



ERMS NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2025

ERMS 2025

ERMS Youtube Channel

In last month's Parent/ Principal Coffee we invited Ms. Kate Collins Middle School Special Education Supervisor to share what her role is at ERMS and how she can support you and your child. Please find the presentation on our ERMS Youtube Channel found here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zIKw5OzWrR8>

Witness Stones Project

Congratulations to all of our students who participated in the Witness Stones Project on November 19th!



Activity Block

We enjoyed our first Activity Block on 11/18. Here are some photos that were shared with us from various classrooms.



Thank you ERMS PTA!

Thank you to the ERMS PTA and all the families who donated sweet treats to our staff to kick off the Thanksgiving holiday! We truly appreciate you!



Cell Phones/Earbuds/Smart Devices Reminder

We have been off to a great year with students following our cell phone/smart device/ earbud procedure. Here is a reminder of the key points for your review. Thank you in advance for reiterating them to your child.

Device-Free Learning

To support focused learning and peer engagement, our middle school requires all cell phones, smartwatches, and similar devices to be turned off and stored in backpacks or lockers throughout the entire school day, **including on school buses**.

- All cell phones, smartwatches, and similar devices must be turned off and stored in backpacks or lockers throughout the entire school day
- **This procedure also applies to school bus transportation**
- Earbuds may only be used when explicitly permitted by teachers for educational purposes
- Photos, videos, audio recordings, and social media posting are prohibited in classrooms, on school grounds, and on school transportation

Parent Support Needed: Students cannot answer calls/texts during school hours. For emergencies, contact the main office directly, they can reach your child immediately. Forgotten items and pickup changes are not emergencies and can wait until dismissal. There is a student phone in the main office to make calls if necessary.

Thank you for supporting our distraction-free learning environment.

Lost and Found

Please stop by the lost and found (the one pictured is in the cafeteria, the other one is near the gym) Items left in lost and found over the holidays will be donated. We have many, many sweatshirts, lunchboxes and water bottles - - one of them might be yours!



Teams Andes and Denali

Our sixth graders had an amazing time at the Bridgeport Islanders School Day Game. The students were wonderful representatives of ERMS and behaved amazingly all day. They brought so much energy to the arena, and even though the Islanders lost, the kids were cheering, laughing, and soaking in the whole experience. We may have even created a few new hockey fans!

During intermission, Mrs. Donigian and Mrs. Koning got to get on the ice for a giant game of human Hungry Hungry Hippos too (they won)!

Now that we are back in the classroom, students are using the game as the launchpad for their Hockey Data Project. They are writing statistical questions, gathering data, and building dot

plots/histograms. The real world context has them excited, confident, and curious about the math behind hockey!

Thank you for your support in helping make this field trip such a success. The students made us all proud. Go Islanders!



Team Elbrus

In Social Studies we have been investigating the difference between rural and urban housing, jobs, travel and shopping in various parts of Africa. Students were able to work together to create slideshows that illustrated the differences. Then they were able to answer the question, "How does where you live dictate how you live?" We will begin researching the European colonization of Africa. The students will then take that information and create a Political Cartoon to share that information.

Team Everest

In science, students have just finished exploring our first major standard, MS-ESS1-1, which focuses on modeling the Earth–Sun–Moon system. Using hands-on models, they investigated the patterns created by the motions of these three objects—such as the changing lunar phases, the cycle of seasons, and the predictable occurrence of solar and lunar eclipses. Students analyzed these patterns and used modeling to explain how and why they happen.

We are now moving into our next focus: gravity and the solar system, covered in MS-ESS1-2, MS-ESS1-3, and MS-PS2-4. Students are examining how gravity influences the motion of planets, moons, and other objects in space, and how gravity helped form the solar system from a swirling disk of gas and dust. They are also beginning to explore the scale of the solar system, using models and data to understand the vast distances and sizes of objects in space. Through modeling and pattern analysis, they are learning how gravity structures the solar system and shapes the motions within it.

It's been an exciting unit so far, and students are doing great work as they continue building their astronomy understanding through patterns, modeling, and evidence-based explanations.

