



## What's Happening in 6th Grade? October 2019

### General News/Reminders:

- Open House, Wed. 10/2/19 6:30-7:30, room 102

Please check out the "Activities" tab on the NJSHS website for activities available to 6th graders at this time. Lots of exciting opportunities!!

**Language Arts:** What a great start to the school year, I can't believe September is over! We've spent the month getting to know each other through writing, poetry, song and art. The students have put together a portfolio about themselves which highlights their learning styles, their likes, dislikes, what they read over the summer and who they admire as their hero, just to name a few. These portfolios will be on display during Open House and hopefully I will have finished grading them so parents can bring them home. We have also started a daily language program called Mountain Language which is used as a warm up for class. This program practices all kinds of language skills such as parts of speech, proofreading, vocabulary and analogies. These will be a part of our daily work throughout the year and hopefully with practice everyone's language skills will continue to improve. Be on the lookout for literature circle books that will be assigned this week to read for the month of October. Looking forward to meeting you at Open House!

**Math:** We have had a great start to the year in Math! I am impressed with how eager the kids are to learn! They are very engaged, respectful and enjoy participating in class. We have worked with all operations of decimals, prime and composite numbers, gcf & lcm. I am trying to incorporate as many games, activities and projects into the classroom this year. We have played math jeopardy, kahoot and some board games thus far. Most of the students will have a decimal quiz this week or next week. We also have a math mate test coming up in some of the classes. Please speak to your child and see when their tests are coming up so you can review the material with them. Also, if you can please check in with your child each night and check the homework chart online, I would really appreciate it. I look forward to a great year with your child, and we are already off to such a great start!

## **Science**

We have had a great start to the year in science! We spent the first several classes working on activities designed to help us collectively develop a class contract that details the rights and responsibilities we each have in science.

We then began our first investigation.

Students are trying to answer this question: *How do scientists know what happened on Earth a long time ago?* They examined a photograph of a scientist in the field and created a Driving Question Board. Students used stereo microscopes to examine rocks and concluded that it's very challenging to determine how old a rock is simply by observing it - some context is needed. They then worked with the idea of layering and discovered that rock layers below others are older and rock layers above others are younger and applied that to photographs of the Grand Canyon and to a stratigraphic chart of rock layers in Michigan. We are about to begin a fossil dig to see how the discovery of fossils fits into the idea of layering.

Throughout our study, students have been using a summary table to keep track of their activities, what they have learned, and how those learnings help answer the guiding question and questions on the Driving Question Board.

Please continue to read the weekly newsletter for the most timely updates about what's happening in science.

**Social Studies:** We are off to a great start in social studies! I have been very impressed with the level of effort and enthusiasm demonstrated by the students. So far we have been focusing on geography skills including finding information in an atlas, identifying continents and oceans, and using latitude and longitude. In addition, we have been learning about the *Five Themes of Geography*, which allow for a deeper understanding of places and people in the world. To demonstrate their understanding of these themes, each student chose a location somewhere in the world to research, and then created a flip book with examples for each of the five themes. Each student has also chosen a continent to focus on, and has set a goal to learn the location of a certain number of its countries. Next week we will be making compasses, and soon we will be wrapping up our geography unit. After that we will begin our study of ancient Mesopotamia!