

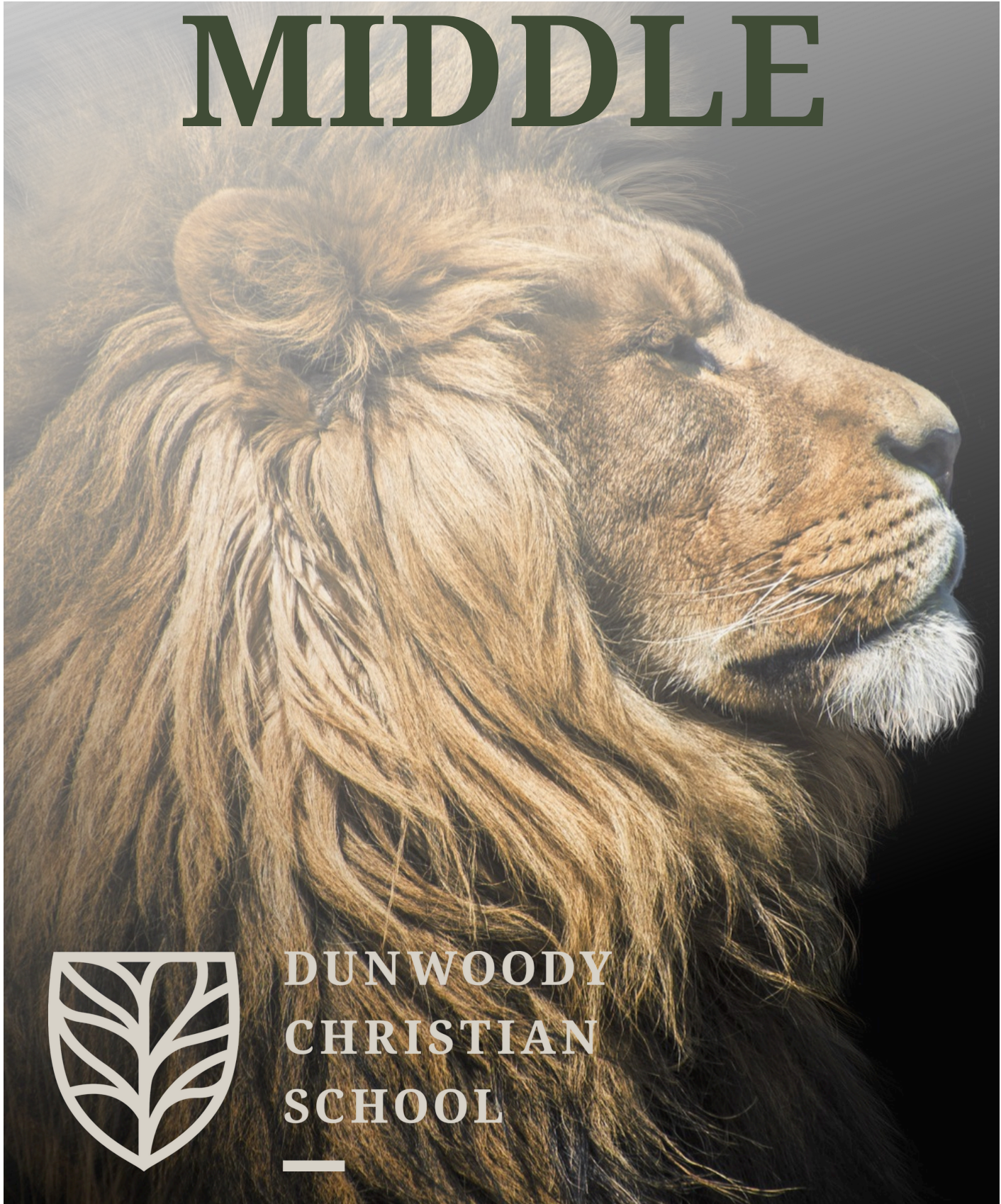
OH, THE PLACES YOU'LL GO!

