



Thomas Jefferson Middle School

IB MYP November Newsletter

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



Community Project: Revised Dates



On Tuesday, November 21 we held our first Community Project Day of Action. Students were able to choose from 13 options to help the community and learn about our local service organizations. We took field trips to six different locations including Phoenix Bikes, Central Library, the Torpedo Factory, the Arlington Food Assistance Center, Lubber Run Community Center, and the Water Pollution Control Plant. Then we had guest speakers from five different organizations come to the school including the Animal Welfare League of Arlington, Path Forward, Eco Action Arlington, Lost Dog Rescue Foundation, Doorways, and our own Jefferson Garden. Students can learn directly from organizations helping people and animals in Arlington and beyond and participate in meaningful service activities.



Our next step for the Community Project is to complete the Investigation packet in Geography courses. Students will need to research the Global Sustainable Development Goals or another international source, a local source, and a current events article about the community they want to help. It is due in mid-September.

Principal's Update

Thomas Jefferson Tardy Policy Reminders

Tardies to School

Daily and on-time attendance is essential to student learning. At Thomas Jefferson Middle School students enter the building at 7:20 AM and are expected to start the school day at 7:50 AM. Beginning Friday, December 1, students who arrive after the 7:50 AM bell will sign-in with TJMS staff. Late arrivals will be monitored by attendance staff and in alignment with our tardy policy, will receive an after-school detention for three or more tardies to school. Persistent tardies to school will result in additional steps which may include an attendance plan, intervention by school administration and in extreme instances, collaboration with Arlington County Court Services.

While we understand extenuating circumstances may impact families from time to time, we want to work to address excessive tardies that are detrimental to student success. Additional information on the [Thomas Jefferson Middle School Tardy Policy](#) can be found on Page 5 of the Student Handbook.

Tardies to Class

Thomas Jefferson students are given four minutes to transition to classes. While we understand that students enjoy connecting with peers, we have observed a need to remind our Yellowjackets that arriving late to class not only impacts learning but disrupts instruction for their classmates. During the week of December 4th, we will begin Hallway Sweeps as a schoolwide intervention to motivate students to arrive to classes on-time. Hallway Sweeps will allow students the full amount of transition time to class, however, when the bell rings to begin class, students who remain in the hallway will record their names on a Hallway Sweep log. The log will be monitored by TJMS administrative team to identify students who need assistance with on time arrival and subsequent meetings will be held with each student. Three or more tardies to a class period will result in additional consequences issued by a school administrator.

Assigned detention notifications will be sent to parents/guardians along with a copy of their attendance record. You may review your child's attendance via ParentVUE at any time.

Family Resources on Attendance

https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/MiddleHigh_handout_111122.pdf

Learner Profile Attribute of the Month: Inquirer



We want all students to be inquirers into all parts of life. At the beginning of every unit, we ask teachers to create at least three big inquiry questions including factual, conceptual, and debatable questions. We want students to ask their own questions, sometimes students are able to turn their questions into research projects for science fair projects.

In class after class students are using the Question Formulation

Technique to create meaningful questions to guide their learning. Students are given a topic and try to generate as many questions as they can. They determine whether the questions they created are open (need explanations as answers) or closed (answered with a "Yes" or "No"). Then students choose their top three questions to explore the complexity of their chosen topic. It's a great way for students to be inquirers. [See the larger poster here.](#)

The School Action Plan's IB Focus



Middle Years Programme

As part of Jefferson's IB MYP Action plan we are prioritizing promoting international-mindedness and

service learning. We want to ensure students see themselves in the curriculum and classroom activities. Since our students come from dozens of countries, it is important teachers make those international connections. We do this by teaching through global contexts to understand issues through different perspectives. Furthermore, where relevant we are looking to build service-learning activities in every subject at least once during the school year.

Social Emotional Learning



November is a great time to support our students in the development of Social Awareness. Social awareness is the ability to understand the perspectives of, and empathize with,

others including those from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and experiences. Understanding and expressing gratitude is essential in developing Social Awareness skills. Learn more about how to help children develop gratitude in this article from the Harvard School of Education.

An IB Policy explained: Inclusion



The TJMS Assessment policy establishes that grades should be consistent, transparent, inclusive, fair and equitable in-line with IB standards. In order to do this, we have rights and responsibilities for everyone.

-Teachers will: ensure summative tasks are aligned with standards and clear rubrics that are shared with students before they are assessed. Furthermore, teachers will give feedback on formative tasks and grade examples of student work together.

-Students will: strive to complete assignments, be academic risk-takers, and ask for help when needed.

-Families will: check-in with students and check ParentVue.

Source: pixabay.com

Student Council Advisory (SCA) Update



The Student Council Advisory team has been meeting to plan service activities, dances and more.

Throughout the month of November, we held a successful food drive in partnership with the

Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC). Our students repeatedly went on the news to talk about the need to donate and how AFAC has served a record number of families this month. Students have donated lots of canned goods, cereals, sugar, and coffee **totaling 208 pounds**. For December we are planning candy gram sales and our first middle school dance.