

# NEWSLETTER



## Mr. Valencia-Barron

Middle School ELA has been finalizing their unit by recapping the texts we have read throughout the quarter via a poster project! Through these posters, scholars have summarized a text of their choice, while also showing their understanding of the text's central theme through their use of visuals and evidence selected from the text.

This month, scholars will be practicing their argumentative writing skills in preparation for testing season and high school through our performance task! As a class, scholars will go through the expectations of a writing prompt based on real exam materials, and work together on developing skills and strategies to assist them in writing an effective argumentative piece!

## Important Dates:

- 01/07/26 Welcome Back!
- 01/13/26 End of Semester 1
- 01/19/26 No School: MLK Day
- 01/28/26 Minimum Day
- 01/29/26 MS Honor Roll Assembly  
5:30 - 6:30pm
- 01/29/26 Spelling Bee
- 01/30/26 Spirit Day:  
Dress Like a  
Staff Member

## Mr. Whipple

8th grade Math learned how to write and solve multistep equations with variables on both sides of the equality. We practiced using the perimeter formula and using a matrix to help write word problems as multistep equations.

7th grade Math learned how to use integer operations. This included practicing finding sums, differences, products, and quotients of integers. We then related this to the real world by calculating changes in bank balances and converting temperatures.

In Math Intervention we have been working on priority skills for CAASPP and our current curriculum. This includes coordinate systems, solving linear equations, order of operations, and integer operations.

In Computer Science we have been working on cryptography using ROT13 and Caesar Ciphers. We practiced ciphering and deciphering, we also practiced using a double cipher for encoded messages.

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## Mr. Reyes

*7th grade History: World history will be diving into the history of Japan. We will be learning about Samurai and Shinto spirits. While also learning about the amazing architecture that composes South Asia.*

*8th grade History: We will be jumping into Presidents! Students will get to pick their president for the project this month as we learn about the role of the executive branch. We will also be learning about the 2nd war for Independence.*

## Service / Leadership

*It's hard to believe that in our modern world, there are still communities without access to clean, safe water—but it's true. Since 1996, Water Wells for Africa (WWFA) has worked to change that reality by installing over 500 wells across Africa, bringing life-saving clean water to people who need it most. In communities where these wells are built, dangerous waterborne diseases like cholera and diarrhea have nearly disappeared, leading to healthier families and stronger communities.*

*As we begin our new service project, scholars will be learning the basics about organizations that help to combat clean water insecurity, the importance of clean water, and how their efforts can help make a real difference in the world.*

## Ms. Hasselberg

*8th grade Science have most recently worked with the sun-Earth-moon system learning about how the Earth's tilt and position contributes to the seasons, why the moon appears to have different shapes through the month and the difference between lunar and solar eclipses.*

*7th grade Science has learned about rock layers and studied and explored fossils and seeing how we can find out more about the Earth's fascinating geological history. Students built rock layers out of playdough and "drilled" with straws to get core samples. We found facts about and investigated real fossils. Next up is mapping out Earth's geologic timeline.*

*In Spanish students finished their quarterly project about Dia de los Muertos and have been working on vocabulary.*

*In Applied Science and Technology (STEM) students just finished their project constructing a ball run following criteria and constraints with the objective of building the slowest ball run. Students practiced engineering skills and problem solving and we finished off with an in class competition.*

## Reminders

*Each week, scholars should complete 45 minutes of Edmentum per subject (Reading, Language, and Math) and 200 minutes of Lexia Power Up.*

*Please review/sign your scholar's Weekly Assignment Tracker to ensure they have completed and submitted their assignments.*