

November, 2009



Dake Junior High School

350 Cooper Road

Rochester, NY 14617

342-2140

Home & School and an Emphasis on Critical Thinking

Emphasis on Connections between Home & School

Connections between *Home and School* and an *Emphasis on Critical Thinking*. These two themes may seem completely different, but at Dake they mesh together quite well. Last month, I told you in general terms how we remain innovative in our teaching practice and in how we build connections between home and school. This month I will add further credence to these two themes by describing a small number of examples from both.

Emphasis on Critical Thinking

As mentioned last month, our teachers are using cutting edge teaching practices that emphasize students analyzing, evaluating, and interpreting information. English Language Arts class is a great example. Currently, students are researching topics for a persuasive essay. These topics include extending the school year and school uniforms. It's a rigorous writing assignment that is relevant to the children and includes many sophisticated writing techniques, such as making an argument and using evidence and explanation to support the argument. In social studies, students continue to analyze a variety of primary source documents to study such events as western expansion and the concept of mercantilism during colonial times. By analyzing these documents through a historical lens, students are able to evaluate different aspects of these events and write relevant essays describing this evaluation.

Thinking is not just a focus of core classes. Students are applying multiple skills in Health and Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS) as teachers from these two departments team teach certain outcomes that are similar. For example, this past week FACS and Health teachers team taught a skill-based lesson tied to analyzing the family structure. Students analyzed ways families can be broken apart as well as strengthened and then synthesized this information to create solutions to real life family issues. Not only was this a relevant learning experience, but the collaboration between both departments was excellent and led to a stronger learning experience for our children.

These are just a small number of examples of how we are using complex teaching strategies to support student learning. I will expand on this focus in future newsletters as I give examples from many other departments and show not only the emphasis on thinking, but also the emphasis on writing.

First, I want to thank all of you for the outstanding participation you showed at our Open House in September. Not only did we have a large turnout, but you came with thoughtful questions and seemed very appreciative of everything our teachers are doing. As I said on my announcement, Open House is only one vehicle that we have at Dake from which to build the school-home relationship. **Wednesday, November 18th, is Parent Visitation Day** at Dake. This day is for you to visit one or more of your child's classes to experience an authentic school day. You are more than welcome to come in at any time and sign in at the Main Office to visit. We look forward to seeing you on the 18th.

Second, Parent/Principal Coffee Hours are important communication vehicles that provide you with a chance to talk to me about anything on your mind tied to your child's life at Dake. **Our next Coffee Hour will be on Thursday, November 19th, from 7-8 p.m. in the Dake Main Office Conference Room.**

Finally, to all of the parents who volunteered to help make last month's Dake PEACE Day a rousing success—I can't thank you enough. Your generous gifts of time and food supported our students as they moved their learning beyond the classroom to take a deeper look at the similarities and differences between one another and explore how to appreciate these differences in a mature fashion. What an example of how students can critically think about their own perspectives regarding other individuals and critically think about how to make our building a better place. We will continue to emphasize this theme throughout the school year.

Take Care,

Tim Terranova
Principal

Topaz Team News

Science 7

Topaz team scientists are off to a fantastic start this school year! Currently, we are studying Ecology. Students have been investigating the niches of different biotic organisms in our ecosystem. They each designed their own experiment to further explore the role of plants as producers by following the steps of the scientific method. We will be recording data over the next few weeks on how plant growth is affected by such variables as temperature, amount of light, and types of soil and water. Please ask your child whether the results are supporting his or her hypothesis!

We will be having an Ecology test on Friday, October 30. Next up, we will continue our focus on interactions in the environment by turning our attention to energy transfer, symbiotic relationships, and limiting factors. Students will also evaluate their own impact on our ecosystem. In addition to various laboratory experiences, students will put their inquiry skills to work during Ron Walker's "Friends with Feathers" presentation on Monday, November 30.

Please don't hesitate to reach me anytime at kristy_pincelli@westiron.monroe.edu. I look forward to continued effort and enthusiasm from the entire Topaz team as our year together continues!

Mrs. Pincelli

Social Studies 7

The Topaz Team in social studies is currently working on Unit 2, Exploration and Colonization. Students are investigating the social, political and economic reasons for colonizing the "New World." Topaz students will also uncover the horrible truths of Triangular Trade and the Middle Passage. All students are working hard and discussing various essential questions everyday in class. I'm impressed with the quality of work that each student has produced. Go Topaz Team!

Mr. Porter

English 7

After finishing their first Literary Analysis essay, students have been working hard on exploring different types of text structures in non-narrative articles. Your student has looked at a variety of different texts that use organizational patterns such as: descriptive, sequential, compare/contrast, and cause/effect. The ability to choose articles based on interest has lifted the level of your student's engagement in the classroom, and there have been many opportunities for students to discuss what they've read with their peers.

