

Oct. 16, 2017

Dear Parents of 8th Grade Students,

Welcome to the 8th Grade Project. The Intermediate School staff looks forward to working with our 8th grade students on their projects this year.

The project is a topic driven, inquiry-based project that gives students an opportunity to explore and report on topics that matter to them. Students feel a sense of pride when they complete a successful project. Your assistance in taking your child to the library and his/her interviews, offering organizational and time management support, and meeting deadlines is most welcome. Students are expected to do their own project work with support from their teachers, coach, and family. Some students will need much assistance, other students no assistance at all.

Your child will be assigned a coach depending on his/her topic choice. The coach will monitor progress for students, check off deadlines, and give other guidance as needed. It is the student's responsibility to make appointments with his or her coach when needed.

The *Project Topic* will be chosen by **December 7**. Students need to choose a topic that matters. The results of the project should be important to the student, the family, and/or the community. Here is how one young lady discovered her topic: "The reason I chose this topic was because one of my best friends was born with V.A.T.E.R. syndrome and is going to have her eighth surgery, and I barely knew what she was going through. I wanted to learn more about her syndrome so I could help her become a better friend." (S. Armstrong, PEG 2012)

The students will be asked to create an *Essential Question* pertaining to their topic. This will help them focus their research and establish voice in their writing. For example, if a student's project is on vegetarianism, the *Essential Question* may be: Should I become a vegan? If the project is on diabetes, the *Essential Question* may be: How can I help my best friend with his diabetes? If the topic is Alzheimer's Disease, the *Essential Question* may be: How Can I Help My Grandfather? If the topic is Apple Computers, the *Essential Question* may be: How did Steve Jobs, a man I have never known, change my life? It will take some knowledge to develop an *Essential Question* that matters. Research is the key.

Quality is expected in all areas of the 8th Grade Project. It will be mandatory to complete the following: title page, table of contents, dedication, a paragraph about the author, project statement, research report, illustrations, at least one personal interview, references, works cited, oral presentation, and an appendix. Meeting due dates is an important part of the project. Students will receive a separate grade on their report card for the 8th Grade Project.

Be sure your child spends part of his/her homework time working on the 8th Grade Project. In January, in addition to our regular curriculum, blocks of time will be scheduled at school to provide time for students to work on their projects. Students are expected to have project work with them at school during these times. If the work is on your home computer, printed draft reports are to be brought in for revising and editing.

As noted earlier, the students will be expected to present their 8th Grade Projects orally to an audience of supportive parents, teachers, and community members. Students will make Power

Point oral presentations. Mr. Van Arsdale has offered to help any and all students with Power Point on his Smartboard. We expect technology to be part of your child's oral presentation. If students have access to Power Point (or a similar facsimile) on their personal computers at home, more power to them.

Attached is a packet of information with guidelines for the 8th Grade Project, the grading system, a check-off list with a timeline, and other information.

We welcome your encouragement and assistance in making the 8th Grade Project a success and, at the same time, very much the student's own inquiry project. There will be a parent meeting to answer questions you may have about the process **Wednesday, October 18, 2017 at 6:00 P.M. in Room 6.** Please bring this packet with you.

After you have read this packet, please sign the attached form and have your child return it to his/her Language Arts teacher by **Friday, October 20, 2017.**

Sincerely,
Jennifer Herron-Bransky, Davis Van Arsdale
Kevin Ramsden and the DIS Staff

By doing the 8th Grade Project, our students are preparing for the following California Common Core State Standards.

- 1.1 Establish coherent thesis, tone, and end with a clear conclusion.
Understand which source of research matches topic chosen.
- 1.3 Support thesis or conclusions with quotes, opinions, etc.
Identify various primary sources of information. ... practice citations for the previous.
- 1.4 Edit written manuscripts to ensure that correct grammar is used.
- 1.5 Use correct punctuation and capitalization.
- 1.6 Revise for word choice; organization, point of view, transitions.
- 2.2 Support judgments with references to the text, other works and authors.
- 2.3 Define a thesis; summarize all perspectives; display information on charts.
- 2.4 Include a well defined thesis and detailed evidence in support.
- 2.5 Present information clearly; follow conventional formats.



Please sign and return to your student's language arts teacher by **Friday, October 20, 2017.**

Name of Student _____

I have read the information about the 8th Grade Project.

Parent Signature

**GUIDELINES FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY
8TH GRADE PROJECT**
Quality is expected in all areas of this project.

Written Research Report:

- Minimum of 8 pages of content (maximum of 12) in integrated essay form, which must be typed or word processed. It should be double-spaced with 1" margins. Font should be Times Roman 12 or the equivalent size.
- The final editing is the responsibility of the student and his/her editor.
- There must be a cover page, a good organizational flow to the content, with appropriate paragraph and spelling usage. Students should include a title page, a table of contents, a dedication, a paragraph about the author, a project statement, 8 visuals (see below), 8 references/works cited (see back), and an appendix (see back). The finished project will have a professional look.
- All PEGs must include at least one personal interview.
- Your Essential Question must be investigated and answered.

