

October 2015

Dear Fuller Families,

I am proud to share the great news from Fuller this past month:

Fuller hosted 15 professors from Tokyo Gakugei University. They were very interested in learning more about STEAM and Project-based Learning (PBL) as well as our student support system. We were very proud to share our progress! Many thanks to the student tour guides:

Aguilar, Andrea

Deletti, Cole

Diaz, Juliany

Falone, Alaina

Guillen, Tiffany

Harvey, Brook

Hersovici, Fiana

Lincoln, Olivia

McIrney, Ryan

Soto, Kevin

Costume Dance!

Thank you, Fuller PTO, for sponsoring the Spooky Spectacular Dance last Friday night; it was a smashing success! Thank you to all the parent who helped behind the scenes and during the evening to make this happen for our kids.

Student Leader to Represent FPS 8th Grade Students

Every year there is an initiative called Project 351, where at least one student is asked to represent each of the 351 school districts in Massachusetts. This year it was Fuller Middle School's turn to select a student to represent the Framingham Public School district based on the merits of motivation, kindness and leadership. After much consideration it is my pleasure to announce that this year, Lucas Monko of the Built Blue Team will be representing not only Fuller Middle School, but the entire Framingham Public School district at the annual conference.

Congratulations Lucas!

Update from the Fuller Department Heads

ELA and ELD teachers at Fuller Middle School are engaging in professional development around Readers' and Writers' workshop to personalize learning. Working closely with our DSAC partner, Lauren McBride, Fuller teachers are looking at the structure of the workshop model to provide explicit instruction in reading and writing. After the lesson, students work in groups as teachers conference with them to meet their specific needs. They will participate in three sessions during the first half of the year and begin designing mini-lessons within the district curriculum units to engage and support Fuller's readers and writers.

Fuller's English Language Development Department, which includes the Transitional Bilingual Education Program in Spanish and Portuguese this year, is off to a great start and growing every day. There are currently 133 students enrolled in the program, 80 of whom are WIDA 1-2 students (newcomers and early intermediate ELLs). With the TBE program in place, newcomers who speak Spanish or Portuguese receive grade-level math, science and literacy instruction in their native language and direct ELD instruction two periods a day. Students who speak French-Creole have native language tutors to support them as they develop English. Students integrate with their native-English speaking peers at lunch, during specials classes, and in the 21st Century after-school program. ELLs make up 29% of Fuller's total student body of 455 students, and Fuller remains the middle school with the most bilingual resources for newcomer students.

Growth Mindset is the mantra in all math classrooms at Fuller Middle School. Our students believe that they can learn math if they are persistent and work hard and they understand that the brain grows when it engages in 'productive struggle'. Students know that they can learn from their mistakes and that failure is the key to success. When one walks into a math classroom at Fuller Middle School they will see students persevere as they dive into the rigor of the EngageNY curriculum. Students are reasoning abstractly, making sense of problems, defending and justifying their thinking, and modeling with mathematics. These are just a few of the Math Practice Standards with which our students are engaging.

STEAM and Makerspaces

Project-based learning widens the opportunities for students to demonstrate their understanding and practice of skills. *"PBL is the act of learning through identifying a real-world problem and developing its solution. Kids show what they learn as they journey through the unit, not just at the end."* (Heather Wolpert-Gawron). During the month of

October, teachers at Fuller are working to develop the statements of real-world problems, and designing the projects that the children will work on during the year. A STEAM Team of about ten teachers collaborates to help build the expertise necessary to design and implement effective projects.

STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) refers to the demand that real-world problems most often require the application of skills from more than one discipline. A study of coastal erosion for example requires the scientific knowledge of the forces that cause erosion, the mathematics to predict what may happen to a region at risk of erosion, and the language arts to communicate this information to a community that must make decisions on how to respond to the situation.

Meanwhile, the three Makerspaces at Fuller that classes will need to develop their projects are being made ready. Just as a library is a resource for children to research knowledge, a Makerspaces is a place where students can find and use the resources necessary to create the representation of solutions to the problem they were set. These solutions can take many forms - working models, prototypes, videos, publications, drawings and more. Over several weeks, the intent is for the work of the project to demonstrate what students are learning about the academic content, and how this content is applied to the solution of real-world, authentic problems. The Presentations of Learning (POL's) are opportunities to reflect upon their learning process thus far and think about what they will do moving forward. The process helps develop important problem solving and life skills - in particular the 5 c's - Critical thinking, Communicating, Collaborating, Creating, and Citizenship - essential skills required for participation in society today.

We are very proud of the work we are accomplishing together, to personalize learning for your child. Please let us know if there is anything we can do to support your child's academic, social, and emotional learning.

In Your Service,

Sharon