

# LaFayette Big Picture TGIF

2020

SEPTEMBER 25

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



One of the activities that we took advantage of this week was a school-wide 5K. On Tuesday, we participated in Laps for Lew. It was 5K walk/run scholarship fundraiser and helped to raise awareness of asthma. It was beautiful weather and our students had even better attitudes and participation. I was so proud of all of our students completing the walk/run. I was proud of

myself as well!

It was a fantastic way to feel connected to our Big Picture network while doing good for others.

Our 101s will be presenting thier Who Am I next week and our 401s have their STPs presentations!





## TGIF from Lenny

Another full week in the books and it was busting at the seams with activity. Here's a breakdown.

We took advantage of the great weather in ER this week and spent most of our time outside. On Monday we staked out our experimental plots in the garden and worked the soil. On Wednesday we went to the woods to learn about the different types of soil and collect some nutrient rich soil for our plots. And on Friday we were back in the woods identifying plants and trees. We used field guides and an app called plantnet. It's a great app for identifying plants. Thank you Nikki for the recommendation.

In LE we built models of amino acids, tested indicators for sugar and starch and also went to the woods for plant and tree identification. My LE section is comprised of 101s and I'm getting to know this group quite well. 101s have also been using the shop to complete their Who Am I projects as well as their 9/11 projects for US History. They continue to be a delightful group to work with.

We have the good fortune of having 2 sheds to store tools and materials in. The sheds were in need of some TLC so I requested some paint from the district and put together a crew. 301s Caitlin, Aiden, Carson and Kyler stepped up as the first crew and they did not disappoint. The group worked hard and did a professional job. We will continue painting on Tuesday weather permitting.

We have many exciting projects planned around agriculture, woodworking and building. Every day at school is a gift and we intend to make good use of it. Have a great week!



## TGIF from April

What a whirlwind the first two full weeks of school have been! 201's have been pounding out the academics, while at the same time we have been trying to get outside and enjoy the nice weather while it is still possible.

A highlight (for me) of this week was reading the journal entries the 201's wrote after walking/running the 5 k on Tuesday. We went on the ZOOM meeting with the BP Network and followed along as the ZOOM presenters led us through stretching and we learned about Lou, the reason for the 5k and the importance of understanding asthma. Then we walked (some ran part way) 3+ miles. I did not hear one complaint the entire time; they all actively participated and wrote beautiful entries in their journals the next day on how they enjoyed participating.

Many 201's presented their health projects to Mrs. Amidon this week. Mrs. Amidon said they did an excellent job and she is looking forward to the rest of the 201's presenting.

We also worked on improving our writing this week focusing on power words and adjectives.

We presented our 9/11 Remembrance Poetry Projects. I was so engaged with their presentations, that I forgot to take photos. However, I did think to snap a couple when Jacob began presenting his 3 D printer visual of the Twin Towers. They were very detailed!

We have spent time in the last two weeks learning how to try new things, to listen to our peers give us advice when they can do something that we can't and understanding that the academics have moved up a level as we move toward Gateway.

Students are busy filling out their learning plans (due Monday), which I will admit is difficult considering we have to plan for the 'unknown'. Meaning: often students will make a LP knowing that they have access to resources –people and materials- at school. However, with the uncertain times of COVID 19, we have to be sure that whatever plans students have for their LTI learning they can accomplish those goals even if we get sent home without advance notice. It just adds one more level of deeper thinking for the students. I think most of the 201's are at the top of their game. Most are rising to the challenges.

Considering all the challenges for us all, I have been trying to make time to recognize their efforts in little ways each day. Sometimes it is a treat (they are always hungry) and sometimes it's a favorite advisory game or going outside to do an activity. They are earning PBIS points like crazy! ☺ I am determined to try and keep the stress we are all feeling, by wearing masks, social distancing and trying to do on line and in person learning, at bay. This week was HARD to find the time to get outside due to all the other requirements that pulled us away from advisory that is why the 5 k walk was so great!

