VOL. 86 12 MAY, 2030

CURRICULUM UPDATES LEARNING RESOURCES ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS

RKA MARKING PERIOD NEWSLETTER

Recent updates from your child's school

Principal's Message

Dear RKA Families-

I hope the school year is off to a good start for you and yours. Each Marking Period, our incredible staff creates this Marking Period Newsletter to communicate with families about curricular matters. We hope you can use this information to speak with your children about their learning and classroom activities.

I want to highlight the work that our MS Staff is doing with our WIN Period AKA "What I Need" Period. Students have all been assessed and have been moved into their leveled groups. Instruction will progress at the students' instructional level, and students throughout the MS will be reassessed in January.

HS Students are also being assessed using the MAP assessment. This information is valuable for teachers as they use it to plan instruction and supports as needed so that students are meeting grade-level standards.

I hope by now you have accessed NYCSA and Jupiter Ed, which are both terrific ways for you to stay on top of grades, assessment, and attendance. Please contact Parent Coordinator Katherine Mendez @ KMendez27@schools.nyc.gov. On November 2, we will also be emailing home sign-up info for Parent-Teacher Conferences.

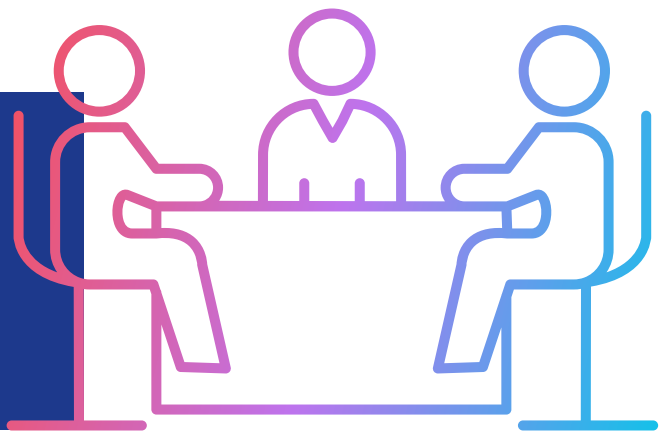
We hope you can also join us the PA Car Wash on 10/25/26 on Independence Avenue from 10:00AM to 2:00 PM. It is a big fundraiser that supports classroom mini-grants from the PA for special projects.

Warmly,
Lori O'Mara

IMPORTANT DATES

10/20 NHS MEETING
10/21 HS OPEN HOUSE
10/22 HS OPEN HOUSE
10/23 COFFEE WITH THE PRINCIPAL
10/23- 5TH GRADE PARENT TOUR
10/25 PA CAR WASH
10/27- NHS MEETING
10/28- 8TH GRADE TRIP INTREPID
10/29- HS HALLOWEEN DANCE
10/30- 5TH GRADE PARENT TOUR
11/2-PTC SCHEDULER OPENS
11/2- PA MEETING
11/3- VIRTUAL CLASSES
11/5-MS DANCE
11/6-MS PICTURE DAY
11/6- 5TH GRADE PARENT TOUR
11/8- BOOK FAIR OPENS
11/10- NHS MEETING
11/11- VETERAN'S DAY (NO SCHOOL)
11/12- SLT MEETING
11/13- 5TH GRADE PARENT TOUR
11/13- 8TH & 12TH GRADE INSTALLMENT DUE
11/16- SENIOR DINNER
11/17- NHS MEETING
11/18- 6TH GRADE TRIP AMNH
1/19 & 11/20 PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES
11/20- HALF DAY OF CLASSES
11/25- YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE CELEBRATION
11/26-HAPPY THANKSGIVING
11/27 SCHOOL CLOSED
12/3- 8TH GRADE COCOA & A MOVIE
12/4- 5TH GRADE PARENT TOUR

Parent Teacher Conferences are November 19 5:30-8:00 and November 20 1:00-3:00
Use PTC Wizard to sign up for appointments beginning November 2





6th Grade

ELA

In 6th grade ELA, students have been practicing annotating for the main idea and supporting details using an excerpt from the book I Am Malala. Looking ahead, students will be annotating poetry and a short story to track theme, plot, and character development. We look forward to the continued great work of students.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Hello 6th Grade Families! Using the NYC DOE Passport curriculum, sixth-grade Social Studies Students have examined the world through the lens of geography. They have located places we will study while practicing their map-reading skills. Students then learned about prehistoric times and the many adaptations early humans made in order to survive and thrive. Next, we will discover how those early adaptations created the foundations of complex civilizations such as Mesopotamia and Egypt. Students are continuing to work on comprehension skills and supporting claims with evidence from reliable sources as they further develop their writing, listening, and speaking skills.

ADVISORY

Hello Sixth Grade Families! We started the year getting to know our new school and new friends. From there, we learned to use the Mood Meter to get to know ourselves! Marking Period 1 focused on organization skills. As we move to Marking Period 2, we will focus on listening skills. Our work in Advisory is intended to continue to support growth in all areas of Sixth Grade life.

MATH

Welcome to RKA! Our sixth graders have started off the year with a unit on decomposing shapes. We cut complex shapes up into smaller components to make sense of and discover formulas for the areas of triangles and parallelograms. We will be using these skills to launch into our unit on ratios in the coming weeks!





SCIENCE

The school year has gotten off to a good start. We are using an engaging curriculum called Amplify Science. This literacy rich program enables students to take on the roles of scientists and engineers to solve real world problems. Sixth grade students have recently finished a unit called Harnessing Human Energy, where students were challenged to find a way for rescue workers to get energy to the electrical devices they use on rescue missions, far from electrical outlets. To do this, students have learned about possible sources of energy, and figuring out ways to capture that energy. Our current unit, Thermal Energy, has students play the role of thermal scientists working with the principal of a fictional school, in order to help choose a new heating system. The principal is considering two proposed systems, both of which would use water to heat the school. However, these systems differ in important ways.

