



Foreword

by Principal Sharon Seyller

I am pleased to share with you the first newsletter edition of the school year. "Teaching and Learning Matters" is a comprehensive and informative collection of articles from each team and department. As you read along, you will notice the following themes throughout: STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts (Humanities), and Math) PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention Supports), and personalized learning. Our staff is committed to providing an outstanding learning experience for all students through high expectations, student engagement and developing strong relationships.

Happy reading!

Sharon Seyller
Principal
Fuller Middle School



▶ ONCE ON THIS ISLAND
JANUARY 22, 23 & 24TH @ 7:00
PM

○ VOLUME1 | ○ Fall 2014



▶ SCHOOL-WIDE PBIS?
SKILL BUILDING APPROACH TO
STRENGTHEN REPERTOIRE OF
SOCIAL SKILLS.....



▶ GROWTH MINDSET:
THE IMPACT ON STUDENT
LEARNING.....

FULLER

Where Teaching and Learning Matters

At Fuller Middle School, every student is supported, challenged and encouraged to reach his/her full potential. By following our core values of RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY and RESULTS, our staff and students create a learning environment that prepares for success in school and in life.

Helping you achieve your academic goals

Greetings Fuller community! As most of you know, this is my first year here at Fuller, and it has been a great experience getting to know so many new people here in Framingham. Having lived and worked across many cultures, including the U.K, Nigeria, Michigan, Ecuador and Massachusetts, it is always reassuring for me to see that whilst the scenery, languages and customs may change across the globe, the basic needs of children remain the same. They want to feel safe, to be part of a community, and to find direction in life. At first, it might seem that our primary focus is to provide a rigorous academic curriculum to prepare children for high school. We aspire to that, but it is not our sole focus. We aspire also to help children make what can be a difficult transition from a young child to an early adolescent. Social and

personal development is as important as any math equation, reading skill or discovery of artistic skill. Here at Fuller, we strive to provide excellence in academics within a culture that supports the needs of all children as they grow and develop.

I have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know the children – whether it is watching them study in class, dance at the Freaky Friday Night social, socialize in the cafeteria, and participate in after-school clubs and even those who struggle with our behavior expectations. *Despite all of our differences, we are a community.*



It is my belief that we will thrive by supporting each other through our challenges, and creating a school where every student believes that they have something to learn from and contribute to others around them.

Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have about life at Fuller.
–Mike Stevens



Respect

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Responsibility

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Results

School-wide PBIS?

PBIS is a skill-building approach that will strengthen the repertoire of social skills for any student. Educators who work in schools that implement PBIS report a high level of satisfaction with the approach, citing the positive effects of getting on the “same page” with their colleagues, improved school climate, and increased time for instruction. Another benefit is that fewer students engage in disruptive behaviors when universal best practices are implemented, and the specialized strategies implemented for those students will likely be more effective when implemented within the context of school-wide PBIS. Finally, students become effective models for each other and a culture of respect, order, and safety becomes more pervasive. –Michigan Dept. of Education

STEAM

Science //Technology//Engineering//Arts//& Math

Lime.com and Opal United –

First our first *STEAM* project, students will be studying topics covered within the Weathering Unit in their science class. Students had the opportunity to meet with our science coach, Emily Calderwood from ACS (American Chemistry Society). Ms. Calderwood helped to further the students understanding of the Weathering Unit by introducing Opal United students to the pH scale and explaining how acids and bases are identified in the lab. As Opal United's Beach Erosion *STEAM* project, which is part of the Weathering Unit, winds down in science class the students will continue to explore the topic further in their language arts and math classes. In students' language arts classes, they will be using Chromebooks to create interview questions to ask a local beach erosion expert, Mike Morse.

Mike will be speaking to students about his work trying to stop the erosion of the beaches on Plum Island.

Along with the beach erosion prevention experiment and lab report, every student in sixth grade did a project on a landform or a type of mass movement. Some students had the same landform or mass movement assignment, but they had a totally different way of showing it in their model. Some of the landforms were desert pavement, sand dunes, loess deposits, and blowouts. We looked at everyone's landform or mass movement model in the science lab, and we wrote down if it was caused by erosion, deposition or mass movement. The kids said, "It was a good experience to learn about landforms and their structure."

One student said, "It was fun to work on the project that we were assigned." Also, they said, "Doing the project was cool because we discovered what we could do on our own and not with a group."

On the *Geology field trip* we looked at evidence of various geologic processes at Fuller, McCarthy, Merriam Woods, and Learned's Pond. At Fuller, we saw grass in the cracks of the sidewalk. This is evidence of mechanical weathering because the growth of grass is breaking the rocks apart physically. It is chemical weathering because the plant roots produce weak acids that can chemically weather rock. We also saw rust on the granite curbstone at Fuller.

