Middle School Classroom Newsletter

March 1, 2024

CALENDAR

3/7 Pizza Lunch

3/7 Science Fair
American Room & Classrooms
6:00 - 7:00 p.m.

3/8 No School - Professional Development Day

3/15 All-School Meeting
8:45 a.m.
Pizza Lunch

3/20-23 MMUN trip to NYC

3/22 All-School Meeting
8:45 a.m.
Pizza Lunch

3/28 M.S. Student-led Conferences

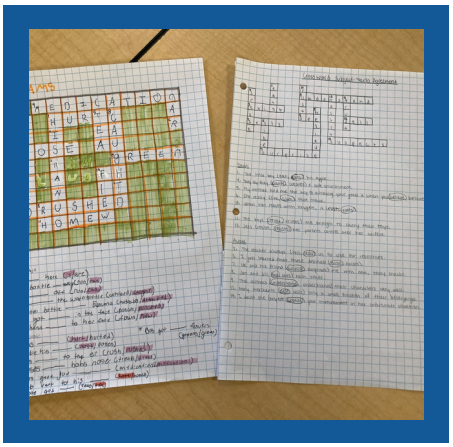
3/29 All-School Meeting
8:45 a.m.
Pizza Lunch

Click here to view ASM's calendar!

Our Classroom

Middle School and Upper Elementary students love hanging out by the fence during recess to talk with the little ones from Children's House. They often sing songs or play games together.

Middle school students started the process for planning the Coffee House. Students took on roles to scribe and type notes, figure out the to-do list, and who was going to do what to help prepare for the event.



Students made elaborate crossword puzzles on graph paper to study subject-verb agreement in Grammar. The sentences they used were completely original and some even told a story.

In science, students started an Evolution mini-unit and engaged in a natural selection simulation lab where they acted as predators 'eating' the prey (beads). They completed a lab report to analyze the data and make conclusions.

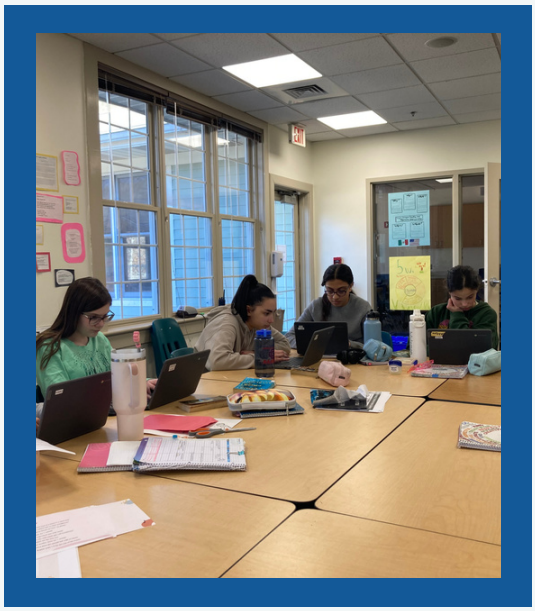
Humanities

Students are continuing to prepare their tri-fold posters for the upcoming MMUN conference. They are working on the design process and how they would like to present the information they have collected as a group. Students are in the process of pasting their pictures and research on the poster. Next, we will work on making the country flag for both Ghana and Sri Lanka.

In History, students studied the Era of Reform and worked collaboratively on a group project in which they studied either Dorothea Dix or Horace Mann and created a poster with information to present to the rest of the class. Each person took on responsibility and ensured the poster included all elements such as an image, title, key facts, and paragraphs on the impact and importance of their historical figure. Next, we are studying the differences of American society in the North and South during the mid 1800s and students will examine the essential question: How was life in the North different from life in the South?

Language

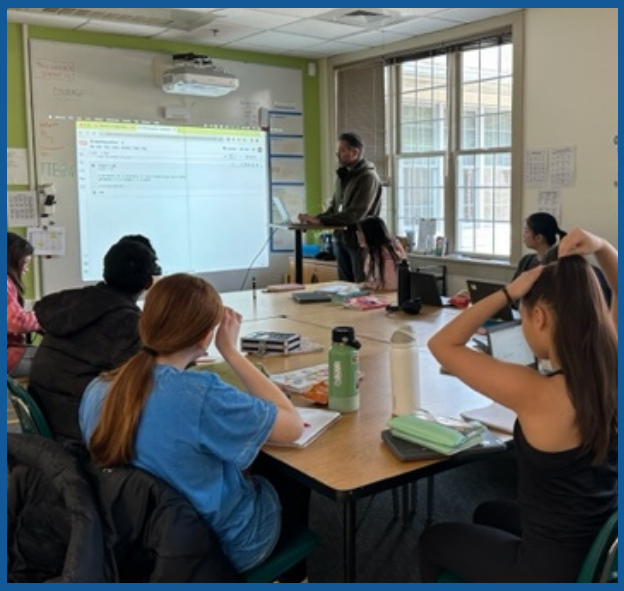
In Literature Circle, we had a discussion on chapters 11-16 of The Giver. Students were engaged, answering questions, making insightful observations, and providing examples that showed critical thinking skills. Students worked independently and diligently using their laptops, to answer questions and match new vocabulary words after reading chapters 17-19 together. As we wrap up the final chapters of the book, coming up next we will embark on reading and analyzing a variety of short stories.
In Writer's Workshop, students have completed a storyboard template for their short story they will begin drafting. Students are creatively and thoughtfully building out their stories so that they include all elements of a story, such as exposition, catalyst, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution. In Vocabulary, students are studying twenty words from chapter 12 and recently engaged in a spelling/definition bee to test their knowledge. They will be assessed on these words before we have a unit test on words from chapters 10-12.



