

LaFayette Big Picture TGIF

2020

APRIL 17

We are **PRESENT, POSITIVE** and **PASSIONATE!**



**BIG
PICTURE
LEARNING**

VIRTUAL VISIT

8TH GRADE

VISIT WITH LAFAYETTE
BIG PICTURE STAFF

**BIG PICTURE STAFF WILL
BE AVAILABLE TO ANSWER
ANY QUESTIONS YOU HAVE
AND SHARE ABOUT OUR
SCHOOL!**

**APR 23
2:00 PM**

**GOOGLE
MEET**

[MEET.GOOGLE.
COM/HKW-
HRHK-RTE](https://meet.google.com/hkw-hrhc-rte)

Hello! We miss you! Things have certainly changed in the last four weeks! This TGIF is a reflection from the staff on how things have changed and celebration of things that have stayed the same. We hope you are all safe and well.

We are holding a virtual visit for 8th graders next week.

We will be holding a virtual Open House on Tuesday, May 12th for Parents and Students. Details coming soon, but mark your calendars for May 12 from 6-7.

TGIF from Lenny

There is no shortage of obstacles, challenges and disappointments when describing educating during a pandemic quarantine. My intention is not to dismiss them, but rather to use them as a lens through which to view many successes.

The 401's have continued to hold advisory using google meet 4 times a week. We spend some time chatting, catching up and just being social. The topic often turns to COVID-19 but I try to limit that. We check in on goals, take care of requirements and read together. So far we have read a book and two short stories during quarantine. I love that my 401s still volunteer to read and a generally engaged in the stories. That has not been lost.

After advisory ends, the one on ones begin. Erin and I field questions and reach out to students throughout the day to question, assist, trouble shoot, facilitate and sometimes just listen. The school day is no longer defined as the time spent in a building. Honestly, it never really was though.

I am pleased to hear how some of our 401s are spending their time and internalizing this bizarre situation. Some, like Alyssa are involved in helping others. Alyssa is helping her family provide meals to essential medical staff. Some 401s are spending more time outside to break up the monotony of their days and fulfilling PE requirements in the process. Many report

that they are spending more time with family. As a result, they have demonstrated empathy for the struggles their parents face with job loss and the economic consequences. And finally, as they have been thrust into a new level of academic independence, many have demonstrated that they do have motivation, drive, and time management skills. And though this isn't true for all 401s, it is very clear which students need more support from staff.

Earlier in the week I set up eight, 15 min blocks of time for 401s to join a google meet throughout the day. We were conducting learning plan and STP meetings to adjust to the new reality. Six out of eight were in the space on time ready to go. Not perfect, but a good start. Is this what they will need to do in the fall for college classes, job interviews or even jobs? There are many questions like this and although we don't know the answers, we know we need to prepare.

I was working with my Better Lesson coach earlier and she pointed out that everything our students are doing now is essentially an artifact, a record of this unique moment in the history of education. What an opportunity this presents for students and educators. There are many things that I miss about teaching in person, but I will continue to look for the opportunities that are presented during this time. Stay safe and stay positive.

TGIF from Walt

Distance learning has been challenging for staff and students alike, but I feel like we are starting to get the hang of things. I definitely miss being able to teach in person, and can't wait to get back to normal. Until then, I have been trying to make the best of the situation by utilizing new technologies and coming up with new and interesting topics/strategies to keep students engaged.

In ELA workshops, we have largely been focusing on short stories and literary devices. Attendance has been a bit sporadic, so I have been focusing on short stories that can be completed in one workshop session. It has been difficult to do ELA via distance learning, and I definitely miss interacting with students in person. Although it can be a struggle, students are still making progress.

In the SAT workshop, we have been doing a combination of grammar based Kahoot, Vocabulary.com lessons and short story analysis. I am consistently surprised by how engaged students

are in this class, and I am actually seeing consistent growth in the students' grammar and vocabulary abilities. It has been going very well, and I look forward to this workshop each Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Although we were still in session during spring break, I enjoyed our week of various activities. On Friday, I was able to host a series of various online gaming sessions with students, and it was a really fun experience.

I have also been working with individual students and whole advisories on various projects and writing prompts. Scotty let take his advisory on a virtual tour of the catacombs one day, and April has had me push in to her advisory for ELA instruction. One of the things that I enjoy about distance learning is that I have more time to work with students one on one. I have been working with a few of the 401s on senior projects and autobiography writing. Even though we are working from home, there is never a dull moment during the school day.

