

Waunakee Community Middle School

# CONNECTIONS

Committed to Children... Committed to Community... Committed to Excellence!



Hello to all of my Waunakee Community Middle School families! Welcome back and here's hoping that you are enjoying our October/November weather.

As we get entrenched in this school year, I would like to quickly touch base on a few things:

**OPEN HOUSE:**

Thank you for your participation at Open House. The turnout was impressive and we were thrilled to meet so many of you. A great big THANK YOU, on behalf of the middle school staff.

**TESTING:**

We have completed both our MAP testing for 7<sup>th</sup> graders and EXPLORE testing for our 8<sup>th</sup> graders. Shortly, we will be gearing up for our WKCE testing. Our testing window this school year is from November 8<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup>.

**POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORT (PBIS)**

This year, we are implementing PBIS at the middle school. PBIS is NOT a curriculum, intervention, or practice; instead but IS a framework that guides implementation of the best evidence-based academic and behavioral practices for improving academic and behavior outcomes for all students.

Improving student academic and behavior outcomes is about ensuring all students have access to the most effective and accurately implemented instructional and behavioral practices and interventions possible. SWPBS provides an operational framework for achieving these outcomes.

To introduce our students to this framework, we held mini lessons on the first day of school. These lessons included the expected behavior in various environments throughout the building. There are posted reminders throughout the building and students are reminded by staff when inappropriate behaviors are witnessed.

Our students have been very responsive as we work toward maximizing academic engagement and achievement for all students.

**THANK YOU:**

Thank you to all of you who have reached out to me with questions or ideas. I cherish working with you to facilitate the success of our students. Please connect with me, either via email, a phone call, or a visit.

**Special points of interest:**

- Welcome Mike Zibell!
- Art with Ms. Wagner-Marx
- Audiobooks

**Inside this issue:**

The Gems	7
The Stars	7
The Eagles	8
The G-8-Ors	9
The Cre-8-Ors	10
The Motiv-8-Ors	11

Smiles

*Marcy*



## WELCOME MIKE!

Mike Zibell comes to Waunakee this year as the new Associate Principal of the Middle School. After spending 13 years in the Watertown Unified School District, 8 as a High School Math Teacher, and 5 as a Middle School Associate Principal, Mike is very excited and eager to be part of the Waunakee Education Team. Mike thrives on making a positive impact on students. The middle school age is a very interesting time in every child's life, and for quite some time now, it has been a passion of Mike's to help students make positive choices. Mike resides in Cambridge with his wife Jennie and two children, Keagen (7th grade) and Peyton (4th grade).

### Resources from the LMTC

*Eric Noah, LMTC Director*

The Middle School LMTC subscribes to a number of high-quality reference and information services your child can access online. Links to these resources can be found here: [http://www.waunakee.k12.wi.us/middle/lmtc\\_research.cfm](http://www.waunakee.k12.wi.us/middle/lmtc_research.cfm)

A quick summary of what we offer:

- **Destiny** - our online library catalog (*log in with network username & password*)
- **Encyclopedia Britannica** - three encyclopedias in one
- **World Book Encyclopedia Online** (username: waunakee, password: wbaccess)
- **CultureGrams** - info on countries of the world, focusing on cultural details most reference books don't cover
- **Safari Montage** - hundreds of full-length educational videos streamed from a server in our district (*log in with network username & password*)
- Magazine and Newspaper databases provided by **Badgerlink**

### Computer and Library Tips on YouTube

*Eric Noah, LMTC Director*

The WMS LMTC has a YouTube channel at <http://www.youtube.com/user/ericno68> where you can view short videos on a variety of library and computer-related topics that are specific to our school, including:

- How (and why) to log into Destiny, our library catalog, to access additional features
- How to find fiction books & biographies
- How to find books by Lexile score
- How to control what you print
- Troubleshooting tips for Webnet
- How to create computer shortcuts
- How to use Windows Movie Maker

## Audiobooks from the LMTC

*Eric Noah, LMTC Director*

The Middle School LMTC has over 80 audiobooks students can check out and take home. These audiobooks are called Playaways, and instead of coming on a CD or cassette, they come on their own self-contained digital audio player. Playaways look and act a little bit like an iPod or other music player, but their contents cannot be changed – each only plays the audiobook loaded onto it.

