



Middle School Newsletter

May 2020

OUR MISSION

To educate and inspire a diverse community of K-12 learners by engaging them in rigorous real-world learning experiences which prioritize intellectual, social and emotional growth.

LETTER FROM THE PRINCIPAL, MRS. LEE



Dear Middle School Families,

Although this is a time of stress, it is also of compassion and community. Our teachers are the catapult of this. Please join me in celebrating our teachers during the week of May 4-8 during Teacher Appreciation Week! We are so fortunate here at Tapestry to have the best teaching staff! We could not do what we are able to do without our talented and loving teachers. Please take a moment to appreciate the teachers for all they are doing both when we were back at school and now that we are in remote learning.

If you are in need of a resource to demonstrate your appreciation, please [check this out with your child](#), personalize it, or take a picture with one of the signs and send it off to our teachers! Thank you for your support!



Within the learning environment, teachers are in constant communication with students to see how our community can be helpful during this difficult time in education and life. Our lessons are accessible and learning is focused on a specific target with a form of assessment that drives the instructional decisions of teachers and gives feedback to students. Although the work is online, the rigor and learning is still high. Our teachers are offering office hours every single day to support students in learning material. Our engagement in online learning is extremely high, on average we have 85% of our students engaging in online learning throughout each week. There is no substitute for being in the classroom and learning, but the face-to-face interaction is still available within our community. Within our Tapestry Community, we have distributed 328 laptops and 30,000 meals to families since the closure has started. We have so much to celebrate!



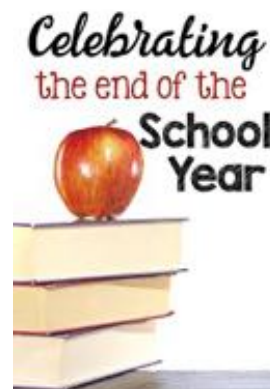
We are very aware of the need for routine and celebration for our students. We are continuing the tradition of PIRR spotlight and Golden Feathers as a way to recognize students who are demonstrating PIRR traits in their crews and online classrooms. We have also continued with our morning announcement each day. We had our first virtual community meeting on Friday, May 1st. This was a way to reconnect students with their teachers as well as celebrate our community and first responders during this time. [Please view the video of our community meeting here.](#)

We will remain in distant learning through the remainder of the school year. Although this is disappointing, it is necessary to keep everyone safe and healthy. With this said, we are already planning for an exciting end to the year! I am working on finalizing some of these plans and look forward to sharing them with the community soon. Please know we are still planning a few fun ways to celebrate our 8th graders and their accomplishments as they get ready to transition from middle school to high school. We will have both a virtual Passage Ceremony and a Drive-Thru Celebration as well as a way for all students to pick up their materials that they left behind in the building. We also have plans in the works for our 6th and 7th graders to reflect on their school year and document what learning has been like remotely. I look forward to commuting more information about this to each of the grade levels by the middle of the month.

A reminder that we are expecting students to continue to engage in online learning and receive academic grades for their work. Students will continue to receive academic grades for the work they complete, but have the opportunity to turn in late assignments and be exempt from work based on family and individual circumstances. Please continue to communicate with your child's crew leader if there is any information that the school should be aware of.

Although we are not physically together, we remain together in our hearts and through demonstrating our PIRR traits as a community!

Have a Safe and Healthy May,
Mrs. Lee





Hello Middle School Families,

Even though we may not be physically inside the Middle School, this past month our goal has been to keep traditions alive in Middle School for our students and families.

Each morning in Middle School a team of 8th grade students along with Ms. Bedell ran morning announcements. We have decided to adopt and adapt this tradition by moving our announcements to video and emailing them out daily to the Middle School community (staff and students).

We have tried to keep the same components by including the Song of the Week, Golden Feather Winners, PIRR Spotlight nominees, and of course the daily weather report. We have also been able to add some new elements through video which includes a photo slideshow during the Song of the Week. We are always looking for photo submissions to display on our daily. If you wish to share photos, please email them to me at dimaggioa@tapestryschool.org.



