

8th Grade Sq-Hawk

Holcomb Bridge Middle School Newsletter for Parents

Every Student Matters And Every Minute Counts

November 5th, 2010

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Home Access Center: Points to Remember

We hope that the Home Access Center is providing you with up to date information on your student's performance. The class average is the average of all the grades issued by the teacher for any given assignment. The tool is designed to give parents an idea of how his/her child is progressing as compared to the class as a whole. The class average is shown for every class work assignment.

The following points are provided to support your understanding of the grading information included in the Home Access Center.

- Student grades are displayed according to the assignments entered into the system and may not represent all assignments completed.
- Assignments may be weighted to reflect importance and may not all be included in the final grade calculation. Some grades may be entered to share formative (or learning along the way) assignments and should not be included in the final grade calculation.
- Avoid comparisons to other students. Class averages displayed may not communicate clearly your student's performance in relation to others. Classrooms are comprised of a variety of learners at varying levels. While the system computes class averages, it would not be appropriate to compare the performance across a diverse group of learners including advanced, on-level, below-level and those with learning disabilities. In addition, a very few students who score exceptionally low or high (outlier scores) will pull the average in that direction and may not provide an accurate reference point for your student's performance.
- Realize that the students who were absent from an assignment may be reflected as a zero (0) until the work is made up. This can skew the class average.
- Avoid comparisons of one classroom to another or one teacher to another. Grades may vary due to the differing student ability levels in each classroom.
- Data on the website is updated in real-time so questions about missing assignments or other data should be directed to the teacher of the course.
- Because of confidentiality, teachers can only talk to you about your student's grades. It is not appropriate to inquire about the performance of other students in the class.
- Once again, parent questions should be addressed to your child's school. Please contact your child's teacher if you feel additional information is needed.

ALSO WITH ESCHOOL:

Parents, please remember that the new grading system does not allow teachers to email progress reports. Because of this, it is essential that you are checking the Home Access Center on a weekly basis and the student agenda on a nightly basis. If you do not have your username and password, please pick it up in person from the office.

(Padres, por favor recuerden que el nuevo sistema de calificaciones no permite a los maestros que envíen informes de progreso (calificaciones) por correo electrónico. Debido a esto, es esencial que se fije en el Centro de Acceso de Casa (Home Access Center) semanalmente y en la agenda todas las noches . Si no tiene su nombre de usuario y contraseña, favor de recogerlo en persona en la oficina principal.)

Don't forget about Learning Labs!

Parents, remember that learning labs are a unique opportunity at HBMS, where students have 26 minutes set aside each day to either work on homework, interventions, or enrichment – depending on their lab assignments. We just wrapped up a round of math labs where students had an opportunity to re-take assessments to show mastery of a past skill, and we are starting Language Arts labs for the month of November. In addition, we have enrichment labs such as Band and Student Council, and we are looking forward to adding more as the year goes on. Encourage your child to take advantage of this time each day, coming prepared and ready to focus.

Important Dates:

- November 11: Veteran's Day
- November 22: Field Trip Forms Due
- November 24- 26: Thanksgiving Holidays
- November 29: 2nd 4.5 Week Progress Report
- December 3: Field Trip to CNN and MLK Centers
- December 8- 10: HBMS Social Studies Fair

Teacher's Corner

Mr. Andry: In 8th Grade Language Arts: We are close to finishing up Unit 2...Expository. The students are now presenting their individual projects from: Power Point Presentation to iTunes snippets to Billboard displays to Newsletters on Publisher.

Ms. Ferrara: Reading class is wrapping up Unit 2 and looking ahead to Unit 3! We will study figurative language and media literacy. We are currently nearing the end of our novel, Touching Spirit Bear. Ask your student to tell you about the novel and how they predict it will end!

Mr. Lindsey: In Georgia Studies, we are starting the unit about the birth of the United States during the American Revolution! It was such an extraordinary time of liberation and triumph from tyrannical governments! U-S-A! U-S-A! U-S-A!

Ms. Foil: Mrs. Foil's 8th grade social studies classes just wrapped up a mini unit on Georgia's Governor and the gubernatorial election. Students learned about the powers, qualifications, and guidelines to be Georgia's governor. We also studied our responsibilities as U.S. citizens, the voting and election process, and the importance and differences in the major political parties. To wrap up the unit, we researched the background of the two leading candidates (Barnes and Deal), as well as their views on important issues in Georgia today. Students created campaign buttons to share these views and taught the class what they learned. Finally, the 8th grade voted! Ask your 8th grader about the results! We are now going to study the American Revolution.

Dr. Taylor: Dr. Taylor's science class is finishing up the unit on matter, and looking forward to applying some forces to create motion!

Ms. Chaffin: In Language Arts, we're finishing up our expository unit writing articles and we are about to start a technical writing unit.

Ms. Blish: 8th grade French is finishing a unit on places and the activities that people do there. The classes have recently taken their first recorded Performance Based Assessment. Mrs. Blish is very proud of the progress that the students are making in speaking and understanding French.

Mrs. Dykstra: Math 8 students test on Unit 2 on Friday, November 5th. We will begin Unit 3: Pythagorean theorem and parallel lines cut by a transversal next week. Advanced Math 8 students have begun Unit 3 and will continue to work with Pythagorean theorem to see how it relates to the distance and midpoint formulas. Math 1 and Accelerated Math 1 are both in Unit 3 (Algebra Investigations and Algebra in Context) and are learning how to factor polynomials

Ms. Merine: Ms. Merine's Math 8 classes are currently conquering Unit 2. Students are doing very well with operations with exponents and scientific notation.

Mr. Donges: Mr. Donges class is starting a unit on figurative language in his reading classes.

Ms. Higgins: In science, we are finishing up Unit 1- Matter, Chemical and Physical Properties and Chemical and Physical Reactions. We are moving onto a new unit about forces and motion

Ms. Moore: The 203 Island is filled with abandoned tribes seeking to survive in the world of Physical Science. There are not enough resources in the laboratory island for everyone, so they have to compete through immunity challenges in order to Survive - and not get voted off. Who will be the Ultimate Survivor? Will it be the Super Monkey Ninja Turtles? The Dichikis? Or could it be the Cookokatchas? One tribe will conquer the academic rewards of Survivor Science - The Properties of Matter Edition.

Ms. Cheetham: Tips from Ms. Cheetham:

- 1) Check the agenda each night to help your student stay on track with his or her assignments.
- 2) Utilize Home Access Center for updates on grades and attendance. See Mrs. Strish in the front office to obtain your username and password.
- 3) If your student does not have homework one night, encourage him or her to read for at least 30 minutes.
- 4) Have students prepare his or her book bag with all materials the night before.
- 5) Contact teachers to determine days and times of morning/afternoon help sessions.