

LaFayette Big Picture TGIF

2021

DECEMBER 17

We are PRESENT, POSITIVE and PASSIONATE!



We still need mentors in a variety of categories. Here are some of the areas we are looking for mentors: Auto repair, computer programming, video editing, engineering, animal care, animal rescue, and construction. Please reach out if you know of anyone that might serve as a mentor. They have the opportunity to get involved in some exciting learning.

Thank you to all of our mentors and adults who continue to support our students. We are so appreciative of those that participate on exhibition or senior thesis panels. Those that volunteer time for informational interviews, shadow days, or internships impact our students in so many powerful ways. We believe these real world experiences are the most important part of our instructional program. We could not do what we do without the continued support of our real world partners.

As the calendar year winds down, we would like to thank all of those that continue to support our students and our work. Thank you to the District Office staff for all you do behind the scenes to support us. Thank you to transportation and our drivers who see our students off to their sites and college classes. Thank you to our friends in food service who are so welcoming and kind to us. Thank you to all of the teaching staff in all of the buildings. We appreciate the relationships we have formed. Thank you to the Board of Education and Mr. Belfield for continuing to support our work and encourage our students.

Happy Holidays to you and yours. See you in 2022!

TGIF from Lenny

It was one of those weeks where you could just tell students were wrapping up their learning plans. I say this because once a student commits to the right project, the moment is evident and things get rolling rather quickly. Here are a few highlights.

Dayton is determined to make a custom skateboard. This will be a very involved process that requires learning new skills and techniques. We plan to use pallet hardwood so on day one we were breaking down pallets, removing nails and running the boards through a thickness planer. This is going to be a journey that we will all learn a great deal from. Jade found plans for a rustic coffee table and quickly we modified the dimensions and made a cut sheet. We will be starting that project before break. Jacoby has a great project in the works that will contribute to the 201 Gateway celebration at year's end. More on this to come.

We had planted almost all of our garlic weeks ago but there was a small amount that didn't make it in the ground. With the unseasonably fair weather on Thursday, we decided to plant the rest. Lucas, Luke, Lucas (not a typo) and I loaded up the rototiller and headed to the field. We had a little trouble with the tiller but completed the job regardless. These are three students who know how to work. They also taught me quite a bit about small engines. Learning from students is definitely a huge perk of working in a Big Picture school.

In ER we continued to refine our science and engineering fair project ideas. We also conducted background research, began experiment design and generated preliminary materials lists. This endeavor will continue to be a large component of our ER course through the spring. In LE we tackled the Diffusion Through a Membrane State Lab this week. We completed the lab over two days and will wrap up the analysis on Monday. This is a great group to run labs with as they have proven that they can work independently.

We have many great projects in the works and only a few days until the long break. We will wrap up what we can and look forward to picking up where we left off after break. Happy Holidays!



TGIF from April

In USH this week we continued both the Question Formulation Technique and (QFT) and the GIST for reading as we looked at policies and organizations important during the progressive era. In Global studies, students continue to delve into testimonials from Holocaust survivors.

301 students should have finished their learning plans this week. Those who did are already busy researching and working on their new academic goals. 301s also did some social-emotional work this week. Holidays are a joyous time with family and friends, however, during the holidays some people experience stress for various reasons. Knowing this can happen, it is important to remind students of techniques they can use to handle stress and take care of their wellbeing; because often stressors make students avoid their academics.

I was able to do some site visits this week. I visited Grimshaw, K & H Motors, From the Ground Up, and Carol DiSalvo Photography. We are so thankful for the work these professionals put into teaching our students!

I didn't have to go far to meet with Carol ;). I was able to discuss my students who work with her and then she and I had a meeting with Jacob because Carol knows Jacob is interested in robotics. She went out of her way to take him to meet a colleague of hers who does robotic work. Jacob was able to meet and



talk with the gentleman. Then Carol found some resources to help Jacob take some first steps toward possibly achieving his goal in robotics if he chooses to take those steps. I SO appreciate Carol taking her own time to do this for Jacob. It is not in her scope as a mentor, - she is a photographer and is working with students teaching them photography- she did this extra work because she is an awesome human being who loves her students and really wholeheartedly invests in them.

The guys at K & H Motorsports are utilizing Coleby's skill of hands on work and teaching him an enormous amount of new skills. They are (I think) the perfect internship site for Colbey, and Jeff said they really enjoy him, and his help in the shop has been invaluable!

Julien has already learned so much at FTGU that he was able to lead his first horse, Lilly, this week!

Andrea said Julien is learning quickly and they are impressed with his ability to do something after only being shown once. We continue to seek professional mentors.

In my lunch bunch group this week we began making gingerbread houses. The students made the dough from scratch, refrigerated it for a couple days, and then cut the pieces out for baking. This Monday they will assemble and decorate their gingerbread. I am glad Lexi asked if we could do it because it is fun and got us in the holiday spirit!

Speaking of holiday spirit- I want to thank all of the BP students and staff who helped make 150 Christmas cards over the last 2 weeks for the residents of Loretto Nursing home! Happy Holidays to you and your families!

TGIF from Walt

This week was very busy. With holiday break coming up, everyone is busy finishing up project work and tying up loose ends from our first trimester while also creating new learning plans for when we come back from break. We had two new students join our advisory: Lydia and Braxtin. Lydia is interested in real estate, while Braxtin is interested in customizing cars. Much of this week was spent working on learning plans for next trimester, so it is a good time for new students to join us. We are excited to have them and are looking forward to working with them on projects.