2024 MIDDLE SCHOOL FALL RETREAT



In the

MIDDLE



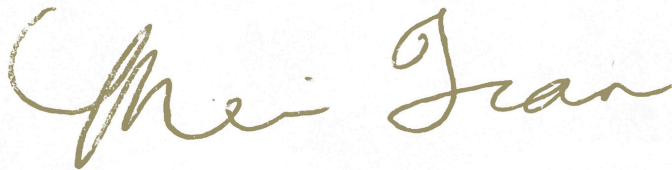
For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. ~ Romans 12:4-5

This summer, God joined together the members of First Baptist Atlanta and Dunwoody Christian School to create a community that was even stronger than before. This is what happens when each unique member of the body of Christ comes together for His kingdom purposes- we are never the same again. We function better than before because of the addition of hands, feet, hearts, and minds that work together towards the same mission. What a blessing I have in joining my brothers and sisters in carrying out the mission of DCS “to partner with parents to develop children who are grounded in Christ-like character, possess exceptional knowledge and are prepared to embrace life’s opportunities and challenges.”

The strength of our middle school is in the team that the Lord has put together to disciple our students during some of the most formative years of their faith and their identity. As you read through the first issue of Volume 3 of *In the Middle*, you will be introduced to our teachers and the Christ-like love that drives everything they do. Additionally, we have had the blessing of others in the FBA community that have come alongside our students to share their gifts and talents. Pastor Joe, from FBA’s middle school ministry, joined our DCS Fall Retreat as our guest speaker and challenged our students to be Grounded, Respond, Offer, and Worship (G.R.O.W.). Mrs. Slemper, who is one of our middle school moms, brings her singing and musical talent each Tuesday afternoon as she and Dr. Colangelo guide some of our students in our budding music ministry.

As you can see, there is much to be thankful for in our middle school. However, none of these gifts are possible without the everlasting gift of God’s love through His son Jesus Christ. May the holidays bring you moments where you can sit before Him with hearts of thankfulness for all He has done.

In His Love,
Mei Fan
Middle School Principal
Associate Head of School



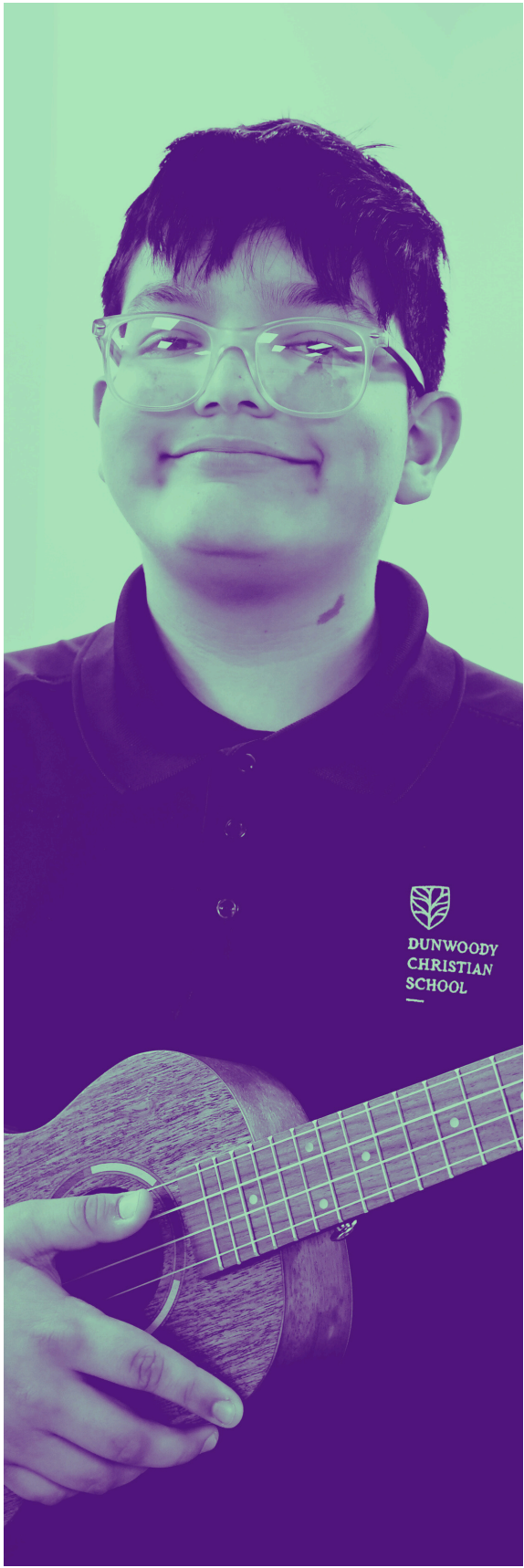


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In our Bible classes, the 7th and 8th grade students have been going through the book of Judges using the book “The Daring Deliverers” and the 6th graders have been looking at the New Testament. During the second semester, we plan on going through the book of Acts for 7th and 8th grade and continue our journey through the New Testament with the 6th grade. In our studies of the Old Testament, we have discovered that the people of the Old Testament were no different than we are today. They have the same dreams and aspirations, but also have the same weaknesses.