Another tradition that we have is our Community Meeting. We originally had a community meeting planned in Middle School after our third PIRR day, unfortunately we were unable to come together to make that happen...so we brought it to you virtually! We hope that you enjoyed the finished product that was published on Friday, May 1st.

We will be celebrating Teacher Appreciation Week during the week of May 4th. We hope you will join us in sending positive messages of appreciation to our hard working staff!

As we look ahead to the future, we will be continuing to find ways to continue our most

important traditions like SLCs and Passages. We can't wait to share our plans for how we can still celebrate our students and their accomplishments while maintaining a safe distance from one another.

Stay safe and healthy Middle School...We can't wait to see you again!
Miss DiMaggio



P.I.R.R SPOTLIGHT



PIRR Spotlight for the month of April is awarded to students in each crew that demonstrated our PIRR Trait of Perseverance. During this time when students are forced to be self-motivated, it is important to recognize when they are demonstrating resilience and persevering through these unprecedented times. The following students have been nominated by their crew leaders for PIRR Spotlight for the month of April. **Congratulations to the nominees for the month of April for demonstrating our PIRR trait Perseverance.**

6th Grade Crews:

Gerchick: KeiAna Branch
Beerman: Matthew Michaux
Brunner: Shamar Land
Tomasik: Edudardo Arroyo
Hoerner: Markis Rodgers
Gentile: Payton Parker
Scanlon: Cameron Petit
Bailey: Megan Machin

7th Grade Crews:

Steffan: Heaven Harris
Close: James Smith
Hartke: Aaron Hicks
Frost: Ciara Cooper
Fields/Camp: Rhezjene Barker
Hanh: Vincent Vasile
Slepian: Mateo Vance

8th Grade Crews:

Matos: Dylan Samuel
Hills: Ricky Ridout
Flores: McKaila Roberson
Smerda: Cashmere Ellis
Hohl: Anthony Collins-Northington
Ritchey: Anthony Hogan
Raham: Adamo Shugg

HEALTH OFFICE UPDATE WITH NURSE BURNS, RN

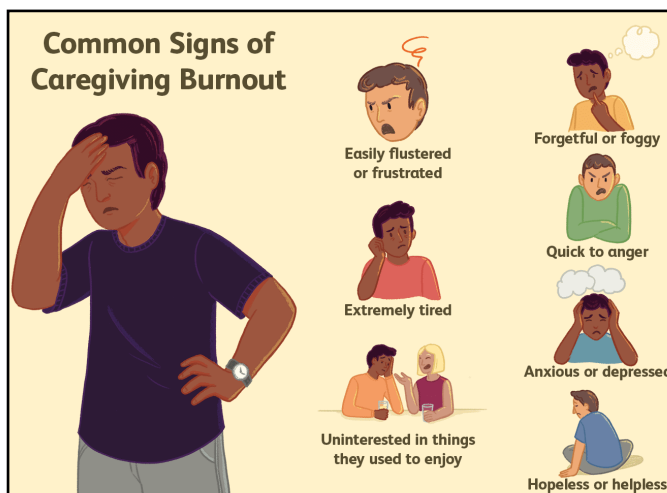
Parents, this burnout is real.

Give yourself grace.

Parents are taking care of their children in a terrifying time. Many are homeschooling amid the chaos and in many cases juggling this with work. It may feel like there is no end in sight. Here we are, weeks into quarantine, and it's already feeling a bit like the movie "Groundhog Day." Waking up to a new day and an attempt at routine to keep some sense of sanity.

We ask ourselves and our friends how we are holding up or if we completed the daily activities sent by teachers. Others wonder if their children will get a grade or need to repeat next year, some breaking the news to their kids that the school year is over for the rest of the year. Stressed parents are doing what we all felt was way outside our job description: acting as school teachers.

It's guaranteed that if you're parenting now, you have your own story about doing something you couldn't do right but had to do anyway. ***This is parenting in a crisis. It's important to see your burnout and give yourself grace. You are doing your best.***



Bottom Line:

This crisis has the potential to produce a generation of children defined by their resilience. We cannot shield our children from this crisis, but it's possible that because we can't, they will grow and stretch in uncomfortable but meaningful ways.