Ronnie's Diner was open this past Thursday, and this week a new item was added to the menu: Soup Du'jour. That is because Jace joined our diner, and he is interested in making us new soups each week as part of his learning plan. This week, he made Cheesy Broccoli soup, and it went over very well. As part of Jace's project, he is going to be researching different types of soups around the world, and he will be offering them at Ronnie's diner. It is a great project, and I am excited to see what he comes up with for next week. Overall, the diner is going very well and it is expanding. Currently we have Ronnie, Austin, Jace, Evan, Airyahna and Jade working on Thursdays for an internship opportunity.

On Friday, our advisory had Learning Plan proposals. This involved students presenting their completed learning plans in order to gain feedback and refine their ideas. David and I are trying a new learning plan template, developed with student feedback, that is based around the equity in grading work we have been doing during professional development. We are hoping to focus more on skill and standard based evaluations that involve rubrics which can be used for cross curricular content matter and assessment. Overall, the presentations went very well, and I have already seen improvements on how students approached and filled in this learning plan over our older template. Next week we are all ready to start working on new projects.

Kat and Bruce are interested in doing more culinary projects this trimester, and they are hoping to develop and run "Kat's Kitchen" on Tuesdays. This will be similar to Ronnie's diner, but it will involve more complicated dishes that are breakfast themed. They previously had been working on learning how to make a variety of egg and crepe dishes, so this is a great way to demonstrate what they have been learning and provide them with a more professional cooking experience. Kat created a starting menu, completed a cost analysis and administered a survey to see what people would like the best. They are hoping to start with breakfast sandwiches, and will begin making prototypes this Tuesday for a taste test.

TGIF from Greg

This week the 401s made serious progress on their autobiographies. They are pushing to reach more than 20 pages by next week. Many of them are very close to this goal while others are already there. On Thursday 9 students joined the high school to visit OCC through the Advantage Program. They were able to apply to OCC if they wanted, and all took tours to find out what the campus is like. Some of them are planning on attending there after graduation so it was a good way for them to get some information and get a head start on their next steps. Carol took our photography students on multiple field trips this month. It is wonderful to see the learning taking place with these students. This week they went to see the Christmas Tree displays at the Everson. Josh is making strides in his Senior Thesis Project, staying in touch with the Lafayette Town Historian and planning how he wants to frame and showcase his historical photos. Austin is multitasking with an internship at the cafeteria as well

as Ronnie's Dinner. He is learning valuable life skills he will be able to use in the workplace later on. Claire is doing a tremendous job starting the robotics program at Grimshaw and soon at ONS, meeting with Mrs. Blossey and some students this week to gauge interest and set timelines for teaching. Our OCC students wrapped up their fall semester taking finals and writing papers this week. They seem relieved to have a break and showed great grit pushing through their college classes while working on their high school assignments. Adam has been working hard to get into Geneseo, filling out his applications and checking requirements. He has been writing his essay on ADHD and proving how much he has learned in psychology this semester. He is gaining a great understanding of psychology and the way disabilities affect people. Gabe has been working on his learning plan as well as juggling finals at OCC. He is healing from a shoulder injury he suffered in hockey and is pushing forward. Kyler presented his three designs he created for the sap shack's logo to the school for voting this week. He

TGIF from Greg (con't)

is moving along on his project and getting ready to make decisions on merchandise printing and figuring out sales methods. Next week the seniors will have a short week. They're filling in their Learning Plans for the new trimester and striving to hit their autobiography goals. Afterwards everyone will take a much needed break to spend time with their loved ones and recharge for the second part of their senior year!

TGIF from Jessica

This year, I have taken on the role of our Professional Learning Communities (PLC) facilitator. As a staff we have taken on the task of developing an equitable grading system. The first step of making any change is to determine a game plan and learn about what we are working to achieve. To build our knowledge, we are all reading through Grading for Equity: What It Is, Why It Matters, and How It Can Transform Schools and Classrooms by Joe Feldman along with additional resources. Grading for Equity has valuable insight into developing an equitable grading system. However, as a substantial book and meeting every other week, it takes some time to read through. Conveniently, Daphne had just given us a training on showing students how to read for the gist of a text. In efforts to cover as much text as possible, I resorted to speed dating. We divided up the chapters of the book so that each chapter was read by two staff members. The staff came to this Monday's meeting ready to share the gist of their chapter with their 'date'. We started by meeting our chapter buddy first and solidified our gist of the chapter and the most relevant information to share. We then rotated every 8 minutes to share our gist and listen to the gist of the remaining chapters. By the end of the meeting the staff mentioned hearing new ideas, liking the ideas, wondering about

ideas, and beginning to formulate ideas for an equitable grading system. We will continue to work through the book, but we are ready to start the next steps in our plan, to brainstorm and draft the start of an equitable grading system.

Wes has recently joined the 101 advisory. Aiden, from the 401 advisory, shared his project work on designing sneakers with Wes. Since then, Wes has been sketching and designing sneaker after sneaker. This is creative and passionate learning that is 100% student motivated. I truly enjoy seeing students, such as Wes, invested in their learning and sneaking in any moment they can to work on it.

