

Friday Facts: Thanks to all of you who were able to attend today's coffee. The November 2 coffee will focus on Grade 7.

Mary Poppins News: Students interested in auditioning for the MMS production of Mary Poppins or joining stage crew must fill out the online form and return the hard copy commitment sheet to Ms. Morgan in 306 by Thursday October 11th. No audition forms will be accepted beyond that date. However, students who audition but do not make the cast can join the crew later if they wish.

Grade 8 Boston Trip: It's finally here: Students leave for Boston on Wednesday! I will send out reminders on Tuesday. In addition, I will email you daily to let you know how much fun your students are having!

Grade 6 Pine Forest Trip: If you have not already done so, please return all forms to the front office. Cashonline is still available for payment for registered students, or you may bring a check to the office. Thanks.

Mark Your Calendars

October 8th: Viva Voce Results Posted

October 9th: 6th Grade band Practice, 7:15 am

October 10th: 8th Grade Trip Departs for Boston—please arrive at MMS by 5:15 am

October 10th: First Viva Voce Rehearsal, 7:15 am

October 10th: Model United Nations, Room 234, after school

October 10th: No After School Sports

October 11th: Mary Poppins forms due

October 11th: Student Council, Room 266, after school

October 11th: Quiz Bowl practice, café, after school

October 11th: No After School Sports

October 12th: 8th Grade Trip Returns from Boston

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OUR SPECIAL AREAS?

PE: Students are participating in their fall sports units of Soccer, Flag Football, and Ultimate Frisbee. They will learn the basic skills of each sport and then play in small-sided games. The students will participate in the State-mandated physical fitness tests throughout the school year, beginning with the mile run in late October/ early November.

After School Sports: Or program is well underway. Students are encouraged to come play after school from 2:20-3:45, Monday through Thursday, in games of mat-ball, basketball, volleyball, and ping pong. There is also a running club on Mondays and Wednesdays, and the fitness center is open each day.

8th Grade Band: I am very excited to be working with our 8th Grade Band students this year. They have started working on their repertoire for their December concert-emphasizing note identification and rhythmic decoding. The students have recently taken the baseline test of the Common Assessment for Music, the results of which will help guide which music concepts will be emphasized in our daily lessons throughout the school year. We have begun our weekly full rehearsals before school on Wednesdays from 7:15 a.m. to 7:45 a.m. Please check my weekly emails and reminders for this and other important information. Please mark your calendars now for our concert dates:

December 6 Middlesex Bands Winter Concert at DHS 7:00 P.M.

February 28 DHS Bands-Winter Concert (MMS Grade 8 Band) Snow date 3/5 7:00 p.m.

May 9 MMS Spring Bands Concert at DHS 7:00 P.M.

Thanks for all of your help and support of our program.

Sincerely,

Jim Carter-MMS 8th Grade Band Director

7th Grade Band: The 7th Grade Band has given me a warm welcome to Middlesex and the Darien Music Department and I feel very fortunate to be working with them! Our focus for the beginning of the year is ensuring a mastery of a counting system for simple rhythms and maintaining a steady beat as an ensemble. Students have made excellent progress on the concert music they will be performing for the Winter Band Concert on December 6.

Starting October 4, we will have a full ensemble rehearsal on Thursday mornings from 7:15-7:45. I hope to use this time to make more sense of the concert music as we fill in some of the holes that may be present while we rehearse on team. Thank you in advance for your cooperation in making these morning rehearsals happen! I will periodically send emails for rehearsal reminders and other important information. Please mark your calendars for our concert dates:

Thursday, December 6: Middlesex Bands Winter Concert at DHS 7:00 PM

Thursday, May 9: Middlesex Bands Spring Concert at DHS 7:00 PM

6th Grade Band: The 6th Grade Band is working hard to prepare music for the upcoming Winter Band Concert on Dec. 6. The ensemble is reviewing and learning new music terminology while rehearsing, including balance, dynamics and tempo and tempo changes to name a few. Students listen, evaluate and provide feedback to improve musical skills. The entire ensemble rehearses on Tuesday mornings from 7:15-7:45. We have had two productive rehearsals so far. Many thanks to parents for your transportation and support! Please check my weekly emails for rehearsal reminders and other important information. Please mark your calendars for our concert dates:

Thursday, December 6: Middlesex Bands Winter Concert at DHS 7:00 PM

Thursday, May 9: Middlesex Bands Spring Concert at DHS 7:00 PM

Band students should check their band Google classroom daily for information and reminders.

6th Grade Orchestra: I am elated to be working with a new wave of young string players. In the first few weeks, we explored the basics of rhythm, beat, and groove. Currently, we are focusing our attention on learning to read notes and rhythms. You can help your children at home by asking them how to play certain notes in their sheet music. Always encourage keeping a steady beat when practicing. Now that we are “back in the swing of things”, students should be practicing at home at least three days a week, preferably four to five. Students have been working hard at learning the melody of Mozart’s 40th symphony (have them play it for you) Next up... “The Chipmunk Song” from Alvin and the Chipmunks! Students are learning how to tune their instruments using a device that attaches to their instrument. We have three in school but some students may wish to have their own.