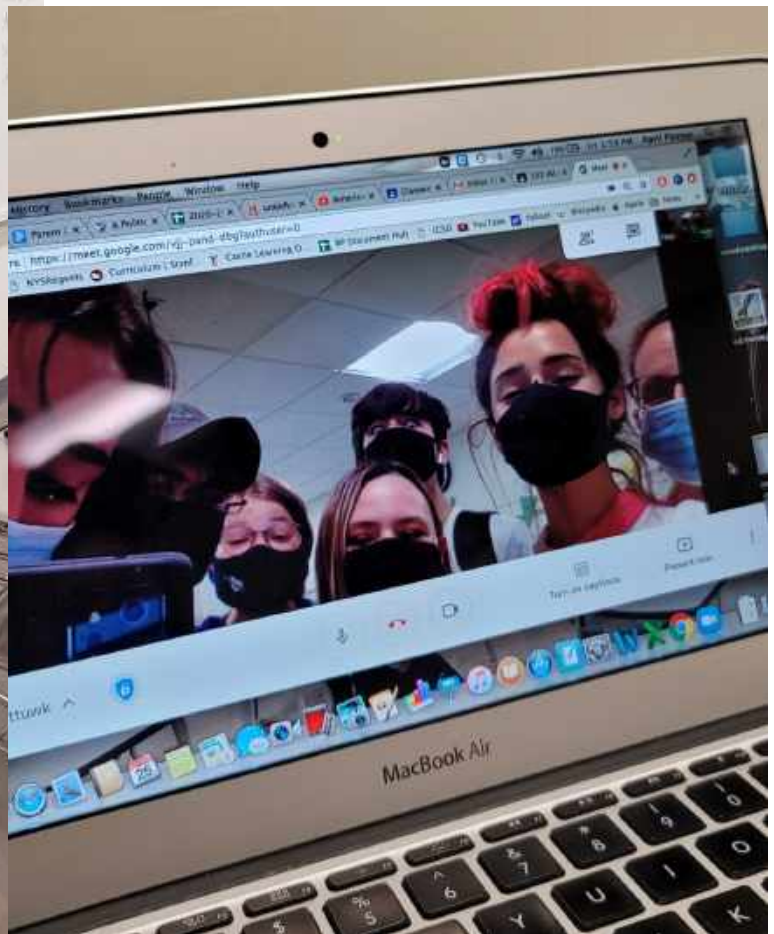
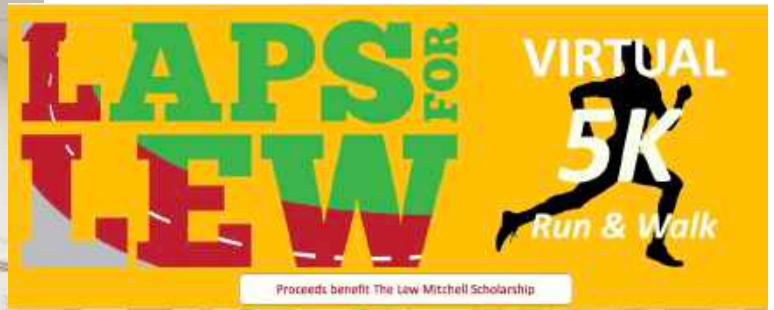
Crystal took the advisory outside for me on Thursday afternoon as Hollis and I were both working separately with online students. It has been great getting to have Crystal and Rosalie stop in at different times throughout the week. We also enjoy when Susan comes down to visit us.

I brought in a HUGE tub of mints for the 201's considering mask wearing after lunch can be a bit 'much'. The 201's love them! The mints are gone already lol – so parents if you can/want to send some in to refill our bucket, that would be great! We will be doing our Work Keys testing in the next week or so, and it is important that our attendance remains great for that testing, as it must be proctored and taken in school.

Please remember to send a snack to school with your teen as lunch is late this year and they are ALWAYS hungry. We have 'snack time' around 10 am each day. Also please recall Mr. Belfield's announcement that ALL students are allowed to have free breakfast and lunch so please utilize this resource, encourage your child to eat at school. Many don't eat breakfast or lunch and they get 'hangry', it really impedes their education and that of others when they act out in their 'hanger'. COVID 19 has allowed for ALL LaFayette students to get free meals, including both in person and virtual learners. Which is fantastic! Please take advantage of this important legislation and encourage your child to eat breakfast and lunch.

As always, reach out to me with any questions or concerns. Peace.





## TGIF from Jessica

Amongst all of the changes and new ways of doing things, it is even more imperative to take time to care for yourself. We started bringing awareness of this need to our students about two years ago and we worked on instilling the skills of box breathing and quieting our mind. Since we taught these skills, the staff has witnessed students using them as resources when they are stressed or upset. The students learned that just by taking a minute or two to recenter and do a calming activity can reset our minds and prepare us for a better outcome.

Over the summer the district offered several book studies for professional development. Christine and I participated in reading *Trauma Through a Child's Eyes: Awakening the Ordinary Miracle of Healing* by Peter A. Levine and Maggie Kline. This book was a fantastic read that focused on healing from trauma and providing an abundance of tools, activities, and strategies. These resources can be easily utilized by parents, teachers, students, medical professionals, counselors, really anyone working with children. Any resource we can teach children that can help them when they feel overwhelmed is time well spent.