Looking forward: The next unit is the research paper where students will be focusing in on a topic of their choice and creating focused questions based on that topic. Many lessons will take place in the library and computer lab as students learn to evaluate reliable sources, create a working bibliography, and collect different sources from which to take their notes. The focus in class will be to develop writing skills, but also develop critical thinking by asking important questions based on the topic of choice. The research paper is an invaluable experience for your student during their academic career. I will be working with your student one on one to support their progress during this unit using information gathered from their Literary Analysis papers.

Mrs. Klemme

Math 7

In math class, the Topaz team has completed our first unit called Variables and Patterns. This unit focused on graphing and creating equations. They even spent a few days learning how to create equations on a graphing calculator!

Our second unit is called Accentuate the Negative. The students will discover the rules for adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing integers. At the end of the unit the students will explore graphing on a four quadrant grid now that they understand negative numbers.

Mrs. Curtis

Amethyst News

Math 8

The Amethyst mathematicians are hard at work, and doing a great job! They have already completed the first unit and are well underway in the second. First topics of study included linear and inverse relationships, where students built upon what they learned last year to compare and contrast new information about patterns and relationships between variables. Now we are studying yet another type of relationship, exponential growth and decay. We are still examining the properties as they relate to what students already know, but taking it a step further to develop new understanding. The first quarter has been a huge success, which should only improve as the year progresses. I thank all the parents for their support and communication to start the year successfully.

Mr. Reininger

Advanced Math 8

These mathematicians are also deeply immersed in their mathematics! Having already completed three units, the students have become master equation-solvers, strengthened their problem-solving strategies for word problems of various types, and learned how to set up, solve, and interpret inequalities. Now, we are working with radicals (square roots) and their application to the Pythagorean Theorem. It's a lot, and it's fast, but the students are demonstrating their enthusiasm and aptitude for math, which should only increase as the year progresses. I thank all the parents for their support and communication to start the year successfully.

Mr. Reininger

Social Studies 8

In social studies, the Amethyst Team just finished our unit on Industrialization. Currently, we are completing our investigation of the immigration to the United States during the late 19th century. In these units, we focused on topics such as child labor, monopolies and the creation of corporations. Students created their own businesses and created stock certificates that could be sold to generate capital for their business. In addition, students also participated in a simulation of an assembly line, which was used to help make the manufacturing process more efficient. Finally, the

team has just composed their first DBQ essay of the year which asked students to evaluate the impact of immigration on the history of the United States.

If you would like to stay current with the class, you can check out our class Web page at:

<http://www.westirondequoit.org/dake/SchrageWebsite/index.htm>.

If you have a question, you can reach me at:

Schrageteacher@yahoo.com or

Matthew_Schrage@westiron.monroe.edu

Mr. Schrage

English 8

This week in English 8 students said, "Goodbye", to Mrs. Sinclair who began her maternity leave on Wednesday and warmly welcomed me, Mr. Smith, into the classroom. I was excited to pick up the Persuasive Writing Unit right where Mrs. Sinclair had left off and so far I've been extremely impressed with the excellent ideas that have been produced by these intelligent students!

Students began the week reading a variety of articles and using them to gather evidence to support their controlling ideas. Students are either *for* or *against* one of the following issues; extending the school year, community curfews, or same sex schools. Students worked hard this week to evaluate and interpret their evidence using a graphic organizer to structure their great ideas and opinions. Finally, Thursday and Friday were spent writing a discovery draft of the essay, of which the final copy will be due on Wednesday October 28th.

I'd again like to thank students and parents for the warm welcome to 8th grade!

Mr. Smith

Amethyst Team News (continued)

Science 8

In science the Amethyst team is hard at work exploring the concept of Energy. We finished talking about how it can be potential or kinetic and how it comes in many forms. We used a bouncy ball lab to explore how energy can be converted from one form to another, as well as to explore possible factors that can affect the potential energy an object might have. Most recently we went mining in a chocolate chip cookie, to dig out the precious chocolate. We are using this activity to model mining coal and really take a look at the pros and cons of this precious energy source. This will kick off our in depth investigation into sources of energy, renewable and nonrenewable, and determining the direction the world should take.

Thanks,

Ms. Meyers

Jennifer_Meyers@westiron.monroe.edu

NEW

from
Community Education

We have evaluated the pool use and have decided to eliminate Open Swim on Sunday mornings and because of a very positive response to our Friday Family Swim add an additional family swim beginning Sunday, November 1st.

NEW! Sunday Family Swim

Bring the entire family for a fun afternoon of swimming. All youth under age 16 MUST be accompanied by an adult. If your child cannot swim unassisted, they must be accompanied by an adult in the water. No flotation devices will be allowed in the pool.