This is called oxidation and the rock must have iron in it for it to occur. At McCarthy, we saw animal burrows in rock and sediment. This is mechanical weathering because the animals broke the rock physically and not with chemical reactions. When we got to Learned's Pond, we saw a gully, rills, and a delta, which are three landforms created by running water. Rills and gullies are both created by erosion because sediment is moved away to create them. Gullies are bigger version of rills. Deltas are created by deposition because they are made of sediment that has been deposited in a new location.

- **Article written by Paige Garland, Annabel Mendum, & Sarah Olson**

Titanium Tangerine and Platinum Inspiration will be combining for the first *STEAM* project of the school year. Students and teachers from both teams will be working alongside each other to solve the problem of how people from all over the world can get access to safe drinking water. We are looking forward to tackling this important issue together as a grade level.

Language Arts

We have finished our mythology unit. Students wrote original myths based on a natural phenomenon of their choice. They have learned many valuable skills that will be carried on throughout the year to challenge themselves as readers and writers.

The focus in **Math** class is group collaboration through group challenges. The challenges hold all members of the group accountable and allow them to collaborate and discuss to answer their own questions without relying on the teacher for immediate support. Students work together to solve not only math problems, but to figure out the best way to work in a group to get all work completed. In addition, students are working collaboratively in interest groups in **Social Studies** to solve the problem of how to best use the land and natural resources of the Amazon Rainforest.

Students in **Guided Academics** have been practicing their everyday math skills and learning how to overcome the challenges of the curriculum. Students are making connections between what they read in school and in their daily lives.

Mr. Santiago's **ELD 3 class** was introduced to the concept of *STEAM* by completing a project in which they conducted observations and research on the 5 Themes of Geography in real life, including practicing drawing maps to scale. They compiled their work into a Google Slides presentation using Chromebooks and presented their work to the class. **Titanium Tangerine** students have been working diligently in all their classes to challenge themselves as learners.

They are exploring new ideas in all areas of the curriculum. Using growth mindset as a guide, students have been learning how to persevere through new and exciting curriculum. Students will be diving into their scores from the MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) assessment that they took this fall. In individual conferences, students will work with their team teachers to discuss their strengths, areas of opportunity, and develop goals that will help each student progress in all of their academic areas. As teachers, we are truly excited to have students be engaged in the goal setting process, as we know this will help everyone grow this year, and is an essential skill for our 7th graders to develop for future success!

In **ELA class**, the Green Designers are currently working on the Hope Endures unit. The team had the privilege of hearing Rena Finder, a Schindler's list survivor. The students were captivated by Rena's story of survival and perseverance. Rena's visit has motivated the Green Designers to delve deeper into the details surrounding the Holocaust, and create excitement around the book we will be reading, Night.

In **Math class**, the Designers are working on a unit on exponents and rational numbers as well as solving complex linear equations. Students have been participating math in the IXL math program and have already completed 20 hours of math problems since November 1st!


The effort level in collaborative group work has never been higher than it is now in class. Students are becoming fluent in 'math language' and using it to communicate to their peers to help each other solve higher level thinking math problems.

In **Social Studies**, The Green Designers are very interested and involved in the study of the 5 major world religions. We have completed our study of the history Judaism and Christianity and are about to begin our study of Islam. The students have been engaged in many high level thinking, speaking, reading and writing activities and we are working towards answering the essential question: "What do the 5

major world religions have in common?"

In **Science class**, The Designers are studying a unit on density. Students recently completed a lab that showed no matter how the mass and volume change at the same rate; the density will remain the same. Students have also completed a metric system unit and are using the metric system to find the mass and volume to calculate density.

How IS FULLER Implementing PBIS?



- Establish a representative school-wide PBIS team to guide & direct the process.
- Garner at least 80% buy-in from staff to consistently support and implement PBIS practices
- Examine current policies and practices around student behavior
- Develop an Implementation Action Plan to present information to students and staff

GREEN DESIGNERS: *Hope Endures*

Students are now in the second phase of the project: they are creating their own websites, the objective of which is to teach others their topic of expertise.

Full-“er” Steam Ahead

Integrated Algebra students are using the weebly website, created by Mrs. Cogliandro, as a springboard for study of the laws of exponents and scientific notation. With the invaluable support of Mrs. Quirarte Perez and Mr. Zindars, students are now in the second phase of the project: they are creating their own websites, the objective of which is to teach others their topic of expertise. Criteria for the student-created websites include: blog entries, in which students share their reflections on the experience of creating a website; original student work that illustrates their topic of study; a student-created, instructional video and/or audio; and website design.

The student website design goals include: development of easily navigable pages that use a variety of graphics and fonts, understanding layout and use of white space, and collaborating with website team members to create sound instructional content.