Team Kilimanjaro

The East Ridge Middle School, Team Kilimanjaro 8th grade Science Team has studied and created its own geologic timeline, reviewed fossil evidence of evolution, dug into rock structures and plate tectonics, and is currently learning about natural selection and creating experiments to test hypotheses. We learned about and modeled story lines of rock pocket mice and changing desert environments, as well as silent crickets in Hawaii thriving possibly due to the introduction of a new predator.

As environments change, so do the organisms in those environments ... We see evidence of this in changing behaviors of 8th graders on a daily basis ;)... Some organisms thrive and others, formerly fit, might just quit. Along the way we are learning about the Periodic Table of the Elements, blood building bones, and erratic weather zones. Could a hurricane create enough of an environmental change to spur an entirely new species? ... Hmmm, just ask the finches.

Team Vinson

For the past month, all 8th grade students have conducted research to restore the history and honor the humanity of those who were locally enslaved. Students learned about 5 individuals who were enslaved by David Scott, an original Ridgefield settler. In 1712, Scott built the house which still carries his name. Over time, he enslaved at least five individuals — Quash, Dinah, Peter, Lidia, and Ann. Students have examined and uncovered the past by looking at colonial, municipal, probate, and census data while reading and analyzing anecdotes, partial histories, and church records. Through the investigation and analysis of records for those who were enslaved alongside additional documents related to their enslaver, students were able to envision the forces that shaped the lives of the enslaved.

The culmination of their research is the writing of essays that become historical biographical sketches restoring the history and honoring the humanity of the enslaved individuals who helped build our communities. Their research of the enslavement, allows the remembrance of a time within our own community where the lofty standards stated in the Declaration of Independence were not practiced because of racial injustice, inequality, and intolerance.

On November 19, several team Vinson students participated in the bearing witness and remembers ceremony, which was a student-led event. The students, some performed music and sang, while others shared their findings and paused to remember the five individuals who are presumed to have been a family. The Event was live streamed and recorded on the RPS Curriculum YouTube Channel.



Unified Arts World Language

Madame Earle

Grade 6

Our unit 2: "Families & Communities" is underway and students have gotten off to a great start continuing to demonstrate their enthusiasm for learning French! Students started the unit by learning adjectives and using them to describe the physical characteristics and personality traits of people. Next, students have been identifying family members (and pets!) and their relationship to one another! We even looked at the family tree of "Les Simpson"!

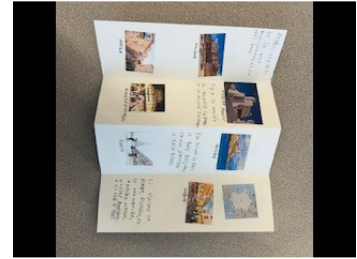
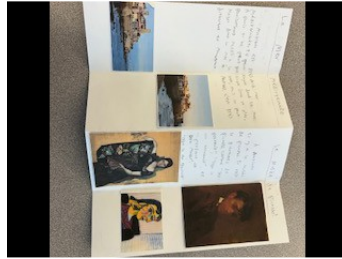
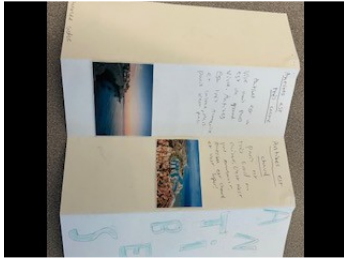
Grade 7

Our unit 2: "Let's Eat" is underway and who doesn't want to learn and savour French food?! :) Students have been learning about food specialties from different regions of France and expressing their likes and dislikes for them. Students also learnt about the most and least popular foods in France! This week students have been learning about a francophone country, Morocco and learning about their famous speciality "Couscous". Next, students will be learning about and debunking some myths about French food - for example: is it really true that French people like to eat frog's legs?? Ask your student! :)

Grade 8

To kick off our "Let's go to..." unit 2, students learnt about Antibes, a beautiful region in the South of France. Students then looked at Paris and Antibes and identified which region each was from

authentic images. They then compared the two regions and expressed which region they would prefer to visit and why. Then, using their own French that they had learned, students made a travel brochure to promote Antibes as a travel destination for Parisiennes. Some examples of their creative work are below.



