



## 7th & 8th Grade Friday Letter - September 21, 2018

### Announcements

#### Just a friendly reminder of new policies for Middle Schoolers at WCA:

*Our Middle School team has implemented two new policies this school year.*

*The first is our new cell phone policy. Students are expected to turn in their cell phones to their first period teachers at the beginning of the day. Students can pick up their phones at the end of the day. If you need to reach your student during the day, you are welcome to call the main office, and we will get the message to them. Any student seen using his/her phone during the day will have the phone confiscated and will either need to pick it up at the end of the day, or the parent/guardian will need to come to pick it up.*

*The second new policy is regarding uniforms. This year students who are out of uniform will be given a loaner uniform, which is to be returned the next day. The exception to this is PE days, when students may wear their uniform or “athletic clothing,” such as sweats or running pants and a t-shirt. Jeans are not considered athletic clothing.*

- ★ Congratulations to our ACADEMIC ALL-STARS of the week! These students displayed leadership both academically and in our WCA community!  
Your all-stars this week are:
  - 8th Grade - Samuel Anderson
  - 8th Grade - Athena Jones
  
- ★ 7th grade Families: We had a great Outward Bound trip! Over the weekend, please make sure that your students get plenty of rest and hydration. Several of them may need to get some topical cream for mosquito bites and possibly poison oak. A flyer was sent home with each student about how to treat bites and poison oak.
  
- ★ Please remind students that it is safer to not be on our phones as we cross streets and walk around before school. We have seen many students looking at their phones on their walk to school and not paying attention to their surroundings and the dangers that may exist on their walk down and across busy streets. Safety First!!!
  
- ★ This next week, we will spend some time reinforcing expected classroom behaviors. Please take some time to chat with your 7th or 8th grade student about your own expectations for your children as they prepare for life beyond Middle School. Teachers will reach out to families to discuss strategies for helping students meet those expectations.

## English Language Arts with Ms. Powers

**Seventh Grade:** The majority of our 7th graders have been with Outward Bound this past week. We are looking forward to hearing all about their adventures.

**Eighth Grade:** This week, students continued to read their independent novels. Our main focus this week was elevating the level of our academic writing. I introduced students to strategies that help improve comprehension and thinking in their writing about reading. We also compared read-aloud texts with personal experiences to consider how pressures exerted on characters impact their behavior. We then brought this thinking to our own independent novels. Students addressed some essential questions such as: *What pressures might there be on this character? Do those pressures help me understand the character's actions and decisions?*

Students' writing assessments were collected for grading today.

Yearbook/Journalism: This week I assigned students to be the Yearbook Reporters for specific classrooms. The next three Tuesdays we will be having classes on photojournalism with guest speaker and photographer Gina Risso. Students will be learning the process of storytelling using the medium of photography. They will be trained on the basics of photography, from the way the camera works to composing their photos to editing them. Students will try out different techniques for color corrections, touch ups, and a few other fun effects.

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:**

We missed the seventh graders this week since most were on the Outward bound trip... they'll be getting ready for a unit test next week.

### **8th Grade announcements:**

8th graders finished strong after having a bit of a rough start with ratios and proportions. This finished up the first unit, and we will be having a test toward the end of next week.

Algebra students took their first quiz and covered several topics, including number system, set theory, powers and exponents, and simplifying radicals. After going over the quiz as a class, I decided that we needed to revisit the number system to better understand the sets of real, rational, integer, whole, and natural numbers. Students who wish to raise their test grade are being offered a retake of similar difficulty during recess.

It is my sincere wish that we work together to encourage and get ahead of any issues that may arise, so don't hesitate to email me at [sst.denny@willowcreekacademy.org](mailto:ssst.denny@willowcreekacademy.org)

## **SCIENCE with Mr. MacDonald**

### **8th Grade:**

This week the eighth graders worked on making a circuit that would make a fan spin. They combined together a motor, fan blade, battery, and switch to make a working fan. Students also used a graphite pencil to make a working joystick in their interactive notebooks. The joystick with a MaKey MaKey controlled their PacMan games.

### **7th Grade Field Trip:**

Today 7a went on a field trip sailing and 7b goes next Friday. Details are below.

The 7th graders have a field trip scheduled to sail in the San Francisco Bay with Captain Heather Richard, Julius's mom. (Julius is a long-time Willow Creek student who is sailing around this world with his family this school year!) On the field trip, students spend 2 hours sailing and then the remainder of the day at the Spaulding Marine Center where the students will get a tour of their facility and some hands on map-making instruction. They will build a sailing map to track Julius's course while he sails around the world. On the boat, students will learn how to set a course in the bay much as Julius will be doing throughout his trip.

In this way, students will personalize the trip and connect with their classmate, as well as gain hands-on experience and make real-world connections among maritime and geography skills, math applications, and navigational know-how.

Over the course of the year, our class will follow Julius as he travels around the world with his family, and it is my hope that the students will have an opportunity to grow and develop through this unique opportunity with Julius and his family.

When:

September 21st – students from 7a will go on the field trip

September 28th – students from 7b will go on the field trip

Please sign the Release and Waiver of Liability Form and return it with your child.

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

### **WHAT WE DID THIS WEEK**

**7th Grade:** 7th grade was camping with Outward Bound. Students who stayed behind got to join an 8th grade class and see what it was like to doing some more advanced work. Next week, we have our first in-class essay on Feudalism.

**8th Grade:** This week, our studies took us to some Enlightenment thinkers: Rousseau, Locke, Hume, and how the Social Contract has evolved over the years. Next week, we will connect those ideas to the Age of Exploration and how it affected the Europeans' relationships with indigenous peoples.

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

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