Students learn valuable lessons about who they are to God in our weekly chapel.

BIBLE

from the desk of Dr. Colangelo



Charlotte and Madeline (6th) read scripture together during small group.

We are beginning to learn lessons from their successes as well as their great defeats, so we do not repeat the same mistakes they made. I have become convinced that our middle school students are some of the best and brightest around. I look forward to seeing how the rest of this school year unfolds as we continue studying the word of God in spirit and in truth. It is my fervent prayer that every student here at DCS will continue to grow in the Lord and become the person of Christ-like character that God wants them to be.



In 7th and 8th grade Bible class, students are studying the book of Judges.

MATH

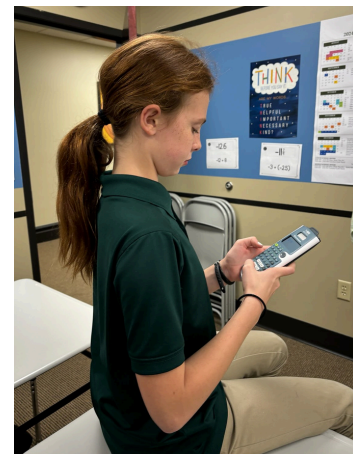
from the desks of Mrs. Gibson, Mrs. Weihe, and Mrs. Coates

6th **Mrs. Gibson** The jump from 5th grade to 6th grade math is usually a hard journey, but this group has made it look easy. This year's 6th grade is learning about problem solving and applying principles that are used in real life. At the beginning of the semester, we reviewed some concepts involving decimals and fractions and how the two are connected. Students multiplied and divided fractions. Students learned that problem solving is very important and occurs often in our daily life.

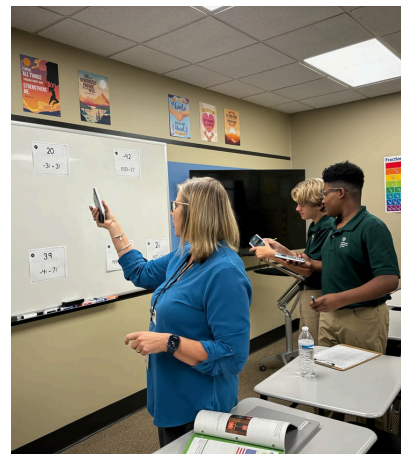
Additionally, students learned about integers and how they are used in the real world. Students found that integers are used in everyday life and that they are very important to our existence. We talked about the purpose and use of zero and what zero means to the overall number system. Student's learned about the power of opposites and what negative and positive integers are. We finished up our integers unit with a mini-project on these concepts.



Students in 6th grade math class.



Avery, Stephen, and Alexander (7th) work together to solve equations around the room.



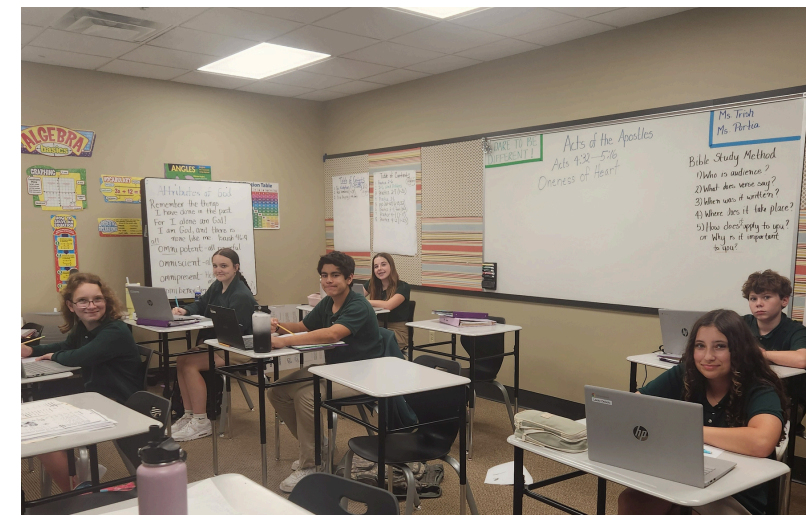
7th **Mrs. Weihe** The 7th grade students started the school year learning about integer operations and reviewing rational numbers. They learned that traditional math strategies don't always apply to negative numbers. In addition, students solidified their algebraic skills by simplifying expressions and solving two-step equations. There have been opportunities to use their skills for real-world applications.