Each Playaway comes with a plastic case, a lanyard, and a spare battery. We ask that students use their own headphones or earbuds; students not owning headphones will be given a set of earbuds to keep. They circulate for three weeks, just like a regular library book, and we only allow students to check out one Playaway at a time. We remind students that, just as with any other items in their possession, they are not to use the Playaways to disrupt learning activities.

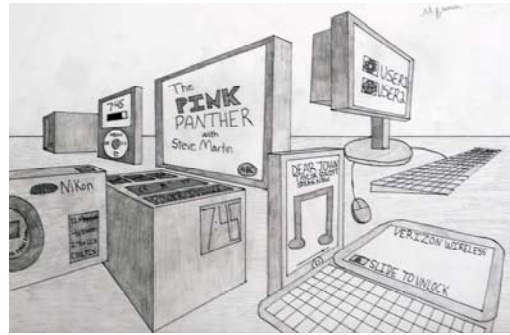
You can view a list of the Playaways available on our library catalog. Visit <http://destiny.waunakee.k12.wi.us/> -- click **Middle School**, then the **Catalog** tab. From there, a keyword search on the word **Playaway** will bring up the list, or go to the **Visual Search** page to find the list. We also have a print version of each of our Playaway titles for students who would like to listen and read at the same time.



## Art with Ms. Wagner-Marx

### 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Perspective Drawings/Paintings

Students explored the uses of **2-Point Linear** and **Atmospheric Perspective** to create the **illusion of depth** on a 2-D surface. Artists brainstormed ideas for their unique “cityscapes” and chose from a variety of materials to complete their projects. (The artwork below is by Lexi C, Michaela B, Maggie W, and Aria P.)



### 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Line Design Drawings

Some students chose to study **facial proportions** before designing their “Crazy Hair” designs, while others chose to create a circular line design. Students used a variety of **line**, **shape**, and **pattern** to create their elaborate doodles. Finished drawings were completed in black marker and shaded or colored. (These drawings were created by Emily R, Katelyn M, and Haley W.)



**Pathways Happenings**  
Barbara Hoeft  
5-8 Pathways Specialist  
[bhoeft@waunkaee.k12.wi.us](mailto:bhoeft@waunkaee.k12.wi.us)

**MATH 24**

For 7<sup>th</sup> grade learners who would like to prepare for this year's winter competition, we will be using the Fractions and Decimals deck. All homeroom teachers have decks for your practice. 8<sup>th</sup> grade students are invited to proctor the 7<sup>th</sup> grade school competition! Contact Mrs. Hoeft if you are interested. You can play the game on line and find out much more at [www.24game.com](http://www.24game.com).

**YAHARA RIVER WRITERS PROJECT**

Yahara is a writing/cartooning contest for students in grade 5-8. It is sponsored by the Greater Dane County TAG Network. Students may enter ONE piece in any ONE of these categories: Cartoons, Editorials, Poetry, and Short Stories.

Information is available with your Homeroom teachers, on the display outside the Pathways Office (214) or you can find all of the information electronically on the Intermediate School Website under Student Bookmarks. All submittals are due to Mrs. Hoeft, Friday, January 6, 2011.

**MIDWEST ACADEMIC TALENT SEARCH**

The invitations are out for NUMATS (Northwestern University Midwest Academic Talent Search). To receive an invitation through Waunakee School District students must have recently scored at the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile or higher on certain subtests on a nationally-normed, standardized achievement test or be qualified for their school district's gifted and talented program.

**FUTURE PROBLEM SOLVING**

Are you curious and creative? Do you enjoy lively discussions and solving problems? Future Problem Solving--FPS just might be for you! Teams are forming now!

**MIDDLE SCHOOL LEARNERS AND TEACHERS ATTEND APT**

On a beautiful September day, many WCMS students and teachers had the pleasure of traveling to the American Players Theatre in Spring Green, WI enjoying a marvelous performance of Shakespeare's "The Taming of the Shrew".