In the meantime, give yourself grace. Remember, that you're being asked to do the impossible.

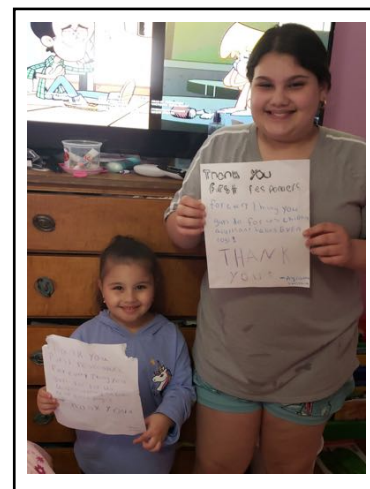
EXPEDITIONARY LEARNING (EL), MRS. KAUFFMAN



Participating in Better World Day is an EL Education tradition that Tapestry has participated in for the last 3 years. Better World Day is an opportunity for our students to serve the individuals and community around them to make the world a better place. This year, we did that by offering our gratitude to essential workers. We thanked our food service and cleaning staff who come to work everyday to tirelessly feed our community and clean our school. We collaborated with the Elementary School and High School as well to create a Better World Day video, thanking health care workers and first responders in our community and encouraging others to do the same.

I am so proud to be a part of a school that continues to give students and community members opportunities to make the world a better place! I wanted to give a special shout out to these individuals who contributed to the video: [Watch Tapestry's Better World Video HERE](#)

Amaya Davis, Amy DiMaggio, Jessica Bedell, Max Burgett, Danielle Smerda, Rob Close, Sydney Hohl, Faith Kauffman, Michelle Flores & family, Annemarie Meier, Zane & Aidan Schenk, Cassidy Ketcher, Farnaj Chowdhury, Starleana Breisch, Aiyanna Santana



MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETICS UPDATE



Dear Tapestry Families,

I hope that our Thunderhawk community is staying safe and healthy. With the arrival of spring we welcome not only the change in weather, but a new season of sports. I hope that while you have been home you have had time to reflect on how important your fitness is. It is so vital to stay PHYSICALLY active in a safe way during this Pandemic. As quarantine times are extended across Buffalo and the rest of the country, it can be extremely mentally taxing for individuals who are used to daily socialization. Suddenly being cut off from in-person social interactions, combined with being stuck inside all day and inactive is a recipe for lack of motivation and even depression. Getting outside in the fresh air, eating healthily, and exercising will help you tremendously until the quarantine is lifted.

There is a champion in all of us. I miss all of my students and athletes and can only imagine how much you miss being with your teammates and friends during practices, games and PE classes. Remember that we will be together again having fun, playing and working hard with our teams and peers!

Here is a deck of cards on a web link to work on specific sport skills or just some neat ideas to work out at home. [Project Play WNY](#)

If you have any questions Contact:

Marc LaMorticella

Tapestry Charter School

Director of Athletics

marc@tapestryschool.org

Work: 716-566-7053



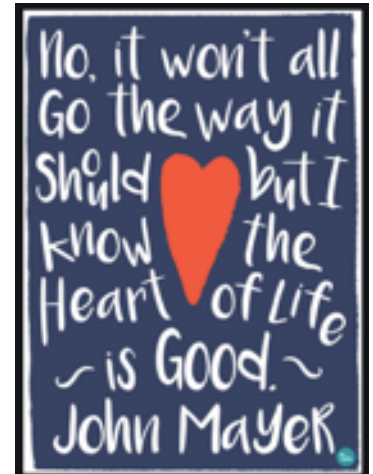
THUNDERHAWK PRIDE!

