



7th & 8th Grade Friday Letter - April 19, 2019

Dear Willow Creek families,

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

Congratulations to our Middle School All-Stars!
Kadence Waye and Malaysia Rice

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. 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 hosted an organization called **Hip Hop for Change**, which encourages leadership and positivity through self-expression.

This week's class meeting topic was **creating safe spaces**. Next week, we will discuss **non-verbal communication**. Please check in with your students about their class meetings and assemblies. We want to keep these conversations going!

Additionally, this week 7th and 8th grade students had a special lesson on suicide prevention during their social studies period on Thursday, April 18th. The lesson is based on a framework created by Sandy Hook Promise and encourages students to A.C.T. when they are concerned that a peer may be experiencing a mental health crisis:

- **Acknowledge:** Acknowledge that you are seeing warning signs and that it is serious
- **Care:** Let your friend know how much you care about them
- **Tell:** Tell a trusted adult that you are worried about your friend

Our counselor, Christina Peterson, attended these lessons to provide additional support and observed that students participated fully and benefited from this powerful work.

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.

English Language Arts with Ms. Powers

Seventh Grade:

This week students began preparing for the upcoming California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) test. Students have been concentrating on vocabulary and close reading (CommonLit), along with discussing effective practices/strategies for test taking.

Eighth Grade:

Over the week, students presented their TED-style talks. Teaching others has multiple benefits. As the Roman philosopher Seneca said, "When you teach others, you learn." In addition, when students teach others about their topics through their talks, they entice them to want to learn more about those topics. Above all, I found that students took ownership of their knowledge and had the confidence to teach new content to their peers.

As always, feel free to contact me with any questions: jpowers@willowcreekacademy.org

Mathematics with Mr. St. Denny**7th Grade Announcements:**

7th grade spent the week working on solving algebraic equations symbolically, and on using algebra skills to solve word problems.

8th Grade Announcements:

8th grade worked on applying the Pythagorean theorem to solve several types of problems involving right triangles.

As always, please feel free to reach out with questions: sst.denny@willowcreekacademy.org

Science with Mr. MacDonald**7th Grade:**

This week 7th graders began a unit on global warming. Students are investigating the causes and effects of climate change. Each student calculated their carbon footprint to see how much carbon dioxide they contribute to our environment each year. Students were also able to determine how many worlds would be needed to support a world population that lives the way they do. In addition, students are starting a new project on programming so that they can simulate global warming.

8th Grade:

This week 8th graders began a unit on global warming. Students are investigating the causes and effects of climate change. Each student calculated their carbon footprint to see how much carbon dioxide they contribute to our environment each year. Students were also able to determine how many worlds would be needed to support a world population that lives the way they do. In addition, students are starting a new project on programming so that they can simulate global warming.

Social Studies with Mr. Baker

7th Grade: This week students have been studying Japanese Feudalism.

8th Grade: This week students have been studying how our country divided on the issue of Slavery and how that affected Westward expansion.

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

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