7th Grade



ELA

So far this year the seventh graders have been working to answer the question, "What can blur the lines between what's real and what's not?" In order to do this, they have engaged with several texts including a short story, "Mirror Image"; an article, ""Not Everything It Seems"; a folktale, "Two Legs or One"; and two poems, "The Song of the Wandering Angus" by Yeats and "Eldorado" by Poe. Students have examined the structures and themes of each text in order to evaluate how the authors address where reality begins and ends.

SOCIAL STUDIES

In 7th grade Social Studies, we are finishing up Unit 1 of the Passport Curriculum, Native Americans Early Encounters and Colonial Development. Students recently completed a quiz on the Columbian Exchange. Currently, students are learning about the colonial regions of the 13 colonies. Next, students will go through primary sources to discover the differences between the 3 colonial regions. Finally, students will review the unit and will take an exam for Unit 1.

SPANISH

In 7th grade Spanish, we are continuing our unit on Identity, Customs, and Traditions. This unit focuses on authentic culture and real-life communication through reading, writing, listening, and speaking activities. As students complete these tasks, they build critical thinking skills by comparing Spanish-speaking cultures and language with their own communities.

Throughout this unit, students learned to identify the 21 Spanish-speaking countries and their capitals, use appropriate greetings and gestures, and make introductions. They also worked on a Hispanic Heritage project, researching an assigned Spanish-speaking country to explore its flag—including the meaning behind its symbols and the date it was created. This unit culminated in our Wax Museum presentations.

How to Support Your Child at Home:
Daily Review: Encourage your child to review vocabulary for just a few minutes each day.
Assignment Tracking: Help them stay on top of completing their assignments on time.
Real-World Practice: Encourage them to use Spanish whenever possible—try reading product labels in Spanish, or listening to Spanish TV shows and family-friendly music together.

MATH

Seventh graders recently wrapped up their first unit on Scale Drawings. They learned how to identify, interpret, and create scaled copies and drawings—skills that lay a strong foundation for our next major focus: Proportional Relationships.
In Unit 2, students will explore what proportional relationships are, how to represent them, and how they connect to real-world situations. They'll analyze tables, determine constants of proportionality, write equations, and interpret graphs—building on their Grade 6 work with ratios and preparing for future studies on slope in Grade 8 and beyond.
Up next, we'll dive into our Circles unit—more exciting math adventures to come!

SCIENCE

In 7th grade science, students play the role of medical students .In chapter 2 students focus on how body systems work together to take molecules from the environment and get them, in usable form, to the cells. Students are presented with the challenge of helping diagnose a teenage patient, Elisa, who feels tired all the time. Through exploring the Metabolism Simulation, reading about different medical conditions, and participating in a classroom-sized model of the body, students learn that in a functioning body the digestive, respiratory, and circulatory systems work together to get glucose, oxygen, and amino acids to the cells. By the end of Chapter 2, students diagnose Elisa with diabetes and are able to explain how this condition affects her body systems and the molecules that get to her cells.

WIN

We have spent the first marking period reviewing and strengthening foundational skills, culminating in completing our first assessment on area of compound shapes. We will be using this foundation to level up our math skills in the units to come: We will take what we know about ratios and use it to learn about proportional relationships and percentages, studying the ways in which quantities, like classrooms, grow together.

8th Grade



ELA

Spooky season is officially here, and our 8th-grade ELA students have dived headfirst into the eerie world of the Horror Genre! To frame our learning, students began by reading the literary criticism "What is the Horror Genre?" before diving into classic and mythological texts like Edgar Allan Poe's "The Tell-Tale Heart," W.W. Jacobs' "The Monkey's Paw" (comparing both text and film), "The Aeneid of Virgil," and "Hades: Lord of the Dead." As they read, students are sharpening key literary skills by annotating for unreliable narrators, suspense, foreshadowing, theme, text structure, and tone.

They've also put their creative skills to work by rewriting "The Tell-Tale Heart" from a reliable narrator's POV and crafting their own foreshadowed horror stories. For their final culminating task, students will synthesize everything they've learned by picking one unit text and writing an analysis evaluated through our opening criticism—exploring how it fits the horror framework and where it breaks traditional genre tropes.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Hello Eighth Grade Families! As we move toward the closing of our first marking period, classes have completed our earliest units: Reconstruction, Industrial Revolution, and Immigration. Students continue to build on reading and writing skills, as well as collaborative strategies. Additionally, the end of the Marking Period brings a Unit Test. Looking ahead, Marking Period 2 transitions into the Progressive Era and greater use of Thinking Maps.

SPANISH

In 8th grade classes, students will enhance language skills and develop a deeper understanding of the Spanish-speaking cultures. This month, we have been learning about Hispanic Heritage and notable Hispanic figures and their influence on the world. We celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month with a Mock Wax Museum project by honoring the contributions of notable hispanics who continue to inspire the future generations.

We also started to review basic Spanish vocabulary from last year (greetings, descriptions, where are you from, saying your name, weather, date). Students will employ critical thinking skills by using the target language in listening, speaking, reading and writing. They will also compare the practices and products of the Spanish speaking culture with their own and the community where they live.

Explore Culture at Home!

To extend learning beyond the classroom, we encourage families to visit and explore these local Dominican and Hispanic cultural resources:

El Museo del Barrio – New York's premier Latino cultural institution, highlighting the art and rich heritage of Caribbean and Latin American cultures.

Dominican Cultural Association / Asociación Cultural Dominicana – A wonderful resource for engaging with Dominican history, arts, and community traditions.

Wave Hill A garden and cultural center in the Bronx offering nature and community arts programs, including seasonal cultural celebrations like Día de los Muertos.