**STRIVE TO DISCOVER—NEVER GIVE LESS THAN YOUR BEST!**

## TEAM TEACHERS



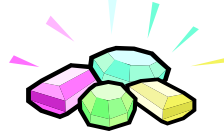
### Eagles

Sallie Piotrowski

Tony Thrune

Clare Zaiman-Keen

Terri Miller



### Gems

Carrie Jeschke

Deb Wisnefsky

Rachel Rydzewski

Emily Pertzborn



### Stars

Randy Enge

Leah Hundt

Katie Grundahl

Barry Walsh



### Cre8ors

Jane Fazio

Melissa Zimmer

Paul Nesbitt

Brad Lussier



### G8ors

Jason LaFlash

Sara Koppes

Jessica Geissler

Jason Kaltenberg



### Motiv8ors

Katie Grundahl

Barry Walsh

Leah Hundt

Randy Enge



## THE GEMS



### Math

Mrs. Pertzborn's Transition Mathematics class has started off the year with a bang. We started by investigating numbers and the order of operations. We now understand that you must always complete division and multiplication before addition and subtraction. We are currently studying and working with fractions. We are realizing that it is easier to keep a fraction as a fraction instead of trying to change it to a decimal. We are also learning how to add and subtract fractions. Next chapter, we will be learning how to simplify expressions by adding like terms. Students are reminded to continue to complete the homework as it is practice for understanding and done in preparation for tests and quizzes. Students can also coming in for extra help in homeroom or before school. We are excited that this year is off to a great start

### Social Studies

Our start to the year has been a review of geography and map skills emphasizing the Five Themes of Geography. We also have started current events. We will be doing a variety of different methods of reporting on these throughout the year. The Newspaper Unit supports our current events and also allows us to take a closer look at the newspaper and other news sources. This will also have some ties to the Five Themes of Geography which have connections to most things we study!

Students seemed to enjoy creating their "Explore" poster which allowed them to place a picture of themselves into a background they chose. It is fun to see how creative they can be!



## THE STARS



### Communication Arts

It has been a busy year so far in 7<sup>th</sup> grade communication arts. Students started with a mini-unit on descriptive writing where they wrote "Where I'm From" poems. Next, we jumped right into our "Elements of Narratives" unit and read many stories to analyze the different elements. In addition, students have been practicing reading strategies in and out of the classroom. They read a novel outside of class and completed their first reading log on predictions, and they are currently reading their second book and working on their second reading log on making connections. We have also been doing a lot with Greek and Latin prefixes, capitalization, and must-know words.

We will continue our investigations into pre-algebra in the next chapter. We will be describing patterns with variables and writing algebraic expressions. We will also be introduced to the Pythagorean Theorem, spreadsheets, open sentences and graphing inequalities.

### Science

The 7<sup>th</sup> grade students just finished their first unit entitled, "Science and the Scientist," in which we studied many of the concepts, ideas and terms involved with the scientific method. We learned about qualitative and quantitative observations, inferences, predictions, hypotheses, variables, cause and effect, and skills like using data tables and making graphs. We just started our 2<sup>nd</sup> unit of study--weather. The students will learn how to collect weather data using equipment like sling psychrometers, barometers, and anemometers in order to make weather predictions. They will learn how to read weather maps and make weather maps. They will learn about air pressure, relative humidity, and air temperature related to our own

### Math

We have just finished investigating chapter 3. In this chapter, we discovered how to convert a number from a decimal to a percent and to a fraction. We also started to explore how to calculate the percent of a quantity (tax or sale price).



# THE EAGLES



## Science

The Eagles team science classes are just working on re-vamping our binders from one unit to the next. We finished up learning the necessary skills to think scientifically and use our science lab and tools with our Science Inquiry Unit. We are just beginning our weather unit which will last us until almost winter break. The students can look forward to observing the weather, performing experiments in the lab and learning the up to date tools meteorologists use to forecast the weather. They will be working on group projects as well as teaming up in the lab to perform our experiments.



