

## WEST SALEM MIDDLE SCHOOL



Volume 9  
Issue 5

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**Special points of interest:**

**NO SCHOOL**  
Dec. 24-Jan. 1

**Page 3: New Absence Reporting Info on district website**

Dear Families,

The holiday season is upon us, and although this year has looked different, our students continue to learn and grow as we make our way towards winter break. The monthly newsletter is one of the ways in which we communicate the efforts in developing WSMS students both academically and emotionally through our instructional and advisory programming.

As such, I would like to draw your attention to a yearly tradition that highlights a part of our district mission statement: *To Serve With Passion*.

In December, we focus on the spirit of giving and service with an annual Christmas Baskets food drive. We hold this drive in conjunction with the West Salem Lions Club. Last year we provided **over 50** holiday food baskets to families and senior citizens in the West Salem area. We will continue this proud tradition of community service this year. Look for more details within the "Counselor Comments" section.

We will have no school on December 24 - January 1. School resumes on January 4. Our 1st trimester ended on November 24<sup>th</sup> and we will be mailing home your child's report card shortly. If you do not receive your child's report card by December 10<sup>th</sup>, please contact our office.

On behalf of our staff, we hope you have a great Winter Break with your children, family and friends. We look forward to continuing to work together as a team with you to provide your child with the best educational experience here at West Salem Middle School. There is no greater gift than to have a positive impact on a child's life. This holiday season, I'm reminded how fortunate we all are with the opportunity to share in this gift.

At WSMS, It's a Wonderful Life!

Ben Wopat  
WSMS Principal  
[www.twitter.com/coachwopat](https://www.twitter.com/coachwopat)



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## Counselor Comments - Mr. Lang

Even though it will most likely look a little (or a lot) different this year, we will still focus on giving and spreading kindness to our community for the month of December. Once again, the middle school will join forces with the West Salem Lions Club to put together food baskets for local families. We will collect nonperishable items at school, and members of the Lions Club will deliver them to area families in need. What may seem to be a small, trivial gesture of giving/kindness certainly goes a long way for the people on the receiving end! We will kick off this event on Tuesday, December 1 and will run through Wednesday, December 16. Members of our local Lions Club will pick up the baskets on Friday, December 18. They will add additional items such as fruit, potatoes, cereal, and paper products and deliver them on Saturday, December 19. Please see the "Christmas Basket" below for a list of suggested items. Thank you in advance for your generosity, kindness, and support.

Since we don't know what type of learning we will be in during this time, we will collect the items in various ways. If we are blended/in-person, students can bring in the items to homeroom. If we are virtual, these items can be dropped off in the main office during office hours. We will also have 'drop off' times from 5:00-7:00pm on Wednesday, December 9 and Wednesday, December 16.



## Christmas Baskets

Helping others during the holiday season can bring cheer and warm feelings to those involved. For this reason, the West Salem Middle School students, in conjunction with the West Salem Lions Club, have decided once again to sponsor a project that will provide holiday food baskets to families and senior citizens in the West Salem area. Last year, we put together over 50 boxes! This year is proving to be a challenging time for many families, so we are hoping to rise to this challenge and be just as successful! Please consider donating some of the suggested nonperishable items:

Cans of fruit	Canned juices	Brownie/cake mixes
Cans of vegetables	Peanut butter & jellies	Spaghetti sauce and noodles
Cans of soup	Macaroni and Cheese	Oatmeal/cereal
Meat/Tuna Helpers	Cans of tuna or chicken	Sugar
Box potatoes	Flour	Stuffing
Crackers	Baby food	Kleenex/Facial Tissue
Paper towels	Napkins	Toilet paper
Plastic silverware	Dish soap	Other?

We will collect these items in homeroom from December 1 – 16. We hope that all WSMS students will be able to experience the joy of giving at this time of year!

Thank you.



**"Meet Us in the Middle"**



If your child will be absent from school, PLEASE call the office at 786-2090 before **7:50** in the morning. (You may also call ahead with any pre-planned absences. We will document it so you will not have to call again the day of the absence.) If you receive the voice mail, leave a message that includes your child's name, grade, and the reason for the absence. If your child is ill, **please be specific with his/her symptoms.** We are required by state law to report numbers of students ill with strep throat, stomach flu, colds, and chicken pox, so it is important that we have accurate count. We do not report student names, just numbers. If your child's absence is not called into the school in a timely manner, it is considered an unexcused absence.

Please remember that any time a student misses an online learning class, the office must be notified, even if it's due to internet or zoom issues. Please remind your student that they are welcome to call the office with questions about schedules or basic technical issues. Major issues, such as connectivity or ipad/charger problems require submission of a help desk ticket via the district website. If your child needs to be picked up for an appointment, please send a note or call the office as far in advance as possible so that your child can be given an out pass in advance. We appreciate advance notification, as it eliminates the need for us to find your student at the last minute. If your child returns with a medical or dental appointment verification form, it is not counted toward the 10 days allowed for your child to be absent from school. Thank you for your cooperation in keeping your child's attendance up to date and informing the school of absences in a timely manner.

Visit the NEW "Absence Reporting" page on the district website! Find info for reporting absences via phone or email. Click [HERE](#) and bookmark it!

## Parent Reminders...

**EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION:** Please remember to keep the office informed of any changes in your contact information as soon as possible. It is important for us to be able to contact you in the event of an emergency.

If you have caller ID and you have missed a phone call from the middle school, please understand that we are unable to identify the person, extension number, or department that was trying to reach you. Rest assured that if your child is sick or injured, the school nurse will leave a message for you.

**Please remind your child to leave a message if they call you.**

If your child texts, e-mails or calls you that they are not feeling well, please make sure they have been to the school nurse. The nurse will then contact you.



Mrs. Hemker's Homeroom Class during their Homecoming Prep Activity

Mrs. Glasel's Panther Time, "Getting Out in Nature" Project



**The Middle School Newsletters** can be found on the district website - [www.salem.k12.wi.us](http://www.salem.k12.wi.us). An e-mail reminder will be sent each month to let you know when it is available along with a link to the actual newsletter. If you would like a hard copy of the newsletter, please let the Middle School office know.