MATH

In Core Math, we have completed our first unit on rigid transformations and congruence. Students learned about rotations, reflections, and translations. As we work through Unit 2, we will be exploring another type of transformation known as a dilation. Students will learn how transformations can relate to similar triangles and finding slope.

ALGEBRA

In Algebra class, we have already wrapped up our first unit of study, in which we learned about arithmetic and geometric sequences. For Unit 2, were are exploring linear equations and Inequalities. This involves writing, solving, and graphing equations in both one and two variables. The second half of the unit focuses on graphing inequalities in two variables, which is a brand new skill for most 8th graders. Please continue to look at google classroom for digital lesson summaries to help to study, as our Unit 2 should be wrapping up the week of October 26th.

SCIENCE

In 8th grade science, students take on the role of student astronomers, advising an astrophotographer who needs to take photographs of the Moon. In order to provide this advice, students investigate where the Moon's light comes from, what causes the characteristic changes in the appearance of the Moon that we observe, and what conditions are required to view phenomena such as particular moon phases and lunar eclipses.

BIOLOGY

We have just completed the first half of Unit 1, in which students explored the group dynamics of lions in Africa. Students used mathematical modeling to investigate why lions can hunt more efficiently in groups than alone. We also explored genetics and inheritance as students analyzed evidence to determine which lions were the parents of cubs in a particular pride.

Next week, we will begin the second half of Unit 1, centered on real scientific research from Mozambique, where scientists discovered that more elephants are being born without tusks following years of heavy poaching. Students will investigate how traits are inherited, how natural selection works, and how human activities can impact ecosystems and wildlife populations. Throughout this part of the unit, students will analyze real data, develop investigative questions, build scientific models, and support their explanations with evidence.



High School ELA

9TH

ELA 9 launched the year offering students an opportunity to explore the concepts of mindset, self-image, neuroplasticity and goal-setting techniques. By reflecting on their past, considering the present and imagining the future, 9th graders had the opportunity to examine and redefine their self-construct as both student and adolescent. In this process, they have new tools to kick off high school with a strong foundation of resilience, good habits and self-awareness.

10TH

10th Grade students are in the midst of reading the novel Bodega Dreams by Ernesto Quinonez. This literary unit includes an exploration of myriad ways authors use allusion, metaphors, symbolism, and imagery to create an exciting, relevant read. The author grew up in a low-income household in the Spanish Harlem section of New York City, attending NYC public schools. Students explore themes by using group discussions, debate, and written analysis. Writing prompts will stimulate critical thinking about social justice, The American Dream, and fairness in society. The unit culminates in a research essay proving the ways a person's background and environment influence future choices in life.

11TH

Students have completed their first unit, which concentrated on writing college application essays. Students will begin applying for college soon and to prepare for that we reviewed tips and practiced strategies to help make their college essays engaging. Students made a folder in Google Drive where they keep their drafts to be used when they begin the college application process. Looking forward, our next Unit of study will revolve around the book, "The Stories of Eva Luna" by Isabel Allende.



12TH

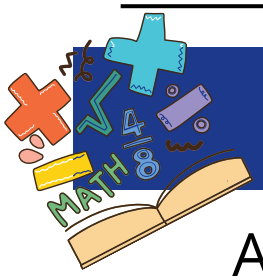
We are thrilled to share that our seniors recently wrapped up their first unit of the year, a dynamic literary nonfiction study exploring a diverse blend of memoirs, poems, and essays. Throughout this unit, students critically engaged with compelling works by celebrated authors including Trevor Noah, Tommy Orange, Michelle Zauner, and John Green. We also introduced the practice of student-led, seminar-style discussions, which fostered deep, collaborative conversations centered around the evocative poetry of Chen Chen and Mosab Abu Toha. In parallel with our reading, students worked diligently on drafting and revising their own personal essays. During this ongoing revision process, they paid close attention to elevating their writing through the careful consideration of syntax, diction, figurative language, and tone, as analyzed in the work of these esteemed authors.

AP COURSES

10th Grade AP Seminar students are in the middle of a unit based on the theme of education. One goal of AP Seminar is to study how arguments are constructed, what qualifies as valid evidence, and identifying credible sources of information. Students will read nonfiction articles, texts and peer reviewed studies from multiple perspectives about how students should be taught. Other work will include researching this topic further using NYPL databases, writing annotated bibliographies, writing research papers and finally presenting their findings to the class. All of these skills are necessary to master for success on the AP Seminar exam and to prepare students for college.

All H.S. English classes at RKA have begun the year with a Skills-Based Unit, and AP Lang is no exception. Our focus is particularly intense as students prepare for the AP Language Test, the NY State Regents and the SATs this year. We have learned and practiced higher level Close Reading, Evidence-Based Writing, and Public Speaking skills, and we have learned several strategies for analysis. Students have read and analyzed personal essays and written one of their own, polishing and perfecting it through the drafting process. This marking period Students will “flip the classroom” to teach lessons on McCarthyism through primary documents. They are reading academic and popular articles on the Salem Witch Trials and will use those materials to write drafted Persuasive Research Essays, which will help prepare them for work they will do before too long in college, as well as for the standardized tests we will take later this year. Additionally, students will be learning the elements of rhetoric to use in analysis of persuasive texts and in their own writing.

Ms. Hope’s 12th Grade AP Lit students have all written their College Essays, through multiple drafts with feedback, stimulated by John Trimble’s, Writing with Style, and inspired by reading ‘new journalism’ essays. As we focus on college academic skills this marking period, they have begun to read and analyze a series of essays on current topics, such as disability, homelessness, and racial profiling. Students will write their own essays on these topics and participate in Fishbowl Socratic Seminar discussions. Next up we will begin a mega-study of poetry.