8th

Mrs. Coates The 8th graders have been working hard to master the skills needed for success in Algebra next year! This semester, they deepened their understanding of operations with rational numbers, with a major emphasis on integers. They then moved into studying variable expressions, learning to write and evaluate them, and expanded their skills by mastering positive and negative exponents—a challenging concept they tackled with perseverance. The final two major units focused on writing linear expressions and solving linear equations, including one, two, and multi-step problems. Through their dedication and hard work, they've accomplished so much and should be incredibly proud of their progress!

We are off to a terrific start in Algebra this semester! We began with a review of key 7th-grade concepts like rational numbers, variables, and the order of operations. In our first major unit, we explored various types of equations, learning to solve them and apply that knowledge to real-world problems. Next, we focused on writing and graphing linear equations. Using TI-84 graphing calculators, students gained insights into relationships between quantities, including the concept of slope and its role in describing rates of change. We wrapped up the semester by creating and solving linear inequalities and evaluating solutions for viability. Throughout the semester, it has been inspiring to see God's order and structure in math—it's truly everywhere if you take the time to look!

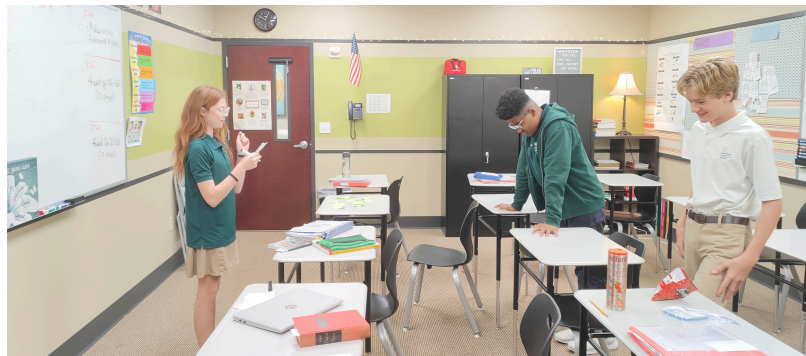
8th grade math students use technology to deepen their understanding of solving multi-step equations!



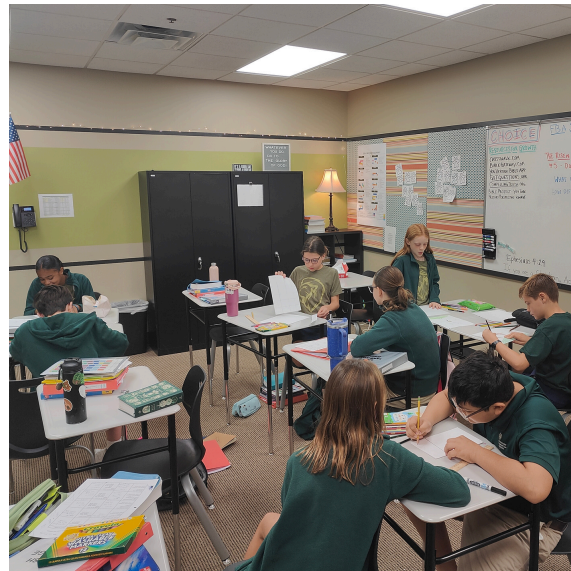
Anna, Bella, and Ria (8th) hard at work sorting through the linear equation task cards in Algebra.

6th

This semester in 6th grade has been full of fun learning opportunities! During our Short Story Unit, students learned the characteristics of the Hero's Journey and applied it to Jesus and what He did for us on the cross to show how He is the ultimate hero of our lives. Students also wrote their own stories by studying the parts of a story: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution. Students have enjoyed preparing for the holiday season by reading *A Christmas Carol* just in time for the Thanksgiving Break and learning the different symbolisms of the Christmas Spirits.



7th grade students reviewing for a vocabulary quiz.



