

Eagle Update



Students were provided with a free agenda at the beginning of the school year and are required to have their agenda in school each day. The AMS agenda is not only used for goal setting and recording of assignments but also as a hall pass for the safety of our students. Lost agendas should be replaced immediately. Replacement agendas can be purchased in the front office for \$10.00.

Please continue to monitor your child's completion of homework. Homework is a way of reinforcing and enriching the instructional program. In many cases the homework assigned is linked to the next day's class assignment. When students don't complete these assignments, it puts them in jeopardy of not meeting with academic success. Setting up a daily routine with quiet place and time for homework is essential. Assist students with reading and studying when necessary. When your child does not have any assigned homework, time should still be allotted to reading and/or studying for classes. Baltimore County Public Schools policy suggests an average of 20 – 30 minutes per subject (no longer than 90 minutes per day) 5 times per week as homework/study time for students in grades 6 – 8.

Language Arts

In Language Arts classes students have recently completed the reading of *THE LIGHTNING THIEF*. Also in this unit students were introduced to Greek mythology where they read various short myths and discussed elements of myths. Students will ultimately read from *Black Ships Before Troy: The Story of the Iliad* where they will compose a new episode in which the character they select meets another god, goddess, monster, or other creature not encountered in the text. Students will consider the author's writing style and imitate that style in their new episode.

GT Language Arts students are also engaged in Greek mythology where they will compose a mythological narrative that features a chosen character's meeting in a new setting – a fictional crossover. Students will balance narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, characters, and theme in their archetypal setting.

Reading

Sixth grade Reading students will build upon making scientific connections in Unit 3 by, "connecting to our world through science." This unit focuses on how the organization of informational text supports a reader's understanding of new concepts, ways in which technology can be both a positive and negative impact to our world, and how reading about science concepts help us understand the advancement of science. As part of this unit, students will utilize their new learning, in order to use a mentor text to create a sequel imitating author's style.

Foreign Language

In March, 6th grade Level 1 Chinese students will be starting their new unit of "My Family." Students will learn about family members, pets and how to describe them. Please continue to check Engrade for missing assignments, particularly those under the name of One Note. If you are interested in finding out more about One Note, plan to attend Arbutus Middle School's Night of Innovation on March 30th. I will be leading a workshop to see how their students are using this new application and how parents can help their student build their online portfolio.

Mathematics

Sixth grade math students will soon be discovering why we have an order of operations. They will also be learning how to use exponents and factoring in order to write, evaluate, and combine algebraic expressions.

Science

In science, students are studying space. They will be examining the solar system, types of galaxies, and estimating the size of the universe. We will examine patterns with in these systems, such as seasons and lunar phases. By the end of the unit, students will utilize their knowledge to make a claim regarding the possibility of a planet identical to Earth existing in the universe.

World History

In World Cultures students will continue to examine the Rise of Ancient Civilizations, including Rome, the Han and Qin Dynasties, and the Mayan Empires. They will be researching the Geography, Governments, Economies, Societal norms, roles of men and women, government and religions of each of the civilizations. They will then compare each of the civilizations to each other. As they progress, they will be looking at the changes that occurred throughout each civilization until the apex of that civilization. As we move to the 4th Quarter of the school year, we will examine the fall of each of the Empires that were discussed during the 3rd Quarter.



Special Area Updates



Art

In art class, 6th graders are putting the final touches on their Egyptian-inspired self portraits, dressing and accessorizing themselves like ancient Egyptian royalty. Once they complete portraits, they will begin the BCPS Art Mid-Point Assessment to display how their art knowledge and skills have grown since the beginning of the school year.

Music

Congratulations to all of our band and orchestra students who participated in the BCPS Solo and Ensemble Festival in February. This year we had 55 students participate, and 30 of these students received a Superior rating and will be representing AMS at the Maryland State Orchestra (May 13th) and Winds and Percussion (May 20th) Solo and Ensemble Festival. These students also had the opportunity to perform at our AMS Night of Innovation on March 30th and will be featured in our Music Department Spring Recital at the Charlestown Auditorium on April 3rd. Great job everybody!

The 6th, 7th, and 8th Grade Orchestras will attend the BCPS/BSO Side-by-Side Concert on Wednesday, March 22nd. This will give our orchestra students an opportunity to hear a professional level ensemble and also allow them to enjoy some classical music! See the permission slip sent home with your child for more information.

Please feel free to email your child's music teacher if you have questions or concerns about your child's progress in class, check out our Music Department website (arbutusmiddleschoolmusic.wordpress.com) for more information, and like us on Facebook to receive the latest updates about the goings-on in the music department.