High School Math

ALGEBRA

The year started off with Unit 1: Patterns and Sequences using Amplify Desmos. Students used technology to explore the relationships and learned that there are different types of sequences. They modeled, compared and contrasted arithmetic sequence and geometric sequences, using tables, recursive definitions, expressions and graphs. We are on to Unit 2 discussing Linear Equations and Inequalities modeling real life situations using various representations: a verbal situation, graphically and algebraically. We are also blending paper based learning along with digital explorations. As we close the Marking Period we will continue with Unit 2 extending students' knowledge of solving one variable and two variable inequalities. Heading into Unit 3: Describing Data, we will analyze one and two variable data using dot-plots, histograms, box plots and using measures of central tendency to analyze data.

GEOMETRY

In Geometry, we are in the beginning of the second unit of the course covering Congruence. We recently finished the unit covering Rigid Transformations. This unit covers Triangle Congruence Proofs, Angle Relationships, and Properties of Quadrilaterals. Students continue to work together through Amplify activities in order to discover properties of congruent shapes with the understanding of how to apply rigid transformations to prove corresponding congruent parts and angle relationships. Please check Jupiter Ed for updated assignments, attendance, and grades. In addition, there are resources for each topic in Google Classroom as well as on Amplify.

ALGEBRA 2

Unit 2 - Polynomials is underway in Algebra 2 classes. Students are learning the terminology for all the parts of a polynomial and how to add, subtract and multiply with polynomials. Soon they will learn about aspects of the graphs of polynomials with varying degrees and how to predict the end behavior based on the degree of the function. Homework is given daily so be sure to check to see what they are working on.

MATH IN MEDIA & MARKETING

Students are extremely busy gathering survey data on questions they have designed to learn about RKA students. Students in groups have to survey at least 100 students, then enter the data into spreadsheets where they will do a statistical analysis and data visualizations. The groups will then present their findings to the class. Following this project, students will learn about the math behind the election process, particularly gerrymandering.

AP PRE CALCULUS

AP Precalculus - Students have just completed the first chapter our of year, a unit which consisted of some familiar topics from previous years in math, ramped up to the level of an AP. Students have made great strides in being able to explain their thought processes using formal mathematical language. Moving forward, will continue their study of polynomial and rational functions and create models to represent real world situations. We will soon begin our next unit on exponential functions.

AP CALCULUS

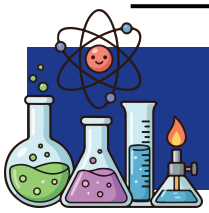
AP Calculus AB (Psachie): In AP Calculus, we have completed the first two and a half units of the course covering most of the derivative formulas and analyzing instantaneous rates of change and acceleration in real-life. We are now in Unit 3 analyzing the more complicated derivative formulas. In the next few weeks, the students will analyze applications of derivatives with graphing, theorems, and real-life scenarios. In addition, students have been working on problems from the AP Collegeboard website in order to prepare for the AP Calculus AB Exam. Please check Jupiter Ed for updated assignments, attendance, and grades. Google Classroom has the resources that go with each topic.

STATISTICS

Our Statistics class has been busy crushing Unit 1, and the probability of us having fun is 100%! We started off classifying categorical and quantitative variables without making any discrete errors. Next, we knocked our SOCS off by describing distribution shapes, catching sneaky outliers in the act. We kept our calculations well within range by mastering the median, IQR, and standard deviation on our TI-84s. Things might get skewed sometimes, but this class is definitely statistically significant and way above average!

FINANCIAL LITERACY

Students began the year recognizing and analyzing different cognitive biases in our society as it relates to the way we spend money. While we cannot expect to avoid them completely, student had learned to at minimum address them, and work on recognizing when they occur in the future. We then began our unit on banking, where students learned about a variety of accounts that banks offer. We just concluded our Bank Research presentations, where all three sections were presented with information regarding eight different banks. Students then made informed decisions about which bank they would open up an account with if they had to choose. Our next unit will be on investing, which students have already started through competing in the nationwide competition, "The Stock Market Game".



High School Science

BIOLOGY

On October 6th Ms. Schmidt's Biology students were able to citizen scientists in a special program called "A Day in the Life of the Hudson and Harbor". Armed with seine nets, minnow pots and water-testing gear, thousands of students catch and release many of the Hudson's 200-plus species of fish, track the river's tides and currents, and examine water chemistry and quality. The data collected by students provides insights into an ecosystem spanning over 300 miles of the Hudson River and New York Harbor and is posted online after the event. By the end of the unit, they will understand not just what makes up a habitat, but how the health of a single species can impact an entire global system.

CHEMISTRY

During the first marking period, Chemistry students have been learning what everything around us is made of. The year began with lab safety and moved into atomic structure, including protons, neutrons, electrons, and isotopes. Students then used the periodic table to predict how elements behave. A highlight was the "World's Largest Firework" investigation, where flame test colors helped identify different metals. The class has also started chemical bonding, beginning with ionic compounds, or salts, and how metals and nonmetals join to form them.

AP BIOLOGY

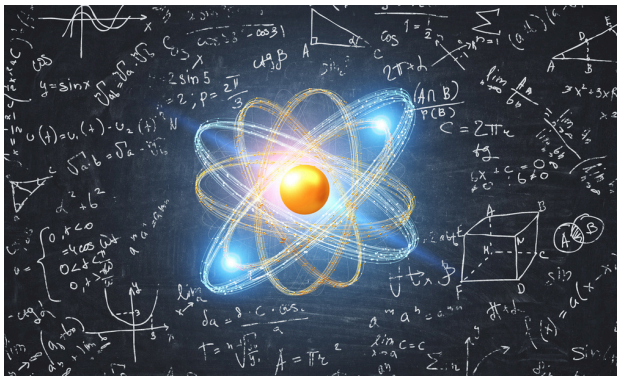
AP Biology is challenging course that allows high school students to receive college credit. In class, we recently completed our first unit on the chemistry of life. In this topic students reviewed basic chemistry, explored the properties of water, and learned about the basic building blocks of life. We are presently investigating the structure and function of cells.

