

**February 3, 2012**

## **Eighth and Ninth Grade Homeroom**

Dear Eighth and Ninth Grade Parents,

After a week of discussing the American Dream in addition to our own dreams in life, the eighth and ninth grade class has come to the conclusion that fantasy and reality often collide in our everyday vision. If you've ever witnessed a mediocre skier or snowboarder immortalizing a few chair 4 runs with a helmet mounted camera, then you know exactly what I'm talking about. In pops the new ski movie. Unsuspecting and unprepared friends, colleagues, or family members smile in genuine excitement as the lights are dimmed and the volume turned up.

"You guys are gonna love this!"

Horror. Lies! Suddenly our cheeks feel heavy. Jawbones quiver, unsure of how much longer they can bear the weight of such shameless self-promotion. But smile we must. We have far too much invested in this person to be honest at a time like this. While the filmmaker interprets this as a sign of support and awe for such "raw" talent, inwardly, we compromise. *If my cheeks start to burn, I'll just start thinking about how happy I am that I'm not that guy. He can't actually tell what I'm smiling about, right?*

The thought that we see what we want to see and ignore the rest is nothing new, but it doesn't help answer the question, "What am I missing about myself?"

Anytime I worry about overconfidence, all it takes is one memory from ninth grade to set me straight: my class president campaign speech. Unprepared, I made it up on the spot and assumed my popularity would carry me through to victory. Somehow I ended up with a gerbil racing fundraiser. That's not even the worst part: as the darkness in front of the stage remained silent, I laughed at my own jokes.

Whatever self-awareness I had lacked regarding my political prospects in high school was quickly made up for with unsolicited feedback. I still shudder at the word "bomb," and it has nothing to do with explosions.

Fantasy can harm us, especially when it's combined with unrestrained ego, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't dream. Inevitably, there will always be people questioning our goals and telling us our ideas are dumb or unrealistic. Sometimes the criticism is accurate: I should never work in politics. At some point, however, we have to decide for ourselves which of our passions are strong enough to withstand any regrets of failure or embarrassment. As long as we can do this, we can be accepting of our critics and still manage to follow our hopes.

-Ryan

Enjoy the weekend,

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## **Humanities**

### **Literature**

tmshumanities.org

### **Geography**

tmshumanities.org

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## **Mathematics**

### **Geometry**

This week students:

- Began study of area.
- Derived formulas to find area of triangles, parallelograms, and trapezoids.
- Learned traditional survey methods for finding area.
- Presented transformation projects at morning meeting.

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### **Algebra I**

This week in Algebra class, students:

- Received results from chapter 5 test and completed test corrections.
- Examined rational numbers.
- Practiced evaluating radicals.
- Investigated equations involving absolute value in preparation for working with the quadratic formula.
- Continued individual mathematics progression with ALEKS.

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### **Physics**

This week in Physics class, students:

- Transitioned from the study of circular motion to the study of special relativity.
- Discussed classical vector addition of velocities.
- Examined Einstein's two postulates of special relativity.
- Learned about time dilation, length contraction, and relativistic momentum.
- Used the idea of a "light clock" to help illustrate time dilation.
- Used the Lorentz formula to evaluate time dilation at different speeds.
- Answer to last week's question: Hawaii!

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### **8th/9th Grade Spanish**

This week, students:

- Learned and practiced mini-cuento C vocabulary.
- Listened to and retold mini-cuento C.
- Practiced reflexive pronouns.
- Listened to a revision of mini-cuento C.
- Read several short stories and completed comprehension questions.

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### **8th/9th Grade Visual Art**

This week, the eighth and ninth graders:

- Began working with screen filler to create semi-permanent images on their screens.
- Learned how to pull a print on paper with screen printing ink and a squeegee.
- Started experimenting with color blends and color overlays.

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## **8th/9th Grade Music**

### **KidSpeak**

TMS students offer their view on their RRA experience:

*"I like that it is a good bonding experience with your friends."*

*"I like that you only help us with the stuff that we need you to."*

*"You let us choose our instruments and our songs and you make it a free place."*

*"My favorite part is learning how to play the instruments and watching the song come together."*

*"I like how you allow us to have some space to figure things out on our own so as we get older you're teaching us to be responsible."*

When asked where she learned the complicated keyboard part to her song, Kelly replied, *"On my mom's phone, on the Internet."*

Seek Mystery, Not Answers!!

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