## Communication Art

The Eagles students have recently finished the Elements of Narratives Unit which culminated with a final exam and an opportunity to write an original story. Students were to apply the knowledge learned about narratives to this piece of writing with the goal of crafting an entertaining piece to share with classmates. Amazing creativity was demonstrated by many of our students! Additionally, students have been practicing the rules of capitalization and learning how the knowledge of Greek and Latin roots can help determine the meaning of unfamiliar words in the English language. Monthly reading logs continue to focus on a specific reading strategy each month. Students have been predicting, connecting, and completing vocabulary studies. Ask your child about what he or she is reading. Your interest makes a world of difference.





## THE G-8-ORS



### Algebra

Our first three chapters gave us an introduction to algebra and simplifying expressions. We have also been reviewing linear equations and inequalities. We will be studying division and proportions in algebra as well as slopes and lines soon. Please remember that I am available for extra help before school, during lunch, and after school until 4:00. I encourage any students with questions to get their questions answered.

### Communication Arts

Vocabulary/Greek & Latin roots will be a weekly staple.

Students will read informational texts with purpose.

Students will study the parts of speech.

Students will learn how to write an effective persuasive essay

Students will begin work on an expository speech.

### Science

We are continuing our Properties and Interactions of Matter unit by investigating the periodic table and its patterns and learning how to use Bunsen burners! During second quarter, students will choose an independent project in which they design an experiment from a list of chemistry questions.

This will bring us into a short astronomy unit. We will be exploring our universe and the celestial bodies within it. In addition to the sun, stars, and moons, students will discover the 8 planets in our solar system (sorry Pluto!).

### Social Studies

In social studies we have completed our in-class Constitutional Convention and Constitution unit. We will be soon be applying what we have learned there to a mock election in class where students will be running for President of the G-8tors. Other highlights include, having a visit from the school police liaison officer to discuss the rights of students in the community vs. the rights of students in school right around Thanksgiving time and our papers on who is the most influential person in American History or Government?

Shortly after our unit on the Executive Branch we will focus on units involving the Legislative Branch and Judicial Branch (which is combined with the Bill of Rights).



## THE CRE-8-ORS



### Algebra

We are making great progress in Algebra this year. The students are currently studying linear equations and inequalities and working to solve and graph them. This year students are working with a partner, they are working on their own, and we are also working together as a full group to solve problems during class time. It is wonderful to listen in on these conversations and hear how the students are making sense of the material. This will serve them well not only in mathematics class but in life. Many of the students are realizing that this level of mathematics is more challenging, and they are stepping up to that challenge. Just as a reminder, I am available for extra help before school, after school, during lunch, and during homeroom. If students do not understand the material it is very important that they come in for further assistance. Please let me know if you have any further questions. I can easily be reached at [jfazio@waunakee.k12.wi.us](mailto:jfazio@waunakee.k12.wi.us).

### Science

In Mr. Nesbitt's science class students are continuing to work on Chemistry. We have been studying the basic properties of matter which include: weight, mass, volume, and density. Now, we are adding the physical and chemical properties of matter, and using them to identify different types of matter. In the next few weeks we will be learning about chemical reactions, phase changes, and how to use a Bunsen burner. Also, don't forget that the students' first quarter unit project is due on October 26th. Students have been working hard on these projects for a few weeks already in class and at home. I am definitely looking forward to hearing what students have learned about their national parks. Finally, students will also be preparing for the WKCE science test in class by reviewing things they have learned in past science classes. It should be a very interesting and busy end to the first quarter and beginning of the second quarter for everyone. Have a safe and enjoyable fall.

### Social Studies

In Social Studies we have concluded studying the origins of our government where students created their own Declaration of Independence and also participated in a mock Constitutional Convention. Moving forward we will be examining the Bill of Rights, including how it relates to students. The last several weeks of 2nd quarter we will be studying the Legislative Branch and Judicial Branch of our government. Students will learn the basic functions of the branch, how the branches interact with each, and feature of each branch. In the Legislative Branch students will be creating a song/story about how a bill becomes a law, and also be participating in a mock Congress where they will create their own bills and try to get them passed. While studying the Judicial Branch, students will participate in a mock trial. The school year is off to a great start, and I look forward to the creative ideas from the students in 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter.