## From the School Nurse

Students who have COVID symptoms should stay home. In order for students to return to school, parents will be required to show proof of a negative or positive COVID-19 test for verification purposes. Students diagnosed with another illness must provide a doctor's note indicating the reason for the illness. Notes from your family physician can be emailed to [wsnurses@wsalem.k12.wi.us](mailto:wsnurses@wsalem.k12.wi.us). Do you have specific questions? Click on the links below for help in answering your questions.

[How do I screen my family for symptoms of COVID-19?](#)

[Should I send my child to school?](#)

[I've been identified as a "close contact". What do I do?](#)

[COVID-19 fact sheet from Wisconsin Department of Health Services.](#)

[How can I help Stop the Spread?](#)

## Early Release Dates

Wednesdays - Release at  
12:20  
Buses leave at 12:30

February 10  
May 12

## Student Cell Phone Use

Students at our middle school are **NOT allowed to carry cell phones** with them throughout the school day. If a student brings a cell phone to school, it:

**Must be turned off**

**Must be kept in the student's locker**

Cell phones are absolutely **NOT allowed on the playground or in the bathroom/locker room.**

Students are **NOT** allowed to use cell phones to take video recordings of other students at school. Students not following the guidelines will be subject to disciplinary action. Please call if you have any questions.



The West Salem School District prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact the Pupil Services Director at (608) 786-0700. To file a complaint of discrimination write to: Pupil Services Director at 405 East Hamlin Street, West Salem, WI 54669 or call (608)786-0700. The West Salem School District is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



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# 5th Grade December Update



**Math:** After finishing our 2nd unit, we will be doing an ugly sweater project. This project will apply what the students learned in the first trimester. Then, we will be starting our third unit.

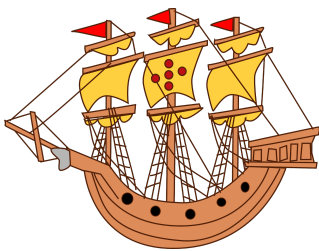
This unit focuses on multiplying and dividing fractions. As always, knowing your multiplication and division facts is extremely important for this unit!



**Reading and Writing:** With the new trimester, we are shifting our focus to informational text and writing. We focus on finding the main ideas and details, recognizing text features, and looking at different text structures. Students will apply that knowledge to their informational writing.



**Social Studies:** Students will continue to study different explorers. They will focus more on the Western Hemisphere exploration. After they complete their explorer simulation, they will start to focus more on the first English settlements in America.



**“Meet Us in the Middle”**





### **Math - Mrs. Jehn & Mrs. Everson**

In November, we completed Chapter 2, reviewing all operations with fractions and decimals. This marks the end of the trimester and the end of reviewing 5th grade concepts. Students will now be working on new material for the rest of the year.

December will consist of working in Chapter 3 - Algebraic Expressions and Properties. They will learn to write and evaluate algebraic expressions using coefficients, variables, and constants. Students will also learn about various properties of addition and multiplication including the commutative, associative, and distributive properties to combine like terms and simplify expressions. This will be very new and very abstract for many students.

### **Accelerated Math - Mrs. Jehn**

In November, we completed Chapter 3 which included algebraic expressions and properties. Students really had to work hard to wrap their minds around using letters in math rather than numbers. This unit is a building block to future work in algebra.

In December, students will complete Chapter 4 - Areas of Polygons and be assessed on areas of parallelograms, triangles, trapezoids, composite figures, and polygons in the coordinate plane. This unit builds their skills for future work in geometry.

### **English - Mrs. Buisman**

In 6th grade English, students will start their final opinion/argument writing piece when we return from Thanksgiving break. In this writing piece, students will choose a topic to research, take notes, and form a claim about. Students will then provide reasons and evidence to support the claim they made. The topic choices include: Should cellphones be allowed in schools? Should homework be abolished? Should students be required to wear uniforms? In December, we will also be working on reviewing some grammar basics in our every day writing.

### **Reading - Mrs. Schultz**

During the month of December, 6th grade readers will be completing an Independent Reading Project. Students choose their own fiction book to use for this project according to guidelines I provided at the end of November. We will be exploring and focusing on different literary features; identifying them in their books and completing a Digital Project with that knowledge. Our focus will be on completing a plot diagram, point of view, conflict, theme, character changes, images to reflect our reading, and choosing meaningful quotes from our novels. We will be using videos and handouts linked within the project pages to help students complete the project and each literary focus. Our current word work words will be wrapped up that first week so we can solely focus on the project until the winter break.

Stay warm and well, and of course HAPPY READING! Mrs. Schultz

### **Social Studies -**

#### **Mrs. Jeranek**

Ancient Egypt has been our focus for the last few weeks of November. We explored the location and geography of Egypt, researched the unintended (nature-made) and intended (man-made) technologies that improved Ancient Egyptian lives. Some of those technologies are still used throughout the world today!

Throughout December, we continue our studies of Ancient Egypt with a focus on Social Classes and Economy: the jobs people held and the conflicts that occurred between classes. Egyptian Religion allows us to study scientific and mathematical developments necessary for pyramid construction and mummification to reach the afterlife. We will also look at Egyptian gods and goddesses and Israelites movement out of Egypt to reach the Promise Land.

To culminate our unit, students will be asked to research an Egyptian topic they'd like to know more about. Focusing on informational text, note taking, and summarizing, students will share their findings with their classmates. As this develops, more details will be provided!



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### Reading - Mrs. Rochester

The 7th graders will be getting into their dystopian books. A dystopia is an undesirable society that usually has a group of people making negative decisions for the rest of the society. The conditions of the society are usually grim due to overcrowding, sickness, lack of food, and misery. The Hunger Games is a perfect example of this type of book. During this unit, the students were given a choice of nine books to read. Each student picked one book to start with and will participate in meaningful book discussions with other students who are reading the same book, as well as other dystopian books. Some of the topics the students will discuss will be characterization, setting, conflict, rebellion, and theme. As a whole group, the students will be discussing characteristics of dystopias, finding examples in the book they are reading as well as looking at real life examples. Students will also be reading dystopian short stories. The students will have more reading with this unit, therefore, they should be bringing their dystopian books home to finish reading that was not done in class. There will not be quizzes during this unit. Instead, the students will be keeping a journal. The topics the students will write about will also be the topics they discuss in their book group. 7th grade students will continue to study Greek and Latin roots.