One Personal Interview (Your coach MUST approve your interview choice):

- Coach approval of interviewee due Thursday, December 21, 2017.
- This interview will be with someone who is an expert in the commercial/professional field. We discourage students from interviewing friend or family members.
- An in-person interview is preferred. Coach's permission is required for all interviews.
- The interview information must be integrated into the written paper.
- Students will include a full copy of interview notes in the appendix.
- The interview may be videotaped or audio taped with permission of interviewee.
- Write a thank you note to the interviewee. This must be turned in to your coach in a stamped, addressed envelope by **Thursday, January 18, 2018.** Use standard business letter format. You may e-mail a thank you letter. Be sure to give a copy of said letter to your coach.
- A copy of the thank you letter must be included in your appendix.

Visuals With Explanations:

- Eight visuals must be integrated into your PEG.
- Visuals must be cited and referred to in the text of your PEG.
- You are encouraged to have a variety of visuals. This could include photographs, graphs, charts, financial statements, hand drawings, photocopies, computer printouts, etc. Video tapes and slide shows are permitted but must be agreed upon with the coach beforehand.
- Each visual must be referred to and placed appropriately within the written text.

Title Page

- Needs to include title, essential question, name, date, coach's name.

Table of Contents: (follows "Title Page")

Dedication: (follows "Table of Contents")

- This is a message in tribute to a person or a cause that is important to you. It does not need to be lengthy but should reflect sincere personal feelings. Please also acknowledge the person you interviewed.

About the Author: (follows "Dedication")

- Short essay that describes you.
- Written in the third person (as if you were someone else).

Project Statement: (follows "About the Author")

- The first paragraph explains why you chose your topic and why it is important to you.
- The second paragraph should tell the reader what you intend to share about your topic. You must include the Essential Question.

Works Cited/References:

- A Works Cited page must be included at the end of the PEG. Please use Modern Language Association (MLA) format. (See citationmachine.net, or owl.english.purdue.edu)
- When citing information in your report, author and page must be noted in parentheses immediately after the reference. (In-text citation)
- Students must have at least 8 references (works cited).

Suggested sources: Wikipedia, documentaries, interviews, magazines, internet articles, and, most importantly, books.

- ALL visuals are to be referenced.

Appendix: (include separate cover page)

- Interview Questions and Notes
- Outline
- Copy of Thank You Letter
- Revision checklist
- Note cards

Oral Presentations:

- Students are required to use Power Point (or a similar facsimile).
- The oral presentation is an integral part of the project.
- The presentation will be 8-12 minutes in length.
- Students will be responsible for all parts of their oral presentation: e.g. if a student wants the presentation videotaped he/she must make the arrangements for the necessary equipment.
- Students will demonstrate effective presentation skills and dressed appropriately.

Timeline:

- Topic selected by Thursday, 12/07/17
- Coach approval of interviewee and questions by Thursday, 12/21/17
- Twenty note cards with works cited by Thursday, 1/11/18
- Proof of interview—thank you letter to interviewee via coach by Thursday, 1/18/18.
- Outline Thursday, 1/25/18.
- Rough draft is due Thursday, 2/1/18.
- Revised self-edit, Thursday, 2/15/18.
- **Final** research paper is **due** in homeroom **Thursday, 3/1/18** at 8:40 A.M.
Submit the original and keep a copy for yourself.

Late final papers will drop by one grade after 8:30 A.M. for each day late.

- Oral presentations will be during the week of March 12, 2018.
- Each step will be checked off by your coach.
- Meeting due dates will be 10% of the final project grade.

8TH GRADE PROJECT CHECK-OFF LIST

Date and check off the following as you complete each:

DATE		✓
<u>Thursday, 12/7/17</u>	Topic Selected	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Thursday, 12/21/17</u>	Coach approval of interviewee and questions	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Thursday, 1/11/18</u>	20 Annotated Note Cards with Works Cited	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Thursday, 1/18/18</u>	Proof of interview—Thank you letter to Interviewee via coach	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Thursday, 1/25/18</u>	Outline	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Thursday, 2/1/18</u>	Rough Draft (including Dedication, About the Author, Project Statement, illustrations and Work Cited)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Thursday, 2/15/18</u>	Revised, Self-Edited	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Thursday, 3/1/18</u>	Final Copy due 8:40 A.M. (placed neatly in a binder)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Week of <u>March 12, 18:</u>	Oral Presentation	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Week of March 12, 2018: Oral Presentation

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Week of March 12, 2018: Oral Presentation