

Middle School Newsletter

This weeks newsletter is in a different format because I managed to spill coffee all over my computer and I don't have access to my publishing software. The content, however, should be pretty much the same!

Student Council

There will be a mandatory meeting for all potential student council candidates on Monday, September 22nd during lunch in Mr. Cross' classroom. If your student is considering running for a student council office, they need to be there. During the week, students will need to complete a form, have it signed by parents and teachers, and submit that to Mr. Cross no later than Friday, September 26th. Campaigning for office begins on Monday, September 29th and elections will be held school wide on Friday, October 3rd. All candidates must also give a speech to the entire school on Friday.

6th and 7th grade MUSIC!!! MUSIC!!!

The 6th and 7th grade "Advanced Band" will be starting this week (9/9 and 9/11).

Students will meet every Tuesday and Thursday, with their instruments, at 12:40 at the Music Room. Ideally everyone should be ready to play, including having his or her copy of "Standard of Excellence" from last years band (available at the Music Tree).

As a reminder we've set up a nice rental/purchase arrangement with the Music Tree of Morgan Hill (Tel 779-4312). As a reminder the instruments available for participation are: Trumpet, Saxophone, Clarinet, Flute and Trombone. If your child plays a different band instrument that I've not listed please contact me to discuss options.

Mr. Schnittman

polydiatonic@verizon.net

www.davidschnittman.com

7th and 8th grade GOLF CLUB!!!

There are still several openings left for 7th and 8th graders who would like to join the golf club. Mr. Chagnon and I are limiting the number of participants to the first 10 to sign up. This will be an after school program meeting, most likely, every week for 1 hour. Please contact Mr. Schnittman to have your name placed on the list and we will let you know when we're getting started. The plan is for the club to begin meeting on Tuesdays after school and we're soliciting donations for certain pieces of equipment that we'll need such as: Shag Bag, golf mats, chipping nets, and golf balls.

Thanks,

Mr. Schnittman

polydiatonic@verizon.net

www.davidschnittman.com

Language Arts

It was wonderful to meet all of you last night; I hope I was able to provide you the information that you needed for a successful year in Language Arts.

This is the last official week of spelling and vocabulary assessments. A few students came to me concerned because the 7th and 8th grade students were being tested on the same words. The testing the last two weeks was a base line study to determine their knowledge base level.

In the upcoming weeks, I will be assessing your child's reading level. This testing is an intricate running log that will provide information on any gaps or areas of concern in your child's reading ability. These assessments will allow me to assess your individual child's needs and areas of strengths to build upon.

Writer's Workshop

The 7th graders this week have worked on their personal narrative. We are continuing to add elements of our experiences at Marin Headlands to our personal narrative story. The 8th graders have done an exceptional job of beginning their personal narrative stories as well. We have continued to work on our personal narrative and the students have been very excited to see the progress that I have made on my piece as well. I feel that it is important for the students to know that while they are writing I am writing and sharing my work as well.

Reader's Workshop

The 8th graders started working on the story The Scholarship Jacket. We have started to discuss the elements of character and inference. The students were assigned a short response to literature regarding the story.

The 7th graders also read The Scholarship Jacket, this past week and in class wrote what it would be like to be in the shoes of the main character.

I would like to thank the parents that signed up for volunteering in the classroom. I know a lot of parents showed interests and spoke to me the evening of Back to School night, but I know I forgot a lot of those names. So far I have the following names willing to volunteer:

Friday Copiers:

Julie Schilling
Vivian Covas
Cindy Gion
Bettie Nelson

Lit Group Facilitators:

Kristin Georgi

Level Books for Library:
Kristin Georgi

If anyone else would like to volunteer, please send me an email and I will make up a schedule for the Friday Copiers. I will also hold a training session for the Lit Group Facilitators, in the first week of October.

I would like to encourage your children to turn their work in on time. Effective, **September 28th**, if a student turns in their Independent Reading Log Assignment late, they will receive a **0**. This is stated on the rubric on the bottom of the paper. I have not enforced this the last few weeks, because we just returned from science camp and were working on establishing our classroom norms again.

A special thank you to the parents that have donated items to the classroom! You have been a wonder of help.

