



DECATUR MIDDLE SCHOOL

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Hawk Highlights

ISSUE 9

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UPCOMING EVENTS:

- Friday, December 16—Sunday, January 1—Winter Break—**NO SCHOOL**
(Students return on Monday, January 2)

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The first semester of 2016-17 has come to an end, and it went really fast! We have so much work left to do, but before that, please enjoy the next two weeks with your friends and family! Happy Holidays!

As we move into 2017 and second semester, I wanted to share with you several notes:

- Monday, January 2 is a full day of school for students. Our first period will begin at 7:45 (as usual).
- During the second semester, we will be highlighting five different character traits in the five months that remain of school. For January, we are going to highlight the character trait of respect. The students who BEST represent this trait during the month of January will have a reward at the end of the month. In the months that follow, we will highlight responsibility, caring, trustworthiness, and citizenship. Please help us by reinforcing these traits at home as well.
- I will be meeting with all students on January 2 and 3 to refresh students' memories of our building-wide expectations. As we move into second semester, the level of responsibility for students to follow our expectations will grow significantly.
- The next PTO meeting is Monday, January 9 at 6:30 p.m. Please plan to join us in the Decatur Middle School Media Center.
- We have opened a new Decatur Middle School social media account. Please follow Faces of Decatur MS on Instagram. Students and adults from Decatur Middle School will be featured by answering the question, "What is your hope?" The plan is to link this account with our Twitter account. If you have not followed us on Twitter, please do so @DecaturMDHawks.

Once again, Happy Holidays!

- Kyle Barrentine, Principal

Imagine SLC News



Students in the 7th grade Imagine community recently read and analyzed the drama version of the story A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens. During the reading of the play, students completed literary activities that became the ornaments and decorations for the Imagine holiday tree. Items that were added included theme stars, foreshadowing snowmen, characterization holly, inference stars, and connection chains. In addition to reading the play, students analyzed and discussed articles about Charles Dickens, life during the time period, and elements of drama that are used to create the play. As a concluding activity, students took a trip to the Indiana Repertory Theatre to watch the story of A Christmas Carol unfold on stage.

In 8th grade our Artful Learning focus for Quarter 2 was the creation of hanging mobiles that embodied the concept of balance. 8th graders investigated this concept in their core classes as well as in their personal lives.



In addition to the concept of balance, the mobiles mimicked the 8th grade masterwork, Dale Chihuly's *Chandeliers*. Each hanging piece of the student's mobile represented one of their four core classes of mathematics, social studies, science or language arts and the masterwork each class investigated.



Have a wonderful and safe winter break! Merry Christmas from the Imagine Small Learning Community!

Global SLC News

7th Grade IDEA Time Update



During 2nd quarter, 7th grade students explored the concept of global connections. Students explored everything from recycling to public transportation to animal waste as a form of alternative energy! On Thursday, December 15, Mrs. Tejchma's IDEA time group visited Fair Oaks Farm to see firsthand how pig waste was used to fuel the farm. They also presented their findings about the alternative fuel's effectiveness to a panel at the farm. The remaining 7th grade Global students shared their findings with fellow classmates. It's great to see students exploring global issues at a local level! Upon returning from break, 7th grade Global students will begin to explore issues involving diversity. Can't wait to see what "IDEAS" students explore!

8th Grade IDEA Time Update

Eighth grade Global students explored human rights issues ranging from poverty to hunger and homelessness. This tied in with the 8th grade service day at the Million Meal Marathon in November. Before break, students presented their findings to one another. It was impressive to see the depth of research that occurred, as well as the creative solutions proposed. The 8th grade team is already looking ahead to next quarter's IDEA Time focus, which will revolve around social justice issues. Stay tuned for more information!



Reindeer Games

On the last day before break, 8th graders from all Small Learning Communities meet in the gym to participate in Reindeer Games—a series of zany games ranging from Candy Train to Reindeer Ruckus. The Global Small Learning Community was proud to claim the silver medal in this year's event—trailing only by two points at the conclusion of the games! Way to go, Global! A fun time was had by all!

Mrs. Davis

It is with a heavy heart that we announce that Mrs. Davis, 7th grade Global Math teacher, will be leaving Decatur Middle School for a position at Southport Middle School. Mrs. Davis is known for her high expectations of students, her sense of humor, and her genuine love of her content area. Both teachers and students will certainly miss her. We wish you the best of luck in your next chapter, Mrs. Davis. Decatur Middle School will always be your second home, though!



Follow Global on Social Media

Stay involved with weekly updates and pictures through our DMS Global Facebook and Twitter accounts. Follow us at: @GlobalHawksDMS (on Twitter) and DMS Global Learning SLC (on Facebook)

Apex SLC News

7th Grade

Consider Your Culture—Students researched a culture from Africa or Asia and then wrote a children’s book. The book was to entertain students while it taught about the culture. The students used Creator, an app on their iPad, to write the story and put pictures in it. Students were then able to share their books with 3rd graders at Valley Mills Elementary School.