### Communication Arts

We have had a great start to communication arts this year! We had an amazing opportunity to visit the American Players Theatre in Spring Green to view the *Of Mice and Men* play. The students and teachers really enjoyed the play experience as well as the talk-back session with the actors after the performance. It generated a lot of discussion as we evaluated similarities and differences between the play and the novel. We also have spent a few weeks on persuasion and completed the unit by writing our own persuasive essay on a controversial topic of our choice. Students will be engaging in speeches at the end of the quarter to showcase an item and practice public speaking skills. Throughout the year in communication arts, we will weave in grammar, vocabulary, and informational text analysis.



## THE Motiv-8-Ors



### Communication Arts

We have had a great start to the year in 8<sup>th</sup> grade communication arts. Students read and analyzed Of Mice and Men by John Steinbeck. After finishing the book, we had the opportunity to see a live version of the book at the American Players Theater, which was a great day! We are currently finishing up our persuasive writing unit where students chose a topic and wrote a persuasive essay. Next, we are moving on to “Show-and-Tell” speeches!

### Science

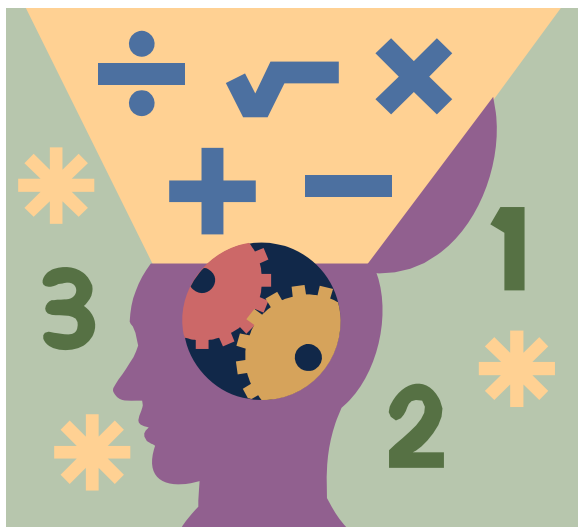
The 8th grade students are researching a national park in order to make a short presentation to a small group of peers about geological features in the park, life forms in the park, and a potential ecological problem that the park could be facing. We have also started our 2nd packet of activities--Properties and Interactions of Matter, (Chemistry Unit). We'll be doing many labs regarding states of matter, change of state, conservation of mass, identifying chemical and physical properties. We will be using the periodic table of elements to identify common element characteristics and properties.

### Algebra

The year started off with a bang. We just finished chapter 3. In this chapter, we investigated linear equations and inequalities. In the beginning of the chapter, we solve linear equations using graphs and tables. We then learned how to use the symbolic method to solve for an unknown variable. We will continue to examine linear equations and inequalities in chapter 4. We will be solving equations with a variable on both sides of the equal sign. We will also be investigating horizontal and vertical lines, percent problems, and situations that always or never happen.

### Algebra 1B

This year has started in the right direction. We are having fun and learning at the same time. We just finished chapter 2. In this chapter, we discovered how to write equivalent expressions using the distributive property. We also used substitution, graphs, tables, and simplifying to discover if two expressions were equivalent. We will continue our investigations into Algebra in chapter 3. In this chapter, we will investigate linear equations and inequalities. In the beginning of the chapter, we will solve linear equations using graphs and tables. We will then learn how to use the symbolic method to solve for an unknown variable.



**WAUNAKEE COMMUNITY MIDDLE SCHOOL**

1001 South St  
Waunakee, WI 53597  
<http://www.waunakee.k12.wi.us/midschl/msnews.htm>

*Committed to Children... Committed to  
Community... Committed to Excellence*

Bulk Rate  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Waunakee, WI 53597  
Permit No. 30