TGIF from David

To recreate my typical day at Big Picture, I gathered my wife and son in the living room to hold our morning meeting. I passed out attendance awards to them. We are at 100% attendance! I also awarded them some PBIS points. My son currently has more points than my wife. I know my wife can catch up if she just believes she can do better. My son has his eye on the "Petting the Dog" prize. We had a PMU where we all danced to a song and then were dismissed to advisories. I pulled my son out of his advisory to talk about his career ambitions. We talked about his interests and how those interests can turn into an internship. His interests are kind of basic at the moment. He is only one years old, so we are working on those interests. So far, we have narrowed his interests down to dog care, teeth interest, lamp shoving, poking electrical outlets, knocking down stacked cups, dancing, funny faces, knocking on the windows and yelling, and long distance sippy cup throwing. So, I suppose he has quite a few interests, we just have to dig deeper to develop a strong interest based project and find the appropriate internship. I asked him to fill out his learning plan and he is taking his time. He just kind of stares at me when I push the papers his way and sometimes he gets defiant by crushing the papers up his hands. All in all, my days have not changed that much.

Seriously, I miss our school days, as I am sure

everyone does. But, we have to remain safe so we can reunite and make it stay that way.

So STEP can do its part, I have created a Google Site that includes information on colleges, careers, interesting articles, podcasts, and more. I want the Google Site to be informative and fun. It does require me to spend time searching for stories that I think students may like, or finding a music video to watch that provides some much needed levity. Thankfully, Kacee, our STEP/CSTEP advisor, is helping to add content. The site is updated every day.

This past week, I joined April's advisory to help students set up Career Zone accounts. Students can build a portfolio of work that includes projects they completed, internship information, build a resume, search for occupations, develop a career plan, and much more.

Everything is much harder now, to connect, to educate, and provide guidance. But, the relationships we have built shine through. I can see just how important those relationships are and have been. I always knew that, it is good to be reminded. I wish that reminder came under different circumstances, but you have to accentuate the positive.

From my bunker to yours, I miss everyone and when we can safely reunite lets throw the biggest party we've ever had.

TGIF from Christine

Hello from the Valley in Syracuse.

I've been watching my tulips and other spring flowers grow over the last few weeks. I recognized "stop and smell the roses" takes on a whole new meaning for me. The birds are lively in song. A woodpecker was knocking on a tree in the backyard, I found inner peace in those moments. Last week, Sue and Rosalie kicked off our Spring break activities at BP. I loved seeing all the students together in google meets. It boosted my spirits and I hope theirs too. The question was "what makes you happy?" was the theme of the day. It was enjoyable to watch the FlipGrid videos. They show how much family means to us and how music plays a role in our happiness too. On Tuesday, Jessica and I hosted a scavenger hunt, which had us outside before the weather changed. Olivia was so creative for getting 15

points for having 15 fish! Hollis showed us her pet stuffed bear named "Inga"! We celebrated Exploratory day with Lenny and Erin on Wednesday. Our students are very talented. We saw cooking videos, and arts and crafts and excellent guitar playing by Randy Neu. Walt took us to a new level with IMovie showing us how to make hummus. Our spirit continued on Thoughtful Thursday with April and Hollis. Our group has such grateful hearts. I bet the recipients of these gestures were as touched as I was to see what they accomplished. We finished out the week with David, Scotty and Walt. A day filled with gaming, "Kahoot" music trivia, Marvel movie trivia and a film fest to finish the day. It was one of my favorite weeks by far at Big Picture. As we continue to keep active with our students, remember to take time to smell the roses and find your inner peace.

TGIF from April

Distance Learning is interesting, challenging and time consuming. Everyone is feeling the challenge. What I do appreciate however, is seeing the 101 faces each day. They are expressing how much they are missing each other and actually attending school in the brick and mortar building. They have come to appreciate the camaraderie our space at Big Picture gives them.

I miss seeing them gather each morning before school in our advisory room visiting, laughing and just being together. Yet, they have not completely abandoned their early morning activity. I open up the 101 Google Meet each morning by 7:30 am because many of our students want to get online and visit with each other before we begin our school day. So as much as things have changed for us, they are remaining the same in spirit. I love my student's ability to adapt, solve problems, and challenge each other. This may be a perplexing situation for our world, but despite their confusion and uncertainty, our 101's are working on rising and thriving! I would like all my 101 parent and guardian to know that while we continue doing academics, which is extremely important, I have also been working on supporting the 101's emotional well being during this stressful societal change. We have focused on teen mindfulness, self-care, getting outside and away from technology daily, and being thoughtful toward others. I continue to remind the 101's that Hollis and I (as well as the rest of Big Picture staff) are here to support them in any possible way if they are feeling anxious during the Nations Shelter in Place order. Please feel free to let me know if you are noticing any emotional/physical changes with your 101 where you feel they (or you) need support. Our school



counselors and psychology interns are also available for students.