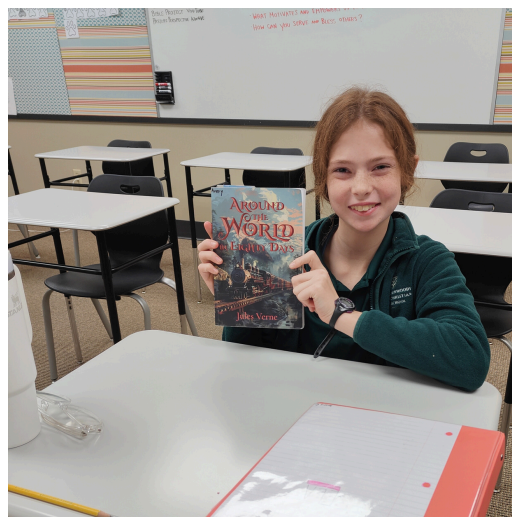
6th graders working in small groups.



6th graders working on vocabulary.



(left) Lillian (6th) holds her comic book depicting the phases of Jesus as our Ultimate Hero.



(right) Avery (7th) reads *Around the World in Eighty Days* as the novel study this fall.

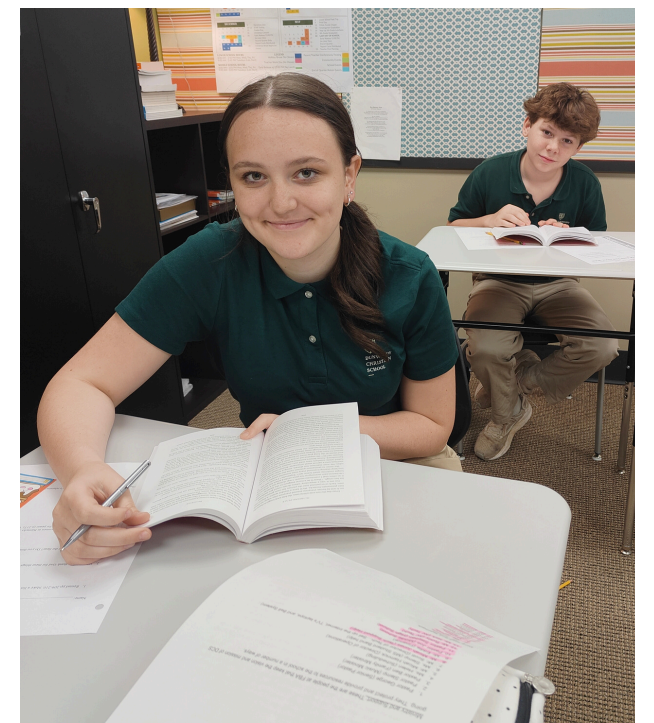
7th

Students in 7th grade ELA started off the semester by reading *The Hobbit* over the summer. They discussed how Bilbo went through the steps of the Hero's Journey as well as some of the differences between the film adaptations and the book. Students continued to explore the characteristics of a hero in short stories like "Rikki-Tikki Tavi" by Rudyard Kipling and were introduced to Gothic literature and the beginning of the detective genre with Edgar Allen Poe. Finally, students made their way around the world with Phileas Fogg and company in *Around the World in 80 Days*. They will create a travel brochure to invite "future customers" into the experiences and challenges of the novel.

ELA
*from the desk
of Ms. Joseph*



Lacey (8th) works on reading and grammar skills in IXL.



Mackenzie and Will (8th) work on annotating *The Hiding Place* by Corrie Ten Boom.

8th

This semester in 8th grade, students explored the important themes of forgiveness, thankfulness, and loving your enemies through Corrie Ten Boom's autobiographical story, *The Hiding Place*. Students plumbed the depths of the novel by discussing important questions like how should Christians respond to an immoral government and the level of priority for all human life. We've also had some fun debates regarding Captain Long John Silver's character growth in *Treasure Island* and the reliability of the narrator in *The Tell-Tale Heart*.