### Regular Math - Mrs. Weber and Mrs. Piersma

We hope you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving break. We will be starting the month of December with a new trimester and a new unit in math. We will be learning a little about algebra and solving equations. This is a really fun unit that we hope the kids will enjoy.

### Pre-Algebra- Mrs. Weber

I hope everyone had a nice Thanksgiving. Welcome to a new trimester. We have been working very hard in math. We completed our second math counts competition right before break. The kids are getting pretty good at these challenging problems. We will be starting the trimester off with a study of circles and composite figures and then move onto transformations. These are both fun units that I think the kids will really enjoy.

### English - Mrs. Friell

As students will be reading dystopian literature in Reading class, we will be writing about the literature in English class. We will focus on summarizing and using textual evidence. In addition to responding to literature, students will continue pre-writing for the memoir they'll write this year. Each class period, we practice working on sentences and parts of speech. We are currently working on verbs and adjectives.

### Social Studies - Mr. Mahlum

For 7th Grade Social Studies, the students will start to look at the different Amendments to the Constitution. We will first look at the Bill of Rights. Then, we will turn our attention to some of the other Amendments. Students will see the importance of all of these rights and how they have shaped our country.

### Science - Mr. Baker

Throughout November, we were learning all about how cells get their energy. This involved photosynthesis, respiration, and fermentation! Students conducted a fermentation study at home by baking bread (alcoholic fermentation) or doing a workout (lactic acid fermentation). There was a lot of amazing looking bread made for this experiment! (see pics below) With cells out of the way, we will be starting body systems and students will be creating their own experiments based on a single body system. Ask them what body system they are working with and have them explain what experiment they are doing!



**"Meet Us in the Middle"**



Homeroom Teachers led special lessons on Veteran's Day and gave students an opportunity to express gratitude to those who have served our nation.



Mrs. Jeranek's HR

PIC-COLLAGE

Mrs. Glasel's HR



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**Math - Mrs. Bentzen and Mrs. Coe**

**Regular Math (Chapter 4)**

We started Chapter 4 called “Graphing and Writing Linear Equations” on December 8th. We will finish this chapter after the holiday break.

The objectives for Chapter 4:

- \*understand that lines represent solutions of linear equations
- \*graph linear equations
- \*find slopes of lines by using two points on the line and by using tables
- \*identify parallel and perpendicular lines using slopes
- \*write and graph proportional relationships
- \*find slopes and y-intercepts of graphs of linear equations
- \*graph linear equations written in slope-intercept form and in standard form
- \*write equations of lines in slope-intercept form
- \*write equations of lines using the slope and a point and by using two points

**Algebra (Chapter 6)**

We will learn how to solve and graph linear inequalities. We will have our third online Mathcounts competition before the holiday break. The regional team will be determined after this third competition. The top 15 scorers on these three competitions will determine our team. They will compete virtually at Regionals on February 15th.

The objectives for Chapter 6:

- \*write, solve, and graph one-step and multi-step inequalities
- \*learn to reverse an inequality sign when multiplying or dividing by a negative number
- \*solve and graph compound inequalities using “and” and “or”
- \*solve absolute value equations using “or”
- \*solve and graph absolute value inequalities using “and” and “or”
- \*graph linear inequalities in two variables

**English-Mrs. Sackett, Mr. Tashner, & Mrs. Martinson**

In 8th grade ELA, students will be deciding and documenting their reading goals for the 2nd trimester. The journal topics will be about different aspects of their choice book, which we will be discussing in focus lessons. Two journals are due each week on Tuesday and Thursday. This is an on-going assignment that many students struggled with 1st trimester.

In addition, we will be discussing the difference between persuasion and argument. Students will do some practice note taking with the teachers to prepare them for eventually choosing their own argument topic and taking notes on both sides of the topic. After doing the research, students decide on their claim. Finally, we continue to practice complex sentences.

**Social Studies -Ms. Morgan**

In 8th Grade Social Studies, we are slowly moving through the American Revolution. We’ve looked at the war from multiple perspectives. Our goal is to finish the Revolution and its immediate aftermath before the winter break.

When we are done with our study in December, students will be able to:

1. Describe important contributions to the American Revolution by also foreigners, minorities and women (in addition to the American men)
2. Explain how the alliance with Spain and France helped turn the tide of the war.
3. Express the challenges the colonists faced as they became an independent nation.

Looking for some virtual experiences related to the Revolution? Check out the Be Washington Interactive Experience ([www.bewashington.org](http://www.bewashington.org)) or a virtual tour of the Museum of the American Revolution in Philadelphia (at [www.amrevmuseum.org](http://www.amrevmuseum.org) and search virtual tour).

**Science-Ms. Smith-Waller**

First trimester is officially over, and we are moving on to more Earth and Space Science!!! We ended our unit on how Earth’s surface changes through weathering, erosion, and deposition. Next up, we are continuing to look at how geoscience processes have changed Earth’s surface by looking at what is going on under the surface. We will be learning about plate tectonics, volcanos, earthquakes, and locations of fossils around the world to get a bigger picture of how Earth’s surface has changed throughout its history. Enjoy the upcoming holiday season!

Essential Learning Outcomes:

- Construct a scientific explanation based on valid and reliable evidence obtained from sources and the assumption that theories and laws that describe nature operate today as they did in the past and will continue to do so in the future.
  - MS-ESS2-2: Construct an explanation based on evidence for how geoscience processes have changed Earth’s surface at varying time and spatial scales.
- Analyze and interpret data to provide evidence for phenomena.
  - MS-ESS2-3: Analyze and interpret data on the distribution of fossils and rocks, continental shapes, and seafloor structures to provide evidence of the past plate motions.



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## Allied and STEM....

**Music 5 - Mrs. Glasel (Kjos) and Ms. Nimm (Burdick)** This past month, we continued to work on rhythm activities with body percussion and bucket drumming. We also focused on listening activities through SQUILT (Super Quiet Un-Interrupted Listening Time) by listening to 4 famous classical pieces and also by comparing 5 versions of the "Star-Spangled Banner". The students were able to respond to these music selections by using their knowledge from the trimester.