Parents and guardians -the single most important educational 'thing' you can do for your 101 teen/student during this time is keep them on our 101 schedule.

The 101 distance-learning schedule helps them feel a sense of normalcy. They are missing their peers, and it helps them when we all can see and hear each other. Please schedule family activities after 3:00 pm M-F. As we do get online at the latest by 8:00 am each and every day, (they know expectations are that they are readily available during school hours 8 am-3 pm) please support our distance learning class

time/day the same as if they were in the school building.

Meet times are very important to the 101's educational progress. Please support them in their school attendance via the Internet Google Meet. It is imperative that they do their course work, I cannot stress that enough; including PE!

You can check their Google classrooms daily to help support their academic progress in each subject area.

They will all look back on this someday and be amazed at the resilience of our students, community and Nation.

Right now I am here to support your child/my student through this difficult time AND keep them progressing academically. We have had school spirit days, Fun

Friday, a YMCA dance, Thoughtful Thursdays, and a Dance Party all online! They are earning Brownie Points when they complete academic goals! 😊

Hollis and I are trying to keep it fun as well as real 😊.

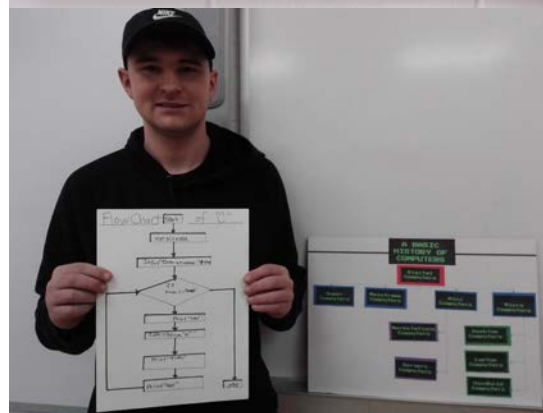
As always, I thank you for your support and patience; I am here for you as well if you have any questions or concerns.

TGIF from Jessica

Distance Learning couldn't have come at a better time. We had just finished trimester 2 exhibitions, the students were able to show off their work and we were about to start the making of new learning plan projects. The 301s had some great exhibitions, I hope you enjoy the photos of some of their work.

Before distance learning our advisory started reading *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee. At this time, students were given various reading jobs that tied to group work jobs. The summarizer, recorder, historian, and predictor had the job of writing a news article. The artist and geographer worked together to draw a town map. The analyst, fact finder, and clarifier made a timeline of events. The infer-er and applicast established a list of the town social norms. The last group consisted of the data tracker, vocabulist, elemental explorer, and caricaturist who worked to make character webs. This system worked well, it gave the students a reading skill to focus on while reading the book and it encouraged engagement. The students were then able to view each of the other group's work and cross examine for accuracy. Once they mastered their job's skill, we shifted roles and they were given a new skill to master.

Since we have started distance learning, among many other things, we had to create and shift to a new system. We are reading the book in google meets and independently. We