Sra. Silvestri

Señora Silvestri's students started the month of November (noviembre) learning about Día de los muertos (Day of the Dead). (Those who use iCalendar, take a look at November 2 as evidence of how 'importante' this celebration has become). Students learned about this celebration and made cultural comparisons between Día de los muertos and Halloween. They learned about the origins of the celebration in all grades. 6th graders painted calaveras in traditional Mexican colors and then papel picado both online and in Maker Space. 7th created their own alebrijes while 8th graders created their own 'esqueletos' honoring Mexican artists as we wrapped out our unit on Art and Entertainment. Below are photos of the cultural share that culminated their learnings on November 2nd.

From top to bottom, left to right: 7th grade *alebrijes*, 8th grade *esqueletos*, and 6th grade *calaveras*



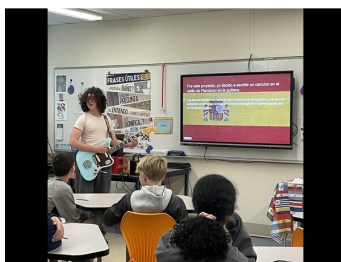
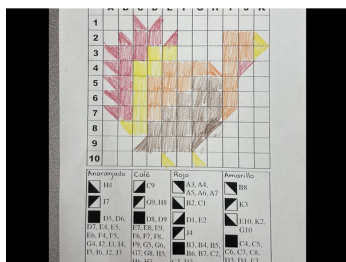
Sra. Dominguez

6th grade students continued with the unit Getting Acquainted and decorated a skull for the Day of the dead and decorated a turkey for Thanksgiving.

7th grade students continued learning and discussing the schedules and classes of schools in Spanish-speaking countries such as Colombia and Spain. For Thanksgiving, they followed a color key that revealed a picture of a turkey.

8th grade students wrapped up the unit of Art and entertainment by working and presenting a form of art of their choice. In addition, they watched Ballet Hispanico from the Ridgefield Playhouse.

They also read about the Thanksgiving tradition in Spanish. We also discussed plans for el Día de Acción de Gracias in the target language.



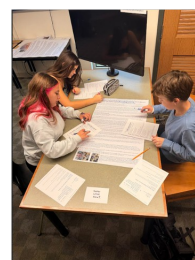
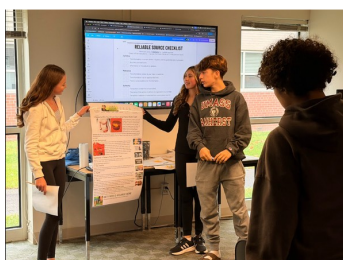
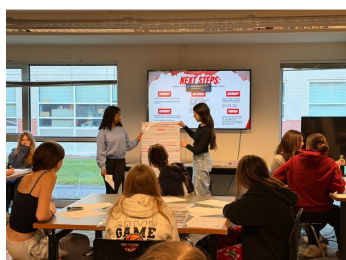
Music

It's concert season! Music students are busy preparing for upcoming December concerts. We'll kick it off on Thursday, December 4 with the concert for all 6th- and 7th-grade band and chorus students. Thursday, December 11 is the concert night for Select Ensembles (Jazz Band, Chamber Singers, Symphonic Band, and Symphonic Orchestra). All concerts begin at 7 PM.

Health

6th Grade: This month, students continued talking about effective communication by using refusal skills in several different scenarios. We practiced "pressure lines" and responded with an appropriate refusal response. We then transition to our last step of communication which is conflict resolution and compromise. They discussed what skill cues were the most important in the resolution process. We shared when conflict can be healthy for relationships vs. unhealthy.

8th Grade: The past few weeks, students have been reviewing the PEMS Triangle and then jumping into our first skill of Accessing Valid Information in regards to health topics. All 8th grade classes had an opportunity to go to the LLC and have a lesson from Mr. Samaha on the "CRAAP Test." This is a checklist that helps students recognize if a resource has currency, relevance, authority, accuracy and purpose. They will be using this skill later on in the quarter to support their research in a Health Advocacy Project.