Mrs. Glasel and Ms. Nimm have been very happy to work with these students. The students were eager to learn and participate, and we enjoyed their involvement and energy with music. Even though we wish we could have spent more time in person, we are so happy to be able to work with these great students. We hope that they keep finding music activities to enjoy and share what they know with their families. We can't wait to see them in the future.

**Keyboards and More 6 - Mrs. Glasel** The students have been continuing to learn some basic skills on the keyboard. They are now reading in the Grand Staff that includes both treble clef and bass clef together. They are still only playing one hand at a time.

The students completed 2 composition projects on the iPad. The first was a Scary Sound Story which they were able to explore and create scary sounds. This allowed students who were not familiar with the GarageBand app to play around and explore with what could be done. The next project was using loops (pre-recorded segments of music) that they learned how to put in and manipulate in a project, work with balancing the sounds, change to an ABA form, and create an interesting composition.

### Guitars and Musicals 7- Mrs. Glasel

**Guitars** - The students are continuing to play songs with the 1st and 2nd strings. They also learned about how to tune their guitars at home and how to care for the instrument.

**Musicals** - The students are continuing to watch the musical "Hello, Dolly" and respond to questions about the characters and storyline.

### Guitars/Keyboards 8 - Mrs. Glasel

**Guitar** - The students are continuing to play songs with the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd strings and also learned about how to tune their guitars at home.

**Keyboard** - These students are now reading on the Grand Staff and beginning to play both hands at the same time.

**Choirs 6, 7, 8 - Ms. Nimm** All three choirs are now participating in at-home rehearsals. Students have been encouraged to find a place in their house where they can sing during class! We continue to rehearse a variety of music and work on good singing techniques. Students have been asked to make several screen recordings of themselves singing a specific passage in their music. This helps Ms. Nimm to assess their pitch matching, rhythm reading, and singing technique skills. Students in all grades will be getting an opportunity to record themselves singing an entire song. These recordings will then be added together to form a complete version of the song, which can then be shared with families!

**Small Choir 6 - Ms. Nimm** Students in Small Choir 6 have spent November focusing on rhythm reading. We used a unit called Rhythm Cup Explorations to read and play simple rhythm patterns. In December, we will be switching to pitch reading. We'll work on identifying notes on the treble and bass clef staves.

**Soundscapes 7 - Ms. Nimm** Students in Soundscapes are just beginning research on a music topic of their choosing. They will be using this research to help them write an article for a class music magazine.

**African Drumming 8 - Ms. Nimm** Students in African Drumming have been working on a "real world" music production scenario. They have been tasked with creating background music for a (fictional) historical DVD series. So far they have created introduction music and music that represents traveling through times. They will be adding music that represents several different time periods. All of these different segments will be added together to create one long composition.



**"Meet Us in the Middle"**



## Music 5 - Mrs. Glasel (Czajka) and Ms. Nimm (CRVA)

Hello 5th graders, and welcome to music class. Let's meet your teachers.

Hi, I am Mrs. Glasel, and I am in my 31st year of teaching, all here at West Salem. I taught 5th grade for my first 16 years of teaching before moving completely to the middle school to teach 6th - 8th middle school general music and band lessons.



Hi, I am Ms. Nimm, and I am in my 15th year of teaching, all here at West Salem, just like Mrs. Glasel! This is my second year teaching 5th grade music and I'm very excited to get started. I also teach Choir (6, 7, 8), Soundscapes (7), and African Drumming (8).

Our classes will be based around the four main concepts of performing, creating, responding and connecting, so that involves a lot of moving, singing, listening, and rhythm activities. We learn about songs reflecting American history and culture as well as different holidays.

Music will start online with some singing, beat, rhythm, and instrument families activities. When the students get back to school face-to-face, we will be team teaching by splitting the class into smaller sections and rotate the students through the two classrooms to assist with social distancing. We are excited to meet you.

## Band - Mr. Waldhart

**6th Grade Band** - We have now moved on from our first 5 pitches and added two more. Our goal is to master our first 7 pitches by the end of 2020. This means all students have used our 7 note names: A-B-C-D-E-F-G.

We will be starting our first piece of sheet music, which ties into the 6th Grade Social Studies unit on King Hammurabi. The song is called "Code of Hammurabi." We will begin working toward our first virtual concert to be held in January. There will be more details coming soon. Here is a list of recognizable songs your 6th grader should be able to play: #14 "Mary Had a Little Lamb," #31 "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star," and #38 "Jingle Bells." Students will continue to submit recordings on the EEi app and submit at least 60 minutes of weekly practice, outside of class, into their EEi app practice log.

**7th Grade Band** - We are continuing to finish up our first method book and will soon start book 2. Please make sure your child has Essential Elements Book 2 by the end of December. It can be ordered or purchased from either Leithold Music or SSE Music. We are currently putting together our recordings to be featured at our December 14 Virtual Holiday Band Concert. We will also be exploring several scales during the next two months. These will be a big part of our EEi app recording submissions. Students should have received "Ash & Stone" and "Awaken" in their take-home bags. These songs will be part of a performance in the new year. Students will continue to submit recordings on the EEi app and submit at least 60 minutes of weekly practice, outside of class, into their EEi app practice log.

**8th Grade Band** - We are continuing to work through method book 2. We have spent a lot of time on advanced rhythms and will now begin a scale unit, which consists of 3 major scales and a chromatic scale. We are currently putting together our recordings to be featured at our December 14 Virtual Holiday Band Concert. We will also be exploring several scales during the next two months. These will be a big part of our EEi app recording submissions. Students should have received "Heartland" and "Banshee of the Badlands" in their take-home bags. These songs will be part of a performance in the new year. Students will continue to submit recordings on the EEi app and submit at least 60 minutes of weekly practice, outside of class, into their EEi app practice log.

## WSMS VIRTUAL HOLIDAY BAND CONCERT MONDAY, DECEMBER 14, 7PM

Come join us as our 7th & 8th Grade Band Students share a little holiday cheer. The concert will be held on ZOOM (shareable link coming soon) with as many as ten short holiday selections to be performed. I will also share a little about the process of student recordings and layer the files to create a concert band setting.

