

ILLING MIDDLE SCHOOL

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Today's Learners,
Tomorrow's Leaders

The Illing Connection



Illing Middle School Parent Newsletter November/December 2013

Words from Welch...

The holidays are right around the corner. So, *Happy Holidays* to our Illing Middle School family and friends! I wish the best for our kids as our school continues to work on initiatives for improving instruction, curriculum, and character education. Teachers, staff, students, and parents are highly involved in our continued efforts to make our school the best it can be! It is my sincerest wish that our kids are working hard to improve academically and socially. The more they read and write at home, the better their chances for success now and in the future. Now that January is right around the corner, here are some trivia tidbits for you...Did you know: slavery was abolished on this date in January 1863; Paul Revere and Betsy Ross were born on January 1; and January is *National Soup Month*, so curl up to a steaming cup of your favorite.

The focus is always on improved instruction to garner high achieving students at Illing Middle School. Teachers continue to focus on curricular modifications with literacy, numeracy, and a positive school climate as our mainstays. During our Professional Development day, teachers met with colleagues to sift through testing data, student progress, and our school improvement plan while constructing interdisciplinary units of instruction to help all levels of students. They immersed themselves in the Connecticut Common Core as well. Academic rigor is certainly the necessary thrust in all classes.

Lastly, I hope your thanksgiving is wonderful and your holiday season is joyous! Please keep our kids practicing healthy and safe habits. The more *we* (both home and school) remind them to wash their hands often, drink plenty of water, and stay away from crowded settings as much as possible, they will eventually hear us and practice these simple rules until they are consistent habits. So, to all, work to have an illness-free Thanksgiving and Winter break!

Sincerely,

David A. Welch, Principal

FROM THE ATTENDANCE OFFICE



If your student is feeling ill or needs to be absent or late for any reason, PLEASE contact our attendance secretary,

Mrs. Barbara Stufflebeam, at 647-3413

SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF

School Counseling Center

Ms. Zalewski Guidance Counselor	Team Central and Tufts	647-5087
Ms. Petito Guidance Counselor	Team Cornell and UCONN	647-3418
Ms. Scholtz	Guidance Secretary Registrar	647-3417
Ms. Cody		647-5085
Mr. Anger Social Worker	Team URI and Dartmouth	647-3420
Ms. Owen Social Worker	Team Princeton and Syracuse School Psychologist	647-3421
Angella Manhertz		647-3414
Sharon Goodwin-Griffin	Community Outreach Counselor	647-3400
Loren Conlon	Community Outreach Counselor	647-3400

LITERACY CORNER

Nancy Ahlquist, Danielle Maguire, and Claudia Millette

As your child's first teacher, you can be a powerful force in helping your child become a skillful reader. Your positive engagement and encouragement can help your child make great strides.

- ❖ Encourage your child to re-read materials to get a deeper understanding of its contents. This is particularly true for non-fiction material (textbook content) and material written above grade level.
- ❖ Read the same book as your child so you can have meaningful discussions. If your child is struggling to complete an assigned reading, try taking turns listening to him/her read, and reading aloud to your child.

- ❖ After reviewing a math lesson with your child, have them do out lesson examples on a separate sheet of paper to solidify understanding.

Common Core State Standards

As you may have heard, Connecticut has adopted the Common Core State Standards. The Manchester Public Schools website contains valuable information regarding the Common Core State Standards. Please visit www.publicschools.manchesterct.gov to gain a better understanding of what the standards are, what they will mean to your child and teachers, and what will make them different from previous standards. You will also find examples of the new assessment items which will be taking the place of the CMTs. This site is extremely user friendly and informative.

Helpful Online Sites

Manchester Public School K-8 Resource Page

- ❖ <http://mhsweb.townofmanchester.org/Library/k8resources.htm>

A student friendly website with links to multiple high-interest, interactive resources in several content areas.

Teen Reads - www.teenreads.com

- ❖ This website has sections for authors, reviews, cool and new releases, new paperbacks, podcasts and videos, book clubs, and SO MUCH MORE! There are also polls, links to award winners and interviews with authors.

Team Tufts



Team Tufts would like to thank all the parents and guardians who were able to attend our Open House on October 2nd. It was wonderful to meet all of you and your participation made for a very enjoyable evening. Thank you for your ongoing support of your child's education! We look forward to working with you and your children in the months to come.

Team Tufts teachers look forward to seeing all of you during our November conferences on the 12th and 13th. Your children are very proud of the work they've done. Try not to miss this inspiring experience. We encourage your student to take an active part in the conference. In so doing, students take ownership and responsibility of their own work.

Student I.D.'s are required to be worn every day. We suggest that your son/daughter keep their I.D. in a safe place after school each day, which may include his/her backpack, binder, or lunchbox. Practicing routines and responsibility is a great habit.

Please remember to keep lines of communication between home and school open. Team Tufts teachers are available for extra help either before or after school. Just have your child check with the teacher to make sure the teacher doesn't have a prior commitment. We can be contacted by phone, email, or a note in the planner.

Mrs. Dudzik's Team Tufts geographers are excited to be completing their map skill activities. It won't be long before everyone becomes a geography expert. We will be examining political and physical maps of Asia and China in the very near future. The Chinese culture is very interesting. We may even get to play a few cards of Chinese Bingo!

As we close the month of October, Team Tufts' mathematicians will be starting their next unit, Algebraic Reasoning, which will be broken into two parts. The first part will be explored over the next three and a half weeks. Students will solve for one step equations. Then, students will be simplifying and expanding expressions using distribution. After that, students will explore two step equations and real world problems. We will then spend some time reviewing those topics before the students are tested on these topics. Towards the end of November and into the month of December, students will be moving onto the second part of the unit--inequalities, where we will write, solve and graph them on a number line. At this time, we will also be welcoming Mrs. Peralta back as she returns to her role as the Math Teacher for Team Tufts.