8th Grade

There are many exciting things happening in 8th grade Apex as we wrap up this semester. A group of learners ventured to The Children’s Museum of Indianapolis to deepen their understanding of DNA. Using wheat germ, learners were able to pull out the long pieces of DNA in order to see what that looks like. Learners got to talk about the advancements

made in genetic modification of food and plan some modification of their own.



All learners had the opportunity to meet high school principal Scott DeFreese and build an understanding of how families are impacted when a family member has a genetic condition. Mr. DeFreese shared with us his family’s story in an effort to help learners understand how genetic conditions impact individuals, families, and the community. Learners had the chance to ask questions and build their empathy for understanding how a family in this situation operates.

Finally, learners got to meet and interact with Katie Shaw and Stephanie Garner from Down Syndrome Indiana, a not-for-profit group that helps families that have a child with Down syndrome. Learners had the chance to experience a small amount of the type of frustration that a person with



Down syndrome experiences by putting socks on their hands and trying to button a shirt. Then they had the chance to talk with Katie, a person with Down syndrome, who works as an advocate for Down Syndrome Indiana. She shared her story and her wish for all people to be treated with respect and kindness. She shared that she hopes that the learners remembered to treat everyone the way they wanted to be treated whether they had a disability or not.

We hope that all of these experiences help the learners to build a sense of empathy for the individuals, families and community members impacted with genetic disorders. As we move forward, learners will continue to build their knowledge of the genetic disease of their choice and will be creating PSAs and fact sheets to raise awareness of some genetic diseases. Learners will be presenting their final products on January 13th.



Explorations SLC News

Explorations 8th Grade Students 3-Peat!

Reindeer Games is an 8th grade tradition all DMS students compete in on the last day before winter break. Once again, our 8th grade Explorations students won the overall championship earning the right to proudly display the Reindeer Games traveling trophy. We have a very competitive and talented group of 8th grade students.



They all did a fantastic job of cheering each other on to show our Explorations spirit!



iTime:

We had our first iTime soiree this past Wednesday. Students from each Explorations STAR class were selected to share their iTime projects with all other Explorations students and staff. Some students have organized fundraisers and various events in order to donate the proceeds to various charity organizations. iTime has been such a positive experience for our students.



The Student Lounge Design Team has started renovating room 237 at Decatur Middle School. This will be the

future home of our Explorations Student Lounge. Team members have decided upon a layout for the lounge and have started painting. If you have any items you would like to donate for the lounge, please contact your child’s STAR teacher.



Follow us on Twitter at @ExplorationsDMS to see daily activities that occur in Explorations classes.

Sign up for Remind to receive regular text message notifications about upcoming Explorations events:

* 7th Grade Explorations Families: Text @7expl617 to 81010

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College Corner



You and your child need to start planning for college no later than middle school. In each of the newsletters, we will provide you with information to help begin the journey of college and career readiness.

Most U.S. parents expect their kids to go to college, and most students have the same goal. But they are not necessarily taking the practical steps to get there.

Counselors, colleges and organizations like the National Association of College Admission Counseling and ACT emphasize that parents should start planning for college no later than middle school. Their reasoning is simple: Your child needs strong preparation in middle school to take the high school classes that colleges require.

You need to do your homework to make college affordable for your family. There are lots of options to cut college costs—scholarships, low-interest loans, work-study, spending the first two years at a community college—but it takes time to research them and get the information you need to meet application deadlines.

College planning is important for all families, whether parents attended college or not. Rose Fabiszak, director of the College Board’s program called College Ed, notes, “The college process has changed, even from four years ago—the forms have changed, there are web sites where your child can take a virtual tour of a college.”

Don’t Wait To Get Your Child Help With Study Skills

Your child will need time-management, organizational and study skills to succeed in high school and college. It’s easier to address these issues now than it will be when the works gets more challenging. Make sure your child has a quiet place to do homework and the necessary paper, pens and other materials close by. Help him get into a regular routine and monitor the results. If you need to, talk to your child’s counselor about how to get extra help—after school, at a community center or in a tutoring program.

College Road Trip—Purdue University



On Saturday, December 3, Decatur Middle School took a group of students and parents to visit the campus of Purdue University. While there, we were able to attend Purdue Men’s Basketball game at Mackey Arena, followed by the opportunity to go on court and mingle with the players. Then students and parents got a bus tour of the campus and ate in a real college dining hall! Those that attended had a great time! Stay tuned for other upcoming college road trips!



The core mission of this school is the creation of highly engaging activities, materials, and settings for learning that are too good—too interesting—for students to resist AND increases student achievement.



The MSD of Decatur Township is Student Invested, Community Connected. We prioritize Student Learning, Safety and Customer Service, fostering a support system for our families.



It is the Board’s commitment to provide a safe, positive, productive and nurturing educational environment for all of its students. Any individual who believes a student has been or is the victim of discrimination, bullying, or harassment should report the situation to the building principal or designee or complete the School District’s Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying report form, which is available online at www.msddecatur.k12.in.us.