'—and her teacher's—attention.

### Pumpkin delight

Autumn is the perfect time to try pumpkin recipes with your middle grader. You can roast the seeds or look online for other ideas. Pick out recipes you'd both like to try (pumpkin soup, pumpkin pancakes). Then, spend time together in the kitchen preparing a healthy dish.

### Tracking progress

Remind your child to keep tabs on his grades throughout the semester. As he receives grades (tests, essays, projects, classwork, homework), he can calculate his average based on the percentage that each one counts toward his grade. That way, he'll know where he stands and be able to focus on areas of concern.

### Worth quoting

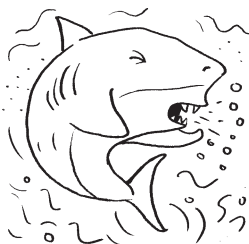
"The quieter you become, the more you can hear."

Ram Dass

### Just for fun

**Q:** Why do sharks live in saltwater?

**A:** Because pepper water makes them sneeze!



## Homework: A change of pace

Keep homework from becoming a daily grind for your middle grader by suggesting new approaches. These ideas can add variety to study time—and keep her motivated to do her best.

### Make it social

Encourage your youngster to invite friends over to do homework together. Working with a friend or in groups could boost her interest and learning. Classmates can share information and explain ideas to each other—and your child will get to spend time with her peers. *Note:* Suggest that she choose study buddies who work hard and take school seriously.

### Make it scenic

Doing homework in a different spot can add a refreshing twist. Your middle schooler might read an assignment while sitting on a pile of autumn leaves outside or head to the library and look for a cozy corner. Even moving to a porch or patio can provide a welcome change.



### Make it a contest

Suggest that your child compete with herself to make her work more exciting. For instance, she could time how long it takes her to finish a set of math problems and then try to beat her time on the next set. Or she could see how many problems she can solve in 10 minutes—and then how many she can answer in the next 10 minutes.

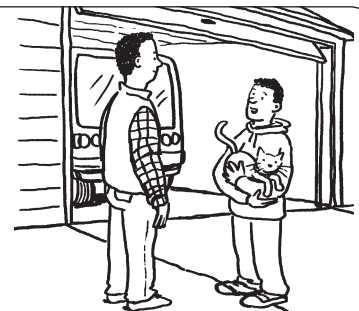
*Idea:* Suggest that your youngster give herself an incentive for finishing her work. For example, she might plan to go for a bike ride, give herself a manicure, or read a magazine. 👍

## Give respect, get respect

Show respect to your child, and chances are you'll get respect in return. Try these tips:

- Don't embarrass or make fun of your youngster—at home or in front of other people. Instead, treat him the way you treat your friends and coworkers and the way you want to be treated. He will be more likely to follow your lead and not embarrass you in front of your friends.

- When your child does something that angers or annoys you, give him the benefit of the doubt by listening politely to his side. Perhaps he forgot to close the garage door because your cat got out and he went to catch her. Listening respectfully to his explanation and not jumping to conclusions may teach him to behave that way, too. 👍

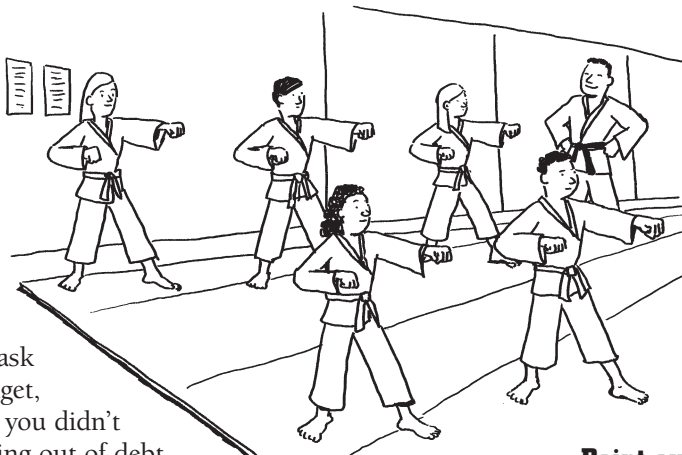


# Stick with it

It's not uncommon for children to start something they don't want to finish. But learning to stick with an activity will help your middle grader later in life. Here are some ways you can teach him to persevere.

**Set an example.** Talk with your youngster about times when you completed a task or an activity (worked out a monthly budget, kept up an exercise routine) even though you didn't feel like it. Explain that the rewards (staying out of debt, being healthy) are worth the effort.

**Be encouraging.** If your child talks about quitting an activity that's difficult for him, suggest that he try a little longer.



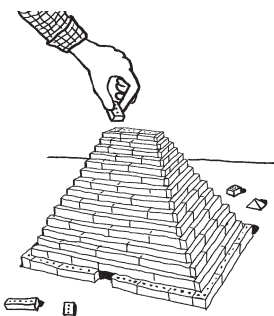
You might say, "You've only been doing martial arts for a month. Stay with it for another month and see how you feel. Then, we'll talk again." *Idea:* Your middle grader can ask for help—perhaps his instructor has suggestions for improvement.

**Point out progress.** When your youngster does persevere, let him know that you notice ("I understand that project was tough for you—great job getting it done"). Praising his persistence will help him make it a habit. 👍

## Spotlight on history

What ties intriguing characters, fascinating events, and important lessons together? History! Bring the past to life in your living room with these ideas:

■ Create something that represents a time period. Each person can choose her own project, or your family could work on one together. For instance, you might use Legos to make a model of an Egyptian pyramid or tape large sheets of paper on a wall and draw or paint an Aztec mural.



■ Have each family member pick a "secret identity" (Amelia Earhart, Ben Franklin) to research using the Internet or books. Then, host a game show where everyone asks yes-or-no questions and tries to guess each other's character. The winner is the person who guesses the correct answer with the fewest number of questions. 👍

### OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ideas that promote school success, parent involvement, and more effective parenting.

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540-636-4280 • rfeustomer@wolterskluwer.com  
www.rfeonline.com  
ISSN 1540-5540



## Q & A

### Handling stress

**Q** My seventh grader seems overwhelmed—I've noticed that she's been biting her nails almost constantly. How can I help her manage her stress?

**A** A little stress is normal for children this age. They're coping with puberty and greater responsibility at home and school.

Besides having your daughter eat well and get plenty of sleep, you can help her pinpoint what's worrying her. Is she concerned about friendships or the number of things she has to do? The two of you can discuss ways to handle problems (talk to her friends, cut back on activities). Having a plan will help her feel calmer.

Also, encourage your middle grader to spend time each day doing something she enjoys, such as playing guitar or rollerblading. Finally, if she feels herself becoming anxious, she can try closing her eyes and taking a few deep breaths. And as she becomes less stressed, hopefully she'll bite her nails less. 👍



## Parent to Parent

### A touchdown for school success

Fall means one thing to my son: football! I thought there must be a way to use this excitement to help Austin with school subjects, so I emailed his teachers for ideas.

His English teacher suggested that we get him reading more by checking out library books about football. She also said he could keep a journal for writing game summaries or making up his own football stories.

Next, Austin's algebra teacher recommended using football statistics for math practice. For example,

he might graph wins and losses or figure out the probability of each team making the Super Bowl.

Finally, his social studies teacher suggested hanging a U.S. map on the wall. She said Austin could mark each team's

location and think about how the team name and mascot relate to the city.

Now that football season is in full swing, I'm happy to see Austin following his favorite team—and enjoying some new football activities! 👍