Mr. Watson's Team Tufts scientists have been busy refining their measuring skills as they get ready to solve problems in the area of energy. The essential question they are focusing on is: "What is the role of energy in our world?" They are also studying how science and technology affect the quality of our lives. Therefore, our next topic will look at what energy is, the scientific definition of work and power, and how we can make work easier by using simple and compound machines. Don't forget to check out Mr. Watson's SchoolNotes page by searching for Mr. Watson's SchoolNotes. Parents can access Mr. Watson's email on the SchoolNotes website, check out what's for homework, learn when the next quiz is, and explore some cool websites. Look for news on an upcoming field trip here, too. Science is everywhere!

Mrs. Bombria's Language Arts and Reading classes are continuing their study of author's craft and figurative language through various articles and Mildred Taylor's *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*, as well as our 7th grade book, *Bystander*, by James Preller. Using these and other texts, fiction and non-fiction, students are learning how to find evidence from the text to better support their opinions in

both open-ended responses and persuasive writing assignments. Please continue to ask your child to elaborate on his or her day's events and help them to use details and examples. Real life application makes learning "real." Practicing using what we learn will make us better at the skill. In addition, students will continue to grow through a lifelong learning skill of self-assessment and setting independent goals.

A reminder: students in Mrs. Bombria's classes are working to reach their monthly independent reading goals. Please check with your child monthly to see what their goal is and ask how they are able to accomplish this goal. Mrs. Bombria has been very impressed with how her students are managing their reading time in order to reach their goals. (Their goal should increase each month.)

In October, Ms. Gill's Language Arts classes continued their study of the author's craft by examining Mildred Taylor's "The Song of the Trees." Students defined the elements of a story and then charted the plotlines of several short stories on plot graphs. In the latter half of the month, student sleuths enjoyed solving mini-mysteries starring their classmates, using their logical skills to deduce solutions from hints provided in the text. In November and December, the students will be exploring the figurative language used in poetry while increasing their knowledge of informational texts during a unit about *The Acorn People*, Ron Jones' classic novel about the challenges differently-abled children face together as they attend summer camp. Students will create graphic organizers highlighting characters in the text, draw comparisons using Venn diagrams, and answer rigorous questions about character development and plot structure. Students will also be reading non-fiction articles concerning subjects introduced in the text, furthering both their familiarity with informational texts and their awareness of the diverse challenges their peers often face.

The Team Tufts Family History Project is ready to enter into another exciting year of learning about our team and each student's family history. Through this year-long unit, each student will have the opportunity to share their findings about their family through writing, poetry, and drawing. Each teacher on Team Tufts will be sharing with the students their own personal family artifacts and stories. This modeling will allow students to see examples of what they need to begin (or continue!) to research about their own family. We are encouraging each student to begin inquiring about their family history. With Thanksgiving quickly approaching, please consider using the holiday and long weekend to talk with family members about this project. Being more attentive about traditions and family events will surely help students with this project.

We look forward to seeing you at the Student/Parent Conferences in November.

Team Dartmouth

“The Big Green”

Ms. Burdacki and Ms. Nobile report for language arts: Our field trip to Gay City State Park was a beautiful day outdoors which has given us much fodder for future class lessons in creative writing. Thank you again to all the chaperones for donating your time and commitment to this experience. An instructional focus these months will be *Analyzing Craft and Structure* from our Common Core State Standards. We will be studying figurative language techniques such as: simile, metaphor, alliteration, rhyme, personification, and imagery through poetry and short stories. Over the next few weeks, we will be writing Haiku poetry to decorate bookmarks complete with photographic images from our field trip to Gay City State Park!

Mrs. Avakian reports that in Social Studies students are completing their initial study of land and water forms and moving on to becoming experts on latitude/ longitude and climate. During election time, students will examine the structure of our government and the election process. In our unit on Africa we will explore the geography, cultures, and governments of Africa. As discussed at Open House, if any parents or guardians have firsthand knowledge, or expertise in Geography or our regional studies such as Africa, please consider contacting me to share your expertise with our students. In our studies we are developing our skills in reading for information from non-fiction text and demonstrating our understanding through constructed written responses. When answering questions, students are ALWAYS expected to R.A. C.E. **R**estate the question, **A**nswer the question, **C**ite Evidence, **E**laborate with details & Examples.

Ms. Levenduski reports for math that we have concluded our Operations with Rational Numbers unit. Students are now experts with negative numbers! We are moving on to Algebraic Reasoning where students will be using their foundation with rational numbers to distribute, combine like terms, and solve equations and inequalities! After we have expanded our mind to include variables, we will move to making inferences about populations and proportional reasoning.

In Mr. Schardt's class, team Dartmouth science students will soon be exploring the wonders of simple machines, as well as great hands-on experiences figuring out forces, work done, and power needed. Please keep sending us a child ready to learn and with a willingness to achieve!

Team URI



In math over the next month we are going to be writing and solving one and two step algebraic equations. We will also be learning distribution, combining like terms, and graphing/solving inequalities.

Mr. Spada's Language Arts class just finished creating short stories and video summaries. Students published their stories electronically using Google Docs, and created a video summary using the website Animoto. These combined assignments not only pushed the students to think about what makes "good literature" but also enabled them to use technology to express their ideas. Next-up in Language Arts is figurative language and poetry...with a cartoonish twist! Ms. Ziegler's class is already deep in figurative language!

Science classes on Team URI are working on science inquiry skills such as observations, inference, and predicting. Students have been studying data tables and learning how to make graphs from them. They have learned to make bar graphs, line graphs, and pie graphs. Most scientific graphs used by scientists are line graphs. Students have applied the scientific method to the airplane lab and written a lab report.