SOCIAL STUDIES

from the desk of Mrs. Sells

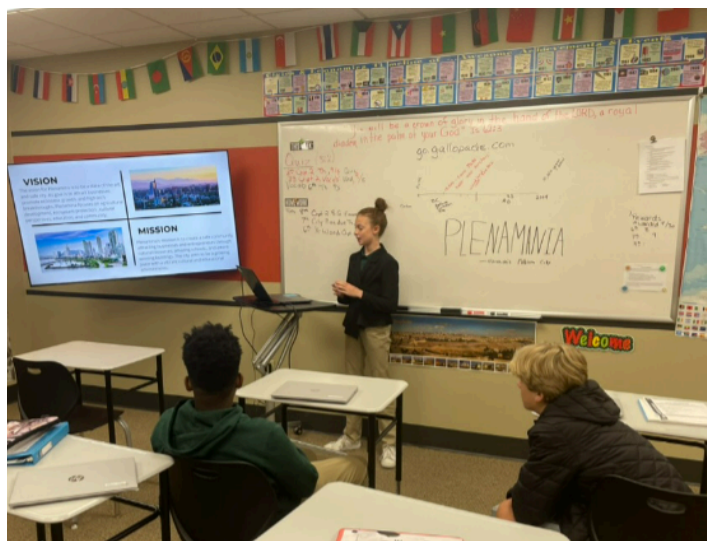
6th 6th grade students started the year becoming familiar with the geography of the world. They made their own globes out of balloons, traveled through different time zones and found locations using geographic coordinates. They are spending the rest of the semester learning about the continent of Europe. Did you know that Russia spans 11 time zones and is on two continents? Europe and Asia! They are learning about the different forms of government, money, and economic systems in Europe and their vocabulary is expanding too! Just ask any 6th grader about a Bundestag or Duma!



Liah (6th) shares her balloon globe with the class while her classmates put the final touches on theirs.

7th

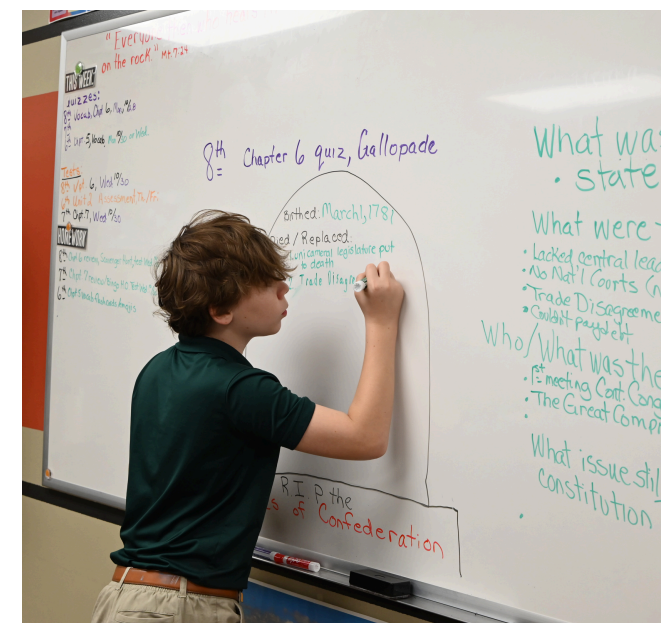
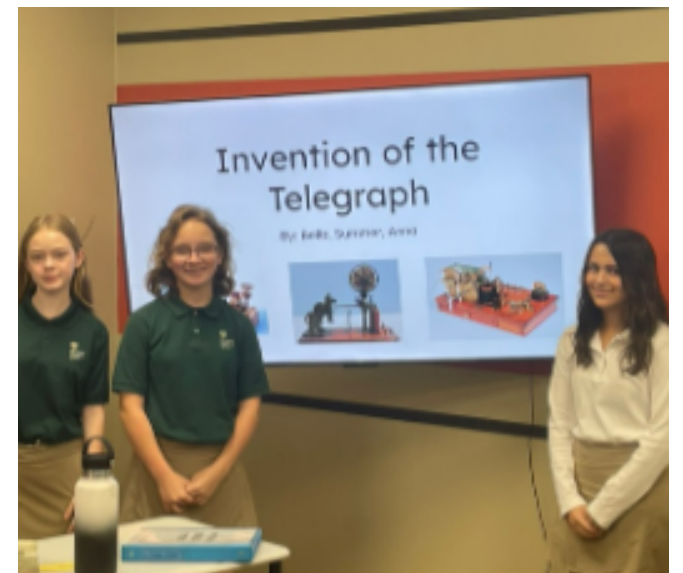
We kicked off 7th Grade with an accelerated review of geographic skills, economic themes and governments. Within that overview, the students researched a region of the world and developed their own city plan based on population, climate, natural resources, goods produced, and potential trading partners. Don't be surprised if one day you hear of a new city- Plenamina, Nevada; Surgut, Russia or Mishkila, Lithuania!



Avery (7th) presents her Plenamina City Plan to the Board of Stephen and Alexander for approval.