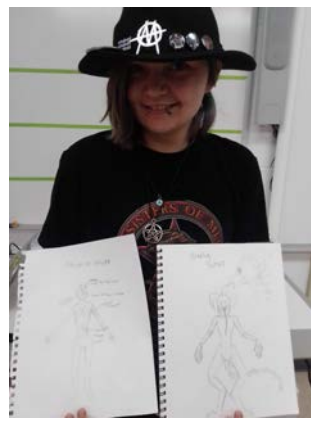
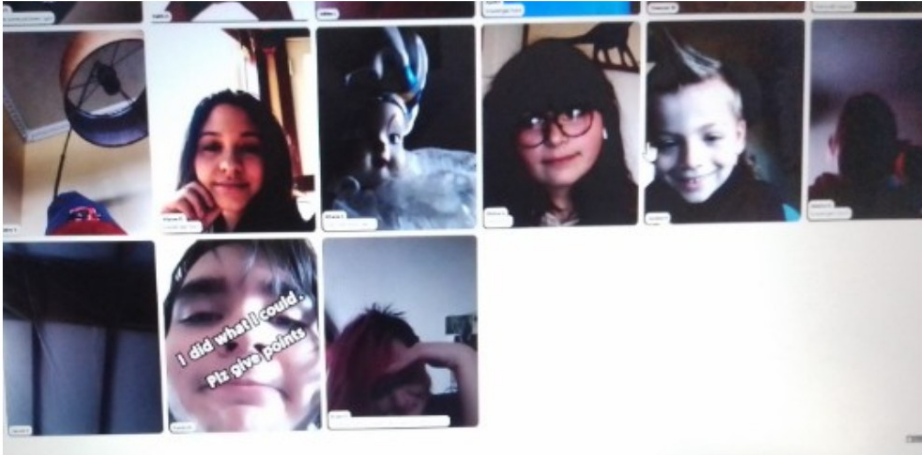
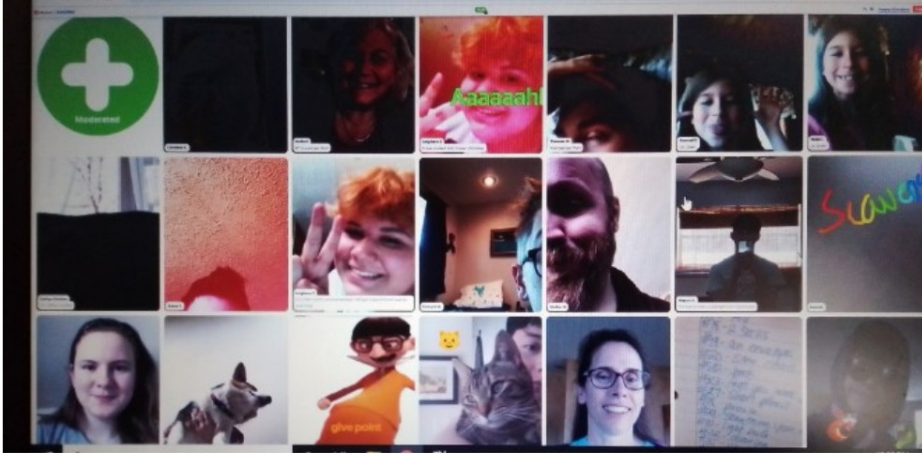


have also done gallery walks and historical walks in relation to the history of the book. One area the 301s are strong in is understanding social norms and discussing different perspectives.

Another thing we shifted was our spring break plans. Over the break, Christine and I hosted a Big Picture Scavengerhunt! Students looked for and made items inside and outside. Then they posted videos and pictures of their findings on flipgrid. As a school, it was fun to learn how to use new programs and watch everyone's videos.

Overall I am impressed with everyone's ability to quickly adjust to a whole new way to learn! For the most part students have been communicating and doing well with their work.

We have to keep up our stamina and persevere until we can return to the school for instruction. I cannot stress enough, how important it is for all students to be completing their work and communicating daily with their teachers. I need to hear more from my math students for attendance and credit for work. I am available to students for help, just sent an email and we can schedule a meeting time. Stay strong, be safe, and persevere.



TGIF from Scotty and Nikki

Well to say the 201's have had an interesting few weeks is an understatement. The group has really shown resilience and effort over this trying time. Their spirits are up and their sense of humor has not slacked off. That being said they are doing some really dynamic work with distance learning. We start off the day in advisory and update on just about everything. Before we set goals for the day and begin the advisory morning lesson we share and reflect about many things. This keeps the students feeling as normal as possible. Thursday will be our second time doing a "NO DINNER DINNER" meeting, (those who remember Elaine from Seinfeld will understand). We meet at 7pm to reflect on the week, play a game on Kahoot, and spend some quality time together as a family. Walt has built in ELA standards with vocabulary and writing activities that engage the kids in a bunch of different ways. His online vocabulary games and activities have proven effective, (Thanks Walt). Nikki has really pushed the kids to stay online and track the students time on task. We have noticed journal entries, running records from outside reading and workshop classes have been a work in progress but successful in this long distance

learning. The kids are grasping the idea of self advocating and responsibility with structuring their learning plans. Aiden has been working on airbrushing sneakers and creating an artistic outlet with his learning plan. Secorrah has started her first learning plan, deciding to research the nursing field, which she plans to enter after graduation. Morgan has been killing it in her college classes, finding balance and time management even more important this trimester. She has been working on a personal interest for this learning plan; researching the use of essential oils as salves for healing and aromatherapy. Evan has been working hard on his go kart still. It's almost complete! He's been ordering more parts and is adding the completion to his learning plan. The Shark Tank students have been immersed in NEWSELA articles and portfolio building in the Career Zone. This website is a site that will help them research new career ideas, build resumes and help them to get their required internship hours for the Big Picture Learning Program. Over the next few weeks they will continuously build on their post school interests and future collegiate courses they may want to take. We're so very proud of the 201s and how they have handled themselves during this trying time!

Stay Classy Big Picture