Next week we begin our unit on energy transfer and transformations to answer our essential question: What is the role of energy in our world? Students will synthesize evidence that demonstrates that different types of (potential) energy can be used to make objects move. They will analyze the relationship between force, distance, and work and evaluate how simple machines are used to create mechanical advantage. Students are looking forward to many mini labs and hands-on activities throughout this unit.

Team Yale



Helloooooo **Yale** family!!! I just want to start off by saying how lucky I feel to be able to work with you and your children for the 2013-2014 school year! On November 12th

and 13th we will be having conferences here at Illing. This is the perfect opportunity for parents/guardians to come into the school to meet with their child's teachers and discuss and create plans for learning success. Parents/guardians will also have the opportunity to fill out a survey that will give us as teachers a better idea of what we need to do in order to be the best teachers for your kids that we can possibly be! Please join us and complete a survey!

In Mr. Parker's LANGUAGE ARTS classes, students have been engaged in a wide variety of active reading and have been working hard on providing support for their thinking and mastering descriptive writing. We recently concluded our elements of a short story unit and are now creeping into a deep study of figurative language. As we move through this unit students will identify, analyze and create various pieces of literature in correlation with their studies of figurative language. In addition, students will continue their study of vocabulary and nonfiction text. As you continue to support your child and their learning, please emphasize the importance of reading. Students should be reading at least 35 min every night and it would be awesome if you asked them about their books. I encourage you to ask them questions about the plot of their book, what they enjoy about their book and why and what connections they are making. Before I sign off, I leave you with the following quote: "How lucky are we to have a brand new day to do something amazing?" -Peace. Love. Parker.

In 8th grade Social Studies, students are beginning to read primary source materials about the tension leading to the American Revolution. We will be discussing why some people decided to revolt against England and why others remained loyal to the mother country.

In 7th grade we are finishing our study of economics and starting to look at Africa. We will be investigating individual African countries with an eye on how physical features and history shape the present and the future.

In Mr. Diaz's 7th grade Language Arts classes, students are studying figurative language through the medium of poetry. They are working on correctly defining, appropriately identifying, and effectively applying the use of poetic elements and devices. We are reading both poems and songs as models of superb uses of figurative language.

In Mr. Diaz's shared 8th grade Language Arts class, students are reading a novel by Heidi W. Durrow entitled, *The Girl Who Fell From the Sky*. They are working on establishing habits of good readers such as taking good reader notes and responding to active reader think along prompts. They are also working on correctly defining and appropriately identifying the elements of a good story within the novel.

Team Yale Enrichment classes have begun! We're exploring different ways of thinking, developing questions, and solving problems. So far we've brainstormed solutions for activities, real-life problems, and tried out team problem-solving skills by building towers in class!

In Ms. Brown's 7th grade science classes, students have been practicing their scientific method skills through experimentation and discussion. We will soon be starting our Energy and Energy Transformations unit! In Ms. Brown's 8th grade classes, students worked hard on their Speed Labs and are now moving into Newton's Laws of Motion.

- Please be aware that students grade sheets are coming home for you to sign
- Please talk to your student about pencils, and making sure they bring them to science class!

8th grade Yale mathematicians are working on estimating square roots, working with rational and irrational numbers and will be exploring the Pythagorean theorem in the coming weeks. They will discover the history behind Pythagoras and develop proof that his theorem for right triangles works on every right triangle! 7th grade Yale mathematicians are growing their algebraic reasoning skills, solving 1, 2 and multi step equations. They will be creating their own algorithms for solving multi step equations and inequalities.

Please be on the lookout for:

- Homework assignments are to be completed every night (Monday through Thursday).
- Grade sheets coming home to be signed - for homework credit.
- Your student needing additional pencils!

Team Central



Hello again team Central parents!

In my Language Arts classes students have been working hard and staying focused to become better writers, readers, and all-around scholars. We have recently transitioned from short stories to a heavier influence of poetry, although short stories will continue to be a large part of the curriculum. Poetry has been our window into figurative language. Students are working like the plows in the deep Connecticut Winter to not only define various pieces of figurative language, but to understand the "why" and "how" of their usage. The pens have danced across paper as pensive looks and patient palms perform purposefully.

I encourage all of you to ask your student how and what they are doing here at Illing, and to give them your

continued support. All of the teachers will appreciate this. Administratively, remind your student that if they are absent on any occasion it is **their** responsibility to ask me for the make-up work. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your student, please do not hesitate to contact me through my school e-mail address. Together we can find a solution! Have a safe and wonderful Halloween!

Mr. Morsbach

Team Central students have started the Physical Science unit with a study of balanced and unbalanced forces, work, and power. Yes, this unit is all about math and scientific formulae! Students will be required to show their work and keep track of the correct units of measurement, but will not be asked to memorize the formulae. As many of these concepts are quite abstract, we will do as many hands-on lessons as possible to make them more tangible. We then move on to differentiating between potential and kinetic energy and simple machines. Please, please, please monitor your child's planner and check his or her work in progress--this is a very busy unit where each concept builds on the previous one, so it is easy to fall behind.

Mrs. Kalt's classes have started studying author's craft. Students are learning and explaining how writers use figurative language to enhance their work. We have started reading "Song of the Trees" by Mildred Taylor. In order to fully understand the setting and context of the story, students read lists of "Jim Crow" laws. They discussed and wrote a reflective piece describing how their lives would be affected if these laws existed in Manchester today. Once we have completed this story, the poetry of Langston Hughes and Tupac Shakur will be analyzed for author's craft. The treatment of common themes by both authors will be compared and contrasted during discussions and in written responses. The unit will conclude with a benchmark test requiring students to analyze the author's craft in poems by Pablo Neruda and Thomas Hardy.

Hello again! I hope you are enjoying the fall season. We are still building our fundamental geography foundation, which we are going to rely on for the rest of the year. Students have learned about longitude and latitude and the physical and cultural characteristics of the earth. We are currently studying earth systems, the distribution of water over earth, and the creation of primary and secondary landforms. Over the next few weeks, we are going to learn about climate and vegetation, land use, and resources. We have a lot of work to do. You should expect social studies homework four nights a week, Monday through Thursday. Keep encouraging your child to do well.