8th

Students in 8th grade trekked with the American Natives through the Appalachians, the Plateaus and Coastal Regions of Georgia and the colonial settlers of Georgia through two wars! The students learned the colonists were not all in agreement about breaking free from England, but The Stamp Act, Townshend Acts and The Boston Massacre led to the infamous "shot heard around the world." After the victory was won, the students enjoyed a clip from the musical "Hamilton." Later in the semester, students unveiled some of the 19th century innovations: The Mechanical Reaper, Telegraph, and Cotton Gin.



Will (8th) writes an epitaph for the Articles of Confederation tombstone to review for a quiz.



Students in 8th grade present on some of the innovations of the 19th century.

SCIENCE

from the desk of Dr. Colangelo



Dr. Colangelo demonstrates the effects of seismic vibrations over bedrock on a water bottle over different surfaces.



Dr. Colangelo explains how seismic vibrations impact houses and buildings. Students jumped as hard as they could to move the bottle.



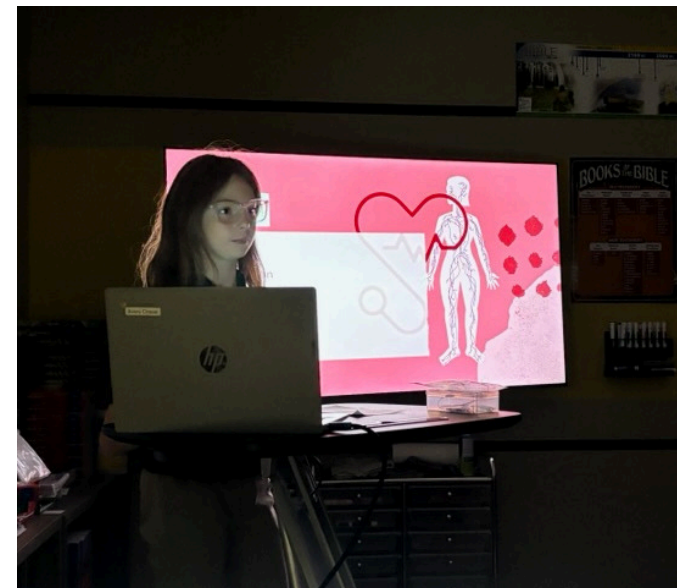
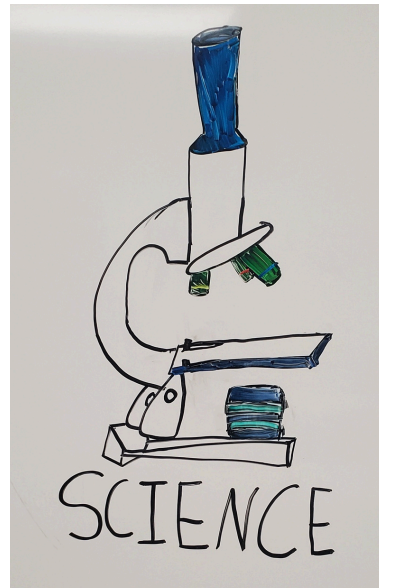
Students in 6th grade learn Earth Science from a Biblical worldview.

The psalmist wrote, “The heavens declare the glory of the Lord,” and this mindset guides our approach to science in 6th grade. In life science, students marvel at the complexity of living organisms and their ecosystems. They explore God’s intricate designs by observing leaf cells under microscopes, studying photosynthesis, and learning how life on Earth interconnects. Every lesson reminds them that creation points to the Creator, and scientific discovery is a way to glorify Him.

6th

7th

In 7th grade, earth science takes center stage as students dive into topics like geology, meteorology, and environmental science. They witness the power of God’s creation through hands-on activities such as simulating tornadoes and cyclones in the gymnasium. By examining the forces that shape our planet, students gain a deeper appreciation for the precision and purpose in God’s handiwork.



Avery (7th) presents on the circulatory system. She brought in a variety of stints from her father’s job to show its impact on our bodies.



An imploding soda can that is first heated, then dunked in cold water, shows the effects of differences in air pressure in weather systems.

By 8th grade, students transition to physical science, where they uncover the laws and principles that govern the physical world. Experiments like imploding soda cans to demonstrate differences in air pressure highlight the creativity and order in God’s design. Each activity reinforces the idea that science isn’t just a subject—it’s a way to understand and celebrate the Creator’s magnificent work. Through these discoveries, students grow in both knowledge and faith, recognizing that science and worship go hand in hand.

