



## 7th & 8th Grade Friday Letter - January 25th, 2019

Dear Willow Creek families,

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

- ★ Outward Bound forms will be going home next week for the March 4, 2019 camping trip for the 8th grade! Please see the link on the Friday Post webpage for an electronic version.
  - These forms need to be completed and filled out by February 15, 2019.

Congratulations to our Middle School All-Stars: Joseph Balistreri and Amaani Cassim

### Class Meetings and Film and Lecture Series

Starting this week, Mr. Baker will be including 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 the month, our 7th and 8th graders come together for a college lecture-style series focused on civil rights, current events, and social issues. Today, we had an assembly focused on **cyber safety**, featuring a speaker from the Polly Klaas Foundation in Sacramento. Next week's class meeting topic is **empathy**. Please check in with your students about their class meetings and assemblies. We want to keep these conversations going!

### English Language Arts with Ms. Powers

#### Seventh Grade:

This week students learned to develop more focused arguments, research and knowledge, counterclaims, and more nuanced reasoning. Next week students will be working in coalition groups, with each group tackling a different subtopic related to the larger issue they've been researching all along (youth sports).

#### Eighth Grade:

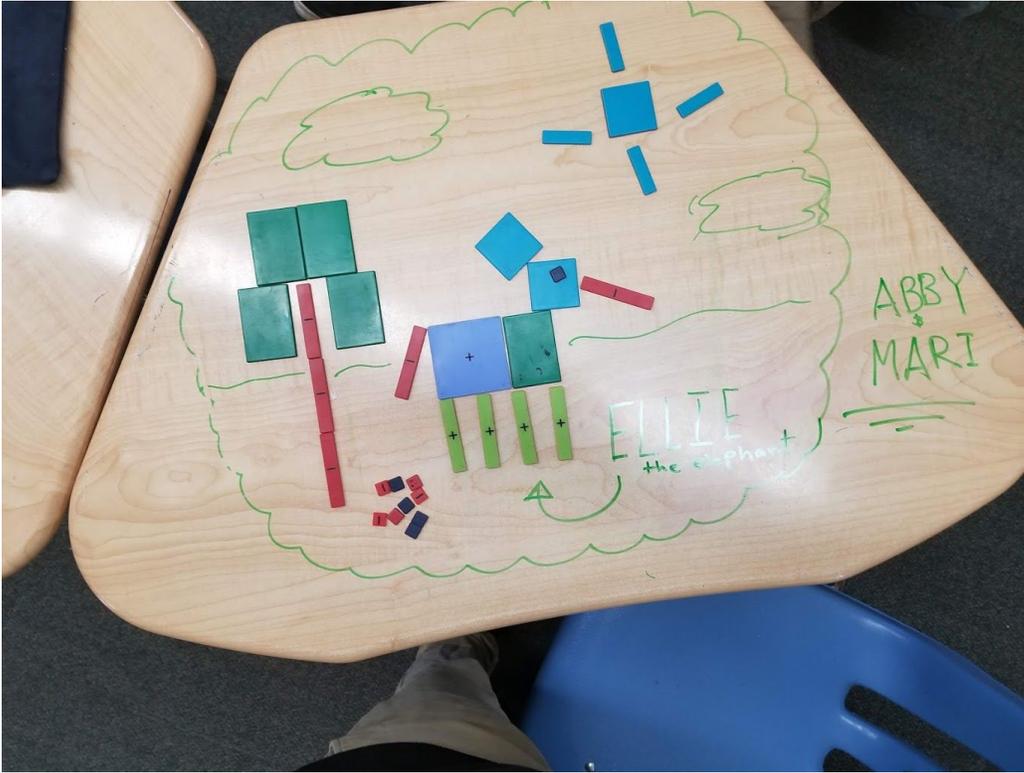
This week students fine-tuned their position papers. They were reminded how important it is to weigh and evaluate evidence for both sides of the issue quickly, to develop a position supported by reason and evidence, and to compose a position paper that takes a clear position while acknowledging other points of view. Next week students will rehearse their position papers as speeches in preparation for the big event on Tuesday... their debates!!

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

## Mathematics with Mr. St. Denny

### 7th and 8th Grade Announcements:

7th grade began working with algebra tiles, which we use to model algebraic expressions and equations in a way that brings their visual and kinematic skills into play.



8th grade completed their unit on transformations. They took a unit test on Thursday as well.

Algebra students worked on solving systems of linear inequalities in which we find a region of possible solutions, rather than a single solution. They completed a test on Thursday.

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## SCIENCE with Mr. MacDonald

### 7th Grade:

7b completed an engineering challenge where students designed a functioning mini arcade game. The students completed the design practice and the games were super fun to play. 7a finished the movie Martian and saw what it might be like to land a human on Mars. Next week students will be building

high velocity cars and a high torque cars using Circuit Cubes.

## **8th Grade:**

The 8th graders have begun a new unit on Space and Gravity. We explored orbits by swinging different sized balls on different length strings. Students are starting to form an understanding of how objects orbit in our solar system. We started a TV series by National Geographic called Mars, a series looking into the future of what it might be like to colonize Mars in the year 2033.

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

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

**7th Grade:** We did a bit of research into 20+ Chinese inventions so that we could choose one invention to focus our research on. Next week, students will research their invention and create a visual project to enhance a presentation about their invention. These presentations will begin on Feb. 4.

**8th Grade:** One of the questions we asked ourselves this week was, "What are the qualities of a good government?" There were so many answers that addressed so many important points and when we talked about the Articles of Confederation, we realized that this government was not created to maintain a Nation, but to make sure there could never be a strong central government. Next week, we will discuss the forces that pushed the Articles to failure and led to a new Constitution.

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

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