Music Makes a Difference,

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Other News

Changes in Immunization Requirements

All 7th grade students in 2017-18 (next school year) will be required to provide proof of having received a dose of meningococcal vaccine (also called Menactra) and a booster dose of Tdap (also called Boostrix and Adacel.) These vaccines are in addition to the vaccines required for kindergarten. Most children receive these vaccines at age 10 or 11.

Parents of current 6th graders are urged to

- Check with their child's health care provider to see if the child has received these vaccines.
- Schedule an appointment for the child to receive these vaccines BEFORE September 5, 2017.
- Provide verification of the immunizations to the school nurse.

More information about these vaccines is available at the Office of Health Services website <http://www.bcps.org/offices/sss/health/>.

7th Grade News

Grade Language Arts

GT:

Students will continue to learn about World War II and the Holocaust through the novel, *Parallel Journeys*. Allegories from Dr. Seuss and different artifacts of propaganda will connect students to the past as they analyze experiences from both sides of the Holocaust. Students will examine argumentative speech and compose an essay analyzing how the delivery of the speech affects the impact of the words.

Standard:

In 7th grade Language Arts, students are continuing to read the play, *A Raisin in the Sun*. Students have been analyzing how setting, stage directions, and dialogue portray the mood in a dramatic text. Students have also identified various types of conflicts within the text and determined how these conflicts can affect the plot. In the next several weeks, students will begin interpreting film and analyzing how various cinematic techniques create the mood in a film. As an assessment, students will compose a film critique in which they argue whether or not the mood in a scene from the text version of *A Raisin in the Sun* is accurately portrayed in the 2008 film version.

World Cultures

Students in 7th grade World Cultures are beginning the Europe Unit at the end of February and continuing throughout the months of March and April. Students start by examining the physical and human characteristics of the 4 regions of Europe. Then, they will analyze the achievements of the Greek and Roman civilizations. The rest of the month of March will be spent on the Middle Ages in Europe. Students will evaluate the role of the church, manor system and feudalism during the Middle Ages. Also, students will examine effects of the Crusades and the Bubonic Plague. At the end of the month, we will have a mid-Europe quiz covering these topics.

Math

Math

Algebra 1 students are finishing up Unit 2, learning about systems of linear equations. They have learned multiple methods of determining when two lines with intersect. Algebra 1 classes will take the Unit 2 assessment the first week of March. Next, the students will learn about quadratic equations and graphs. These equations have a squared variable and form a parabola on the graph!

Pre-Algebra students are finishing up Unit 3 learning the concepts of linear relationships & equations, determining slope & y-intercept, and solving linear equations. Pre-Algebra classes will take the Unit 3 assessment the first week of March. We will then dive into Unit 4- Geometry. In this unit we will be exploring the concepts of Modeling Geometric Figures, Transformations, Congruence & Similarity, and Angle Relationships in Parallel Lines & Triangles.

Science

GT Science is working on their mirror/laser project where they design a shape using mirrors and bounce a laser beam off of the mirrors to a target. Students also learn about parts of the eye and how light enters the eye and forms images. To supplement this GT students will be dissecting a cow's eyeball.

Standard Science is just finishing up with their changes over time unit, discussing the peppered moth evolution and phenomenon caused by the industrial revolution in Manchester, an industrial city in England. Students will learn about fossils and finally, evidence of the how the horse has changed over thousands of years. The next unit is the physics of waves!

Reading

The i-Ready students will continue to work on skills to increase overall reading comprehension and vocabulary. They will also be practicing fluency and using a program called audacity to monitor their own pacing.

Chinese

7th graders in Spanish and Chinese are working diligently on improving their language skills through listening, reading, writing and speaking. Some students have been working on creating menus in Chinese while others are finishing up their Unit 3 IPA. In Spanish, we have students who are conjugating verbs of different activities in order to express their likes and dislikes. Please check Engrade for any missing assignments and have students practicing their language at home!

Specials

Art

In art class, 7th graders moved from self-portraits to an abstract art unit focusing on Frank Stella. Art students were challenged to pick a sport and create a non-realistic representation of that sport using cardboard pieces and paint. They had to think about how the sights, sounds, and actions of a sporting event could translate into colors and shapes. Once they complete their sculptures, they will begin the BCPS Art Mid-Point Assessment to display how their art knowledge and skills have grown since the beginning of the school year.

Music

Springtime is Performance Time in the AMS Music Department! We have a number of important performances coming up so please take a second and mark on your calendars all of the exciting opportunities your music students have coming up!