8th

6th Sixth grade students meet for Spanish twice weekly. They are in a great *rutina*/routine of getting right to work when the bell rings in completing their starter work. They all take turns leading us in prayer. I am so proud of our new students for jumping right in to learn our prayers in Spanish and taking the initiative to lead the class in prayer. They have learned greetings in Spanish and have perfected their calendar terms, including days of week, months of year, seasons and all related vocabulary. They have been doing *mucho trabajo* with *numeros*/numbers in Spanish, not only learning the numbers and counting by 2's, 5's, and 10's to 100 but also perfecting the spelling of all of their numbers to 100. They are right on the mark in telling time in Spanish. In grammar, they have been learning pronouns and gender of nouns.

SPANISH

from the desk of Señora Donahue

SPANISH 1

Los estudiantes del septimo y octavo grado/Seventh and eighth grade students meet for Spanish four times weekly. They have been increasing their vocabulary base, building on the foundation they established last year. They follow classroom instructions in Spanish and are presently learning classroom vocabulary and subjects in Spanish. Putting that together with their knowledge of calendar terms and telling time, they are able to create daily schedules in Spanish. Conjugating both irregular and regular verbs in the present tense has been a focal point of this semester. They have learned all of the interrogative words in Spanish and are forming many questions (and answers) in the target language. Seventh and eighth graders have become very adept at honing their listening skills with regular oral classwork and quizzes. Students have the opportunity each day to practice his/her oral skills with each other. I am thrilled to see my students' growing confidence in learning a second language.

ATHLETICS

from the desk of Coach Sarah Newton

DCS fosters a love for lifelong fitness through athletics, enhancing the academic experience with healthy competition, sportsmanship, and teamwork. Our athletic program develops student-athletes who train with excellence, compete with character, and lead on and off the field. Competing in GAPPS leagues, our teams allow students to grow at their own pace, emphasizing skills and good habits.

Lacey (8th), Avery (7th), Lillian and Liah (6th)



In the fall, our Cross Country team has flourished under Coach Beard, with highlights including Luis setting a new school record in the 3k at the state championship meet in a time of 13:21. Our girls team finished the season strong as well with a lot of close finishes and new personal bests. In the winter we offer swimming where athletes are continuing to gain confidence in their abilities and potential. At our first meet, six school records were broken including the women's 50 Backstroke, 50 Breaststroke and 100 IM and the



The Cross Country Team at the Ranger Invitational.

men's 50 Freestyle, 50 Breaststroke, and 50 Butterfly. It will be exciting to see our swimmers excel at the state level this season. We look forward to building on the success of the programs we currently offer and anticipate adding to our sports offerings soon.

DCS LION PRIDES

What happens when two prides of lions are in the same room? They compete! This school year marks the inaugural season of our Dens: Galilee (led by Dr. Colangelo) and Lebanon (led by Ms. Joseph). Each Tuesday, our lions compete for points which culminate into a prize at the end of the semester. From 3-legged races to volleyball games to a schoolwide (rubber) duck hunt, our students look forward to our Tuesday morning PRIDE time where school spirit and friendly competition develop and deepen lasting friendships.



LEBANON CHANT

Hey! Hey! Get out of our way!
We've got spirit, yes we do.
We've got spirit, how 'bout you?
L-E-BAN-OoooN!
Team Lebanon!



GALILEE CHANT

Team Galilee! Team Galilee!
We serve the Lord of Calvary.
To our God we will be true,
We've got Spirit.
How about you?

During the academic school day, it can be challenging to find time to connect with students at a heart level and to be intentional about helping them to develop their personal walk with Christ. That is why we have carved out time once a week within small groups of 4-6 students to a teacher or staff member who can disciple students and pray through each of their needs. Our boys discipleship groups, led by Dr. Colangelo, are using Jim George's *A Boy's Guide to Making Really Good Choices* and our girls discipleship groups, led by Mrs. Breech, Ms. Jasmine, and Ms. Joseph are reading through *A Girl's Guide to Making Really Good Choices* and *Defined: Who God Says You Are*. Our students look forward to meeting with their discipleship leaders each week to share what is going on in their lives and to find support within a loving group of brothers and sisters to point them to God in their challenges.

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS



One of the 7th and 8th grade girls discipleship groups meet to share about their week and to pray for one another.



Dr. Colangelo leads the 7th and 8th grade boys in a discussion about making good choices each day.