Mr. Menefee

Team Central Math, the first quarter is off to a good start! The students have learned that there are not only whole numbers but fractions and decimals – both positive and negative. We have just about finished our units on this and

will be heading into Algebraic Reasoning. Please check your student's planner daily and make sure they are completing their homework. Math homework is assigned daily – Monday through Thursday. A PENCIL is needed DAILY in MATH CLASS! Please make sure to check to see your child is equipped with the right tools to make them successful!

Any student who is having difficulty should contact me to seek extra help. They can make arrangements with me to get help as needed. Feel free to contact me via email at any time! Looking forward to seeing you at the conferences in early November!

Team Princeton



Princeton Tigers Rock!

Team Princeton math students have been very busy, as usual. The Algebra class will be finishing up their study of solving inequalities and multi-step equations and moving into solving systems of equations and inequalities. They also will be exploring different types of functions using the graphing calculators. Connected Math students will be finishing up their Pythagorean Theorem unit and will be moving into a very important unit of studying linear relationships. Thank you all for working hard and Team Princeton teachers look forward to seeing students and parents/guardians at conference time!

Mrs. Francoeur's social studies classes are investigating the early forms of representative government in our colonies, economic activities of the three colonial regions, and the growth of trade within our borders and abroad. As the New Year begins, we will embark on the next leg of our journey. This will take us to the early conflicts that will eventually lead us to fight for our independence from Britain. It is a very exciting time in our history. Ask your son or daughter to explain what they have learned in class. Even better, ask them to share his or her notebook with you. Be sure to check out our web site where important information can be found, especially the postings of daily homework assignments. ☺

Mr. Mack would like parents to know that annual review PPTs are very important for eighth graders. Plans must be initiated for post high school education and employment. The transition to life after high school begins at these annual meetings. Team participants also plan for services that will be available in ninth grade. It is essential for parents and

students to attend. Parental participation may occur via telephone if attendance is difficult, due to issues such as a job or lack of transportation. Mr. Mack will call parents on the day prior to the PPT to discuss how participation will occur.

During the month of November, Team Princeton science students will be writing our first formal lab report to analyze the data from our Catapult Cars experiment. Then, we will be moving on to study how gravity affects the motion of the planets in space. In December, we will be exercising our critical thinking skills to determine the trustworthiness of websites. Finally, we will conclude 2013 with the Barbash River Bridge Building Challenge! Don't forget to monitor grades through the Home Access Portal, and keep an eye on the Syllabus to know when tests and projects are coming up.

Team Syracuse



Greetings Syracuse Families! We are so enjoying getting to know your children and we look forward to seeing many of you at parent conferences on November 12 and 13, so please make sure to get your date to join us! Also, check out our website, easily located through the Illing Web page, and view our new 'team pet', "Fluffy." On the academic side of Syracuse life, in science, students will be wrapping up laws of motion and heading "out of this world" as they study gravity.

In math, we are finishing the study of the Pythagorean Theorem and moving in to the linear relationship unit. In social studies we will be closing out our unit on the colonies and beginning our pre-revolution studies. In language arts, we are currently immersed in the study of poetry and figurative language, and we have done some amazing work with alliteration, assonance, and rhyme scheme. We are currently plowing through similes and metaphors.

In December, we will begin reading and assimilating information from non-fiction sources. As always, homework club runs every Tuesday and Thursday, weather permitting. All teachers are available after or before school by prior arrangement with the teacher. We are all readily accessible by email or by telephone at the Illing main number, and we do enjoy hearing from you!

Team Cornell



Mrs. Gohla's language arts classes have moved on to Unit two in the Common Core, which is craft and structure. Students are reviewing figurative language (simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole, assonance, onomatopoeia and alliteration). There will be a focus on imagery and why authors choose to write the way they do-- in order to appeal to the senses. After reviewing figurative language, students will apply their knowledge in order to find different types of figurative language and imagery within a variety of texts such as short stories and poems. We will spend some time studying poetry, structure and rhyme scheme. Finally, we will read Bronx Masquerade by Nikki Grimes as a whole class. This is a novel set in a high school in the Bronx, New York and it is told through a combination of poetry and prose. Eighteen teenagers begin an open mic Friday and in turn learn more about who their classmates are on the inside instead of merely judging them from the outside. It is a wonderful novel that students will be able to connect with and enjoy!

All students are to read a minimum of 20 minutes per night in their independent reading book and fill out their book mark as daily homework. Please make sure to sign their book marks on Thursdays and review their planners so you can see what we are working on in class!

Mr. Bebyn's Social Studies classes have been studying the founding of the thirteen English colonies. We are now looking at the growth and development of the southern colonies and comparing the reasons they were founded and how they adapted to this new region. Students are still learning of new reading strategies in order to comprehend the material presented in their text books and from outside sources. We have also been having weekly quizzes on their states and capitals as a way of reacquainting themselves with their country!! Please remember to check the website for updates from all your stu8dents teachers!!!!

Team Cornell's Math Corner-(Mr. Gray) Greetings Readers. We have concluded the unit of exponents entailing scientific notation and integers. For the past few weeks we have been focused on exploring the Pythagorean Theorem. Upon its completion, it's envisioned that our scholars will know how to apply the Pythagorean Theorem in various instances of the real world. At the same time, we will continue to review and extend the knowledge of order of operations, computing integers and solving linear equations. As suggested in the beginning of the school year, each student is urged to become acquainted with helpful resources available beyond

the class' duration. They are: homework club, websites such as Khan Academy and Coolmath and, of course, my assistance when available. It is important that your student know that obtaining help does not require hourly sessions to strengthen or exercise math competence. The employment of daily visits, ranging from 15 - 20 minutes, to either or a combination of the areas mentioned would prove substantially beneficial to one's academic development. Thank you for your time. Treasure the good in your day.