**The VIRTUAL CONCERT is REQUIRED for all 7th & 8th Grade Band Students,**  
so please make a note in your calendar.

## Art - Mrs. Hemker

### Grade 5

I look forward to working with Mrs. Kjos and Mrs. Burdick's classes this trimester! This month, 5th graders will be working on a variety of portraits. A painting of an animal that represents them is the first focus. Portraits will then turn to a more realistic style where we will look at facial features and proportions. We will also be working on a name project which will turn into an abstract piece of art when complete.

### Grade 6

As we begin the new Trimester, 6th grade will be working on various mini-works in various styles and incorporating them into a SmashBook. We will be working on additional drawing practice daily.

### Grade 7

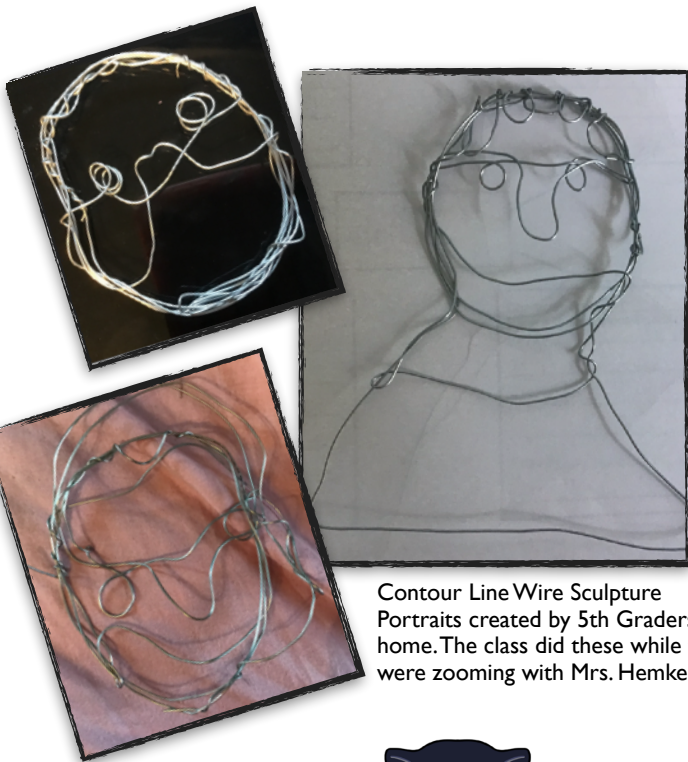
7th graders will spend the month of December experimenting with drawing from different points of view. One of the projects will require students to create the entire drawing from start to finish by observing an inanimate object. We will also be working on observational drawings of shoes if time allows.

### Grade 8

Students in 8th grade will be working on projects that represent themselves this trimester. Our first project will be a design that will be considered for this year's class t-shirt. The next will be a Poster featuring a quote that describes them. The poster will include a hand written font. 8th graders will also begin to design their wall block as a lasting way to represent their 8th grade self. We will also be reviewing various types of art, creating small examples of these and adding them to a Smash Book.

### 8th Grade Elective

In December, we will finish our paper mache bowl project first. We will also continue to work on our sampler book and include oil crayon, crayon, and acrylic paint samplers and mini drawings. If time allows, we will also be working on a larger oil crayon drawing where we practice blending and other techniques in a more in-depth way.



Contour Line Wire Sculpture Portraits created by 5th Graders at home. The class did these while they were zooming with Mrs. Hemker.



Mrs. Hemker's 8th Graders, making hand sculptures.



## Healthy Living - Mr. Brewer, Mrs. Olson, Ms. Serres, Mrs. Turner

Happy December!! We are finishing up discussing the six sustainable skills of Happiness. They are mindfulness, gratitude, positive outlook, generosity, purpose and human connection. We have had some AWESOME discussions related to these concepts. We are hoping our students will continue to work on all six of these skills to help train their brain to be more happy. As we move into more winter-like weather, remember there are lots of ways to keep moving. This winter may provide an opportunity to try a new way of moving. Some great examples are: snowshoeing, sledding, HIIT workouts, and Just Dance videos, just to name a few. There are some amazing opportunities to move together.

## STEM - Mr. Jones

In STEM, we will be navigating through the blended learning environment vs. virtual by having an in-class project and an at-home project.

**6th Grade STEM** - Students will be learning about the design process and developing a foot orthosis prototype for a student in need for the at home project. The 6th graders will be designing a toothpick bridge using certain constraints for the at school project.

**7th Grade STEM** - We will be learning about multiview sketches and technical drawing at home. At school we will use what we've learned to design and create a puzzle cube.

**8th Grade STEM** - We will be learning about ruler measurement to the nearest 1/16th inch and creating air skimmers at home while doing a paper roller coaster project back at school.

## Robotics

For the month of December, we will be continuing our learning about mechanisms. If school stays virtual, we will begin learning about programming. If school goes back to blended learning, we will be making pull toys using the mechanisms that we learned about in class.

"Choose to be optimistic,  
it feels better."

—Dalai Lama



"Meet Us in the Middle"



## Allied and STEM, cont.

### Spanish - Ms. Phillips

**Sixth Grade** - ¡Bienvenidos! Welcome to second semester Spanish sixth grade! Our first unit will include introductions and basic vocabulary. We will practice letter sounds, numbers, calendar and weather vocabulary. We will also talk about different songs and cultural practices of Mexico and Central America. ¡Feliz Navidad, prospero año y felicidad!

**Seventh Grade** - ¡Bienvenidos a la clase de español! The 2nd semester 7th grade Spanish class will begin by reviewing basic conversations and asking each other questions in Spanish. We will also talk about cognates and review the song ¿Puedo ir al baño?.

**Eighth Grade** - ¡Bienvenidos a la clase de español! The 2nd semester 8th grade Spanish class will review introductions, classroom phrases and get to know each other through mini special person interviews - en español! Students will be developing speaking skills by describing themselves and others.

**Eighth Grade Elective** - Spanish elective students are making a lot of progress in writing and building confidence in speaking. During the month of December we will begin telling stories and read the book "Brandon Brown Dice la Verdad".

