

LaFayette Big Picture TGIF

2019

SEPTEMBER 13

We are PRESENT, POSITIVE and PASSIONATE!



Welcome Back! It has been a fantastic start to the 2019-2020 school year. We started the year with our annual back to school breakfast and our staff cooked for our students. We have also held our first Pot Luck Dinner of the school year. All of our seats were filled as we learned more about each other and shared a delicious meal. Our enrollment this year is at capacity as we continue to place new prospective students on the wait list. On Thursday night,

Lenny was recognized by Chairman of the Onondaga Legislature, Dave Knapp for being named Big Picture Advisor of the Year. Congratulations again Lenny!



TGIF from Jessica

It's been a pleasure being back to school and seeing everyone again! I enjoyed meeting new families at the Potluck dinner on Tuesday, thank you to everyone who came out.

This year has really kicked off to a good start. The 301s have come back to school ready to learn and eager to develop projects. We have spent the first few days brainstorming projects, learning what it takes to make a high quality project, and creating individual goals for the year. They have positive goals for themselves and ambition to carry them out well.

The 301s have great project ideas and plans that I'm excited to see come to life. Many of them already have their learning plans filled out! Tete has plans to create first aid kits to sell and raise money to provide food to kids while they are out of school. Tierra is looking to learn how to build her own night stand and use woodworking tools. Stuart plans to build and design a ferret cage. Darryl and Randy are looking to build computers. Rioux is interested in building plant boxes for raised gardens. Brandon plans to look at the developmental stages of a dog's life and he is returning to his internship at

Compassionate Care! Sam is interested in researching how famous singers got to where they are and what steps they took. Kyle is going to BOCES for carpentry and he is loving it! Dawsun is looking to learn about speech, occupational therapy, and counseling for elementary school students. We have two new students in our advisory, Kylee and Elizabeth. They will both start with the Who am I project and then lead into interest based projects.

My golden classroom expectation for the year is: The more you participate, the more you learn. Throughout the first 7 days of school I have seen great participation across all advisories!



TGIF from Walt

Another year has started at Big Picture, and so far it has been very positive. I am still working in the shop this year, and I already have many projects lined up. In addition to running the shop, I also will be teaching ELA. I am excited to start a new reading and writing workshop with the 201s this year. I have been wanting to test out some new literacy strategies, and I can't wait to try them out.

This week's highlights:

I began working with Jamus on restoring a teardrop camper this week. He purchased one that needed some work, so this week we began dismantling the interior and replacing lumber. The wood supporting the back hatch was rotten, so we removed the door and are in the process of recreating the frame for it. Next week we are hoping to have this completed, and we are also hoping to start on the interior.

Brie is creating an art portfolio, and this week I helped her start a sculpture. She wanted to sculpt a pangolin, so I showed her how to make an armature and taught her some basic sculpting skills. This week she created the armature and applied the first layer of clay, hopefully this will be completed next week.

I have been working with Randy and Darryl on building a gaming computer, and this week we continued troubleshooting. It has been a complicated process, but we are learning much from this experience. Next week, we are hoping to instal a new motherboard, and will hopefully have a functioning computer.

On Friday, we had our first Morrisville Day, and, as usual, I supervised the tail tag game. This is a team game this is very similar to capture the flag. I had a great time, and many students participated. This is a game that my advisory really enjoyed playing, and I am happy to share it with other students.

Did you know...

teenagers need about 8-10 hours of sleep every night, according to the National Sleep Foundation? Sleep deprivation can impact mood, behavior, cognitive ability, and academic performance and create drowsy drivers. The National Sleep Foundation (NSF) recommends the following strategies to combat sleep deprivation in teens:

- *Keep a sleep diary
- *Take short naps
- *Keep your room cool, quiet and dark
- *Don't consume caffeine close to bedtime
- *Don't use nicotine or alcohol
- *Establish a bed and wake-time sleep routine-even for the weekends
- *Don't eat, drink, or exercise within a few hours of your bedtime
- *Don't leave your homework for the last minute
- *Try to avoid the TV, computer and telephone in the hour before you go to bed
- *Have a night time routine to teach your body the signals that it's time for bed
- *Keeping a diary or to-do list and write down notes before bed time and you'll be less likely to stay awake worrying or stressing.

Nationwide Children's Hospital suggests contacting your child's doctor if your child has trouble falling asleep at night, snores, or seems excessively sleepy during the day time. There could be medical reasons for their sleep issues, such as sleep apnea, narcolepsy, incomnia, or restless leg syndrome, all of which are treatable, as stated by the NSF.

TGIF from Lenny

As far as starts to the year go, this was an extremely positive one. Our new class of 101s are a wonderful group of kind and creative kids filled with energy. They were welcomed in our first days by returning students and staff brimming with positivity. Here are some highlights.

401s had a 99% attendance rate the first week and are making things happen right out of the gate. Thomas and Kyle continued their college classes at SUNY Morrisville that they began a couple weeks prior to the start of school. Melissa and Nikki have also begun college classes at Bryant & Stratton studying Criminal Justice. In addition to college classes, 401s have begun shadow days and internships. Kyle returned to Goodman Automotive, Bri and Alyssa had a day at The Cheeky Monkey production facility, RJ was with STUDCO, Kaleb went to Tama Lacrosse, and Nyla had a very successful shadow day at Loretto.