Science Rules!! We've participated in lots of activities that demonstrate principles of physics. We have begun to post pictures on the Cornell website (go to the Illing Homepage; click on Teams; click on Cornell; at the bottom of the page, click on Website). The Science Website has several pages. The pictures are being loaded on "While you were here."

Students will be doing out of school projects on the laws of motion and we will continue to have interactive labs. Students will share the assignments with you and due dates for projects, as a signature is required as a homework assignment. Students will have an opportunity to impress me with what they choose!

All assignments (and sometimes the actual papers) are posted under Science Homework on the Cornell Website. If you have any questions or I can assist in any way (students and parents/guardians), please contact me (vschn@manchesterct.gov)

We work hard to help your student succeed!!!! Ginny Schneider Cornell Science Teacher

Team Uconn



Washington D.C. payments are in, and remember to contact a member of the team if money will be an issue for this trip. Remember, we want all of our kids to have the opportunity to go if they want to be there.

Mr. Kienle's classes have wrapped up their short story unit and have just completed their Poe news broadcast projects. They were amazing. We are trying to see if we can get recordings on the school website. Keep an eye out for that. In the coming weeks, we will be reviewing literature terms and applying them to examples we read in class

During November and December, Ms. Nunez's Science classes will be studying two units: Earth & Space and Bridges & Trusses. We will focus on how the position of the Earth in the solar system affects conditions here on our

planet. We will learn how this makes and dictates the tides and seasons we experience. We also will learn what orbital velocity is and what determines it. When we study Bridges and Trusses we will be exploring how science and technology affect the quality of our lives. We will get to build truss structures to test for their ability to withstand three forces of tension, compression, and torsion.

A reminder to Ms. Cocola's classes to make sure you are getting you figurative language in poems as well as music as part of our poetry unit. Soon we will be working on creating our own poetry portfolios in addition to analyzing poetry. Students are currently working hard on identifying alliteration and assonance as well as creating our own examples. Our next unit will focus on finding the main idea in non-fiction and fiction texts.

Social Studies classes for Team UCONN continue their exploration of the early American colonies. As October comes to a close, students will be exploring the historical significance of the Salem Witch Trials. Through November, students will study the earliest forms of American government, the rise of trade in the American colonies, the numerous conflicts that erupted on the American continent, as well as the roots and causes of the American Revolution. We will explore the causes, tragedies, and lasting effects of the slave trade on the formation of the United States. All these events and happenings will help fill the powder keg toward the American Revolution.

All math classes have settled in and we are off to a great start! The routine has been established and students are aware of what is expected in math. Please encourage your student to be prepared for class (i.e. bring a pencil and notebook to class, have homework completed, and be ready to learn!). Connected Math is currently studying the Pythagorean Theorem. We will be discovering this formula and applying it to real world problems. Algebra class has just finished our first unit test is beginning to study inequalities. The Common Core Curriculum is rigorous. Should your student have difficulty with any of the concepts, please encourage them to stay for extra help. I am available before school or after school most days of the week. I can be contacted by email for any concerns you may have, as well.

Art Department

We have just finished our first quarter and because of the new schedule this year at Illing, we now have 45 days to work with our students - an improvement from the 30 days we had the past several years.

Eighth grade students are learning things about careers in the real world and making connections with how proactive methods and techniques could aid them in future careers. Students experience the joys of working with perspective, drawing, painting, printmaking, ceramics and the elements of design as well. Card design, illustration, textile design, graphic design, utilitarian ceramic creations and much more continue to be highlighted in the curriculum.

Seventh grade students will be focusing on the art and culture of Asia and Africa. Students will experience making connections with several cultures and creating projects that are influenced by of these same cultures. Learning new techniques and working with the elements of design will assist them in a successful art experience. Mr. Lafontaine and Mr. Atkins will complete the students global art travels with images and posters of places and art of these cultures.

Mr. Atkins is now offering Art Club on Tuesday afternoons from 3:00 – 4:00pm. He encourages students to discover their creative side as a participant in this activity.

Keep an eye on our annual Student Art Show. Mr. Lafontaine and Mr. Atkins are saving student art pieces throughout the year for display at the show. This exciting event will take place in the final weeks of the school year to give us the opportunity to squeeze all the creativity we can from our students. Please be patient with us if we retain your child's work. All art work will be returned after the art show.

Enrichment Program

Hello Enrichment parents!

Our classes are moving along very well. We're making our way through the novel *Nobody's Secret* and our students are coming up with really intriguing theories about the suspects and the motives for the murder in the book!

Here is an update on other information concerning our fall/winter project:

- The Fall/Winter Project Handbook is here! The Handbook has been uploaded to the Illing website in a PDF for you to look through. If you have trouble finding the Enrichment tab-no worries! The district website has been redesigned and, along with that, the Enrichment tab is being updated. So if the Handbook is missing from the Illing site- keep coming back! It will return soon- when the Enrichment tab is updated by our media gurus!
- Michaela MacColl, author of *Nobody's Secret*, the book our project is based on, is coming to Illing on November 21st! Our students will get to watch her large group presentation and the enthusiastic writers in our program will have a chance to work with her in a Writer's Workshop. We will also have an Illing Night at Barnes and Noble where Michaela will sign copies of her books!
- The dates for the Enrichment showcases are almost set- I will have them put on the website as soon as they are confirmed. Early January will be when the Fall/Winter Project showcase will come together. More TBA!!
- Author/poet/performer Allan Wolf is coming back to Illing! Students will have a chance to work with

him this year again on January 16th. More information about his visit will be posted on the website soon!

I'm very excited about our students' project ideas. I think you'll be very impressed!