PHYSICAL SCIENCE

In Mr. Rowley's Investigations in Physical Science class students are beginning Unit 2 which introduces the fundamental principles governing how objects move and interact in the physical world. Students will explore motion by describing and calculating speed, velocity, and acceleration, laying the groundwork to understand how forces alter an object's state of motion. Through Newton's Laws of Motion, the unit examines how net forces cause acceleration, how inertia resists change, and how forces always occur in equal and opposite action-reaction pairs. Additionally, students will investigate fundamental forces—such as gravity, friction, and electromagnetic interactions—analyzing how contact and non-contact forces influence momentum, energy transfer, and stability in everyday systems.

EARTH & SPACE

After entering the Universe, we are kicking off the next marking period in Earth and Space Science by asking one of the biggest questions in science: *What makes Earth so special?*
In **Unit 1: Discovering New Worlds**, our young scientists are investigating the cosmic conditions that make life possible here on Earth and whether we might find life elsewhere in the universe. We'll be diving into the life cycles of stars—including our own Sun—to understand how stellar energy fuels planetary systems over billions of years. Students will also investigate the "Goldilocks Zone" (the circumstellar habitable zone where temperatures are *just right* for liquid water) and step into the shoes of modern astronomers to analyze real data and methods used to detect distant exoplanets in search for other habitable worlds.



ANATOMY & PHYSIOLOGY

Anatomy and Physiology is an upper level science elective. The class is an exploration of the central concepts of human biology, starting at the cellular level and advancing to physiological systems of the human body. In class, we have just finished an introduction to anatomy and physiology and begun basic chemistry.

AP ENVIRONMENTAL

Students are about to begin studying Unit 2 during which they will develop an understanding of how Biodiversity, which includes genetic, species, and habitat diversity, are critically important to ecosystems. Additionally students will discover and discuss the following key concepts; Biodiversity in ecosystems is a key component to sustaining life within the living world. Natural and human disruptions have short and long-term impacts on ecosystems. Ecological succession can occur in terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems in both developed and developing areas. Also, organisms within ecosystems must adapt to the changes created by these disruptions. In subsequent units, students will examine in greater detail how populations change over time.



High School Social Studies

GLOBAL 9TH

In Global Studies I, our 9th graders have been traveling back in time to explore one of the most pivotal moments in human history: the Neolithic Revolution. Together, we examined how early humans transitioned from foraging and hunting to settled, agricultural communities. Grounded in Science of Reading (SoR) practices, students built key domain vocabulary and strengthened comprehension through structured writing exercises and visual Thinking Maps to analyze the major causes and effects of this shift. By discovering how geography shaped early human survival, our students now see how terrain and resources shape where communities flourish. This geographic perspective perfectly sets the stage for our upcoming deep dive into the world's first major river valley civilizations: Mesopotamia, Ancient Egypt, Indus Valley, and Ancient China. As we explore these early societies, students will begin uncovering the complex systems of government, trade, and culture that still influence today's modern world. Furthermore, we've officially introduced students to "Enduring Issues," a cornerstone NYS Regents concept that helps students spot recurring historical themes across centuries. Through this framework, students learn to connect past events to contemporary global issues, developing critical thinking skills that extend far beyond the classroom walls. We are so proud of their curiosity and analytical growth, and look forward to seeing them shine as young historians in the weeks ahead!

US HISTORY

We are near completion with the first unit on foundations of American democracy, and we are set to start unit 2 soon beginning with landmark cases of the Supreme Court. Students continue working on their major semester project, Project ACTION, for advocacy of student-selected political issues in preparation for their final advocacy portfolio and speech presentation. Project work for Government and Economics will be used toward the NYS Seal of Civic Readiness. "The Seal of Civic Readiness is a formal high school diploma and transcript endorsement that certifies a student's proficiency in civic knowledge, skills, mindsets, and experiences."

AP AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES

AP African American Studies-Students completed the Unit 1 coursework on geography, ancient African empires, and the initial impacts of Portuguese colonization. We started Unit 2 recently, focusing on African exploration of the Americas and Asia, and the influence and impacts of the Middle Passage and enslavement for Africans and the wider African diaspora. The class will start more directly discussing the major course research project and resources. To that end, Ms. Dawson has been in contact with the Spuyten Duyvil Library, we are working on the potential for a visit to the Schomburg Center, and we have connected with Fordham's African American Studies Department for work in collaboration with their professors and resources.

GLOBAL 10TH

10th Grade Global classes are in the middle of a unit on Political Revolutions. Our study focuses on the following topics: the causes, events, and impacts of the French Revolution; the Reign of Terror, the reign of Napoleon; and the Latin American Revolutions of the 19th century. Students are working with a variety of primary and secondary sources, engaging in assignments that foster creativity and critical thinking, and honing their skills on Regents-related tasks. For one activity, students will prepare for and participate in formal debates about Robespierre's actions during the Reign of Terror. For another assignment, students will write a piece in response to an excerpt from A Tale of Two Cities, the Charles Dickens classic set during the French Revolution. Students have also been encouraged to develop their own personal perspectives on questions like "Was Napoleon a friend or foe of the French Revolution?" and "Was the French Revolution a success or a failure?" Please remember that students willt ake the New York State Global History & Geography II Exam in June 2027.

AP US HISTORY

AP U.S. History students are currently studying the American Revolution, having completed our unit on the British American colonies. Students completed an in-class Short Answer Question on the role of religion in Spanish versus English America, and a DBQ Outline on the ways Puritan values shaped colonial New England. Our first multiple-choice test covered material up to 1763 (end of the French and Indian War), and upcoming class discussion will delve deeper into the extent to which historians agree about the "revolutionary" nature of the American Revolution.