COUNSELING CORNER - MS BEDELL



Dear Families,

Happy May Everyone! I hope everyone in your family is doing well. This is such a strange time in our country, but I have come to find gratitude in the simple things in life. Hold on to those moments with family and friends and cherish them. They mean more than anything in the world. The counseling team is continually updating our COVID Website on the Tapestry Website. Please refer to that when you are in need of resources or activities to do with your children. [COVID Updates](#) & [Student Resources](#)



I have been meeting with students on google meet every day and it has been wonderful to spend time with our kids and bring them together. If I have not seen your face, please feel free to reach out to me and I can set up a meeting within the week. Also, I am always here for any support if needed. You can reach me on my school extension (x1060) or reach me via email.

May is Mental Health Awareness Month. You will be receiving more communication from me on tips to stay mentally healthy during this time. Be Well!

Ms. Jessica Bedell - Counselor



THE MIDDLE SCHOOL ARTS

VISUAL ARTS

Have you Heard of the Getty Challenge? Well since many museums have been self quarantined just like students and families at home, the J. Paul Getty Museum decided to inspire followers to “recreate a work of art with objects (and people)” from the comfort of their own homes.

This is a very fun activity which many students in grade 6-8 have been experimenting with while learning from home. It has been a great opportunity for peers, family and furry friends to come together and get creative. Our students on Google Classroom hope you and your families will join the fun and recreate your rendering from a famous artwork found online or in a book. So please send your renderings to nikki@tapestryschool.org



***Dogs Playing Poker*, by Cassius Marcellus Coolidge**
Rendering by Kellen Paterson



Artist & Title Unknown
Rendering by Bethany Callahan



***Young Boy Playing The Guitar*, by Lucille Valentino**
Rendering by Rocco Alessi



***Lady in Fur Wrap*, by Alonso Coello**
Rendering by Maya Pender



***Brazilian Monkey with Pineapple*, by Edwin Landseer**
Rendering by Olivia Griffith

THE MIDDLE SCHOOL ARTS

GUITAR

The Guitar students continue to put forth a good effort in online learning. Students that have guitars are reviewing old songs, working the notes of the G-major scale, and practicing the G-Em-C-D chord progression. Students without guitars are playing rhythmic ostinatos, researching famous guitarists, and listening to new and interesting music from other cultures. We are making the best of a challenging situation!

BAND

"Information is not knowledge. Knowledge is not wisdom. Wisdom is not truth. Truth is not beauty. Beauty is not love. Love is not music. Music is THE BEST." — Frank Zappa



THEATER

Grade 6 majors are beginning a unit to introduce them to monologues.

Grade 7 majors are synthesizing their studies on Hammurabi's codes to perform them theatrically on video. Grade 8 majors are developing the tools to perform their monologues on video.

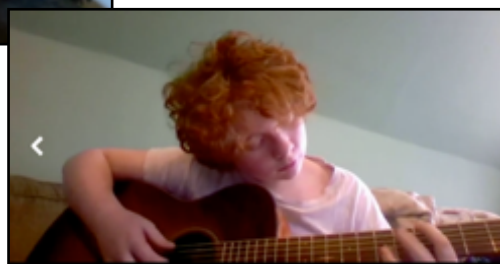
DANCE

Grade 6 majors are learning how to perform short movement phrases that integrate classic modern dance with Cunningham technique. Grade 7 majors are demonstrating their choreography inspired by Jose Limon technique. Grade 8 majors are beginning an introductory unit on Dance Anatomy.