Family and Consumer Science

Our 7th and 8th graders are both learning about the value of good nutrition. Nutrition is an important part of everyone's health. The new focus of the US Department of Agriculture "Choose My Plate" is on fruits and vegetables. Choose My Plate illustrates the five food groups that are the building blocks for a healthy diet is using a familiar image—a place setting for a meal, with half of the servings fruits and/or vegetables. Here are some tips for healthy eating:

- Grains are things like rice, wheat, pasta and cereal. Try to have half of those 6 ounces whole grains like oatmeal, whole wheat bread, and brown rice
- Eat a variety of vegetables every day. A big salad is an easy way to do this. Think of color: Dark green leafy vegetables, orange sweet potato, red pepper, yellow corn, purple eggplant...
- Try to eat fruit that is "as close to nature as possible." Limit fruit juices as they tend to be a concentrated form of sugar (no 'added' sugar, but sugar nonetheless).
- Use healthy oils like olive oil, canola oil and fish oil
- Choose lean dairy products like low fat milk and yogurt. Limit fattier dairy products like sour cream and ice cream. Adults should have 3 glasses of milk every day; kids under 19 are better off with 4!
- Choose lean meat like chicken, lean beef and pork. If you're not a meat eater stock up beans. Beans are a wonderful low-fat, high-fiber source of protein.

For more information, including recipes, visit:
<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/>

Meanwhile, try this easy recipe to get more veggies in your diet. Our students loved it! It's quick and easy because it uses frozen veggies. Who said kids don't like vegetables?

PASTA PRIMAVERA **8th grade lab**

- 1 ½ c. **Cooked** Pasta such as Penne, shells or elbow macaroni
- 2-3 T Olive Oil
- 1 c Mixed, frozen vegetables such as broccoli, cauliflower & carrots
- ½ t Basil
- 1 t Garlic
- 1 T Parmesan Cheese

If necessary, run cooked pasta under cool water to remove stickiness. Drain, place in medium serving bowl and set aside. Cut vegetables into bit size pieces.

In a medium pan, add oil and heat to medium-high heat. **Sauté** the frozen vegetables with basil and garlic until tender and remove from heat. Add vegetables to pasta and top with Parmesan cheese until coated and serve.

Music Department

This is a reminder that our December Choir Concert will be on **Thursday, December 12th** at Manchester High School in the Auditorium, beginning at 7:00 p.m. The concert will include the Seventh Grade Choir, Eighth Grade Choir, Girls' Choir, Boys' Choir, Illing Singers, and Community Choir.

There will also be a field trip performance on December 13th for Girls'/Boys'/Illing Singers at the Wadsworth Atheneum.

The Community Choir will have an upcoming performance at the Elms Mansion!! (Date TBA)

Calendars will be distributed to students in those groups. A reminder to all students that concert dress for those events is: Boys – black pants and white button down shirt. Girls – black pants/skirt and white blouse/sweater.

Please let me know if you have any questions about these upcoming events. (More news to follow regarding the March performance of students at the pregame show and God Bless America, at the Wolfpack game!!!) Tickets will be available!

Fundraiser booklets are due back by November 1. The items should be received by mid December!!

Be on the lookout for the new MUSIC WEB PAGE link on the Illing Website!! (Thanks to Mr. Rip and Ms. Zappulla!!!) Exciting news, dates and info will be included!!!

Cheryl Hilton
Illing Choirs

Hello String Families!!

I am already enjoying all of the hard work your orchestra students are putting in so far this year! This is a reminder that your child's Orchestra grade is posted weekly. Any missing work is highlighted and available at any time for your student to pick up and turn in for late credit. *New for second Quarter* – Through your home access to your child's grade book, you will be able to download electronic copies of any homework that your child is missing. They will be linked to the assignments in a PDF format. If you have any questions, please let me know.

The Manchester Orchestra Parents Organization has begun for the 2013-14 school year. We are working on opportunities to bring here to Manchester. If you would like to get involved, please let me know and I will get you meeting information. Thank you.

Don't forget our Concert Dates! **Wednesday, December 11th, 2013** at 7:00 p.m. in the Manchester High School Auditorium is our first concert of the year! If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me. I look forward to seeing you all at the concert.

Mrs. Sica-Leonard

Physical Education

Winter is approaching and the temperature is falling. A reminder that when being active outside to dress warm and in layers.

Fitness testing is wrapping up and student performance and effort has been outstanding! Let's finish strong!

Some ideas for being active during the colder months are to going skiing or snowboarding, sledding, ice-skating, snowshoeing, or cross country skiing. You could even help out around the house by raking leaves and shoveling snow to be active!

Science Club



Science RULES!!! So far, meetings on Thursdays after school, we have created rainbows in test tubes (density/viscosity lab).



We've created paper airplanes, tested and raced the control; made "better" ones, and raced them. **Eve Hernandez** was the winner at 10.3 meters! Students explored neuroscienceforkids.org to test memory by using the website experiments.

We had a special guest, Mr. Schardt, help with squid



dissection.

Activities vary throughout the year. Students are always WELCOME to join. Some activities require a sign up by Wednesday (there are announcements) due to the amount of preparation and cleanup. If you are interested, please contact Ginny Schneider, Team Cornell Science Teacher and Advisor for more information. Use the Iling Homepage or Email b21vschn@manchesterct.gov or call the school 860-647-3400.

Members of the Iling community can try out for the Iling School Science Bowl Team (Check out the national website <http://science.energy.gov/wdts/nsb/middle-school/>). The competition is February 22 at University of Connecticut. A good candidate knows lots of science trivia and loves math!!! Contact Mrs. Schneider b21vschn@manchesterct.gov or leave a message on the school phone. SCIENCE RULES!!!!

Tech Ed

Technology Education is a study of technology, in which students "learn about the processes and knowledge related to technology" in a hands-on approach.

As a study, it covers the human ability to shape and change the physical world to meet needs, by manipulating materials and tools with specific techniques.