**5th Grade LMC - Ms. Dederich** Fifth graders in Mrs. Czajka's class just finished creating advertisements for the national parks they researched in class this trimester. These students used LMC resources to locate and research a national park that they chose and later used Google Slides and PicCollage to create a 2-page advertisement to convince others to come visit their park. Students came up with some sharp-looking, creative ads! After Thanksgiving, we will be welcoming Mr. Ringlien's and Ms. Fink's classes to the library to start our new rotation for Trimester 2! We will begin class by getting familiar with the LMC homepage, the resources located on the homepage and learning how to find and request LMC materials. Thanks to Mrs. Czajka's class for a wonderful 1st trimester and I am looking forward to meeting lots of new faces in Mr. Ringlien's and Ms. Fink's classes!

**8th Grade Creative Computing - Ms. Dederich** Students in Creative Computing are getting ready to build their first game. Each student will design a maze game that draws on all of the coding concepts we have been learning over the past trimester. Students will have the creative freedom to choose the theme and design of their game. We are excited to share these games in future newsletter updates!

### WSMS LMC - Ms. Dederich

The LMC staff has been working hard to fill online book requests so that students can keep reading during virtual learning. Ms. Keyser and Mrs. Bradley have also been busy troubleshooting technology issues and helping students access the content they need for classes.

We are working on creating space for a new section in the LMC where we will feature our Novels in Verse collection. Novels in Verse are full novels that are told through poetry. Popular authors like Kwame Alexander, Jason Reynolds and K.A. Holt have helped to popularize the format and many kids have started asking for novels in verse, so we are helping to make them easier for students to find!

As always, feel free to contact Ms. Dederich with any questions about accessing LMC resources!  
Keep reading, Panthers!

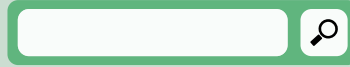
WSMS LMC



"Meet Us in the Middle"



West Salem Middle School LMC Presents...



# FINDING THE RIGHT BOOK WHEN YOU CAN'T BROWSE...

Using searching & filtering strategies to  
find a book you'll love

Learn more about  
[Searching & Filtering](#)  
in Destiny Discover



## WHY SEARCH & FILTER?

Since browsing the LMC for a new book isn't an option right now, searching the catalog is the best way to find a new book. Using the "filtering" options to the left of your results will help narrow down your results and weed out books that aren't right for you!



How to [Request a Book Online](#) through  
Destiny Discover



December 2020

# Middle Years

Working Together for School Success



## Short Stops

### The power of zero

Help your child understand the importance of turning in every assignment. Have her add up several of her grades ( $97 + 89 + 93 = 279$ ) and divide by the number of grades to get her average ( $279 \div 3 = 93$ ). Then, ask her to change the last grade to zero and average again—suddenly, the 93 becomes a 62.

### Great advice!

Want to raise the odds that your middle schooler will actually follow your advice? Get his input. Instead of saying, “Setting your alarm 10 minutes earlier will keep you from scrambling to get ready every morning,” try, “I’ve been running late in the mornings, too. What ideas do you think could help us?”

### DID YOU KNOW?

Just a few minutes of physical activity can immediately improve your middle grader’s concentration. Remind her to use her distance-learning or study breaks to move around. She could write quick ideas on slips of paper (“Dance to a song,” “Do 5 jumping jacks”) and pick one to do between classes or subjects.

### Worth quoting

“The mind that opens to a new idea never returns to its original size.”  
*Albert Einstein*

### Just for fun

**Q:** What falls in winter but never gets hurt?

**A:** Snow!



## Kindness makes a difference

Clue your middle schooler in on this formula for a happier, more successful life: When he is kind and sees kindness in others, he will feel better about himself and the world around him—and other people will view him more favorably, too. Try these ideas.

### Be a detective

Challenge your tween to spot kind acts throughout the day and jot them down in a pocket notebook. He might notice someone stepping aside to let him pass on the sidewalk, for instance. How many kindnesses can he find in one day? Make it a point to call out his kind acts, too: “It was kind of you to offer your seat on the bus to that woman holding her baby.”

### Watch for opportunities

Suggest that your middle grader think of safe ways to assist people who are struggling or lonely. Maybe he’ll make cards or bookmarks for nursing



home residents or have a virtual game night with younger cousins who miss seeing their friends.

### Play bingo

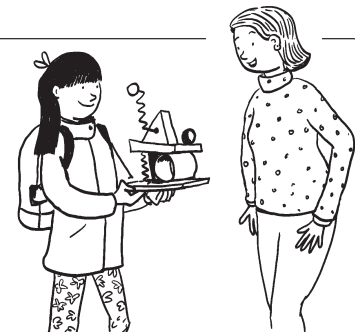
Your child can create a bingo card to fill with kind acts (donate clothes you’ve outgrown, let someone go ahead of you in line, do a chore for a sibling). Make a copy for each family member, and cross off acts you complete. Who will get bingo (five in a row) first? Can everyone finish their cards? 🍷

## Look on the bright side

Having a good attitude toward school can help your tween learn more. Here’s how to nurture positive thinking.

■ **Use upbeat language.** Encourage your child to reframe negative remarks. “We get too much homework in math” becomes “All this practice means I’ll remember the formulas.” Let her hear you talk up school, too. (“Your art teacher gives really interesting assignments!”)

■ **Act as a cheerleader.** Show your tween that you believe in her and expect her to do well. Regularly ask to see or hear work she’s proud of, such as a poem she wrote in English or a solo she’s working on in chorus. 🍷





## Plan ahead for better essays

Like going for a hike, writing an essay requires advance planning. In both situations, your tween needs to know where she's headed and how she'll get there. Share these steps to map out a well-written paper.

**1. Choose a destination.** Suggest that your child list at least three ideas for her essay topic. Say she's asked to write a personal narrative about an obstacle she overcame. Possibilities might include moving to a new town or recovering from



a soccer injury. Then she can pick the one she believes will make the most compelling narrative.

**2. Make a map.** Your middle grader could draw a big soccer ball in the middle of her paper and write her essay title inside ("Getting Back in the Game"). Then, she can surround it with medium-sized balls for subtopics (her injury, physical therapy) and add small balls with supporting details (recovery milestones, teammates' support). Now she can refer to her map as she writes her essay. 👍

## Q & A Screen addiction?

**Q** I think my son is addicted to screens. He only wants to play video games in his free time and can't seem to go a minute without checking his phone. What should I do?