When: Sundays, 1-3 p.m.

Cost: \$5 per visit for immediate family up to 5, \$1 for each additional member, payable at the door



Dake PTSA News

Many Hands Make Light Work.....and Great Profits!

A big thank you goes out to all of our parents, students and community members who donated their time, energy and household stuff to make this year's Next-To-New-Sale a huge success. When the doors opened this year, everything was very organized and ready to go.

We made nearly \$22,000 about \$1,600 more than last year. This is significant since this is the WICPTSA's only fundraiser and it pays for so many wonderful programs in our schools, including the Dake PEACE day in October.

We can't stress enough about the importance of great donations and great volunteers as the Next-To-New makes it possible for our schools to avoid multi-fundraising efforts throughout the year.

Go Back to Junior High!

Mark your calendars for Parent Visitation Day on Wednesday, November 18th. This is a great time to spend your day reliving your 7th and 8th grades without having to take the quizzes or take notes! Spend your lunch hour eating off a plastic tray and reminiscing for an hour or two in a classroom seeing your child and teacher in action. You'll see that this isn't the junior high like "back in the day." See you there!

Go to the Principal's Office

Just a tip that the Parent-Principal Coffees are a great time to find out what's going on at Dake, alleviate any worries you might have and ask the principal about any of your concerns...or just share a fun story! Most often, it's just a fun chat about our kids, junior high and parent challenges. The next coffee is on Thursday, November 19th at 7:00 p.m.

You're Invited

Did you know that there is a special district budget vote coming up in December? That's just one of the many issues we talk about at our monthly WICPTSA

meetings. The meetings include: PTSA building representatives from each school, an executive committee, principals, school board members and high school student reps. We talk about district happenings, concerns, great news!, solve problems and ask questions of the superintendent. All are invited!!

Join us at our next meeting Tuesday, November 10 at 7:00 p.m. at the District Office conference room.

Have a great month!!

Your Dake PTSA reps,

Teresa Mueller

Karen Rand

Karen Napierala



October Students of the Month

Congratulations to the Dake October Students of the Month.....

Katelyn Axman	LOTE, Music
Jack Bowes	Technology
William Eckert	Social Studies
Ruth Marren	English
Charmaine Pfrengle	Health
Jennifer Reininger	Physical Education
Isaiah Stokes	Science
Emmett Walsh	Art
Maggie Weisensel	FACS
Danny Wellin	Math



Parent/Principal Coffees

Thursday, November 19

7 p.m. - 8 p.m.

And

Wednesday, December 16

9 a.m. - 10 a.m.

Dake Main Office Conference Room



Scary Story Contest

Winners



First Place: Evan Platten for his story, "The New Town." Evan will receive a \$50 VISA gift card.

Second Place: Jenna Dombroski for her story "The Bellford Mystery." Jenna will receive a \$25 Barnes and Noble gift card.

Third Place: Molly Brind'Amour for her story, "Ink Spilled." Molly will receive a \$10 Dunkin Donuts gift card.

Dake Winter Sports

- Dake offers wrestling and boys & girls basketball for our winter sports.
- Forms are available in the health office so remind your child to stop in and pick one up.
- In order to try out, a current physical dated November 1, 2008 until present is required to be on file in the health office.
- We are offering physicals on November 20, 2009. These require an appointment so please call the health office at 336-2964.
- All Athletic Eligibility forms must be submitted by November 20, 2009.



LOTE NOTES

Some Reasons to Study a Foreign Language:

Through a study of languages, young people can learn about themselves, about the world, about the power of language as a communication tool, about their own language. Swarbrick, A. (2002)

Learning a language really does broaden your awareness of other cultures - you learn things that you would otherwise never come across. Sixth Former

Foreign languages provide opportunities for pupils to develop the key skill of: Communication, through developing their awareness of the way language is structured and how it can be manipulated to meet a range of needs, and through reinforcing learning in specific areas such as listening, reading for gist and detail, and using grammar correctly. DFEE, QCA (1999)

Language learning will be seen as a way for the learner to develop his or her personality (for example, greater assurance or self-confidence, greater willingness to speak in a group) or to develop his or her knowledge of how to learn (greater openness to what is new, awareness of otherness, curiosity about the unknown) Council of Europe (2001)

The West Irondequoit School District is one of the few districts of its size in the **NATION** to offer five languages other than English (LOTE) and one rotating world language **EACH YEAR**. We are very proud of this fact. Our students are accelerated at the 8th grade level and the class is for high school credit. Your child must pass the exam **AND** the class in order to receive this credit. LOTE is proud to say that our passing rate is near 100%! Take advantage and enhance your life ... learn a language!

