

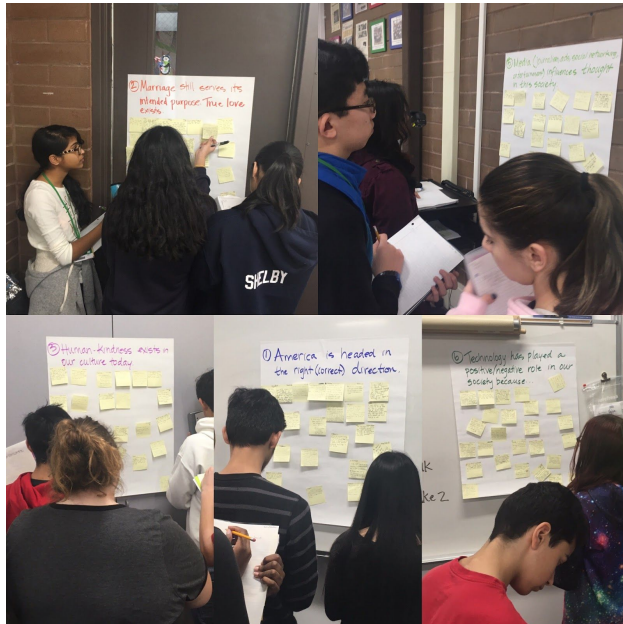
MARCH NEWSLETTER

Mrs. Hahn's 8th Grade ELA Classroom



Dear Parents,

Spring was in the air a little early last week, but we're back to winter! What better way to spend a cold, windy day than inside, curled up with a good book? AR projects are due the day we return from spring break, April 3, and AR points are due on the 7th.



Advanced LA (ALA)

Our study of *Fahrenheit 451* has launched us into many great discussions about society. To think that Ray Bradbury, in 1953, prophesied a world in which technology replaces books is crazy--the students have come to the conclusion that we're not that far away from this dystopian society. What can each of us do to ensure our intelligence and not succumb to a life of device-dependent ignorance?

Through the unit, students have been practicing their "below the surface" (BtS) thinking. I introduced this concept through annotations at the start of the year, and now we're leveling up by analyzing significant quotes in the novel. We also continue to work on finding our voices in group conversations; is your child articulating his/her thoughts out loud? My favorite moments in class are when

brave volunteers toss out text-based theories ("the blood on page 102 represents the lingering scent of the books on Montag's fingers") and the class makes meaning right before our eyes ("You're right! It's like how K9 dogs can sniff out drugs--the books are the drugs in this society!"). I'm immensely proud of the students who are willing to take a chance in sharing their thoughts aloud because they deepen our conversations in such a meaningful way.

This group is also working on argumentative essays--perhaps you've heard your child talk about the controversial social issue he/she has chosen to argue? From abortion to gum chewing in school, death penalty to participation trophies, the students have been busy learning factual information about their topic and arguing it, in writing, in a convincing way. I stressed last week that good writing is good writing, no matter what it's called, but in an effort to teach them the terminology they might be exposed to in high school, we are working with the MEL-Con formula for writing. Students will turn their final papers in before spring break.

Language Arts (LA)

Thank you for reading through, commenting on, and talking with your child about his/her argumentative essay. Weren't the results from the pre- and post-assessment amazing? Such learning! I hope these students remember what good writing looks like and are able to transfer it to other subjects (and high school). We will now layer on the next piece of argumentation--speaking. Through analyzing TED talks (ted.com), students will determine the

qualities of effective speeches. How do school presentations differ from “real world” public speaking experiences? By the end of the unit, students will be expected to prepare and execute a five to seven minute speech (modeled after a TED talk).

We are in the midst of our *Flipped* (by Wendelin VanDraanan) unit ; this book is all about perspective--how two people witnessing the same event can perceive it in two completely different ways. I am challenging your children to try and see things through multiple perspectives and in the process, decipher the truth. As for skills for this unit, we are working on writing concise summaries and engaging in Socratic seminars.

Passion Projects

1/2: Every month we make a commercial of sorts to spread the word about the upcoming issue. Last month’s was written by Danielle Jasinski and awesomely performed by the students in this video: https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B-gV2Y754_xLVzc3SFpwSWJsaUk/view?usp=sharing Issue four of the *Feed* will be released March 17. Please check our site (you can read a PDF of the paper copy there, too): www.firebirdfeed.weebly.com We’re working on a lot of great articles, from a school lunch exposé to an opinion piece about how guys and girls should be able to try out for sports designed to the opposite gender. Please ask your child what his/her job is for this issue--the new editors’ goal was to “switch it up” and have the staff dabble in something new this month.

