

March 12, 2020

Highlights and Notes:

Tissues- For those of you who did so, thanks for sending them in. 😊

Conferences- *SignUpGenius* is “live,” as of today

Distance Learning Plan- We have one- but hope that it will not be needed.

Dear Parents,

I hope this note finds you and your family, happy, well. Though I can tell from their behavior, the class is sensing spring in the air- academically, the students have been working very hard and have been successfully meeting learning goals. In fact, told them earlier this week, just how proud of them that I am. 😊

❖ **What We Have Been Working On**

In both **writing** and **science**, students have been working to finish up the content of the *Nature's Decomposers* unit. Students have researched a question connected to the unit and have just finished typing an informative piece that answers their research question. As students finish, they have been working to create an “infographic” using Microsoft Publisher, related to their topic. Creating an infographic blends: knowledge of content, creativity, communication skills, as well as utilizing Microsoft's, digital graphic design tools. I have been impressed by their work and look forward to you viewing it at conference time.

In **reading**, we have just concluded our work in LEAD 21 for the second trimester and students have been completing culminating assessments. We will spend a few weeks work on text analysis, as well as some specific reading skills, before moving back to some novels. During the third trimester, we will be working with two classics, one recent, and one that is quite old: *The Night of the Twisters* and *The Wizard of Oz*.

Please continue working to have your child read, each evening. I know how difficult that it can be to sustain the habit.

In math, my **math** class is approaching the end of Chapter 5. We are currently working on estimating and “real world” problem solving.

❖ Conferences

Second trimester conferences will be held in late March and early April. During the conference we will discuss your child’s progress for the year, to date, as well as some future goals. It is my hope that your child will attend. As of today, the following SignUpGenius link is active:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60b054caca72aa75-2ndtrimester1>

As always, please let me know if none of the times will work for you and we will work to find a mutually convenient time. I am looking forward to meeting with you again!

Important note: These conferences are no longer “portfolio” conferences. However, the work that will be shared during the conference will be available in the hallway for you to preview directly before your child’s conference. There will be a folder, with your child’s name on it, as well as a pair of assignments (an informative writing piece and an accompanying infographic) hanging in the hallway, outside of our classroom.) If you would like to take time to look at your child’s work, before the conference, please arrive early to give yourself time to do so. Know that this is not necessary, and that our 25-minute conference allows for time for you to look over your child’s work.

❖ Distance Learning Plan

Hopefully, received district communications and saw Mr. Cochran and Mrs. Pedersen’s e-mail, from Wednesday evening, about our plan for “distance learning.” If not- please read it/them, as it has additional information about what distance learning will look like.

Know that if this plan goes into effect, you will be notified. The access point for (you and) your child to connect with the assignments will be on my website. There is a tab entitled “Distance Learning.” I will have work and instructions posted there by 9 am, each day that it is necessary.

Today, I am also sending home a LEAD21 textbook and a folder with some additional materials. Please keep these things at home for your child to use as a resource for any future distance learning assignments. I will request that students bring the materials back to school sometime in May or June.

Know that teachers have been given the following directives about the work: It should review previously taught content; while students are required to complete the work, it should not be factored into student grades; and that our target is that it takes students about four hours to complete. These requirements are consistent district wide.

While it is my hope that the plan never needs to be put into effect, I believe it good to have the groundwork ready to activate said plan.

Thanks for all that you do to make it possible for your child to come to school ready to learn!

Stay healthy,
Mr. VanZant