Congratulations to all of our band and orchestra students who participated in the BCPS Solo and Ensemble Festival in February. This year we had 55 students participate, and 30 of these students received a Superior rating and will be representing AMS at the Maryland State Orchestra (May 13th) and Winds and Percussion (May 20th) Solo and Ensemble Festival. These students also had the opportunity to perform at our AMS Night of Innovation on March 30th and will be featured in our Music Department Spring Recital at the Charlestown Auditorium on April 3rd. Great job everybody!

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These groups will also represent AMS at the Baltimore County Band, Orchestra, and Chorus Assessments on March 15th through 17th. This is a required performance so please make sure you get and sign the permission slip sent home with your child.

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Grade 8 March Newsletter

As we move into the last half of third quarter, eighth graders are gearing up to finish strong! A heads-up to parents that immediately following Spring Break in April, the permission slips will go home for the 8th grade end-of-the-year trip to the Spirit Lunch and DJ Cruise at the Inner Harbor on Friday, June 2. The cost will be \$36.

Also, from March 6 through March 24, 8th graders will have an opportunity to lower the cost of their trip by selling Gourmet Popcorn! All proceeds will go toward the overall cost of the trip. Students will get the information sheet and the flyer with the many delicious flavors from Double Good Popcorn Company to bring home on Monday, March 6. We hope you take advantage of the opportunity to lower your cost while supporting the 8th grade team at the same time!

Meanwhile, teachers continue to prepare our eighth graders for high school. In Math 8, students are finishing up solving linear equations and will begin solving systems of linear equations. In Algebra 1, students are wrapping up Unit 2 which explores various types of linear equations and briefly touches on absolute value functions. The next units will include examining exponential functions and quadratic functions and the characteristics of each function family. Throughout the next month, these students will also be preparing for the Algebra 1 PARCC assessment. GT Geometry students just wrapped up Unit E: Triangle Congruence. The next unit will examine properties and attributes of triangles.

In Standard Language Arts 8, students are just finishing up a unit on the challenges of emotion. They have analyzed the positive side of the emotional spectrum with William Shakespeare and the negative side of life with Edgar Allan Poe. Now, they are finishing the novel *Walk Two Moons*, in which both positive and negative emotions are blended to send important messages to readers. Next, students will begin a brand new unit on the challenge of distinguishing fact from fiction in historical conspiracy theories. For this unit, students will be reading the non-fiction text *Chasing Lincoln's Killer* in order to determine how to deal with conflicting pieces of information.

In GT/AA Language Arts 8, students are completing a unit in which they decided to pursue either suspense and dramatic irony with *Dracula* or satire and situational irony with *The Princess Bride*. After students finish up their last Literature Circle meetings with these texts, they will be coming back together as a whole group to face our next unit on the challenge of distinguishing fact from fiction in historical conspiracy theories. Students will research a conspiracy of their own choosing and present their findings to the class. After this project, students will begin reading *Chasing Lincoln's Killer*, supplemented by contemporary texts from the time of Lincoln's assassination.

General science is beginning the mechanics unit where students are applying the concepts of physics and the engineering design process in order to create a 2 liter bottle rockets. Students will be able to calculate speed, velocity, and acceleration. They will also be able to analyze the forces on different objects in different situations. As students learn these new concepts they will apply their knowledge by modifying and testing their rocket designs. All concepts learned throughout this unit will be building blocks to prepare students for high school physics.

Environmental science is beginning their short units. They just finished up their Earth's processes unit and are moving into the exciting world of Soils! Students will be spending many labs outside, they will be warned before on how to dress. Students are also gearing up for their final projects that they will start in earnest at the end of May. More information for the project is to come.

America's Past- Making History Every Day

Greetings from the past! We recently concluded our unit on Expansion and Nationalism. Our students worked hard to understand that as the United States grew larger in first half of the 1800's.

Students learned about many different ways the U.S. acquired land, fought wars against England and Mexico and enhanced our sense of pride in ourselves thanks to events at Fort McHenry that were memorialized by Francis Scott Key.

The next unit will look at the causes of the Civil War. From the inventions that changed American culture, to the compromises that pushed off armed conflict, we will see how America was careening towards an incredibly deadly war with itself.

This will also tie into our History month theme of February as we learn how many African Americans resisted the institution of slavery and fought back bravely.

Since we recently took the Unit Test, it may be a good time to clean out your binder! Materials from the first 4 units are not needed moving forward. Additionally, it also may be a good time to refresh your students supplies but adding pencils, pens, paper and maybe a sharpener to their binder.

Thanks for all your work so far this year.

Art

8th grade art students are creating sculptures of their hands by wrapping them in a plaster cast. Then, they will study the culture and symbolism behind Indian henna designs and Polynesian tattoo designs to decorate their sculptures in these traditional styles.

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