We will instruct all students in the areas of Communication, Construction and Transportation in this fun, hands-on approach to education. We have much to teach you, so let's learn by doing.

We are looking forward to all our new students in each of the four quarters.

Class Trip

8th Grade Class Trip to Washington, DC

Our first two payments are in and before we know it, the cold days will pass and we will be getting ready for our trip.

We want to remind those attending the trip that students will need one blue and one green uniform shirt for this trip.

As a reminder the following is the payment schedule for this year's trip:

Initial Deposit	\$125.00	September 30, 2013
Second Payment	\$120.00	October 28, 2013
Third Payment	\$120.00	November 25, 2013
Fourth Payment	\$110.00	January 15, 2014
Final Payment`	\$110.00	February 19, 2014

This year, in addition to the Iling Website, we have a new way for you to keep updated on upcoming events and due dates - our Text Message reminder system! To sign up, text number 475-529-2263 with the message @beaf5. You will receive a message about what to do next so that you can be a member of the text message blasts that we will periodically send out.

Our next fundraiser will be held at Red Robin on November 20, 2013. Come join us for some good burgers and great fun!! ☺

We still have a few boxes of candy left, If you are interested in helping us out by selling a box of candy, please contact us at Iling.

If your son or daughter is interested in attending the trip but has not yet turned in their paperwork, please have them speak to their social studies teacher or team leader. We still have spaces and we would love to take them with us.

Please feel free to contact the trip coordinators if you have any questions at 647-3400.

Mr. Bebyn - b21dbeby@manchesterct.gov

Mrs. Francoeur - b21sfran@manchesterct.gov

MANCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Manchester Public Schools is committed to a policy of equal opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons. Manchester Public Schools does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of race, color, religious creed, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability (including, but not limited to, intellectual disability, past or present history of mental disorder, physical disability or learning disability), genetic information, or any other basis prohibited by Connecticut state and/or federal nondiscrimination laws. Manchester Public Schools does not unlawfully discriminate in employment and licensing against qualified persons with a prior criminal conviction. Inquiries regarding Manchester Public School's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to:

Terri Smith, Human Resources Specialist/Title IX
Coordinator

Manchester Public Schools
45 North School Street
Manchester, CT 06042
860-647-3595

Shelly Matfess, Assistant Superintendent for Pupil
Personnel Services
Section 504 Co-Coordinator
Manchester Public Schools
45 North School Street

Manchester, CT 06042
860-647-3452

or
Suzanne Valade, Coordinator of School Health
Services

Section 504 Co-Coordinator
Manchester Public Schools
45 North School Street
Manchester, CT 06042
860-647-3324

Word's from Welch cont'd...

I want to take a moment and share with you our *STARS* program and one of the tenets of this program: **RESPECT**...

A Respect for Respect

RESPECT is the word associated with the *R* in our *STARS*' program at Illing Middle School. It is an easy word to utter and sometimes too easy to ignore or forget. However, it represents one of the most potent and meaningful concepts in our society and certainly in our school. **RESPECT** means showing regard and appreciation for the worth of someone or something. It means honor and esteem. It includes respect for self, respect for the rights and dignity of all persons, and respect for the environment that sustains life. *Respect keeps us from hurting what we ought to value.*

Why is *respect* important? Much of the universal values that contribute to the good of the individual and society and affirm our human dignity are derived from the value of respect and the value of responsibility. We need to collaborate and to have a peaceful world. Ralph Waldo Emerson once wrote, "Make the most of yourself, for that is all there is of you." Indeed, self-respect is vital to our well-being. However, giving respect to others means receiving respect in kind. I believe that respect is one of the most powerful concepts we can teach kids. It should be a way of life, not just a social moray or idea. Students with respect:

- ✓ Listen;
- ✓ Keep unkind thoughts to themselves;
- ✓ Speak kindly to teachers and others;
- ✓ Play fairly and wait their turn;
- ✓ Raise their hands before talking;
- ✓ Say "please" and "thank you;"
- ✓ Clean up after themselves;
- ✓ Share.

Let's talk to one another about respect with regard to how it is a way of life and even how we view one another. Like some of the great heroes in our world" Abraham Lincoln respected his enemies and modeled understanding, forgiveness, and kindness. He was committed to restoring the union and freeing the slaves. Golda Meir served as Israel's prime minister and worked to secure peace agreements with the Arab nations. We too can follow their leads and practice respect as a daily, moment to moment habit. We are Illing Middle School and need to always demonstrate respect for one another the *Illing* way!

Parent Conferences

Parent conference time is quickly approaching (**November 12, 13**) and teachers and parents alike must begin their preparations. In order to have a successful conference, we need to work together to share information, answer questions, and develop goals. Ultimately, your attendance will make a difference in your child's education.

Parents may effectively prepare for conferences by doing two things. First, discuss school and general concerns with your child. Second, make a list of questions and comments to discuss with the teacher.

Remember, a conference is held for the parents and teacher to communicate with each other concerning the progress and needs of the child. Parent input provides a vital ingredient to a successful conference. My best wishes for a positive and rewarding conference!

Doughnuts for Dads with Dave in December

Friday, December 13th, 2013 is designated as a morning for our students' dads/male guardians and the Illing Middle School Principal to have some breakfast and chat a bit. In its second year, this initiative is a time for the *good ol' guys to gather and gab*. Principal Welch invites his Illing Middle School dads to the Teacher Cafeteria at 7:15 a.m. with an agenda that merely asks fathers, "whatdya think?" and "whattup?" Come on dads and have a doughnut on Dave!

Quarter System Begins

For the purpose of enhanced communication and academic reporting and to be more in sync with secondary school education, Illing Middle School is now following a quarter grade reporting system rather than a trimester process which was the past practice. This will allow students to self-monitor their progress more often and help teachers and parents better assess student progress throughout the year.