Ms. Rawlins

Advanced Algebra

In case I forgot during our whirlwind time together at Back-to-School night, I'd like to thank all of you for attending. While I did most of the talking, I always gain insight when I have the opportunity to talk with parents as well as students.

For the next couple of weeks we will be taking an in depth look at our number system, fractions, and foundational math. I have told students this should be a review and I'd like to attack it aggressively. However if I'm moving too fast and something doesn't feel like review, they need to let me know!!! Once through, we will move forward with a relatively consistent foundation and get on with the business of mastering algebra. I really believe math is fun and I'd like nothing more than for my students to believe it too.

I do ask for your help in one area. This class seems to have a strong reliance on calculators. For the concepts we are working on now, there is no need for calculators. In fact using calculators will be counter-productive to what we are trying to accomplish, honing our number sense. So please, unless I specifically give the ok, **NO CALCULATORS!**

I encourage all students and parents to contact me with any questions, comments, or concerns. Students can usually find me on campus during lunch or last period (Monday, Wednesday, Friday); I can also be reached by email at mలాstra@csmh.org.

Infinity

As we go into week 3 of the CSMH Football League season, the contests are heating up. Click on the following link to view the league scoreboard:
<http://games.espn.go.com/ffl/scoreboard?leagueId=509434>. Note as you look at the scoreboard, team managers are listed by the owner of the ESPN account; in some cases this is a parent's name rather than a student's name and in some cases there is more than

one student managing the team. Following are the current standings listed by team name and manager:

TEAM	MANAGER	RECORD (W-L)
MH Supa Bowl Champ	Ty Gardner	2-0
CAL Crushers	Jack Affourtit	2-0
csmh baby sharks	Nikolai Sochan Garrett Taylor	2-0
Mo Hill winners	Jackson Gion	1-1
Team Lazy Eight	Mary Lastra	1-1
Team Cisewski	Trenton Cisewski	1-1
MH Ballas	Zack Hughes	1-1
MH Mongeese	Lucas Salem Sarah Lewis	0-2
MH Cheetahs	Alex Ochoa	0-2
MH Raptors	Brandon Lefore Cody Hulme Trenton Reynolds	0-2

Pre-Algebra/Algebra

It was wonderful to meet everyone at Back to School night! As we discussed that day, the Homework Policy is in effect. A reminder that it must be on time and signed by a parent.

Thank you again for participating in our in class survey of ideas that would help us be successful in math ("Need to Succeed" wall). Students were able to see your input and compare it with their own ideas, which created rich discussions. They observed that as the students seemed to focus on their social and homework time, the parents were more concerned with what the teaching and learning expectations are in the classroom. We also were able to come up with possible reasons behind the difference. We came to the conclusion that even though we may have different ideas of going about it, both parents and students alike value their education and the time they put into it.

The following were highly valued by everyone:

- Using time wisely
- Being respectful of different learning strategies (by teacher, student, and parent alike)
- Clear directions and expectations
- A low anxiety classroom

For information on upcoming math concepts, be looking for snapgrades emails. Have a great weekend!

Erin Earnshaw

Clos La Chance Student Dinner Project

A donation of \$10 from each middle school family is greatly needed to make this dinner a success. Please turn your check into Amy Storlie. The students are planning a Mexican Fiesta for October 18th. Thank you to those that have already donated. The students are excited and it should be a great project!

School Lunches

Reminder: All Revolution Foods lunch orders are due by Wednesday at 5pm for the next weeks lunches. Payment can be made in the office with "Hot Lunch" in the memo area.

Newsletter 09/19 (3 pages + High School Info sent to you earlier)

Seventh grade science students have or will be given copies of two particularly good note summaries so that they can compare and contrast those summaries with their own. They will also be given the Master Notes. They will combine their notes and summaries into one coherent, organized summary of all the History of the Earth information. There was or will be one large quiz, Friday (7-1) or Monday (7-2), covering this information. Next week, we will begin discussing the Characteristics of Life. The following week, we will apply those concepts to a study of tarantulas, leading up to the Tarantula Fest on Saturday, Oct. 4, our 3rd big Extra Credit Opportunity this year! The Tarantula Test is Tuesday, October 7.

Master Notes are available to those with modified education plans and those who feel they need help to improve their note-taking abilities. Students are asked to bring the notes they take to show to Ms. Anex in order to receive a set of Master Notes. Master Notes will be available in this manner throughout the year. Students are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity.

