

Blake Middle School
Term 1 Update for Families
Grade 8
10/16-10/20

Dear Families,

During this week we take time as a community to provide you with an update with regard to areas of curricular focus and student work. You may also receive an email from your child's teacher if there are specific areas of concern with regard to progress towards meeting the standards under consideration this term. Please know that you may reach out to teachers or your child's guidance counselor at any time if you have questions or concerns about their progress. We hope that the information provided in this document will help foster conversations at home.

Subject	Term 3 Update <i>Priority Standards, Learning Skills, Student Work</i>
Art	Grade 8: Figure Drawing - Students are using photo references and mannequins to develop proportional accuracy and form through observation, planning and color selections. (STUDIO HABIT - Envisioning and Planning, Observation) (Priority Standard - Creating, Connecting)
English	After reading Reginald Rose's drama, <i>12 Angry Men</i> with a focus on independent and proficient reading comprehension, students are now composing their final analytical essay concentrating on the Writing and Language Priority Standards: (1) <i>Uses logical reasoning and relevant evidence to support an original claim.</i> (2) <i>Plans, revises, proofreads, and edits to produce clear and coherent writing.</i> (3) <i>Demonstrates command of standard English grammar and usage; creates meaning through the use of grade-level vocabulary and word choice.</i> We will meet with students in individual conferences to provide personalized feedback in both the content and style of their essay.
French	In French class, we are finishing up a unit on food. Through a

	<p>variety of activities, students have learned new vocabulary and are now able to talk about what they eat and drink during meals - including in the past tense! We will finish the unit with a project in which they create a menu for a dinner at their house. Next, we will read our first story together: Le Nouvel Houdini.</p>
Mandarin	<p>In our Mandarin language class, we've been focusing on how to describe the weather and seasons. For the culture highlights, we learned the class manners in Chinese tradition.</p>
Math	<p>Students began the year working on solving 1 variable linear equations and have explored the model of "begin + move = total" for application problems. We are now adding a second variable so instead of just looking at <i>number of cookies or number of weeks</i>, we are now looking at <i>number of cookies vs. Total cost or number of weeks vs. Total Saving</i>. In addition to traditional algebra experiences, students have been engaging with Google Spreadsheets, animation with Google Slides, Desmos, Canva, & Cuttle.xyz to create multiple experiences and allow for learning.</p>
Science	<p>In science we have been focusing on 3 of the 4 of the Science and Engineering Practices; SE-1 Skills of Investigation, SE-2 Skills of Analytical Thinking, and SE-4 Skills of Scientific Literacy.</p> <p>Grade 8 Science just finished up their first chemistry unit on Elements, Compounds, and Mixtures. Students focused on SE-2 Skills of Analytical Thinking by developing and using scientific models. Additionally, students focused on SE-4 Skills of Scientific Literacy by using appropriate scientific vocabulary (monatomic, diatomic, molecules, compounds, pure substances, mixtures) to demonstrate their understanding and apply their scientific knowledge. We will be continuing our journey through chemistry in our next unit- The Law of Conservation of Mass!</p>
Social Studies	<p>In our 8th-grade civics class, we've been diving into the philosophical foundations of the United States political system. Our students have explored the influence of ancient Athens and Greece on modern democracy, the Roman Republic's impact on</p>

	contemporary governance, the Enlightenment thinkers' role in the American Revolution, the British ideas that shaped colonial America, and the influence of Native Peoples, like the Iroquois Confederacy, on our government's principles. We're excited about the engagement and curiosity our students have shown and look forward to further exploration in the coming months.
Spanish	Students started eighth grade expanding their ability to describe themselves and important people in their lives. They then read a story about friends texting about going to a party featuring Dominican food, music and dance. This helped them learn how to make plans with their own friends in Spanish, and discuss what they are going to do on the weekend. We are excited about starting our Day of the Dead unit in mid-October!
Wellness	<p>PHYSICAL ED: Grade 8 students got to experience two great activities in PE so far: Golf and Archery. These activities take skill and precision and we were impressed to observe the students focus and effort towards hitting their targets.</p> <p>Grade 8 PE students will begin a "fan favorite" unit of Touch Football. This unit will eventually lead to a 8th Grade Turkey Bowl Football tournament the day before Thanksgiving Break. Stay tuned for updates!</p> <p>HEALTH ED: Grade 8 Unit: Substance Use Prevention / What You Need to Know About Opioids</p> <p>During this unit, students are learning about the response of Opioids on the body, the stages of addiction and how to cope with stress in a healthy way. Activities include discussing "frequently asked questions" from community members regarding substance use and creating their own self-care kits. Student conversations have been meaningful and sparked opportunities to debunk myths around drug use.</p>