

LaFayette Big Picture TGIF

2022

JANUARY 14

We are PRESENT, POSITIVE and PASSIONATE!



This TGIF was a tough one to write. In fact, I wanted to skip it in order to avoid my reflection. Avoidance is a strategy that is used often, but not a recommended one. Avoidance is not the strategy we are going to use at Big Picture.

We had a significant break in our school culture this week. The breakdown in our norms and the expectations we have for ourselves and others has come into question. When things like this happen, groups can make large sweeping swings or changes in how they operate or they can ignore events. We cannot and will not do either. As a whole, both students and staff, we will be answering the questions of what went wrong, where our individual responsibilities lie, what we want to be different for ourselves and for our schoolmates. We will work to rebuild what broke down and reinforce the things that are good. I look forward to the growth in our school culture and in ourselves. We can do better. We will do better. We will be better.

We are also a few short weeks away from another round of student exhibitions. If you are interested in being a panelist, please let us know so we can find a time that will fit your schedule. Thank you to those who have reached out with mentor connections. We are still in need. Let us know if you can help!

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.

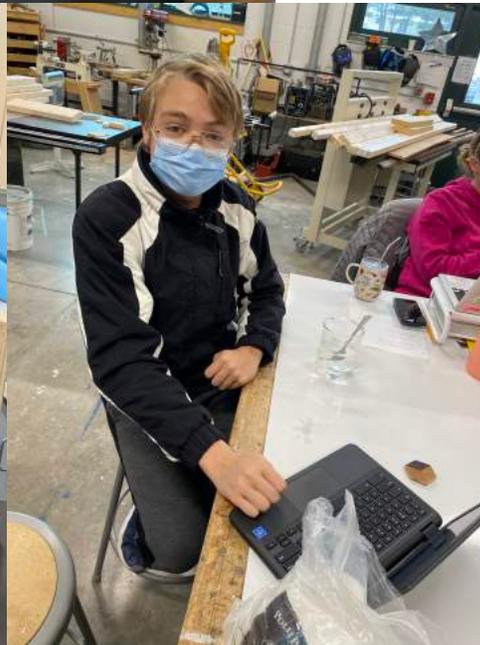
TGIF from Lenny

Upon returning from break, we had a renewed sense of purpose and urgency as exhibitions approach. Many students met with me to plan next steps or beginning steps for their projects. Here is a peek.

Jacoby continued his mini golf element as we worked out dimensions and materials. When the project is complete, Jacoby will have 3 mini golf putting greens with various obstacles. We are building based on images not plans, so there is a great deal of reverse engineering and customizing needed. It is encouraging to see that Jacoby remembers and applies skills gained from making the Gaga pit and planter boxes for Grimshaw Elementary last year.

Jade found plans for a rustic coffee table that she wanted to build. We gathered the necessary materials before break, and finally had everything in place to begin. We met some obstacles early on as the instructions had some gaps. Jade also decided to modify the design to create a slightly smaller table with a solid bottom. Jade demonstrated prior knowledge of many of the tools and techniques employed in the build. She also quickly picked up new skills and did most of the work independently. We have some final sanding and staining to do and then the project will be complete.

We had some trouble with our rototiller the last time we used it and I really wanted to get it fixed before



we put it away for the winter. Luke M. volunteered to assess and fix the machine. He quickly found the issue and requested a few parts. After cleaning the carburetor and replacing the spark plug and a fuel line, the rototiller runs like its new. Luke also saw the need for a boot brush for the shop so he built one from scratch. We appreciate his initiative, work ethic, and skills.

In ER we are learning about the James Webb Space Telescope that was launched on Dec 24, 2022 towards its final destination 1.5 million kilometers from Earth at Lagrange Point 2. Realizing that to even remotely understand how this telescope works, we need to first understand light, mirrors and lenses. Our first endeavor was to make light boxes. Some students worked in pairs and others independently to build the boxes that we will later use to study how light rays behave.

In LE, each student gave a mini report on a human body system to begin the unit. Now we are digging deeper as we explore each system's organs, disorders and ways to maintain health. We are currently using our study of the digestive system to learn about nutrition and healthy eating habits.