Please Mark your calendars with the following concert dates:

- Middlesex Orchestras Winter Concert at DHS - December 5 at 7:00pm
- Stamford Mall Performance: Friday, December 7th Time TBA (Rockestra Only)

7th Grade Orchestra: I am happy to see familiar faces entering the 7th grade orchestra! Students are hard at work learning both Johann Sebastian Bach right next to Paul McCartney. Ask them to play a bit of “Yesterday” for you! One of Bach’s most famous melodies, known as “Sheep May Safely Graze” is also challenging them. Please listen to this together. Always encourage keeping a steady beat when practicing. Now that we are “back in the swing of things”, students should be practicing at home at least three days a week, preferably four to five. Last year, we learned to tune our instruments using a special tuning device. We have three in school but some students may wish to have their own. Please mark the following upcoming concert dates in your calendars:

- Middlesex Orchestras Winter Concert at DHS - December 5 at 7:00pm
- Stamford Mall Performance: Friday, December 7th Time TBA (Rockestra Only)

8th Grade Orchestra: I am happy to see familiar faces entering the 8th grade orchestra! Students are hard at work learning works from renowned composers such as Leonard Bernstein, Franz Schubert, Hans Zimmer (Composer of themes from Pirates of the Caribbean), and Carl Orff. Coming up soon is the “Haunted Ballroom” themed Halloween concert joint with the Darien High School Orchestra. This is a great way to introduce 8th graders to the program and show them what is possible in a few more years of practice. Students are encouraged to dress up for this event. More information will be sent shortly. Always encourage keeping a steady beat when practicing. Now that we are “back in the swing of things”, students should be practicing at home at least three days a week, preferably four to five. Last year, we learned to tune our instruments using a special tuning device. We have three in school but some students may wish to have their own. Please mark the following upcoming concert dates in your calendars:

- Rehearsal for DHS Orchestra Night Concert - October 23 at 6:30PM
- DHS Orchestra Night Concert - October 29 at 7:00 pm
- Middlesex Orchestras Winter Concert at DHS - December 5 at 7:00pm
- Stamford Mall Performance: Friday, December 7th Time TBA (Rockestra Only)

Chorus: The Camerata Singers and Viva Voce auditions have just concluded. Congratulations to those selected! Chorus classes have been focusing on the fundamentals of posture, breathing and tone with additional work on the solfege scale and basic sight-reading skills. Voice parts have been assigned to all chorus classes and preparations for the winter concert will now go into full swing.

7th Grade Computer Applications: Students have just completed the design portion of the 3D designs in Tinkercad Website. The students will be printing 3D designs to see the transformation from computer to actual object. They are continuing with 3D investigations to see how 3D objects are a part of our everyday world.

8th Grade Digital Media Exploration: Students are currently in the Graphic Design unit, where they are creating 3D dream houses using Google SketchUp Pro 2018. Google Sketchup, is a 3D modeling computer program used for a wide range of drawing applications such as architectural, interior design, landscape, and civil and mechanical engineering. Students are very excited to start designing their own houses.

Technology and Engineering Education

7th Grade: The 7th grade students are working on their construction projects. These structures are starting to take on a 3 dimensional shape. We look forward to seeing what the students come up with as they complete their projects.

8th Grade: The students are finishing up the Power and Energy project. They will be testing them before they go to Boston. They will then start the transportation project

Healthy Living

7th Grade: The 7th Grade Healthy Living Cohort started the quarter by developing an understanding of the core concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention by exploring the different parts of wellness. Each student is working towards a personal health goal: be sure to ask him/her what it is! Currently, students are learning how to identify and access valid sources of health information. They will demonstrate their skill acquisition by researching a substance abuse prevention topic and sharing what they learned with the class next week. Their next unit of study includes identifying and practicing health enhancing behaviors such as stress management and emotional awareness. Looking forward to a fun and productive second half of the quarter!

8th Grade: During the nutrition unit, students explored factors that can influence our decisions about food. They identified a food environment problem and advocated for their solution in order to reduce the risk of disease. Their next unit is Sexual Health Education. Please check your e-mail for more information and contact me with questions.

Art

6th Grade: Our 6th grade artists are currently working on sculptural hot air balloons that explore the elements and principles of art. Students are collaborating in groups to design and create their final pieces. They have developed many ambitious designs and the results will display their new understanding of art vocabulary!

7th Grade: Seventh graders have finished their exercises from 'Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain' and are now getting ready to paint either a still life or an animal of their choice. They are eager to dip into the paints, and many have started already. Soon there should be more postings on Instagram @mmsartdept.

8th Grade: Students have had a fun filled kick off to the school year. They began by creating color wheels, tints/shades and completing color scheme worksheets. Each student chose an image or design to paint in a specific color scheme. The results are beautiful. Student work will be showcased in the eighth-grade hall soon! Students have begun creating ceramic pieces and planning a personal conceptual art work based on a saying or lyric of their choosing. I am anticipating some outstanding work from this community of student artists.

Kindly, Mrs. McGee

"Art enables us to find ourselves and lose ourselves at the same time." Thomas Merton

Media Center: The 8th graders have kicked off the year with their memoir unit. After book talks revolving around a dozen different titles, students made their selections. The 6th graders came in for their Library orientation. We have a good number of students coming by during their study hall periods and after school.