

# Albany Middle School

## Monthly Updates from Academic Departments

### February, 2012

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>8<sup>th</sup> Grade ELA and History</b></p>	<p>The 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Humanities Department finished up the 1<sup>st</sup> semester with Senate-style debates. In small groups, students researched contemporary topics (gun control, death penalty, voting age, to name a few), wrote persuasive speeches and conducted structured debates. These debates aligned well with our studies of the Bill of Rights and the Constitution. In English, we also completed our work with the play <i>Inherit the Wind</i>, reading through the lens of our essential question, "What happens when ideas collide?"</p> <p>Now we've begun the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter I-Search project with relish! All 8<sup>th</sup> graders have chosen a topic and have jumped headfirst into their research; they have learned to take "Cornell notes" as they read articles, books and websites. They have also written letters to experts and are organizing their findings and questions. Next up, the Media Search and Interview! See student portfolios and calendars for clarification.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>7<sup>th</sup> Grade ELA and History</b></p>	<p>In 7th grade ELA we are teaching persuasive writing, grammar, and reading one of these three CORE novels—<u>The Outsiders</u>, <u>Of Nightingales that Weep</u>, or <u>And Then There Were None</u>. In history most classes are examining medieval China and Japan.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>P.E.</b></p>	<p>This month in Physical Education we have transitioned into a new rotation, which includes wrestling, rock climbing, stationary bikes, juggling, paddle tennis, track &amp; field, and softball. The Presidential and State physical fitness tests are coming up in March. Students have been preparing for these tests. Additionally, we are planning for our 8th grade "all A's in PE" fieldtrip.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Math</b></p>	<p><b>6th grade math</b> classes are learning about data analysis including mean, median and mode.</p> <p><b>6th Grade Math Support:</b> We are creating Histograms and Percent Circles this week and talking about all the ways we can talk about what is "normal" for a set of data. Like all the sixth grade classes, we are at the end of Chapter 7: "Analyzing Data".</p> <p><b>Math 7 (Review- Adams)</b> We are finishing Chapter 2, "Rational Number Operations", studying division of fractions and reviewing some of the concepts from Chapter 1 that were not mastered in the Chapter 1. Our group did a sweeping review of fractions, decimals, and whole number operations earlier in the school year and started working in the 7th Grade math book in January.</p> <p><b>Math 7 (Grove)</b> is studying graphing linear equations using tables, intercepts, and the slope-intercept form.</p> <p><b>7th grade pre-algebra</b> is studying measurements and planar figures as well as learning about the Pythagorean Theorem.</p> <p><b>Math 8:</b> we are finishing up percent, rates, Ratios and Proportions. Next week we are starting solving equations.</p> <p><b>Algebra 8:</b> The 8th grade Algebra 8 classes learned about manipulating exponents and radicals and will proceed to the topic of polynomials.</p> <p><b>Algebra 1:</b> The 8th grade Algebra 1 classes just wrapped up units on systems of equations and exponents/radicals and are moving onto exploring polynomials.</p>

French	<p><b>In 7th grade</b>, students are being introduced to the wonderful world of verbs, infinitives, and conjugating verbs. And we are almost ready for a new recipe. One can't survive on croque monsieur alone!</p> <p><b>8th graders</b> have mailed their second pen pal letters to Alex White's cousin's school in St Ciers sur Gironde, France. This time, many included photos and are hoping to get some in return. All of a sudden, French is a bit more "relevant".</p> <p>We are also about ready to start a lesson on clothing which will finish with a fashion show.</p>
Spanish 7	<p>We are currently finishing the chapter on "Tu dia en la escuela" ( Your day at school). Students are following the writing process for a multi paragraph assignment. Our skill focus this chapter is learning how to conjugate regular -AR verbs in the present tense and building vocabulary related to the topic of school. Students are also preparing for an oral and written exam for the chapter.</p>
Spanish 8	<p>This week 8th grade Spanish students have begun a new unit on your bedroom. Vocabulary: Bedroom items and electronic devices in the home. Grammar: Students will use the comparative and superlative of adjectives. We will also be learning to use two stem-changing verbs DORMIR (to sleep) and PODER (to be able).</p>
Science	<p><b>7th Grade Science:</b> In 7th grade Science, we are continuing our rotation through the science units. Ms. Coriell's classes are learning about microscopes and cells. They have just finished their Micrographia projects. Ms. Cooper's classes are studying evolution through an online WISE project.</p> <p><b>8th Grade Science:</b> In 8th grade Science, students have completed an introduction to atomic theory. They now understand the parts of an atom, and they know how the periodic table is organized.</p>
ESL	<p>The intermediate and advanced ESL students are part of a study being conducted by WESTed and UC Davis researchers. We are using WRITE curriculum, a genre based writing program. We are currently working on writing summaries using both fiction and expository texts. We are learning the three types of summaries- sentence, paragraph, and essay. Our beginning and intermediate ESL students are looking forward to our annual Valentine Luncheon to be held <a href="#">Feb. 14th</a>. This is an international potluck hosted by our students for the AMS staff.</p>
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	<p><b>6th grade Math:</b> Teachers recently gave a chapters 1-6 benchmark assessment. We are finishing a chapter on making and analyzing data displays and we will be moving into a chapter on probability.</p> <p><b>6th grade Language Arts:</b> We are continuing to read our core novels, work on vocabulary, and are writing personal narratives, in preparation for the Writing Assessment.</p> <p><b>6th grade Science:</b> We are studying volcanoes and will study erosion and deposition in March.</p> <p><b>6th grade History:</b> Some classes are concluding their Ancient Hebrews unit, while others have begun their Ancient India unit.</p>