Social Studies

Students are in the midst of the World Religions unit. Their studies began with Judaism and they have now moved into Christianity. Eventually the path will take them through Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism. By studying the major world religions, the students will be able to explain the history and development of each and understand the common ground that exists among these religions and hopefully think of ways people can come together and encourage religious tolerance in a diverse world.

Science Class

Students worked very hard on the measurement unit. The metric system was explored in depth. The culmination of the labs was the production of our very own rainbow. The students used the graduated cylinder to make exact measurements and from the basic colors they produced the results shown in picture below.

Language Arts

Students have finished a short stories unit and begun a study of the Holocaust. The central text for this unit is Elie Wiesel's memoir, *Night*. Prior to reading *Night*, students will analyze various primary text documents, such as the Nuremberg Laws, to help them understand the conditions that allowed the Nazis to gain power

and murder millions throughout Europe. Throughout the unit we will examine people's choices to become either bystanders or upstanders and how those individual choices affected a larger community. Students were fortunate to meet Holocaust survivor, Rena Finder, and to hear her account of how one man, Oskar Schindler, made the choice to become an upstander. Schindler's choices on behalf of the Jewish people are credited with saving not only Rena and her mother, but also a thousand of his employees.





Don't be caught off guard-stay in the know



Once on this Island

January 22, 23 & 24 at 7pm.

“Non-stop song and dance, full-hearted Musical.”



handbooks, a story quilt and storyboards. They shared stories about their cultures and their families.

As we move into the next unit they will learn how to express themselves using Non-Verbal Communication, how to share their thoughts and ideas without words. Also a review of dramatic structure and how to create a well-made story.

“What? So What? Now What?”

These are the questions we

answer at the end of every class, either verbally or through writing in their Drama Journals. “What?” What did we do? “So What?” Why did we do it? And “Now What?” How can we use what we learned?

Using these questions as a way to reflect is a very important part of our class. The students are learning valuable skills in drama class that can be used outside of the Drama classroom every day.

- Make up Picture Day – Dec 2.*
- Afternoon Social – Dec 12.*
- Winter Art Show & Concert – Jan 14.*

The 7th and 8th grade Drama classes have been busy learning about the exciting world of Drama. The year began with Theater Etiquette and Storytelling. The students created posters,



Two key topics covered in health class are *positive self-esteem* and *body image*. These are important topics for this age group because how one feels about himself or herself has a major impact on a student's mental health, and day to day behavior. When people are more positive about their self-esteem and body image they tend to be more successful in school and life, they feel more in control of themselves

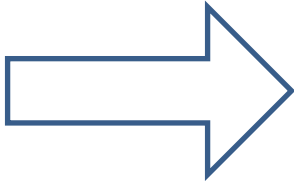
One way the 7th grade students' work on promoting positive body image and self-esteem is through designing jeans. Students create (on a poster) a pair of jeans that would help them to feel good about themselves physically and mentally. They explain how jeans/clothing has an impact on one's attitude and how others may perceive them. Students learn how through simple media techniques their attitudes about themselves and others can be impacted.

The tenth administration of the MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey was successfully administered November 6 to all three grades. Thanks to all who participated.

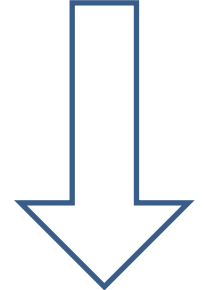
In the gymnasium, physical education students will be practicing their fitness testing as well as doing archery. Students will be taught the parts of a bow and arrow as well as range commands and how to calculate their scoring. Students will try to advance through different levels of scoring which also moves their targets further away. It is great for hand-eye coordination and students are having fun each day trying to hit their target!



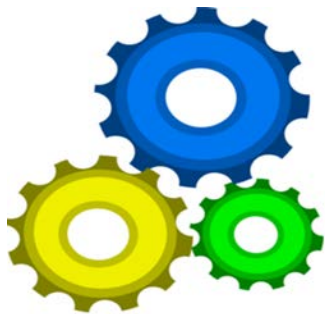
Effective Dec 1st. any cold or hot temperature days, Students are encouraged to enter in the building using door 1 & 2 and wait in the lobby area until school begins.



6th grade, we just finished testing materials for properties such as ductility, flexibility, hardness, thermal conductivity, and strength. We are now about to begin using those properties to design bridges. These bridges will span the landforms they are currently learning about in science and social studies.



7th grade, we are deep into our unit on transportation. Students tested ways to keep an egg safe in a vehicle that was bound to crash. Students did an egg-cellent job at this! We have also tested boats to discover why some objects float while others sink.



8th graders just finished researching advanced manufacturing processes that happen here in Massachusetts. They were able to choose from an extensive list of products which are made right here in our commonwealth, then had a week to learn more about how they are made. The project culminated in making a video explaining the process.