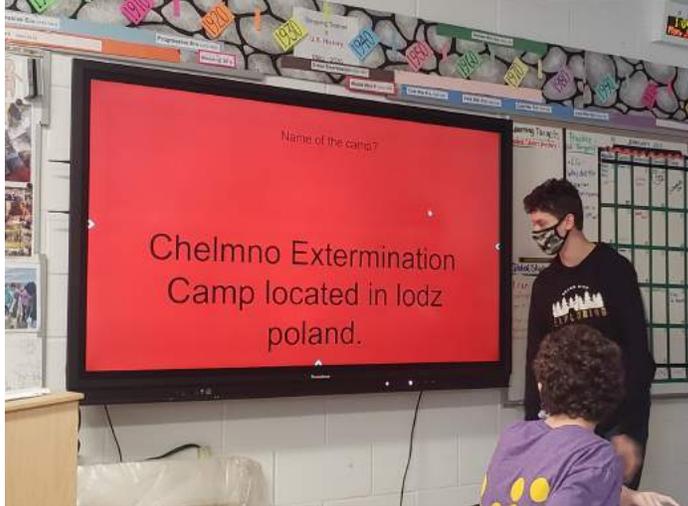
Stay warm and have a wonderful week!

TGIF from April

The new year has hit us hard. Many 301s have been out of school with illness. It is very strange for us as typically we have pretty good attendance as a whole. We are certainly looking forward to getting us all back together soon and being our usual loud, rambunctious selves!

In the meantime, I will back fill. Previously Jacob had a virtual meeting with Carole from Kenya to introduce himself and an idea he is formulating. I enjoyed sitting back and watching the conversation; as well as how Jacob handled the difficult situations that arise when you are attempting to converse with someone halfway around the world over a spotty internet connection. Add to that it was the day before the holiday break and the HS bell schedule was bursting with holiday songs over the loudspeaker/PA system interrupting the google meet. Jacob was mortified, but I think Carole found it amusing :).

Elijah again is working with Meagan Smith on his learning plan goals, which is an awesome pairing. We have welcomed Peggy from LPP and she is forming a relationship with Jace which is awesome. Hollis worked this past Friday after school with Yaya on her LP project; again: awesome. The 1:1 relationships are what keep BP awesome. If you have time to mentor a student, even if only for an hour or two a week the benefits are worth it. We need you now more than ever. I am looking for someone to work with one of my students on indigenous cooking, please reach out if you are interested. We have our kitchen at school available for such learning.



USH is working through Imperialism and delving into critical thinking about the US and its movement from isolationism to acquisitions of Hawaii, & Puerto Rico. This week in USH I had a student say to me: "This is our favorite thing to do." They were referring to the QFT practice that I have them do often. I responded "Really?!" Another student piped in and said "Yes" and a 3rd student said "and we are actually communicating well now when we do it." YAY! I told them that it made my heart happy to hear. :) And indeed they are getting better at the practice!

Global students are heading toward their culminating projects on their understanding of the Holocaust. They just completed their individual projects on various concentration camps during the war and presented their learning to the class. During their culminating project they will combine ELA skills with their knowledge and practice some expository writing. I look forward to seeing what the students present as we

