



Thomas Jefferson Middle School

IBMYP May Newsletter

Learning Together to understand and improve ourselves, our futures, and our world.



Learner Profile Attribute of the Month: Principled

We want students to be principled. This means want our students to act with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and for the dignity of people everywhere. Our most principled student-selected students are:

Dolphins-Roayba Adhi, Dragons-Diane Jandres Betran, Eagles-Tobesta Abebe, Gators-Chelsea Rios, Monarch-Yalguun Baterdene, Owls-Brenda Lopez, Penguins-Ellie Danaceau, Phoenix-Maria Gonzales & Stingrays-Meron Mesfin. Source: [pixabay](https://www.pixabay.com/)



Written Curriculum

Our Year 1 Language and literature (ELA 6) students are conducting interviews of fellow students and teachers for journalistic style articles. Students have had the opportunity to review exemplars from years past and are now writing their own stories. They are interviewing people about key turning points in their lives and trying to capture revealing quotes.

Our Year 2 Language and literature (ELA 7) students are reading the classic novel "The Outsiders." They are focused on the global context of group identities and relationships.

Assessment Policy: Not Grading Formatives



In order for every student to experience success in their educational journey, there must be room for mistakes. It must be OK not to get something right the first time. In traditional grading practices, every assignment whether classwork or homework (formatives) is graded. The problem with this approach is that: 1) The grade doesn't accurately report what a student knows or can do at the end of a grading period. 2) Completing homework is usually a behavior rather than evidence of student achievement. Work habits should be reported separately from student achievement. 3) Grading classwork and homework encourages students to try and hide misunderstandings rather than learning how to refine skills. 4) As soon as a number or letter is put on a piece of student work, students disregard any teachers comments. And if those comments are specific, meaningful and timely they will really help students learn, which is our goal.

Virginia Junior Academy of Science

Thirty-four TJMS students participated in the Virginia Junior Academy of Science Research Symposium on May 21-23 at Old Dominion University. Students had to submit research papers months in advance and present their research findings in front of a panel of experts. Our students rose to the occasion earning all of the following accolades:

- Chemical Sciences Honorable Mention: Dhruva Barua
- Ecology & Earth Sciences Honorable Mention: Anya Dutta & Kritika Rai
- Ecology & Earth Sciences 3rd Place: Ava Fischer
- Ecology & Earth Sciences 2nd Place: Estee Ruiz
- Mathematics, Patterns, & Relationships 3rd Place: Maya Jones
- Physical Sciences & Astronomy Honorable Mention: Juliet Geers
- Plant Sciences & Microbiology 3rd Place: Aria Merrill
- Plant Sciences & Microbiology 2nd Place: Ellie Rowland
- Engineering & Technology Honorable Mention: Ella McNally
- **Engineering & Technology 1st Place: Raphael Sanchez**

Community Project Reflections

Now that a month has passed since the Community Project Presentations we have had time to analyze and reflect on the results. First with topics from adopting animals to women's empowerment (pictured right) there's no question that quality projects completed. The average scores given by 6th and 7th graders were for each criterion: A-6.7, B-7.9, C-6.9, and D-6.7. For the teachers the averages were: A-6.2, B-6.1, C-6.0, and D-6.1. The greatest challenge for students was time and support. Next year YJP classes will support it. Photo by Mr. Malinosky.



School-wide Service Learning

Every TJMS student got the opportunity to participate in service learning this month through a TA lesson on the Ocean Challenge sponsored by the Bezos Family Foundation. When we consider the global context of globalization and sustainability one of the most visible problems is plastic ocean waste. Through the Ocean Challenge students raised \$2 for every sea creature (fish or sea anemones) they created. The goal is to raise awareness about how life in the ocean is threatened by plastic waste. Altogether TJMS students raised \$446 to help clean up the ocean. Photo by Mr. Malinosky.



International-Night



On May 3 we celebrated a TJMS tradition with International Night. We celebrate the foods, fashions and especially the dances of cultures from around the world. The night began with Mexican dances from Nottingham, Bolivian Tinkus dancers, classical and modern Indian dances, and we finished the night with west African dances. All but the Tinkus dancers were student-led.

Upcoming dates/Service needs

- Every Tuesday at 5pm volunteering at Phoenix Bikes to repair bikes, 909 S. Dinwiddie St ([full details here](#)).
- Every Wednesday at 6:30pm volunteering at AFAC to bag chicken, 2708 S. Nelson St, ([full details here](#)).
- Every Friday, work community garden at TJ after school.
- [Service Learning Calendar is here](#)
- Stay tuned for upcoming school-wide activities.