

Middle School September News



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"Families are a valuable asset to a child's education."

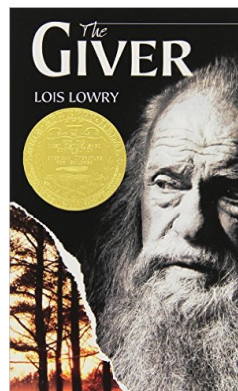
Meet The Teachers!

Please join us Monday, September 17, to meet your child's new teachers. Administration will be providing an update on our school in the multipurpose room and afterwards we'll meet in room 301.

Character Trait of the Month - Respect (Purple)

We will start building our learning community by getting to know one another and developing our social contract.

English Language Arts



Seventh graders will begin the year with a Short Story Unit to prepare them for analyzing and critiquing their first novel. They will read *ALL SUMMER IN A DAY* and *DARK THEY WERE, AND GOLDEN-EYED* by Ray Bradbury and *TWO KINDS* by Amy Tan. Their first novel will be *THE GIVER* by Lois Lowry. *THE GIVER*, a utopian dystopian novel, follows the story of Jonas who is chosen to become the new Receiver of an egalitarian society.

Sixth graders in Rooms 301, 302, and 303 will begin the year by reading two short stories in preparation for their first novel. The stories are, “The Tail” by Joyce Hansen and “Eleven” by Sandra Cisneros. In honor of the celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month, their first novel will be *Esperanza Rising*, by Pam Munoz Ryan (historical fiction). Esperanza is living the good life on her family’s ranch in Mexico until she and her mother must escape from Mexico and settle in a camp of migrant farm workers during the Great Depression. She finds poverty, hard work, and discrimination. Esperanza becomes involved in the California migrant workers’ struggles, and saves her mother in the process. As with many immigrants, Esperanza must transition from a comfortable life back home to a life of poverty in the US—a land that many immigrants see as wealthy and prosperous.

ELA READING SKILLS AND STRATEGIES:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Critical analysis •Critical thinking •Cultural connections •Internet skills •Literary analysis •Making inferences and drawing conclusions based on text evidence •Map Skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Online research •Visualization of Text •Using a Climax Chart •Using Literary Language in both speaking and writing •Writing summaries of narrative text •Working in collaborative groups •Analyzing Character Development •Identifying and explaining literary symbolism
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Math

Welcome to another year of great learning in the mathematics classroom! It is my goal to bring out the mathematician in every student; no one is “bad” at math -- we just have to think about different ways of solving the problem. In our classrooms, students talk to each other every day and work together to support each other’s achievement. Students also are learning how to take good notes so that when they get to high school and college, they can be very successful.

Our grading scale:

- Assessments (35%)
- Problems of the Week (15%)
- Math Reflections (20%)
- Notes/Binder Check (10%)
- Homework (5%)
- Participation/Classwork (10%)

All students are expected to complete homework when it is assigned. Homework assignments will be posted on Google Classroom; additionally students are encouraged to use their agenda books to write down the homework prior to leaving my room.

Students *also* are encouraged to use online resources. Accounts will be established for Google Classroom, where students may look for assignments, their weekly Problem of the Week and any important announcements (such as dates of quizzes and tests). Additionally, all students have accounts for Math IXL and Khan Academy and will be using that resource for skill practice. All students also should maintain their math binder and keep it organized. Vocabulary should be updated continuously!

Sixth grade students will be using Envision as their curriculum this year, the same series that was used in Fifth Grade. One great aspect of this curriculum is that students will have access to their textbook online, along with a lot of resources! Each student will have a login and password (their username is their CPS email, complete with @cps.edu; password is their math ID, followed by my last name). Our initial focus will be rational numbers and their operations.

Importantly, sixth graders currently are learning how to set themselves up for success in the mathematics class! This includes organizing their binder to include all of their materials (so that nothing is inadvertently left in their locker, in their desks or at home!). We also are learning how to take good notes and talk to each other with respect so that we can learn from each other.

Seventh graders will be using Connected Math this year and will start with quick warm-up units called Shapes & Designs (2-D geometry) and Variables and Patterns, in which they will practice writing algebraic equations to match situations and “stories” to match graphs. They also will review the important structure of a linear equation, $y = mx + b$, a very important pre-cursor to Algebra class..

Science

Students will present the STEM-related news article they reviewed over the summer break.

Sixth graders will be introduced to the eight (8) NGSS scientific and engineering practices as they start the school year of Earth and Space Science. For each lesson, students will reflect and provide evidence on which of the eight (8) NGSS practices they think they used. Students will start Scientific Method unit that will guide them in selecting and conducting the science fair project. Through this unit, students will review the scientific and engineering design process, while designing and conducting investigations, or solving a problem in preparation for Haines' middle school Science/STEM Fair in December, 2018. In pairs, students will think of a problem that they want to solve or a question they want to answer, then submit a proposal with their purpose and hypothesis for approval. Upon approval, students will conduct their literature review in order to formulate their hypothesis and identify their methodology and experimental or engineering design.

Seventh graders will also start with scientific method unit. Once again, this unit will help them to select and conduct the science fair project. Through this unit, students will review the scientific and engineering design process, while designing and conducting investigations, or solving a problem in preparation for Haines' middle school Science/STEM Fair in December, 2018. In pairs, students will think of a problem that they want to solve or a question they want to answer, then submit a proposal with their purpose and hypothesis for approval. Upon approval, students will conduct their literature review in order to formulate their hypothesis and identify their methodology and experimental or engineering design.

Social Studies

Sixth graders have been very busy learning the guidelines of day to day operations of middle school. We will begin our first unit: Geography of the World. Our focus skill will be finding accurate locations using latitude and longitude. Sixth graders will also learn about the first civilizations of Mesopotamia. Students will end this unit with a writing assignment where they become the hero or heroine of their very own epic poem or story. As we complete our Mesopotamian unit we will head for Africa: Everything out of Africa.

Seventh graders will be learning about the sequencing of primary source documents. There will be a brief review of early American civilizations and explorers. Seventh grade will learn about the Colonization of North America. Students will begin the Jamestown unit using the Document Based Question (DBQ): Early Jamestown: Why Did So Many Colonist Die? Upon completion of the DBQ analysis students will complete an essay in which they answer the question using primary source documents to support their thesis.

Reminder

Encourage your child to read daily.

Important September Dates

September 3 - Labor Day

September 4 - First day of School Year 2018-2019

September 17 - Open House

Attention:

We are proud to continue our debate team this year. Middle school students are encouraged to join as being part of the debate team helps students to develop critical thinking skills. We will meet once a week for one hour. Your student/child will participate in 5 debates on Saturdays. Your child will be accompanied by teacher and lunch, as well as source of transportation will be provided. Please encourage your child to join as future high schools highly consider debate team members.