**A** While "screen addiction" isn't an official diagnosis, excessive screen use can be connected to anxiety and depression.

Ask yourself whether your child's usage is so all-consuming that it's having a negative effect on him. Consult his pediatrician if you notice any of these red flags:

- He can't control his screen use or lies about it.
- He has lost interest in other activities.
- His screen time interferes with sleep, school, or relationships.
- Screens are his main source of happiness or comfort.



You can help your son cut back by setting limits for the whole family. That way, he's not watching others play on their phones when he can't use his. Finally, encourage him to fill downtime with screen-free activities he enjoys, perhaps running or drawing. 👍

### OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ideas that promote school success, parent involvement, and more effective parenting.

Resources for Educators,  
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## Kitchen chemistry

Holiday baking is a science—literally! Talk about these physical and chemical reactions while making treats with your middle grader.

### What happens when you melt butter?

When energy (heat) is added to a solid, like butter, it causes the atoms to speed up—and the butter becomes a liquid. This is an example of a physical reaction. Together, observe what happens when melted butter cools again. It turns back into a solid because the atoms slow down.

### What makes cakes rise?

Have your tween mix 1 tsp. baking soda with 1 tbsp. vinegar. He'll see bubbles, signaling a chemical reaction. In a cake recipe, baking soda reacts with acidic ingredients like vinegar, lemon juice, or buttermilk to release carbon dioxide, and the expanding gases make the cake rise. 👍



## Parent to Parent

### Peer pressure: Trust your instincts

My daughter Rosa went to the mall with friends when they were supposed to be at the park. Because she broke our pandemic-safety rule about no indoor socializing, I told her she had to stay home for two weeks.

When I asked Rosa why she went somewhere she wasn't supposed to, she said, "Because everyone else did." Then she admitted to feeling nervous and guilty inside the mall.



I encouraged her to think of feelings like those as "alarms"—when an alarm goes off, that's a sign to "wake up" and think for herself.

Next, we brainstormed responses she could have used like "My parents would ground me" or "My family is careful about indoor spaces."

My daughter wasn't happy to be grounded—but next time she's pressured to do something that sets off alarm bells, I hope she'll make a better choice. 👍

HARVEST OF THE MONTH  
 NEWSLETTER 12/2020



### FUN FACTS

- In Native American folklore, winter squash was one of the “three sisters”, along with corn and beans and were staple foods in their diet.
- There are over 15 different types including: butternut, Delicata, Hubbard, banana, acorn and spaghetti squash.

### NUTRITION INFO

One cup of cooked, cubed squash has 115 calories and provides vitamins A & C and fiber.

### PICK

Choose winter squash with firm skin free of nicks, cracks, or soft areas with an attached stem.

### STORE

Fresh, whole squash can be stored in a cool dark place for several weeks to months depending on variety. Store cooked squash refrigerated for a few days or freeze up to 6 months.

### PREPARE

Winter squash is versatile. It can be baked, microwaved, roasted, sautéed, boiled, and/or steamed. Use a very sharp knife to cut or peel.

### USE

Puree cooked squash and add to soups for a creamy texture. The seeds can be roasted and eaten like pumpkin seeds. Try using a spiralizer to make squash noodles. No spiralizer? Try spaghetti squash!



## Roasted Butternut Squash Fries

Serves 6

### Ingredients:

- 1 medium butternut squash
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 tsp. dried thyme or 1 Tbsp. chopped fresh thyme
- 1 tsp. dried rosemary or 1 Tbsp. chopped fresh rosemary
- ½ tsp. salt

### Directions:

Heat oven to 425°F. Lightly coat a baking sheet with olive oil. Peel the skin from butternut squash and cut into even sticks, about ½ inch wide and 3 inches long. In a medium bowl, combine the squash, oil, thyme, rosemary and salt; mix until the squash is evenly coated. Spread onto the baking sheet and roast for 15 minutes. Remove the baking sheet from the oven and shake to loosen the squash. Flip squash and place back in the oven for 15-25 minutes until golden brown.

Per serving: 110 calories, 2.5g fat, 0g saturated fat, 2g protein, 23g carbohydrate, 4g fiber, 200mg sodium

for more information visit [www.laxf2s.org](http://www.laxf2s.org)








HARVEST OF THE MONTH CALENDAR  
2020-2021



# December 2020

West Salem Middle School  
Lunch

(Panther Packs will continue to be offered.)

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sub Sandwich</li> <li>• Veggie of the Day</li> <li>• Fruit of the Day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caesar Salad</li> <li>• Fruit of the Day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ham &amp; Cheese on White Wheat Sandwich bread</li> <li>• Veggie of the Day</li> <li>• Fruit of the Day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chicken Tenders</li> <li>• Veggie of the Day</li> <li>• Fruit of the Day</li> </ul>
<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cheesy Garlic French Bread Pizza</li> <li>• Veggie of the Day</li> <li>• Fruit of the Day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meatballs &amp; Gravy with Buttermilk Biscuit</li> <li>• Mashed Potatoes</li> <li>• Fruit of the Day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breaded Chicken Patty Sandwich on WG Bun</li> <li>• Veggie of the Day</li> <li>• Fruit of the Day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mini Corn Dogs</li> <li>• Veggie of the Day</li> <li>• Fruit of the Day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cheese Quesadillas</li> <li>• Veggie of the Day</li> <li>• Fruit of the Day</li> </ul>
<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chicken Nuggets</li> <li>• Veggie of the Day</li> <li>• Fruit of the Day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loaded Beef and Cheese Nachos</li> <li>• Veggie of the Day</li> <li>• Fruit of the Day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bistro Boxes</li> <li>• Veggie of the Day</li> <li>• Fruit of the Day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cheeseburger on WG Bun</li> <li>• Veggie of the Day</li> <li>• Fruit of the Day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Golden Crunchy Fish Sticks and Goldfish Crackers</li> <li>• Veggie of the Day</li> <li>• Fruit of the Day</li> </ul>
<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Popcorn Chicken</li> <li>• Veggie of the Day</li> <li>• Fruit of the Day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Turkey and Cheddar on WG Bun</li> <li>• Veggie of the Day</li> <li>• Fruit of the Day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sloppy Joe</li> <li>• Veggie of the Day</li> <li>• Fruit of the Day</li> </ul>		
<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	
				

Menu likely to change based on product availability.