Connecticut Common Core State Standards

Building on the excellent foundation of standards states have laid, the Common Core State Standards are the first step in providing our young people with a high-quality education. It should be clear to every student, parent, and teacher what the standards of success are in every school. Teachers, parents and community leaders have all weighed in to help create the Common Core State Standards. The standards clearly communicate what is expected of students at each grade level. This will allow our teachers to be better equipped to know exactly what they need to help students learn and establish individualized benchmarks for them. *The Common Core State Standards focus on core conceptual understandings and procedures starting in the early grades, thus enabling teachers to take the time needed to teach core concepts and procedures well—and to give students the opportunity to master them.* With students, parents and teachers all on the same page and working together for shared goals, we can ensure that students make progress each year and graduate from school prepared to succeed in college and in a modern workforce.

In an Effort to Limit Paper Use and Save Money...

Illing Middle School will post our parent newsletters on our website each month along with being sent electronically (via an attachment) in the School Messenger program. Parents, please be sure to be on our emailing for the district's School Messenger notices. For assistance, you may contact Ms. Sabrina Cody, our Illing Middle School Registrar in the counseling office.

S.T.A.R.S. Award Winners

Congratulations to the following students who received a **STARS Award** at Illing Middle School: Tony Rodriguez, Yankarlos Diaz, Mauela Arias, Kaitlyn Newport, Sara Guzzi, Maya Penna-Scheer, Savannah Vandenneuvel, Sophie Snow, Ethan Cox, Bryan Gleba, Juan Narvaez, Madison Gardner, Cashree Wilson, Shelianie Robles, Martinez Bonilla, Kyle Maloney, Amber Donovan, Janel Figueroa, Niya Brown, Josue Ocasio and Conor Williamson. We are proud of our kids who make a conscious effort to *Reach for the STARS* at Illing Middle School!

Student of the Month



Central	Myan Ly
Dartmouth	Erika Moore
Tufts	Kaitlyn Newport
URI	Hailey Rodgers
Yale	Cassie Shimkowitz
Cornell	Justin Guerrero
Princeton	Patrick Gordon
Syracuse	Taylor Keyt
UConn	Austin Martin

Some Facts About Our Kids

Ages 10-14

- **Early adolescence is a time of great changes.**
- **Physically, the students with whom we are working with may grow 5 to 6 inches and put on 20 pounds over their three years at Bennet and Illing.**
- **Their noses grow faster than the rest of their faces and they always feel self-conscious about the way they look.**
- **If you ask them what they want more than anything else, 75% would say a new hairdo.**
- **They seem obsessed with their hair because it is the only physical feature they have some control over.**
- **Most of them are having an identity crisis; about 50% of them would rather be someone else other than who they are.**
- **They are social. Friends are the most important thing to them and unfortunately for use, they seek more approval from them than from the adults in their lives.**
- **They sway back and forth between being dependent and independent. This can start to cause conflicts at home and in school.**

- They are moody and emotional. They will probably need to talk about how they feel.
- “Imaginary Audience” is a characteristic associated with this age group. They believe that everyone sees everything they do. If they drop a pencil in the hall, they will report to you that 500 people witnessed it and 98 laughed at them. They mean it – that is the way they feel.
- “Personal fable” is another characteristic. They believe their life experiences are so unique that on one could possibly understand what they are going through. It does not matter to them that you were once an early adolescent. They think that you just do not get it.

Special Parent Events at Illing Middle School

Attention, Illing Parents! Please mark your calendars. Illing Middle School administration is looking to reach out to our parent community. Several events are planned for you to attend and enjoy. Please see below:

Topic/Activity	Date	Time	Location
<i>Doughnuts for Dads w/ Dave in December</i>	Friday, December 13, 2013	7:15 a.m.	TBA
<i>March Madness: Family Fun Night</i>	Wednesday, March 26, 2014	7:00 p.m.	Kelley Gym
<i>Muffins for Moms on a Monday in May</i>	Monday, May 12, 2014	7:15 a.m.	TBA

Parents of Students Riding a Bus to Illing Middle School...Please review these bus rules with your child as highlighted in both the parent and student handbooks...

Bus Safety Guidelines



BUS BEHAVIOR RULES

Riding the bus to school is a privilege, and in order to ensure safety for all children and drivers, the guidelines (below) must be observed.

Please review this bus plan carefully, and discuss the importance of appropriate behavior on the bus with your child. Children not observing these safety guidelines may lose their bus privileges.

CHILDREN RIDING THE BUS WILL:

- Speak politely to the bus driver at all times.
- Find the next available seat.
- Remain seated for the entire time on the bus, keeping their feet out of the aisles.
- Keep all personal belongings inside their backpacks. Musical instruments and backpacks should be kept on their laps or stored under the seats.
- Refrain from shouting to other children on the bus.
- Refrain from eating or drinking on the bus.
- Tell the bus driver or the teacher if there is a problem on the bus.

S.T.A.R.S. Program

(Scholar, Truthful, Aware, Respectful, Safe)



What are *STARS* made of at Illing Middle School?

As a SCHOLAR you are always:

- ✓ Prepared for class
- ✓ On task and working your hardest
- ✓ Following directions of an adult

As a TRUTHFUL person you are always:

- ✓ Practicing honesty
- ✓ Respecting the possessions of others

As an AWARE person you are always:

- ✓ Using an indoor voice
- ✓ Using kind and caring words
- ✓ Interacting with others in a caring manner
- ✓ Keeping your hands, feet, and objects to yourself

As a RESPECTFUL person you are always:

- ✓ Responding appropriately to all adults
- ✓ Making good decisions when responding to adults and one another
- ✓ Treating all property with respect
- ✓ Using appropriate language

As a SAFE person you are always:

- ✓ Behaving appropriately in the lavatory
- ✓ Walking quietly in the halls
- ✓ Following the bus rules at all times
- ✓ Following all the posted rules for inside and outside of the building

