



MS 6th Grade Dean Update

Dear 6th Grade Parents and Guardians,

Thank you to all for supporting our Thanksgiving food and coat drive! Sixth graders lead the division in donations and celebrated the middle school's participation by presenting a slide show about our drive at Monday Morning Meeting. As we head into the Thanksgiving break, anticipation builds toward the end of the fall term.

Most subjects wrap up a unit right before the winter break -- such as the TREP\$ projects, which culminate in the marketplace on December 11th. Parents are invited to attend starting at 3:40 pm. Please note that most students will need to stay until 5pm that day to clean up, cash out, and check in with Mrs. Larionoff to close their participation in the event. (See Ms Larionoff's email for more details).



The week right after the Thanksgiving break includes the posting of the first 6th grade “**report cards**” to myDE. Sixth graders do not receive cumulative letter grades in any subject. Instead, at this point in the year, subject-specific feedback takes the form of detailed checklists from MESH subjects as well as visual art, music, Health & Wellness, world languages, and ASK. Starting in middle school, “report cards” are written to students as well as to you. Students read and reflect upon the reports during advisory period the day before they are posted to parent portals, putting the students “in the driver’s seat.” Over the course of the next several advisory periods, each student participates in a goal-setting conference with their advisor, using the checklists and their own reflections as a guide. We hope they also will take the opportunity to enjoy sharing their plans with you and discussing their ideas about each of their subjects as they look forward to school starting up again in January.

In the new year, our next big interdisciplinary project is the **Food and Identity Unit**. You will learn more about the unit after the winter break in a letter from the MESH team, and parents are all invited to attend the closing celebration on **January 28 at 8:30am**. In fact, we are hoping many parents will help by contributing to the international food festival that caps the celebration

of student presentations of work completed for the unit. The celebration and food fest is an annual, fun tradition in the 6th grade year, and we hope you will be able to join us.

Dates of Interest

- **Wednesday, December 3rd -- Checklist Reflection for Students.** During advisory period, checklists from all subjects will be opened to students on their portals in myDE, and advisors will guide students through a reflection process. Over the next several advisory periods, advisors also will have individual conferences with each student to discuss points of special pride and goals the student plans to focus on in the coming months. Student checklists should be available on parent portals in the evening.
- **Friday, December 5th -- MS/US Orchestra Concert**
- **Thursday, December 12th -- TREP\$ Marketplace, 3:40-5:00** See the notice above and the email from Ms Larianoff for details.
- **Friday, December 12th -- NO SCHOOL.** Teachers' Professional Day
- **Monday, December 22nd-January 2nd -- NO SCHOOL.** Happy Winter Break!
- **January 5th, First Day of Classes.** Welcome back to school!
- **Tuesday, January 6th -- Food and Identity Interdisciplinary Unit Kick-Off.** True to its theme, the unit begins with a special, midmorning, multicultural breakfast (for students only), followed by concept-launching activities as a full grade level. After the winter break, look for a letter from the MESH team that describes the opening events, and the unit as a whole, in more detail.
- **Tuesday, January 28th at 8:30am -- Food and Identity Unit Celebration.** Parents are invited! As it began, this unit ends with food: a pot-luck-style international food festival highlighting samples of foods special to our students and their families as well as some presentations of student work from the unit. Look for an email from our wonderful Parents Association Representatives. They will be organizing the Food Festival component of this celebration -- and offering you the opportunity to get involved.

Around the Dinner Table...

- **Checklist Reflections.** As part of reflecting on their "report cards", all students meet with their advisors to confer. Ask your child what goals they have set for themselves after discussing their checklists with their advisor. What are they proud of?
- **Assemblies** this month include Hour of Code and the Upper School Jazz Rock Concert
- **Special Multi-Divisional Events** this term include the annual Book Fair and the Cultural Showcase

Reminders

- **Planning an Absence near the Winter Break.** If you plan to extend the winter holiday, please let me know as soon as possible, in addition to emailing MSattendance@d-e.org or filling out SchoolPass. Absences that extend a regular school break are “excused without extensions” which means students are expected to take the initiative to discover what they will be missing and make up that work on time. This might mean submitting work electronically while they are out or bringing in work early or the first day they are back to school. We at school can support your child with the planning process during TAGs if we have enough notice, and students should use the MS “Planned Absence Form” I can give them to help keep track of which teachers they have talked to. Please note that, especially around holidays, when teachers wrap units and kick off new ones, absent students will miss some experiences and instruction that can not be recreated. (See the MS school student handbook for more detailed information about planned absences and absence types.)

Have a happy holiday!