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10/26/2020 Board action to make 11/13/20, 12/11/20, 1/15/21, Teacher Professional Development Days - Virtual Learning Days for students. (VLD)

# WEST SALEM SCHOOL DISTRICT 2020-2021 CALENDAR

^9/28/2020 Board action to change 10/14/2020 from Early Release to a full day.

\*\*Summer School July 20-August 7, 2020

AUGUST 2020				
M	T	W	T	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
31				

SEPTEMBER 2020				
M	T	W	T	F
	1	2	3	4
NS	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30		

OCTOBER 2020				
M	T	W	T	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14^	15	16
19	20	21	22	23#
26	27	28	29	NS*

#No school for Elementary & Middle students only

NOVEMBER 2020				
M	T	W	T	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	VLD
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	NS	NS	NS
30				

DECEMBER 2020				
M	T	W	T	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	VLD
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	NS	NS
NS	NS	NS	NS	

JANUARY 2021				
M	T	W	T	F
				NS
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	VLD
NS*	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

FEBRUARY 2021				
M	T	W	T	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	ER	11	12
15	16	17	18	19#
22	23	24	25	26

#No school for Elementary & Middle students only

MARCH 2021				
M	T	W	T	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	SD
15	16	17	18	NS*
22	23	24	25	26
29	30	31		

Note, April 6 is a school day.

APRIL 2021				
M	T	W	T	F
			1	NS
NS	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

MAY 2021				
M	T	W	T	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	ER	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
NS				

May 12-ER  
\*ER K-8 Only  
\*9-11 No School  
\*12-SEP presentation day

JUNE 2021				
M	T	W	T	F
	1	2	3	SD
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30		

**First Day of School: September 1, 2020**  
**Last Day of School: June 3, 2021**  
**Graduation Day: May 30, 2021**  
**Early Release Days:**  
**October 14, February 10, May 12**

SERVE WITH PASSION TO IGNITE CREATIVITY, INNOVATION, AND EXCELLENCE

**NS = No School for All students**  
**# = No School for Elementary & Middle School students**  
**ER = Early Release (Students dismissed at 12:20, Buses leave at 12:30)**  
**SD = Snow Day or Make-up date (March 12 & June 4)**  
**\* = Teacher Inservice (August 25 & 26, October 30, January 18, March 19 + 2 Floating)**

## Online Learning Schedule

<b>Definitions</b>	<b>Online Learning</b>	Learning that happens in real-time. Students attend the class period with their teacher though the Zoom online meeting platform. Attendance is taken like it is during in-person learning. Online learning will mirror in-person learning as much as possible.
	<b>Office Hours</b>	Teachers will be available via Zoom to meet with students that need assistance or have questions. Open Office hours will be from 1:00 - 1:45 daily.
	<b>Scheduled Office Hours</b>	Teachers (or students) may schedule an appointment to meet with students that need additional assistance. Scheduled Office hours will be from 1:45-2:30 pm daily.
	<b>Zoom</b>	The online/app-based meeting platform for online, face-to-face instruction and interaction.
	<b>Google Classroom</b>	The online platform WSMS teachers use to post instruction and course material.

### Monday - Thursday

Times	5th	6th	7th	8th			
8:00 - 8:40	Block 1	8:00 - 8:20	Homeroom	8:00 - 8:20	Homeroom	8:00 - 8:20	Homeroom
8:45 - 9:25	Block 2	8:30 - 8:50	Allied	8:30 - 9:10	Block 1	8:30 - 9:10	Block 1
9:30 - 9:45	Allied	9:00 - 9:20	Allied	9:20 - 10:00	Block 2	9:20 - 10:00	Block 2
9:50 - 10:05	Allied	9:30 - 10:10	Block 1	10:10 - 10:30	Allied	10:10 - 10:50	Block 3
10:15 - 10:55	Block 3	10:20 - 11:00	Block 2	10:35 - 10:55	Allied	11:00 - 11:20	Allied
11:05 - 11:50	Block 4 (45)	11:10 - 11:50	Block 3	11:05 - 11:50	Block 3 (45)	11:30 - 11:50	Allied
Noon - 12:30	Panther Time	Noon - 12:30	Panther Time	Noon - 12:30	Panther Time	Noon - 12:30	Panther Time
12:30 - 1:00	Lunch	12:30 - 1:00	Lunch	12:30 - 1:00	Lunch	12:30 - 1:00	Lunch
1:00 - 1:45	Open Office Hours	1:00 - 1:45	Open Office Hours	1:00 - 1:45	Open Office Hours	1:00 - 1:45	Open Office Hours
1:45 - 2:30	Scheduled with Students	1:45 - 2:30	Scheduled with Students	1:45 - 2:30	Scheduled with Students	1:45 - 2:30	Scheduled with Students
2:30 - 3:30	Teacher Collaboration	2:30 - 3:30	Teacher Collaboration	2:30 - 3:30	Teacher Collaboration	2:30 - 3:30	Teacher Collaboration

### Fridays for Grades 5 - 8

8:00 - 8:20	Homeroom (Attendance will be taken.)
8:30 - 9:30	Grade Level Academic Support. Direct support/instruction by teachers as directed. Stay logged in to Zoom.
9:45 - 12:00	Work on posted content from your teachers in Google Classroom.
12:30 - 3:30	Participate in the physical activity posted by our Healthy Living Team and continue working on posted content.

## Blended Format Schedule

Last Names A - K will be the WEST group

- IN-PERSON Monday/Wednesday, ONLINE Tuesday/Thursday

Last Names L - Z will be the SALEM group

- IN-PERSON Tuesday/Thursday, ONLINE Monday/Wednesday

(example): 1 A Class List & 1 B Class List

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
<b>West (A - K)</b>	In-person - A	Online - A	In-person - B	Online - B
<b>Salem (L - Z)</b>	Online - A	In-person - A	Online - B	In-person - B



**“Meet Us in the Middle”**