Middle School Students Program in Python

Over the past week, the middle school students experienced a collaborative math class that featured a special unit on Python programming, led by Karim Fatehi, a Lower Elementary parent who works at Google. Mr. Fatehi brought his passion for coding to the classroom, igniting excitement among the students. He demonstrated that programming is a building process—starting with fundamental concepts like defining variables, and progressing to constructing a program capable of calculating the areas of various geometric shapes.

The students were introduced to the basics of data types, learning how variables can be integers, booleans, or floats. They easily grasped the distinction between 'if' and 'for' statements, as evidenced by their quick application of these elements in their coding projects. Through logical reasoning, the students adeptly debugged their codes when challenges arose, with peer-to-peer assistance enhancing their problem-solving skills. Culminating the session, they even applied programming to decipher Wordle, the widely popular word game from The New York Times, showcasing the real-world relevance of their new-found skills. This experience highlighted the engaging nature of programming and its vast array of applications. We hope to continue to use this new found knowledge in programming to take on other projects in math. More to come!

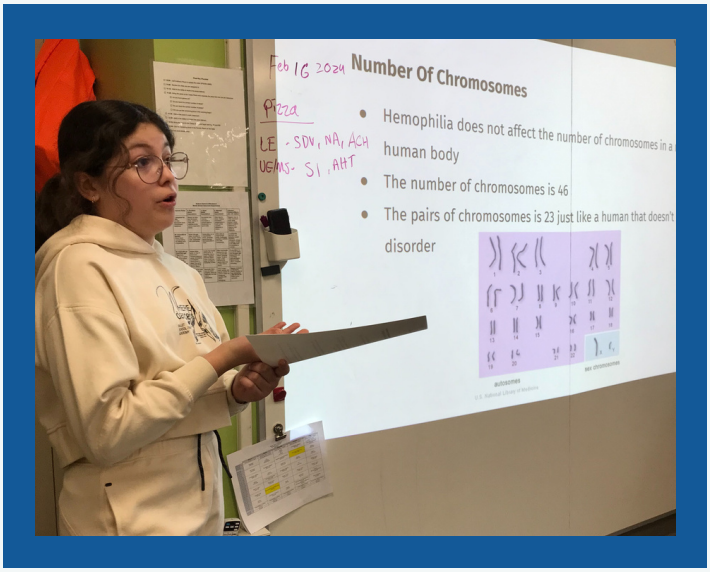


Click here for more classroom photos!

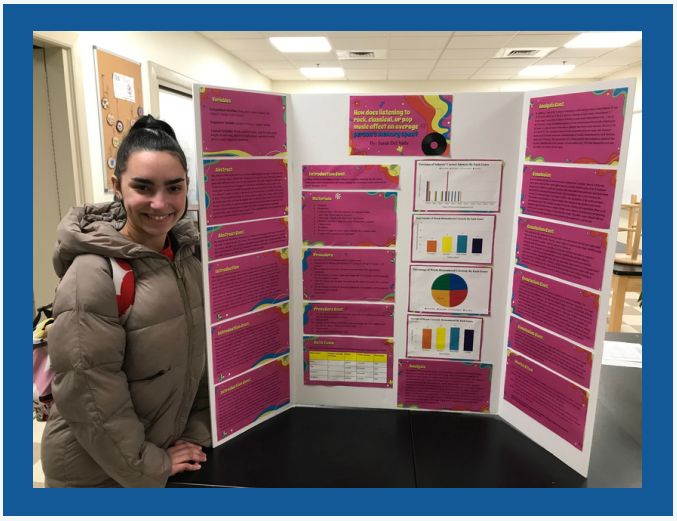
Science / STEM

In science class students chose a genetic disorder to research on their own and create a slide show to present to their peers. They used the rubric and project guidelines packet to answer specific questions about the disorder, first writing down their research, and then creating professional looking slides. After going over what a good presentation looks like (speaking clearly and loudly, having good posture, making eye-contact, and a good pace) students presented and then gave warm and cool feedback to each other.

In STEM, students finalized their science fair projects by peer-editing and revising their lab reports and creating their tri-fold boards for the fair. They discussed what makes a presentation professional and will practice presenting in front of each other next week.



Looking Ahead to the Science Fair...



Students have been working hard on their science fair projects and we are down to the final countdown. Their tri-fold board presentations are due Tuesday 3/5 and they will practice presenting to each other in STEM class, giving feedback to each other.

Students have the chance to qualify for the Massachusetts Science & Engineering Fair by competing on the regional level. Doing so gives students the advantage of gaining feedback from judges on how to improve their projects, enabling students to refine their work before the statewide Science Fair.