

Middle School Family Connections

Title I Parent/Guardian Resource Newsletter

January 2019

Judy Rush Curriculum/Title I Director

Curriculum Corner

The Collections Program

The middle school comprehensive Language Arts curriculum consists of all the aspects of communication including reading, writing, usage and mechanics, grammar, speaking and listening, vocabulary, and research.

Pittsfield Public Schools believes in the value of common literary experiences. To that end, middle school students share in shorter, common literary experiences of high literary merit through the researched-based *Collections Program*. These shorter texts include short stories, poetry, excerpts from novels, and literary nonfiction.

The *Collections* Student Experience

- Dramatic historical stories, contemporary events, and multi-genre and leveled texts ensure that content is age appropriate and always engaging for students.
- Instruction facilitates meaningful conversations about the texts to promote inquiry and active learning, helping students with annotation, analysis, and creative thinking.
- Online tools help students revise, evaluate, and incorporate text evidence and foster both peer and teacher feedback.

- Performance tasks and mentor texts offer practice and support to hone listening, articulate speaking, and writing skills.

Collections creates passionate student readers with texts that matter to them, and their engagement with the texts inspires them to become critical readers, writers, and thinkers.

A Sample of Authors Read

In grade 6:

Maya Angelou, Ray Bradbury, Avi, Margaret Haddix Peterson, Langston Hughes, Robert Frost, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and Mark Twain

In grade 7:

William Shakespeare, John F. Kennedy, Gary Soto, Margaret Haddix Peterson, William Butler Yeats, Lucille Fletcher, and Charles Dickens

In grade 8:

Edgar Allan Poe, Ray Bradbury, Walt Whitman, Anne Frank, Elie Wiesel, Mark Twain, Carl Sandburg and Louisa May Alcott

**Ask your child about the "My HRW" account.
**Take a look at their work.

Maybe even read one of the stories!

Assessment Connection

One of our primary goals in our district is to provide high quality instruction that ensures academic growth for every student. One component of this is to have an assessment system that gives teachers timely feedback in order for them to be better able to differentiate instruction in the classroom and provide targeted instruction for struggling students as well as for students at benchmark and above.

Winter Benchmark Time!

Students in Grades 6 - 8 will be participating in Winter Benchmark Assessments in Literacy and Mathematics.

This Universal Screening is the process of regularly checking every student's performance (taking their "temperature") periodically during the school year. This helps to identify students who are responding well to core instruction (on track), as well as those who may require supplemental (some risk) or intensive (high risk) intervention or additional enrichment.

- ★ Students will have their literacy and mathematics skills assessed through the FastBridge Formative Assessment System.
- ★ Additionally, students will participate in the *GoMath!* and *Collections* Mid-Year program assessments. The results will indicate the areas (state standards) where students have grown or show mastery and the areas where students need additional instruction to be prepared for the next grade.



Middle School Curriculum
Information Night...

March 26, 2019
Herberg Middle School
6:00 p.m.

Mr. Henault in a New Role Reid Middle School

When students return to school they will still be seeing Mr. Henault, but in the new role of *Assistant Principal of Teaching and Learning*. This is a new Title I supported position.

Mr. Henault will solely focus on supporting, training, coaching and evaluating staff regarding academic instruction. In addition, he will analyze instructional data to implement student support and enrichment and adjust academic programming. He will support staff in implementing the core programs with fidelity.

We are both excited and fortunate to have Mr. Henault in this curriculum role and look forward to hiring for this new role at Herberg, as well.

Here are the Title I Contacts for your school...

- Herberg Middle School
 - Martin McEvoy, Principal mmcevoy@pittsfield.net
- Reid Middle School
 - Linda Whitacre, Principal lwhitacre@pittsfield.net
- All Schools:
 - Judy Rush, Curriculum/Title I Director jrush@pittsfield.net
 - Sharon Mongeon, Family Coordinator smongeon@pittsfield.net
 - Cynthia Schwartz, Assessment Coordinator cschwartz@pittsfield.net
 - Lynn Taylor, Intervention Coordinator ltaylor@pittsfield.net