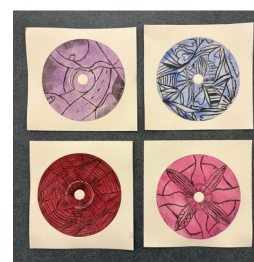
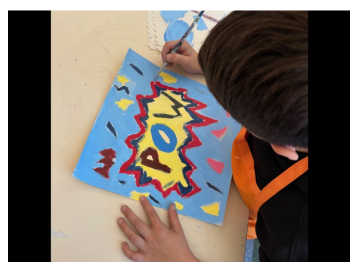
Art

Parents of first semester art students, please remember to join our online portfolio, Artsonia. This allows you to see all the great work your child produces in the art room. Our school code is - **XZDDXB3C**.

This month, the 6th grade classes have been studying color theory and have begun working on their acrylic paintings. After reviewing the work of Roy Lichtenstein, artists created their own design using onomatopoeia, or words that make a sound. Students selected a color scheme that we discussed in class, such as cool colors, monochromatic, primary or analogous colors to paint their design. By custom blending tints, tones and shades within their color scheme, students create their own unique color palette.

In 7th grade, students are just beginning their final watercolor landscapes. After practicing multiple painting techniques, finding reference images for inspiration and sketching out thumbnail designs, artists are ready to work on their project. Students studied the work of the French Impressionist Claude Monet to learn about how colors change depending on the time of day, the season or even the quality of the day. They are now prepared to paint a landscape, where all the colors work together to produce a realistic scene. They will also use details within the foreground, middle ground and background to create a sense of depth within their paintings.

Finally, the 8th grade students are working on Intaglio printmaking. After working on design sketches, each student received a CD on which they incised their design for printing. Using a small printing press, we are now producing multicolored prints. The images are fantastic!



PE

East Ridge students finished up a fast-paced unit on Badminton this month! Students mastered key skills like the clear shot, drop shot, and the smash, while developing excellent sportsmanship and agility. Badminton is a fantastic workout for hand eye coordination and fitness. We loved seeing the energetic rallies across all six courts!

LLC

Happy Thanksgiving ERMS Family,

The library learning commons was busy as always this past month. Students were having a great time in recess whether it was on Tinkercad designing 3D objects, playing board games, reading, or just hanging out when the weather was too cold outside. They are so awesome and wonderful to work with. A special shoutout to Alston and his crew in 7th grade for their work on bringing the Brooklyn Bridge to life in the form of K'Nex!

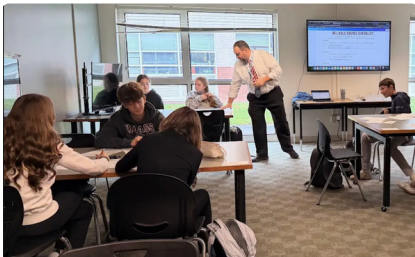
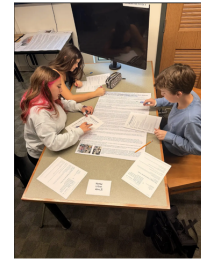
In Ms. Picarella's Health classes, students learned how to tell the difference between reliable and unreliable sources. The students did a great job at identifying when sources were out of date, had

inaccurate information, a bias, or the purpose was not necessarily to inform but to sell a product. Thank you, Ms. Picarella and to your students for coming in and doing an awesome job!

Lastly, the LLC Volunteers have been coming in to help make the LLC a more inviting place. Students have been instrumental in: trying new activities with me, so I can learn best practices before inviting more students to the space (like resin casting); keeping the bookshelves organized for student use; generating decorating ideas for the winter months; and preparing the space for class visits. A special shout out to: Nora, Emery, Carl, Cole, Emmalyn, Cooper, and Davis in 6th Grade and to Wells and Nevin in seventh grade for being especially helpful over this past month. I am looking forward to making the LLC Volunteers an opportunity for student voices to take center stage so the LLC can be a space that is more reflective of those it serves.

Again, Happy Thanksgiving from my family to yours; and I hope you all stay safe, happy, and healthy.

Devin Samaha



Jennifer Phostole

Jennifer is using Smore to create beautiful newsletters