401s have also dug right into their senior thesis projects (STPs) and are completing proposals. These will be presented to and scrutinized by a panel on September 27th. There will be much more information about these projects in later communications as they are a centerpiece of the 401 year.

For workshops, I have two sections of Living Environment and one section of Empirical reasoning. I am really excited about the year based on the attitudes of the students in the first few days. In ER we have already begun identifying the environmental issues we will seek solutions for.

Advisory has been a mix of clerical items pertaining to STPs, screeners and internships, reading our book, and planning for the overnight. My 401s still have that creative energy that's hard to harness sometimes, but I'll take that over apathy any day.

Looking ahead we have our

overnight coming up this week and STP panels the week after that. It's certainly going to be a busy senior year for our 401s and I am confident a successful one as well. Have a great week!



TGIF from Greg

The beginning our **201** school year had an awesome start. Our kids have chosen some really good internships so far. Some of these include: Photography, Tama Lacrosse Company, Ichor, metal working, woodworking, culinary and others. They have started a project that will teach them about the New York State Stock Exchange, and will be competing in the Central New York Stock Exchange Competition on Channel 9 news this upcoming fall. Our fall athletes are off to a great start with their season and our own Claire Virnoche is killing it as a Varsity Soccer captain. Morgan, Devyn, Mason, Austin, JJ, Gabe went to the Samaritan Center this week, kicking off their service learning by cleaning the building and bagging cold lunches for the homeless guests to take out. We are beginning our first tenth grade learning plans for exhibitions, and are excited to see what projects the students come up with; most of them are trying out new internships that are out of their comfort zones, learning new skills and meeting new mentors, making us very proud. Our beginning of the year STAR Math indicator showed growth after a great summer. We wrapped up the week with an exhausting active day at Morrisville, where our students played soccer, walked the track, played lacrosse, tail tag, and soccer. After all the physical movement we brought it back in with a quiet game of *Werewolf* after lunch, enjoying our time together as an advisory family once again. All in all, it's been a wonderful start to the 2019 - 2020 school year.



TGIF from David

I was just talking with someone the other day about how long I have been at Big Picture. I think it has been my whole life. I think I was born here, raised here, and now I have my own habitat in my office. Actually, Jessica's son (who is in Kindergarten) asked her if I live in my office. How astute that young one is, I do indeed live in my office. Not really. In fact, I spent the most time away from my office this summer than I ever have. I had the great fortune of being able to stay home with my son on paternity leave. So, my office sat lonely, empty, and dark. At least, I assume. Having stayed home with son, I had a lot of time to think about my role at Big Picture. There is only so much conversation you can have with an infant, so I had a lot of time to think. I am still processing a lot of that thinking, so I hope to reflect on that as the weeks roll by.

I can feel a positive energy filling our school. The beginning of the year always has a positive feeling and we are going to have to work hard to maintain it. So far, our PBIS has rolled out seamlessly. I know it makes students feel good to get recognized for their positive contributions to our school, but it also feels good to dole out those positive points. TeTe really did a phenomenal job of researching sites in Syracuse that can help make her project a reality. I watched her avoid distraction from her peers, remove herself to a solitary space, and get to work. The best part

about all of it is her project is meant to help young people in the City of Syracuse. I gave her a PBIS point to help her fill her card. JJ also jumped right on trying to find an internship. Now, we have to help spread that drive for an internship throughout the entire school.

We had our first whole school visit to SUNY Morrisville on Friday. I can definitely tell we went because my legs hurt from running around. I had to show students that I am dangerous on the Tail Tag field. No matter how old you actually are, our students always assume we are way older. They get a bit over confident, so I had to remind them that even an "old" person like me could keep up with them if needed.

Next week, is a busy week. We have our Overnight Trip. This can be a highlight of the year. This is also the best opportunity we have to build a strong beginning to our relationships with students. I look forward to it, especially since I get to use my son as an excuse as to why I cannot spend the night and sleep on the most uncomfortable sofa in the world. Don't tell the rest of the staff I said that.



TGIF from April

What a great start to the new school year we have had!

The new 101 advisory is full of positive energy and laughter. They are learning the process of Big Picture style learning through group work. Each group is working on one of the core components of learning- ER, SR, QR, CO. It has allowed me to learn more about them as they work in their groups together.

The 101's have experienced many firsts already this year. They enjoyed their first Big Picture breakfast and design challenge. They have been working through their first independent reading book (IR) and their first trip to Morrisville. Some have had their first 1:1 meeting. They have attended workshops and exploratory. Through all the new challenges and learning the 101's have been very conscientious when it comes to being in the place they are supposed to be, at the time they are supposed to be there. WOW! I am so impressed by them!

They each have distinctive personalities, yet they are able to disagree, give space, correct each other, and laugh together. For our school wide overnigher T-shirt design they all had very different ideas on color and design, yet they were able to agree to a long-term design that would 'grow' over our 4 years together. That moment told

me a great deal about their drive and commitment to having a great 4 years together at Big Picture! It has been very enjoyable for Hollis and I as we



get to know this great group of young people. I always enjoy the 1st day of USH workshop and observing the students work as a group and then as individuals on recalling/learning the locations of states. They also have been working on a 9/11-remembrance project. I'm looking forward to a great year ahead!

