This Week We

Mid-trimester reports were due back to school on Tuesday.  If you haven’t received a mid-trimester report yet, you should contact your child’s homebase teacher.

Our 6th grade students worked on setting up their Google Drives this week so they can begin using it in all their academic classes.

Next Week We Are

We are beginning to get ready for our winter NWEA\* testing.  The state of Missouri recently announced that they would not have practice MAP tests ready in time for schools to use them prior to Spring MAP testing.  You can read more about this in the following administrative memo:

<http://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/am/documents/CCR-15-001_gradelevelELAandMAinterimassessments.pdf>

While the state has prepared practice tests in each subject and grade, these tests only have a few questions and are mostly used to prepare students for some of the various features of online testing, like the ability to highlight information in text.  These tests will not tell us how prepared students are for the Spring MAP test nor tell us what additional information students need to learn to be ready.  This makes our winter NWEA test that much more important because it is given online, similar to the MAP test, and is the last standardized test students will take before they take the MAP.  Data generated from the NWEA will allow us to determine what additional content our students need to learn before the end of the school year.  Parents, please ask your children to do their best on these tests.  They can be long and sometimes students struggle to remain engaged, but we need students to do their best so that the information we get from these tests truly represents what your child still needs to learn.  This is the best way to make sure that we can meet the needs of all children.

\*NWEA test information and resources- <https://www.nwea.org/resources/parent-toolkit/>

7th Grade is also taking a field trip to the Challenger Learning Center on Monday or Tuesday of next week (the date students attend depends on their class schedule).

Upcoming Events

Our annual Literacy Ball is Thursday, Feb. 12, 6:00 to 7:30, with fun, free, hands-on activities for K-8 kids and families. There will be a local author, costumed book characters, free snacks and goody bags, and a chance to win a Kindle Fire. The theme is “Readers are Leaders” and it’s all to promote reading, writing, and leadership.

Important Info from the Field

Throughout my career, I’ve probably said “he needs to study more” at least 200 times to parents and students.  But I’m not sure I’ve ever really talked about what it means to study and how to study well.  The attached link gives some insight and might be useful when working with your kids.

<http://smartblogs.com/education/2015/01/13/practice-questions-for-inspiring-effective-studying-learning-and-benchmarking/?utm_source=brief>

As a parent, to me this means finding ways to help my child study by working with him/her to develop practice quizzes or practice questions and continuing to try to answer them.  In fact, in my own life I vividly remember studying for my comprehensive written exams at the end of grad school.  If I passed, I moved on to my dissertation and eventually a doctoral degree.  If I failed, I was out of the program.  Needless to say, studying was important.  Once I had a good enough command of the topics that would likely be covered, I wrote different possible test questions over and over and practiced answering them.  The strategy worked, mine was one of the top scores from my cohort.  I think this approach to studying can be used by those trying to learn something at any level.