LAW

Students kicked off the year by exploring the fundamental role laws play in society, examining how legal frameworks adapt as a nation's values evolve. They conducted a deep dive into the six core factors of the Rule of Law, analyzing its necessity for a fair and functioning government. Through multimedia case studies, students evaluated modern real-world examples where the Rule of Law remains strong versus where it faces challenges. They also will be conducting research on a case study of their choosing in marking term 2.

High School World Language

SPANISH 1

¡Bienvenidos! In Level 1 Spanish, students build essential language skills while gaining a deeper appreciation for Spanish-speaking cultures. During this marking period, we focused on creating a safe, welcoming learning environment, getting to know one another, and exploring the rich history and global contributions of Hispanic individuals. To celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, students brought their learning to life through a creative Mock Wax Museum project!

As the new marking period begins, we will begin on our Preliminary Unit which focuses on learning to greet others, and introducing themselves and others. Students will also work on spelling their names, learning the days of the week, and how to say the date. We will also reflect on how different seasons are in different parts of the world. Students will be listening, reading, writing, and speaking on a daily basis.

Explore Culture at Home!

To extend learning beyond the classroom, we encourage families to visit and explore these local Dominican and Hispanic cultural resources:

El Museo del Barrio – New York's premier Latino cultural institution, highlighting the art and rich heritage of Caribbean and Latin American cultures.

Dominican Cultural Association / Asociación Cultural Dominicana – A wonderful resource for engaging with Dominican history, arts, and community traditions.

Wave Hill A garden and cultural center in the Bronx offering nature and community arts programs, including seasonal cultural celebrations like Día de los Muertos.

SPANISH 3

"Caminante, no hay camino; se hace camino al andar." As the renowned Spanish poet Antonio Machado once wrote, travelers make their own path by walking it. This autumn, our Spanish 3 students are doing just that. They are stepping into a transformative, culturally and linguistically immersive year designed to reshape how they see the world.

The academic year kicked off with students laying the groundwork for a tight-knit, collaborative community through nuestro acuerdo comunitario. Together, they designed their own community agreement, establishing the high expectations for success that will guide them both inside the classroom and out in the world.

Now, they are bringing Hispanic Heritage Month to a spectacular close. Students are preparing to present extensive, research-based projects that dive deep into the first civilizations of the Spanish-speaking Americas. They will showcase their work in a live, wax-museum-style expo at our very own library.

This is just the beginning of a remarkable language and cultural journey in Spanish 3. Stay tuned as our students continue to pave their paths toward linguistic fluency and global citizenship

A huge thank you to our librarian, Ms. Aimee Dawson, for her amazing help with resources for our Hispanic Heritage Month projects. Her guidance was incredible; she gathered key materials for our students and hosted several Spanish classes in the library to teach them how to find reliable sources and conduct true investigative research.

¡Muchísimas gracias, Sra. Dawson!.

SPANISH 2

We've had an exciting start to the school year in Spanish 2! Students have been building their confidence in Spanish through classroom conversations, interactive activities, and cultural exploration.

Recently, our class worked on the Hispanic Heritage Project, "Un viaje por el mundo hispano" (A Journey Through the Spanish-Speaking World). Students researched different Spanish-speaking countries, exploring their traditions, customs, geography, and cultural significance. Through creative displays, artifacts, and interactive presentations, students are bringing their learning to life in our Living Museum. This project allows students to practice their Spanish-speaking skills while celebrating the rich cultural diversity of the Spanish-speaking world.

As we move forward, we are strengthening the foundational skills students developed in Spanish 1, including:

Present tense verbs and common irregular verbs

Stem-changing verbs

Adjective agreement (gender and number)

Question formation and everyday conversations

Expressing ideas using complete sentences in Spanish

These skills will help students build a strong foundation as we continue working with Reporteros 2, expanding vocabulary, improving communication, and exploring the cultures of Spanish-speaking communities.

Tips to Keep Practicing Spanish Outside the Classroom

Learning a language requires consistent practice! Here are some simple ways families can encourage students to continue developing their Spanish skills:

Listen to Spanish music and try identifying familiar words and expressions.

Watch Spanish-language shows or movies with subtitles to strengthen listening comprehension.

Practice vocabulary and grammar using Quizlet, Conjuguemos, or other language-learning resources.

Speak Spanish daily, even if it's just a few sentences about school, family, or weekend plans.

Read short stories, articles, or social media posts in Spanish.

Set weekly goals, such as learning five new expressions or practicing a short conversation.

Every opportunity to listen, speak, read, or write in Spanish helps students develop confidence and move toward greater proficiency.

¡Gracias por su apoyo! Together, we can make this a successful year of language learning and cultural discovery!





High School World Language

SPANISH FOR SPANISH SPEAKERS 1

¡¡Hemos tenido un excelente comienzo de año en nuestra clase de Español para Hablantes de Herencia (SPSPSP)!

Para celebrar el Mes de la Herencia Hispana, los estudiantes prepararon el proyecto "Raíces Vivas: Lo que llevamos con nosotros", un Museo Viviente dedicado a explorar nuestras tradiciones, raíces e identidad cultural. A través de investigaciones, exhibiciones creativas y presentaciones orales, los estudiantes comparten historias familiares y reflexionan sobre la importancia de preservar nuestras tradiciones para las futuras generaciones.

También hemos reflexionado sobre nuestra identidad cultural y el valor de ser bilingües, reconociendo cómo nuestras experiencias, familias y comunidades forman parte de quienes somos.

Próximamente, continuaremos con el Módulo 1 de Galería, fortaleciendo nuestras habilidades de lectura, escritura y expresión oral en español.

Consejos para seguir practicando español

Conversa con tus familiares sobre sus tradiciones e historias.

Lee cuentos, artículos o noticias en español.

Escucha música o pódcast en español.

Escribe sobre tus experiencias y recuerdos familiares.