Grade 8 science students have begun the year with an overview of the Solar System that is mandated by our state standards. This is a relatively low-stress, entertaining way to get back into the academics of science before we begin our study of chemistry. Students are working in groups to create both written and performance products to educate their classmates. One of their more interesting tasks is to design a "LGM/W," a "little green man or woman" that could live in the environment of their assigned celestial body.

Life Skills students have begun to explore some of the challenges facing young people in the world today. They are thinking about themselves, who they are, what they believe, what they stand for, and what they hope for the future. On Mondays, we are participating in the G.R.E.A.T. program, which uses a violence prevention curriculum that teaches skills to help students avoid gangs, violence, drug abuse, and crime. Tuesday through Thursday we are currently reading and working on activities connected with the books *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens* and *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens Personal Workbook* by Sean Covey. It is possible that we will be able to take advantage of a "teacher's discount" to purchase these books. Details will be forthcoming in class.

Extra Credit In Science: Trimester I

To earn the credit, you must follow the steps outlined below. If you think of an event you wish to attend, you must clear it with me first if you want credit for attending.

The Steps to Extra Credit

1. Attend an approved event, one I suggest or one you suggest and I have approved.
2. Bring in a photograph of YOU in which you are DOING something interesting at the event.
3. Bring in an artifact of your participation, such as a craft you create there, a rubbing of something with an explanation of it, an autograph with an explanation, or an artifact of something else you DO that creates a memory.
4. Tell us about your experience – using the photograph and artifact – in an informal “Show and Tell” presentation.
5. Write one page summarizing your experience. Include an explanation of what you DO and what you enjoy about the overall experience.
6. How much credit you earn will depend upon how well you follow these instructions, and how thoughtfully and carefully you create your photograph, artifact, informal presentation to the class, and essay.
7. (You may suggest an alternative to any of the above steps, but it must be approved BEFORE you do it if you wish to receive credit.)

Extra Credit Opportunities:

Coastal Clean-Up, Santa Cruz, Saturday, Sept. 20, Register Now:

<http://www.coastal.ca.gov/publiced/ccd/ccd.html>

Ohlone Day, Henry Cowell Redwoods, Felton, Saturday, September 20

<http://www.santacruzstateparks.org/whatsnew/index.php>

Tarantula Fest, Coe Park, Morgan Hill, Saturday, October 4

<http://coepark.org/tfest.html>

HelpMeStudy: Solar System Web Sites (proven functional & useful)

<http://www.windows.ucar.edu/> (all topics)

http://starchild.gsfc.nasa.gov/docs/StarChild/solar_system_level1/solar_system.html (all topics)

<http://www.nineplanets.org/> (all topics, scroll down)

<http://www.solarviews.com/eng/homepage.htm> (all topics, pictures)

<http://pds.jpl.nasa.gov/planets/welcome.htm> (NASA-all topics)

<http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/en/kids/> (NASA for kids, all topics-with games)

<http://sse.jpl.nasa.gov/index.cfm> (NASA exploration mission)

<http://amazing-space.stsci.edu/>(all topics)

<http://www.nasm.si.edu/ceps/ETP/> (Smithsonian, all topics)

<http://amazing-space.stsci.edu/resources/explorations/trading/directions.html> (all topics, trading cards)

[http://space.jpl.nasa.gov/\(JPL solar system simulator\)](http://space.jpl.nasa.gov/(JPL+solar+system+simulator))
<http://science.nationalgeographic.com/science/space/solar-system> (NatoGeo-all topics)
<http://magma.nationalgeographic.com/ngexplorer/0203/games/game.cgi> (NatoGeo game)
<http://www.spaceweathercenter.org/resources/04/04.html> (Sun)
<http://www.spaceweathercenter.org/resources/05/05.html> (Sun)
<http://www.marsquestonline.org/resources/familyguide/index.html> (Mars)
http://www.open2.net/home/view?entityID=11497&jsp=themed_learning%2Fexpanding_viewer&sessionID=-1190841133552&entityName=object (solar system + links)

Middle School Science Camp

SCIENCE CAMP PHOTOS:

<http://picasaweb.google.com/woodyroy2004/CharterMorganHillMarinHeadlandsScienceCamp20082#>

<http://picasaweb.google.com/woodyroy2004/CharterMorganHillMarinHeadlandsScienceCamp2008#>

<http://picasaweb.google.com/dcross95020/ScienceCamp#>

<http://flickr.com/photos/29398850@N04/>

(If you have not brought in yours, do so soon! We are making the master set for the slide show and other delights! Join in!)