One day this week I took the first three minutes of advisory to show the students how to center themselves. We started with putting both feet flat on the ground and then did a few different activities to focus on our feet and the pressure as they connect to the ground. I used the Calm app to play a melody and then I asked the students to set positive intentions for the day. We started with creating a personal I can statement, then an I will put in the effort/time to overcome \_\_\_\_ challenge, and we ended with thoughts of confidence in our own judgement and decision making. Christine and I were both impressed with all of the 401s at the end of the day. The amount of work they accomplish was stunning especially considering that over the days before they were stressed about their STP projects, they didn't know how to begin, and they were procrastinating.

This week we have our STP panel proposals on Friday. Each day we will take a moment to center ourselves and set positive intentions. Through these moments we can set up the opportunities for success not only for this week, but also as a future resource.

## TGIF from Scotty and Nikki

The 301s had a busy third week of school. Most of the students completed their WorkKeys early in the week, and we're happy to say that they all passed them! It was great to see our virtual students in person for the first time this year. We have also started our projects for our learning plans; Claire is building and programming a robot for her exhibition, as well as incorporating her college math course into what she plans to present. Adam had a meeting with Walt's wife, Autumn, to learn the process of video editing. He would like to learn more about how to do this and is planning on creating a short film for his project. Evan has been going to BOCES daily to work on his welding skills and certifications and Austin has decided he wants to get into the animation field. He is starting with a

flipbook for his first project. Caitlyn has been hard at work in her OCC creative writing course, and is busy creating a poll for the students at Big Pic to see what type of literature they prefer. Devyn is choosing a recipe to create for his exhibition, deciding that he would like to stick with exploring a culinary career. Hayden is basing his exhibition around fitness this trimester, using the running log from his coach to assist him in keeping track of his exercise. Next week we are going to watch a few of the seniors' present their Senior Thesis Project Proposals so we can prepare for our own senior year! We are also finishing up our Gateway that was cut short last year with the quarantine.



## TGIF from David

Last weekend just got away from me, and by the time Sue came knocking on my text messages for a TGIF it was too late to get one completed. This week, I am squeezing it in early. A lot has changed for all of us this school year. A lot has changed for all of us in our lives, I do not need to say why. But, I have to say that the changes for me at Big Picture has been a role adjustment. I still serve our students through the Science and Technology Entry Program of SUNY Morrisville. I still connect our students with internships. I have the added role of co-advising the 101s with Walt this year. I feel like I have been able to positively impact students in a much more direct way so far this year and it has been very rewarding.

Enough about me, that is difficult to type, but the real focus should be on the students. That focus is easy. The 101s have proven to be a collective group of diverse learners. Their interests are rooted in diverse areas, which has allowed us to be creative with products for their Who Am I Exhibitions. Those exhibitions begin this coming Monday.

From veterinarian medicine, to welding, to electrical engineering, to carpentry, to art, and everything in between these 101s are ready to make Walt and I work. I believe we are up to the challenge. It was obvious from the beginning that we should get these 101s working with their hands and allowing their creativity to take over their Who Am I Projects. Students have to complete specific parts of their Who Am I Project, such as Future Map, Past Map, and Oral History. Cody built a model of a veterinary hospital for his Future Map. He wants to be a veterinarian. While building his veterinary hospital, he learned about the path to become a veterinarian, and learned he has to overcome his fear of snakes. He will have to do a clinical rotation if he pursues his DVM, where he will have to handle snakes. While building his model, he managed to learn some math during the process. Cody's veterinary hospital is just one example of the kinds of projects the 101s have made to represent themselves for the Who Am I project. Also, with the addition of building projects, students have had to learn the lesson of time management, and project management. These are great skills to start building at the beginning of their Big Picture careers because

they will need to use it for every learning plan they build.

This week, we had a visit from Susan Johnston, SUNY Morrisville STEP/CSTEP Director, to lead the 101s in a conversation about leadership. STEP plans to conduct a monthly leadership series to educate students on how to become leaders and utilize those skills for advancement in their personal goals.

If any of our mentors are reading this TGIF, I did send out a letter asking if internships are a possibility for you this year. We are impacted by Covid in new ways, and we know it is the same for all of you. We also have the option for virtual internships. Please email me if you are able to host a student in person, or you can be a virtual mentor. Internships are the most valued part of our students' education we want to preserve and maintain during this irregular time. We need all the help from our wonderful mentors that we can get.

Welcome back to a new school year, welcome back to our TGIF, and welcome back to my weekly reflection.