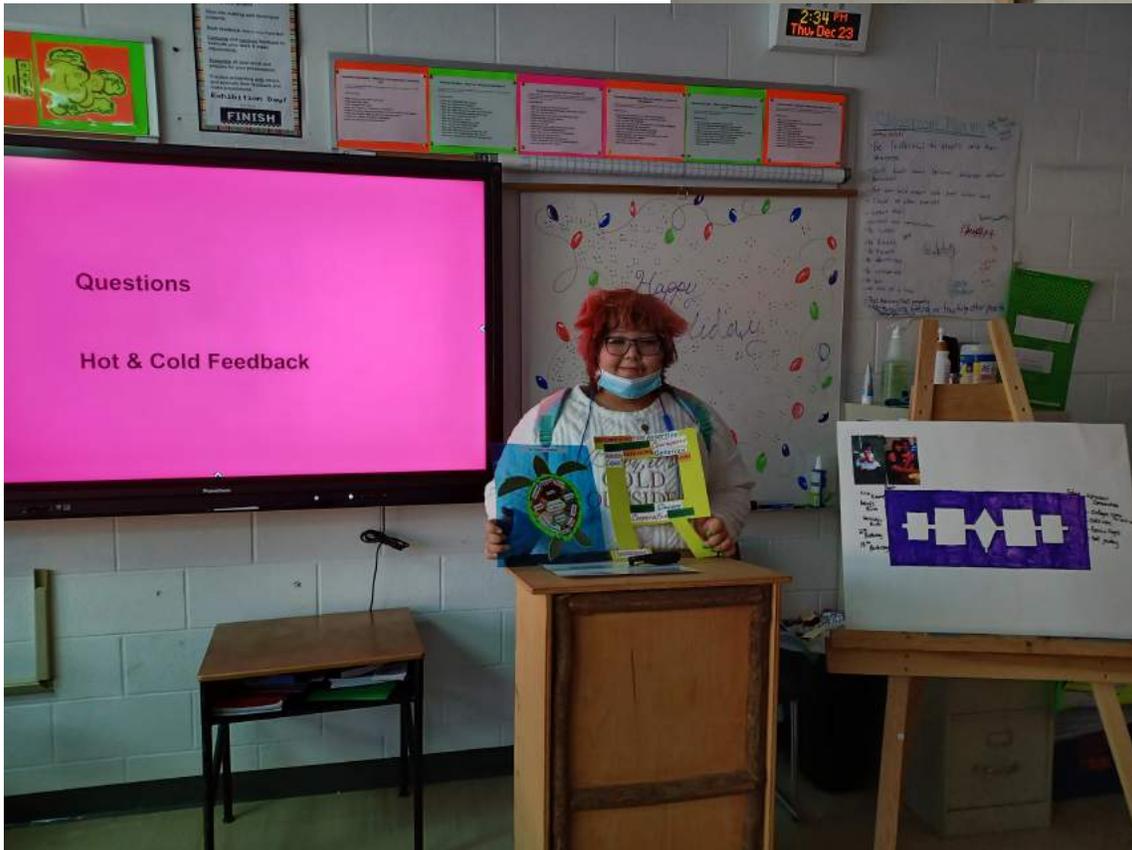
finish up this learning.

Here is to hoping everyone stays healthy and happy for the next few weeks and beyond. And that the 301s become super productive in their learning plan academics over the next two weeks as exhibitions begin in 13.5 school days. Those who are attending the Morrisville Culinary course or OCC courses will lose time in our BP building so they need to be proactive in their high school requirements/work as their college classes begin a week from now! Monday Jan 24 will begin OCC and Morrisville courses; many 301s will be busy with college work.

TGIF from Jessica

Over the past few weeks in 101 Advisory, our focus has been wrapping up missed exhibitions, writing new learning plans, and reading our new advisory book. This trimester we are reading *The Last Lecture* by Randy Pausch. This non-fiction book is Randy's account on life as he faces terminal cancer. His purpose is not to dwell on the inevitable, but to live for the moment, take account of memories, values, and achievements in effort to impart his wisdom to his children when they are old enough to read his work. Our focus as we read this book is to develop our skills in making connections to text. The natural way to make connections to this text is through self and the 101s are writing journals to show their development of this skill. Along the way we are also developing connections to history and looking up the things he is referencing in the book.

Over the past few weeks in math, the Quantitative Reasoning and Applied Math students are working on the same unit. We are learning about spreadsheets. We have just wrapped up learning how to make and format spreadsheets for different data



collecting contexts. In the next few weeks we will learn how to use formulas, charts and graphs, as well as conditional formatting to show changes in data. Algebra students are learning how to graph different types of functions. From the graphed functions, algebra students are learning how to read and interpret significant points on the graphs. After this concept we will begin learning how to write functions based on graphs, tables, and word problems.