Our seventh & eighth grade students spent the first week of September enjoying Science Camp in the Marin Headlands. Our students were well prepared and enthusiastic.

Through hands-on learning and guided exploration, they discovered a sense of wonder about the natural world and a sense of responsibility for its stewardship. They developed a sense of the place in which they were living, and an understanding of the interconnections that form the fabric of life in our world.

Our students sampled water from a pond in the Headlands, catching macro-invertebrates that indicate water quality. They examined them with microscopes, keyed out their identities, and observed their behaviors. One night they learned about bioluminescence and hiked out to the beach to dig for plankton that give off green light when you disturb them in the sand.

They played team-building games and faced both individual and team challenges. They hiked out to tour the NIKE missile site, chopped up compost for the worm bins, cleaned pots in the Native Plant Nursery, climbed Hawk Hill or Hill 88, examined native plants and animals, and participated in a great program of entertainment around the campfire. They lived in army bunkhouses, ate delicious organic food, made good friendships even better, and created memories to last a lifetime.

Our Middle School staff, and Ms. Ellsworth and her brother, kept our campers safe and on task. They played games with them after hours, listened to their troubles, and shared their happiness. They took wonderful care of our students both on and off the trail, and we are very grateful to them.

Our students worked hard to be ready for this adventure, and several camp facilitators said they were among the best-prepared campers they had taught. Our students were ready, willing, and able to handle the challenges of a strenuous week of science camp away from home. We are proud of them and thank them for their good spirit and energy. We also thank their parents who were willing to let them go away for a week and also helped them to raise funds, acquire equipment, and complete their preparation for this program. This great collaborative effort resulted in a wonderful week of Science Camp! Thank you and congratulations to one and all!

History

Medieval History

7th graders are currently assessing their Events Projects. We have gone through a few of them on Thursday and Friday, and hope to complete the task on Monday and Tuesday. On Wednesday I expect that we will insert some of our pages into our interactive notebook. Because of this, I need ALL students to have a spiral bound, 70 page (or more) notebook set aside as their interactive notebook. We still have a small number of students who do not have this.

U.S. History

Beginning on Monday, we are going to begin a short unit on the Constitution. The unit will conclude with a quiz on Wednesday, October 1st. I plan on passing out the quiz review on Monday or Tuesday and we will review for the quiz on Tuesday September 30. Students will need to memorize the Preamble to the Constitution for this quiz.

Following our short look at the Constitution, we will move into our President's project, looking at the qualities, actions and events that made some of our historical President's "good" or "bad." We will then move on to look at our current election and students will make recommendations regarding who Mr. Cross should vote for. On October 30th, students will participate in a mock election designed specifically for Junior High and High School students.

Important web addresses:

<http://csmhhistory.pbwiki.com>

<http://www.digitaldave.us/CSMH/>

<http://www.digitaldave.us>

<http://www.snapgrades.net>

High School Information

A series of meetings will be held for those who wish to learn more about local Catholic private high schools. All of the Catholic high schools in the Diocese of San Jose attend these evenings – Saint Lawrence Academy, Archbishop Mitty High School, Bellarmine College Preparatory, Notre Dame High School, Presentation High School, and St. Francis High School.

Listed below is the schedule of High School Information Nights for Fall 2008. All programs begin at 7:30 pm. Reservations are not required.

- * Monday, September 22, 2008 7:30 – 9:00 pm St. Catherine’s School, Morgan Hill
- * Wednesday, September 24, 2008 7:30 – 9:00 pm St. Justin’s School
- * Tuesday, September 30, 2008 7:30 – 9:00 pm Queen of Apostles School
- * Thursday, October 2, 2008 7:30 – 9:00 pm Most Holy Trinity School
- * Tuesday, October 7, 2008 7:30 – 9:00 pm Holy Spirit School
- * Thursday, October 9, 2008 7:30 – 9:00 pm St. Simon’s School