4/5: Groups have spent the last few weeks converting their prose stories to scripts. We will spend the next two weeks as a whole class, generating the dialogue that links our five acts together. After that we’re on to casting, rehearsing, costuming, and creating sets for our performance! If you are willing to help with any of these components, or have any “connections” to props/costumes/sets/etc., please let me know! Our tentative show date is **Thursday, May 25**. Please pencil it in on your calendars. Here’s a preview of a scene!
https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B-gV2Y754_xLMHRPaDR2OGhQdFk/view?usp=sharing

6/8: From the bake sale and water bottle sales, the students raised \$1,548.25--enough to purchase TWO Hydration Stations! These 14 students shattered their original goal of \$700 through their perseverance, energy, and passion for this cause. I am immensely proud of them, and the best part is that the fountains will be installed so they can reap the “fruits of their labor.” THANK YOU to all parents who donated or supported this cause in any way. These kids have left a permanent legacy at FJHS. If you’re interested, you can view the commercial the students made that got the word out to our school community by copying and pasting this link (huge thanks to Zach for compiling and editing all the clips!):
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B-LdfVJbODtqbEtvV2JEVnZ6eTA/view?usp=sharing>

AR goals went up for almost all students this quarter. Please know that these goals are individualized based on your kids’ FAST reading score and my observations of them as a reader. As always, they should be reading at least thirty minutes a night.



#fjhs210B hydration station squad and their \$\$\$!

Important Dates to Remember:

- 3/3: Student Senate dance, 7PM
- 3/7: PTO meeting, teacher's lounge, 7PM
- 3/24: 1:50 dismissal for spring break
- 3/27-4/2: Spring break--NO SCHOOL
- 4/3: AR projects due, all classes

Sincerely,

Kristin Hahn

847.593.4350

hahn.kristin@ccsd59.org

<http://friendship.ccsd59.org/teachers/hahnkristin/>

Follow me on Instagram and Twitter: @mrshahnfjh



Wrapping goodies for Bake Sale



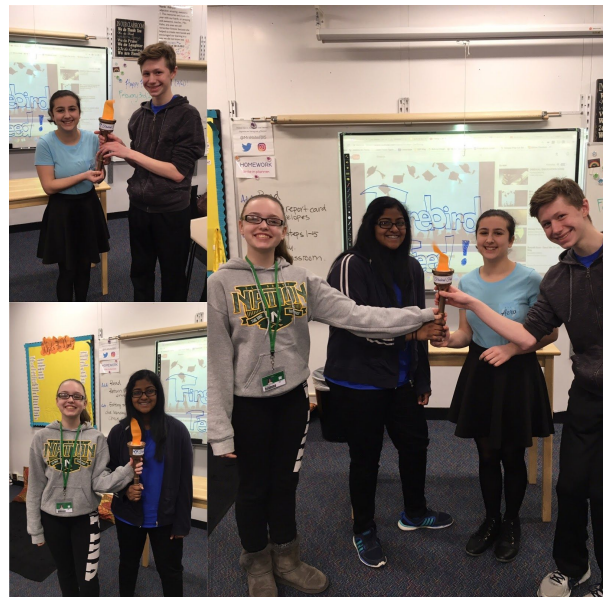
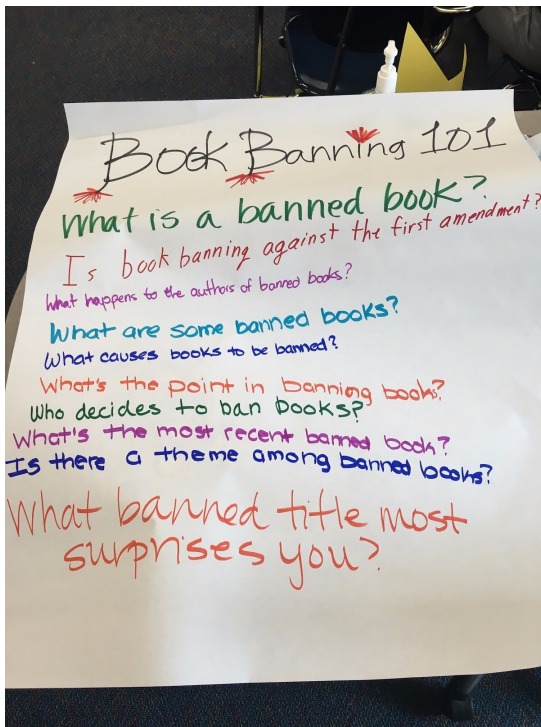
Working hard to raise some "dough"!



Preliminary counting--\$1200 turned into...



\$1,548.25!



Passing the Firebird Feed torch to new editors-in-chief!