¡Gracias por su apoyo! Juntos seguiremos celebrando nuestras raíces y fortaleciendo el español como parte de nuestra identidad.

PRE-AP SPANISH

¡Bienvenidos! We just wrapped up our preliminary unit, where we discussed the importance of celebrating Hispanic heritage, especially within our local community. We are culminating Hispanic Heritage Month with a Wax Museum presentation centered on the theme "Historias, voces e identidades de la comunidad hispana en Nueva York."

During this marking period, students also completed a baseline assessment to help us track their language growth throughout the school year. Next, we are diving into Module 5: Las relaciones sociales. In this module, students will explore social relationships in Northern South America (Venezuela, Colombia, and Ecuador), studying topics such as bullying (el acoso escolar), social structures, and cultural norms of behavior.

How to support your student at home:

You can support your student by encouraging a few minutes of daily vocabulary review, making sure assignments are completed on time, and encouraging Spanish practice whenever possible. Watching Spanish TV shows, listening to Spanish music, or tuning into podcasts related to our class topics are fantastic ways to reinforce learning!

We look forward to watching our students continue to progress throughout the school year.

SPANISH FOR SPANISH SPEAKERS 2

We just wrapped up our Preliminary unit where we discussed the importance of our heritage, bilingualism as a super power, and culminated Hispanic Heritage Month with a Wax Museum food project in which students had to embody the dish of their choice for their presentations.

This marking period we will begin with a baseline exam to assess student growth throughout the year and after we will begin with Module 4. Module 4 focuses on careers and professions. We will learn about the importance of manual labor and field work, professional careers, the relationship between the location of South Central America and the jobs and activities in the region and lastly the requirements and obligations to get a job.

One way in which you can support your child at home is by encouraging him/her to review vocabulary and topics frequently (a few minutes each day), to complete his/her assignments, and to use Spanish whenever possible. Try listening to some Spanish TV and appropriate music, and listening to Podcast related to our class. We look forward to seeing our students continue to progress throughout the school year.

Explore Culture at Home!

To extend learning beyond the classroom, we encourage families to visit and explore these local Dominican and Hispanic cultural resources:

El Museo del Barrio – New York's premier Latino cultural institution, highlighting the art and rich heritage of Caribbean and Latin American cultures.

Dominican Cultural Association / Asociación Cultural Dominicana – A wonderful resource for engaging with Dominican history, arts, and community traditions.

Wave Hill A garden and cultural center in the Bronx offering nature and community arts programs, including seasonal cultural celebrations like Día de los Muertos.

AP SPANISH

¡Bienvenidos! AP Spanish Language and Culture is designed to fully prepare students for the AP exam in May by honing all four core language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Throughout the year, we will practice these skills both individually and through integrated, real-world tasks.

We kicked off the semester with an overview of the AP exam format and its 6 overarching Themes. We are currently diving into our first theme—Families and Communities—focusing on educational communities and the impact of community service. Next, we will explore family structures, urban and rural communities, and social networking.

How students can practice: Students are strongly encouraged to read Spanish news articles and listen to Spanish-language podcasts related to our unit topics to build vocabulary and sharpen comprehension.

How you can support at home: You can support your student by encouraging a few minutes of daily vocabulary review, ensuring assignments are completed on time, and promoting Spanish practice at home. Tuning into Spanish TV shows, music, or relevant podcasts together is a fantastic way to immerse them in the language!

We look forward to watching our students grow and succeed throughout the school year.

Arts



VISUAL ART MS

Varadan- Drawing the figure in action and creating a comic strip is the theme of the 6th grade drawing unit. Students started the year off by posing for each other and learning about body proportions and joint movement. Then they used their imagination to create superheros from these sketches and place them in a scene. Currently we are reading the Cartoonist Club and working on creating a comic Zine of their own. 7th graders are creating expressive self-portraits inspired by Frida Kahlo.

Mena- uring the first unit of the school year, 6th graders and Visual Arts Exploration students are developing their observational drawing skills through still-life compositions, while 7th graders are creating expressive self-portraits inspired by Frida Kahlo. In Unit 2, students will explore a variety of watercolor techniques and apply their new skills to create original works of art.

8th graders are learning about vanishing points and 3D design by drawing their chairs and looking at Vincent Van Gogh's many renderings of chairs drawing the 1850's. We are discussing how the texture and design of furniture has changed since post impressionism and how to use line, value and shape to capture the feeling of an interior room. Currently they are choosing a picture of a room from a design magazine and drawing it in 3D shapes using vanishing points.

DRAMA

This is the first year of a new RKA course, entitled "Acting for Stage and Screen," which offers students a dynamic exploration of performance techniques for both theater and film. We spent the first marking period establishing a supportive classroom ensemble and building vital performance fundamentals, ensuring every student feels confident taking creative risks. Building on that strong foundation, students recently dove into character analysis as they rehearsed and presented their very first monologues. It has been incredibly rewarding to watch their growth, creativity, and collaborative spirit come alive in these initial weeks. We look forward to sharing more updates as they transition into scene work and digital screen tests in the coming weeks!

PAINTING

Painting Through History students are looking at Renaissance Humanism and Value shifts in art. Michelangelo's hand renderings are providing the inspiration for drawings done in pencil and graphite. The students are finding hand poses found in magazines and blowing them up to life size hands using a variety of lines and values.

CERAMICS

In ceramics class, students are learning the ins and outs of working with clay, and making their ceramic artwork viable for firing in the kiln. They have learned all about the 3 major techniques which are, pinch pot, slab, and coil. With these new skills, students will be able to create much of their ceramics artwork. I'm excited to see all the wonderful ceramic art they will create throughout the year. During the next marking period we will focus on learning the basics of the glazing process.