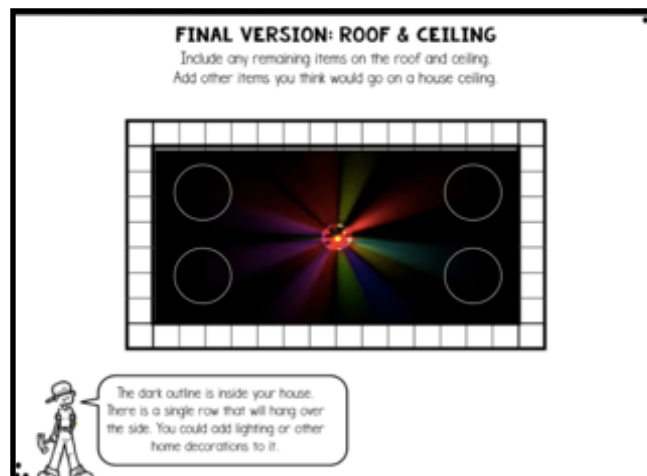
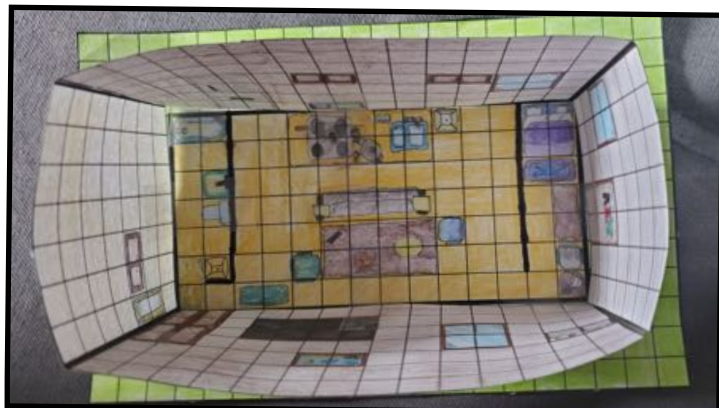


HIGHLIGHTS FROM ONLINE LEARNING

Mr. Brew's guitar class continues to rock out! The commitment from our students is something to be seen! A special shout out goes to Nina Smith for doing an exceptional job on her Blue's Guitarist Project. [BB King Presentation](#)
Keep up the great work everyone!



As a culminating activity for their Geometry Unit, [the 6th grade students of Ms. Scanlon's class](#) designed their own [Tiny Home](#), and then calculated the perimeter and area of the 2-dimensional versions of their household items. They were able to use the given images for items or add in their own. They were very creative with their designs, and some students printed them out and put them together! Here are some pictures of what they did!



HIGHLIGHTS FROM ONLINE LEARNING

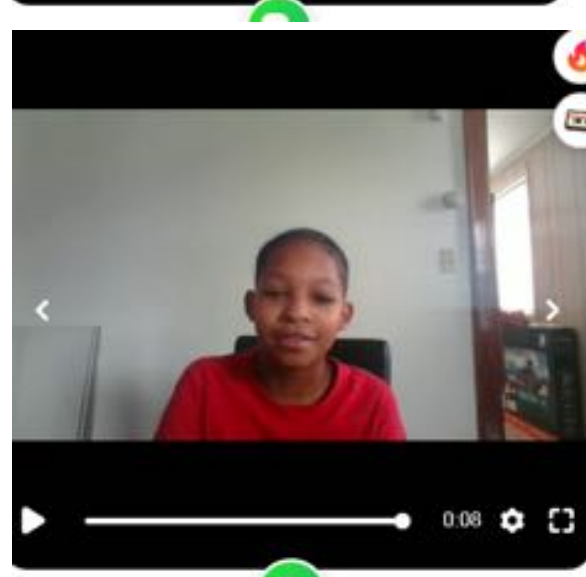
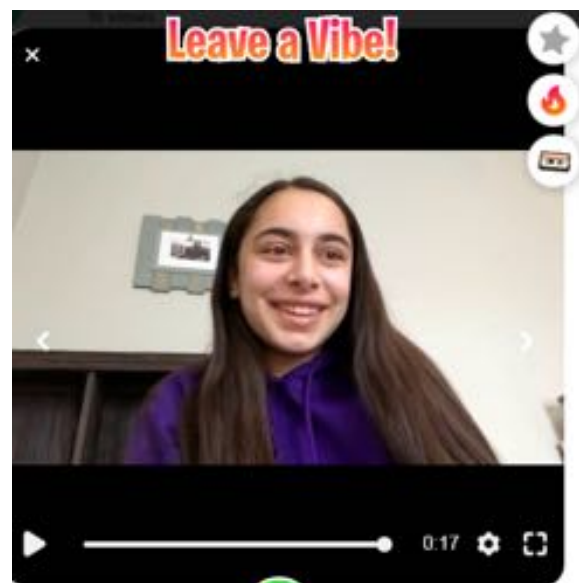
Mr. Hahn's 7th grade Expedition in Literacy class has been using narrative to share how quarantine and COVID-19 has effected them at home. The work of these students and their reflection on the COVID-19 experience is extremely powerful. Please clink on the link below to read some student samples. Truly amazing, wonderful work from Mr. Hahn and our 7th graders!