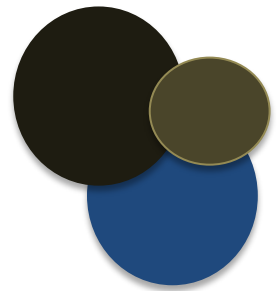


The Interact Club, sponsored by the Framingham Rotary Club. The Rotary Club and the Interact clubs at Framingham High and Fuller Middle held fundraisers so Brian a student from El Salvador could travel to the United States for heart surgery. The clubs had a goal of raising \$1,500. Brian successfully received his heart on Oct. 21 and was recently released from the Massachusetts General Hospital. He is scheduled to go back to his Central American country on Nov. 13.

Fuller Interact students met Brian on Wednesday. He spoke to the students about his experience, showed them his scar and thanked them. While in Massachusetts, Brian met his favorite sports team - The Revolution. They gave him an autographed soccer ball.

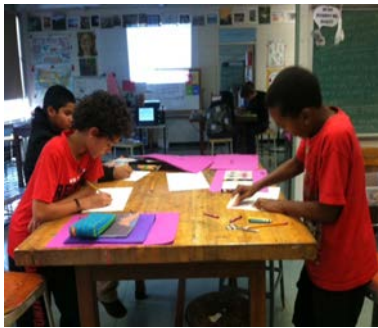


In the coming weeks and months, students will receive vision, hearing, postural, and Body Mass Index (BMI) screenings as required by Massachusetts Law. You may request that your child not be screened for vision, hearing, and postural if you have a religious exemption or if you have documentation from your child's primary health care provider stating that the screenings have been done in the past six months. Please state your religious exemption in writing and/or provide physician's documentation to your school nurse. You may request that your child not be screened for BMI by making the request in writing to your school nurse.



THE ALIENS HAVS LANDED! 6th grade students designed, built out of found objects (recyclable materials) and are currently plastering using plaster craft. Next, we will use tempera paint to decorate. We just finished our Gustav Klimt's "Tree of Life" created using pencils, purple paper, gold paint and oil pastels.

→Previously, we created Winslow Homer's Seascapes paintings learning 5 watercolor techniques, studying our own local Boston artist, arguably one of the greatest American watercolor painters.



7th grade we just completed a "time lapse of food disappearing" in our Pop Art unit, using chalk pastels in a grid form. We studied Andy Warhol, Claus Oldenburg, and modern artist Wayne Thiebaud.

→Previously, we created our Australian Aborigine Dot Paintings using the handle of our paintbrush (using a tool in a new way) to create dots on top of our drawing/animal collages.

8th grade students have just completed their abstract self-portraits by creating Mandalas.

Students were asked to create a theme that represents their interest. They drew and render images arranged in a circle that portrayed "a circle that represents their universe".

→Students had completed a major project, "San Francisco's Painted Ladies", studying the famous landmarks in California. Each student drew and painted their own house, and we had a class wide critique where students asked each other questions and reflected on their own artistic choices.

Next up, students are creating a "Spoof on a Masterpiece" creating a parody of either Leonardo Da Vinci's "Mona Lisa" or Grant Wood's "American Gothic". This lesson blends iconic paintings with modern images, making art history accessible to all students.



This October, **Rainbow Team** teachers turned Halloween into a teachable moment. Instead of celebrating All Hallows' Eve on October 31, teachers donned costumes in honor of "Idioms Oktoberfest." All nine ELD teachers participated and brought idioms to life, in order to teach students the meaning behind "it's raining cats and dogs" and "when pigs fly." Students spent the few weeks prior to October 31 learning about idioms in their ELD classes, levels 1 through 5, and on the day itself, students participated in a scavenger hunt, deciphering each teacher's idiom costume and its connotative meaning. In this way, we brought learning the English language beyond the classroom and made it into an interactive experience.



Veterans visit the *Curious* *Crimson* crew

“It was very interesting to hear about the different branches of the military,” Matthew Tivnon said about the visit from veterans. Anthony Ratta commented, “I thought it was really cool how the veterans were talking about their lives.” The Director of Veteran’s Services, Lt. Colonel Peter Harvell, discussed his wartime experiences along with Sgt. Mac. and Sgt. Whitfield with students on the Crimson team on November 10, 2014. All of the students asked questions, shared personal connections to the stories, and listened attentively to the two hour presentation. This is the sixth year Sgt. Harvell has discussed Veteran’s Day with Crimson Team students. “I look forward to this visit every year” Sgt. Harvell told everyone. The veterans brought uniforms from most of the wars and Crimson Team students enjoyed wearing the jackets and helmets while learning about the lives of the soldiers. Other artifacts included eating utensils, maps, and prayer rugs.

→Afterwards, students completed reflections in their journals and wrote thank you notes. When asked his thoughts about the holiday, Cevin Ostapchuk said, “I want to wish Happy Veteran’s Day to all veterans”.