Ceramics

In ceramics class, students are learning the fundamentals of working with clay and preparing their creations for kiln firing. They are exploring three essential techniques—pinch, slab, and coil—which will serve as the foundation for their ceramic projects. Students have begun their first project, designing and creating a piece of their own choosing. In the next marking period, they will learn the basics of glazing to add color and personality to their finished work.

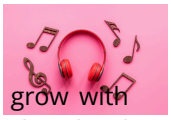
INSTRUMENTAL HS

The H.S. Guitar Classes have already learned 10 chords and are using them in a variety of songs. Students are currently working on learning how to read pitch on a treble clef staff so that they can also play simple melodies.

INSTRUMENTAL MS

Our Beginning Band Class students have chosen their instrument and are beginning make our first sounds. We are currently working on "Making the Connection" between reading pitch on a staff in our Method Book, counting the rhythm shown, and applying it to our fingering. Students will begin practicing at home and submitting their 45 min Weekly Practice Log. Our 8th grade students have been learning to build major scales and are learning their 2nd piece.

MUSIC APPRECIATION



We are excited that our Morning Band Club continues to grow with new members wanting to challenge themselves with higher level songs. We have already learned two pieces.

Please speak to Ms. Castiner if you are interested in joining. We meet Tuesday and Thursday mornings at 7:30 am.

Health and Physical Education

MS HEALTH

In Health class, our 6th graders are using the HealthSmart curriculum to build the tools they need to make smart, healthy choices. Throughout the year, we'll cover topics like stress management, healthy nutrition, drug and alcohol prevention, conflict resolution, and personal wellness. Rather than just memorizing facts, students get to practice real-world life skills like goal setting, handling peer pressure, and effective communication. Feel free to ask your child what we're working on in class and chat with them about keeping these healthy habits going at home!



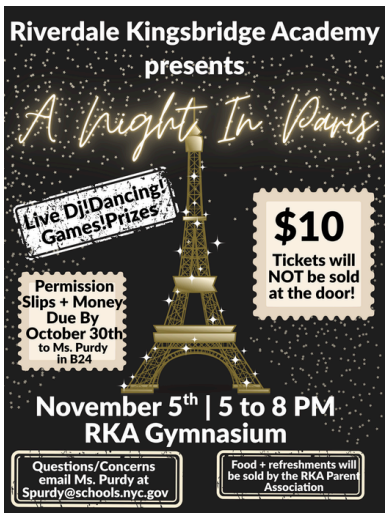


HS HEALTH

In Health class, our 9th graders are diving into high school-level wellness concepts designed to help them make safe, informed, and independent life choices. Throughout the year, we'll focus on key areas like mental health and stress management, nutrition and fitness, substance use prevention, and navigating healthy relationships. Our lessons focus heavily on real-world skills, teaching students how to manage peer influence, practice clear communication, analyze media messages, and set personal goals. Feel free to ask your teenager what we're discussing in class and keep the conversation going at home!

MS / HS PHYSICAL EDUCATION

In PE class, we are finish up our flag football unit on October 16th. The students are learning how to throw and catch and play offense and defense. The students will also play flag football games to end the unit. Our next unit will be wiffleball. Students will work on batting, throwing, fielding and running the bases. Students will work on batting stations and play in wiffleball games. Students in PE will also complete the Fitnessgram Testing. The tests are the PACER test, sit-ups, push-ups and two flexibility tests. It is very important that all students wear sneakers in order to participate in PE class.









Guidance

WELCOME BACK TO A NEW SCHOOL YEAR! THIS IS AN EXCITING TIME TO SET POSITIVE HABITS THAT WILL LEAD TO SUCCESS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. ONE OF THE BIGGEST KEYS TO ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IS STAYING ORGANIZED AND MANAGING YOUR TIME EFFECTIVELY.

📅 KEEP TRACK OF DUE DATES

ASSIGNMENTS, PROJECTS, QUIZZES, AND TESTS CAN ADD UP QUICKLY. MAKE IT A HABIT TO:

WRITE DOWN HOMEWORK AND DUE DATES IN A PLANNER OR AGENDA.
USE YOUR CALENDAR OR REMINDERS TO STAY ON TRACK.
CHECK GOOGLE CLASSROOM, JUPITER DAILY.
BREAK LARGER ASSIGNMENTS INTO SMALLER TASKS SO YOU DON'T WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE.

📂 STAY ORGANIZED

BEING ORGANIZED HELPS REDUCE STRESS AND IMPROVES PRODUCTIVITY.

KEEP FOLDERS AND NOTEBOOKS ORGANIZED BY SUBJECT.
CLEAN OUT YOUR BACKPACK WEEKLY.

⏰ MANAGE YOUR TIME WISELY

SUCCESSFUL STUDENTS PLAN AHEAD!

CREATE A DAILY HOMEWORK ROUTINE.
PRIORITIZE TASKS BY DUE DATE AND IMPORTANCE.
SET ASIDE DISTRACTIONS DURING STUDY TIME.
BALANCE ACADEMICS WITH EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, HOBBIES, AND SELF-CARE.

🌟 COUNSELOR CHALLENGE OF THE QUARTER

CHOOSE ONE ORGANIZATION GOAL AND ONE TIME MANAGEMENT GOAL FOR YOURSELF:

💡 REMEMBER...

PROGRESS HAPPENS ONE STEP AT A TIME. SMALL HABITS, SUCH AS CHECKING YOUR ASSIGNMENTS DAILY, ORGANIZING YOUR MATERIALS, AND PLANNING AHEAD, CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE IN YOUR ACADEMIC SUCCESS. STAY FOCUSED, ASK FOR HELP WHEN NEEDED, AND BELIEVE IN YOUR ABILITY TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS!

📍 SEE YOUR SCHOOL COUNSELOR IF YOU NEED HELP WITH ORGANIZATION, TIME MANAGEMENT, GOAL SETTING, ACADEMICS, OR SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SUPPORT.