[Hannah Berdine - Coronavirus Narrative](#)

[Clementine Gianadda - Coronavirus Narrative](#)

[Clifford Pecoraro - Coronavirus Narrative](#)

Our 8th graders in Ms. Hills Spanish class continue to shine! Here are some screen shots of the kids completing the flipgrid assignment. They had to create an account, answer some introductory questions like name, fun fact, how they are feeling and what they were going to do over the weekend. Ms. Hills is using this platform to engage and assess their speaking of the language. This was their first one!



STAFF SPOTLIGHT - STEPHANIE MIRANDA: 6-8 INSTRUCTIONAL COACH



Share a little about yourself.

I moved to Buffalo from downstate over 20 years ago and now consider this my home. My favorite season is winter and I love to go sledding with my family at different local parks. I live with my husband, 2 younger children that also attend Tapestry, and 4 cats. When I am not working, I enjoy baking and trying out new recipes.

How long have you been a part of the Tapestry Community?

This is my 5th year at Tapestry. I was the 6th grade math teacher for the first year before switching to the instructional coach position.

Why Tapestry?

Being part of a community has always been important to me. I love that Tapestry supports this through crew and team building activities. I think not getting to see everyone during this offsite learning has been challenging, but enjoy still connecting to staff and students through video conferencing.

What is your favorite Tapestry memory?

My first year, my crew earned enough PIRR points to go out for lunch one day. We spent a week looking at the menu, learning about the food industry, and how tips work. The next week, we went to Denny's and had a wonderful meal together. I remember laughing and just enjoying some non-teaching time with my kiddos. I can still tell you what most of my kids ordered that day- including pancakes covered in grape jelly.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT - KELSEY HOERNER: 6-8 LITERACY SPECIALIST



Share a little about yourself.

I was born and raised in Niagara Falls, NY, primarily in the town of Niagara. I have two brothers so I have always loved playing and watching sports and I particularly love football season. I love summer and enjoy eating great food and spending time in the sunshine with friends and family. I also really enjoy bonfires, hiking, and traveling to new places.

How long have you been a part of the Tapestry Community?

This is my second year at Tapestry Charter School.

Why Tapestry?

I love Tapestry because of the people. This community is so special and I really enjoy working with all of the staff and families that attend Tapestry Charter School. I strongly believe in the core values of Tapestry Charter school and believe in our educational philosophy of educating the whole child through our PIRR traits and Crew time.

What is your favorite Tapestry memory?

My favorite Tapestry memory was taking students to the Hidden Valley Animal Adventure park last year. We had so much fun learning about the animals and getting to feed them. It was a great way to end the year and we had a lot of laughs while there. It was really special to have time with my Crew students that was in a completely new environment and we had the best time.


MIDDLE SCHOOL UPCOMING EVENTS

May 1, 2020: EL Better World Day, Middle School Virtual Community Meeting

May 4-8, 2020: Teacher Appreciation Week

May 13, 2020: 5 Week Progress Reports Due

May 25, 2020: No Instruction - Memorial Day



**Stay safe, stay healthy and
we will see each other soon.**

**- Tapestry Charter Middle
School**

CONTACT INFORMATION

65 Great Arrow Avenue

Phone Number: 716.332.0755 | Fax Number: 716.332.0758 Website: www.tapestryschool.org



Tapestry Charter School is an arts-integrated, K-12 Expeditionary Learning, tuition-free, public school located in the city of Buffalo, NY. Founded by passionate individuals who shared a commitment to choice, accountability, and excellence, Tapestry received approval from the State University of New York Board of Trustees to open in September 2001.