



## 7th & 8th Grade Friday Letter - March 22, 2019

Dear Willow Creek families,

We hope you had a good week! Here's the news from our middle school team:

- ★ Parent Teacher Conferences will be held on Friday, March 22, 2019 (today). Instructions for signing up for a conference were sent in an email on Friday, March 8. If you didn't get a chance to sign up for a conference, please contact your child's homeroom teacher directly or call our front office at 415-331-7530, ext. 202.

**Congratulations to our Middle School All-Stars!**

**Matteo Hanson and Saba Urushadze**

**They were nominated by Chef Guillaume for outstanding work as Eco Top Chef Ambassadors!**

### **Class Meetings and Film and Lecture Series**

Each week, we include a description of our middle school class meeting topics for the preceding and upcoming weeks. Middle schoolers meet with their homeroom teachers for class meeting on Monday and Friday afternoons to talk about important social-emotional learning topics and build community. On the last Friday of each month, our 7th and 8th graders come together for a college lecture-style series focused on civil rights, current events, and social issues. This month, we will host Jasmin Gerraty from Bay Area Community Resources for an assembly about **vaping prevention**.

This week's class meeting topic was **unpacking bias**. Next week's topic will be a continuation of this topic, as this week is a short week. Please check in with your students about their class meetings and assemblies. We want to keep these conversations going!

If you have questions about class meetings or social-emotional learning in grades 7 and 8, please reach out to Mr. Baker: [rbaker@willowcreekacademy.org](mailto:rbaker@willowcreekacademy.org).

### **English Language Arts with Ms. Powers**

#### **Seventh Grade:**

7th grade spent this week MAP testing. Our new system provides students immediate access to their RIT scores; this feedback is motivating and supports students as they reach for their goals.

## **Eighth Grade:**

8th graders continued to build their background knowledge on their chosen topics in preparation for their TED Talks. Students began the critical, yet challenging, work of curating text sets on topics they know well. They reflected on all the texts they read on their topics and then selected the most powerful texts, the ones that introduced new perspectives or insights. Based on their recommendations, I will add those text sets to our classroom library to be cherished by readers to come.

Finally, we ended the week with MAP testing. Our new system allows students immediate access to their RIT scores; this feedback is motivating and supports students as they reach for their goals.

As always, feel free to contact me with any questions: [jpowers@willowcreekacademy.org](mailto:jpowers@willowcreekacademy.org)

## **Mathematics with Mr. St. Denny**

### **7th Grade Announcements:**

Moved on from MAP testing, and spent the week working with algebra tiles. They compared several collections of algebra tiles to see which had the greater value. The moves they use for this are precursors to combining like terms and simplifying expressions, which we will soon be doing symbolically. This all leads up to solving algebraic equations for an unknown.

**8th graders** MAP tested this week, which yielded some very encouraging results as they get ready to head off to high school. We saw strong growth, especially in categories like number system, and algebra and operations, that we've spent much of the last couple of months covering.

As always, please feel free to reach out with questions: [sst.denny@willowcreekacademy.org](mailto:sst.denny@willowcreekacademy.org)

## **Science with Mr. MacDonald**

### **7th Grade:**

This week 7th graders took their designs from the computer simulations and began building a physical bridge out of straws. Students are carefully assembling their bridges which will be loaded with weight next week.

### **8th Grade:**

The 8th graders are adding motors and lights to their cardboard arcades. Students are learning how to wire up a circuit in order to add motion and lights to their games. Students have also been using CAD to make vinyl stickers for their arcades.

## **Social Studies with Mr. Baker**

**7th Grade:** Our project on Heian art and culture has morphed a bit this week as we have decided to actually create real bonsai trees. Next week will be a blast!!! Pictures will be provided!

**8th Grade:** We had some of our presentations on the Land Acquisitions run over into this week, so our exploration of the Age of Jackson was delayed. We are starting to learn more about King Andrew, his Indian policy, the Spoils system, and the creation of the modern democratic party.

As always, if you need to reach a teacher for any reason, email is best.

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Sean St. Denny - Math - [sst.denny@willowcreekacademy.org](mailto:sst.denny@willowcreekacademy.org)

Joann Powers - ELA - [jpowers@willowcreekacademy.org](mailto:jpowers@willowcreekacademy.org)

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