LOTE CLUB: THE LOTE CLUB is open to all students. Our activities are social as well as cultural. Some activities take place after school while others are offered in the evening. Madame Mundt and Signora Guido anticipate a fun-filled year! Our first activity will be held from 3:15 – 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, October 29th in the APR at Dake. We will be watching cartoons in all languages and of course, eating snacks. Cost is **FREE!!!!**

Visit the Dake Web site Club Sites to find out the latest happenings!

Fine Arts Department At Dake

Mrs. Guarnera's 7th and 8th grade art classes started out the year with a fun-filled mark making exploration to warm up to the idea of drawing as a form of art. They also participated in making "pop corn" drawings. The 7th graders then spent some time on still life drawings focusing on composition and value through shading techniques with pencils and colored pencils. The 8th graders explored contour drawings. These 8th graders were some of the first students to use glue (clear and black) as a drawing medium at Dake Jr. High. Once the glue dried, they added vibrant pastel colors to enhance their work. The students then change modes from 2-D to 3-D. Seventh and Eighth graders will be using clay to investigate form and function. They will learn techniques of pinch, coil, and slab hand construction of clay. From here the 7th graders will discover African Art work based on a donation from the Jembetart Gallery on Park Avenue, Rochester, NY. Based on these authentic works of African art, the students will research these and other artworks from the gallery and created fabulous prints through print making techniques. The 8th graders will be doing some research of well-known artists and then create a 3-D painting of a famous work of art on a cereal box focusing on the concepts of depth and a variety of brushstrokes and color mixing.

Second quarter, Mrs. Guarnera's 7th graders will explore mono-printing, gesture drawing, and watercolor landscapes from their own original designs. The 8th graders will delve into claymation and stop frame animation through the use of Photoshop and digital cameras. They will also revisit the color wheel, look at the concepts of portrait drawing and painting techniques, and create and produce watercolor landscapes based on the use of the grid and proportions. Many of these works of art will be on display all around Dake throughout the year and some will be on display at the District Office in December. Please check out Mrs. Guarnera's Web page under the Dake School Web site. There are great links to amazing art Web sites, a student art gallery highlighting many of the projects created at Dake, and other important information about the art program. Ms. Guarnera's art students' outcomes have been very successful and beautiful demonstrating growth and development in a variety of forms of art.

Last but not least, Art Club has started out this year with a bang where over 50 members have signed up and attended meetings. Mrs. Guarnera will assist in advising these students in mural creations in the art room and around Dake. The club members will be working on a 7th and an 8th grade mural that will be hung in the All Purpose Room at Dake for years to come. They are also working on a group mural to be donated to Golisano Children's Hospital. This club is open to all students. It is also a place for students to work on art or drawing in their sketch books. They will be a field trip in May to the Memorial Art Gallery to see the most current exhibit at that time. Please see meeting times for these clubs on Mrs. Guarnera's Web site by clicking on Art Club. Please contact Mrs. Guarnera if you have any questions or comments at Sarah_Guarnera@westiron.monroe.edu. Thank you for your support of the arts!

Mrs. Salvo-Olear's 8th grade art Classes have had a great start to the year. First projects are complete and are a great success. The beautiful results are on display across from the library door until the end of November. This project consisted of creating a study of mathematical space in design. Scratch-board material was used to show the distribution of opposite mirrored space. The images include fun loving animals and fantasy characters.

Upcoming projects are artists' studies, traditional thematic still-life drawing/painting using Renaissance grid methods, portraiture, collage composite images, and digital artworks using Photoshop.

In your visits, stop by the library hallway to look at the student work display. Work is also posted on the school Web site, as are general updates, via the school art department links.

Lastly a special thanks to the parents that made open house, your dedication strengthens your student's academic commitment. Please communicate concerns about student grades prior to the ten-week marking period. Ms. Salvo-Olear may be contacted at annemarie_salvo-olear@westiron.monroe.edu, or through the main office.

In addition, donations of hand sanitizer, Kleenex, and soap are widely accepted and encouraged to Ms. Salvo-Olear's classroom to promote healthy habits.



Important Dates to Remember....

Veterans Day	Wednesday, November 11 <i>IHS flagpole dedication</i> <i>9:30 a.m.</i>	NO SCHOOL
Dake Musical: Honk!	Friday, November 13 Saturday, November 14 Sunday, November 15	7:30 p.m. 7:30 p.m. 2:00 p.m.
Parent Visitation Day	Wednesday, November 18	7:53 a.m.-2:57 p.m.
Parent/Principal Coffee	Thursday, November 19	7:00 p.m. - 8 p.m.
Thanksgiving Recess	Wednesday, November 25 thru Friday, November 27 NO SCHOOL	