



Connecting Waters Charter School

Accredited by the Schools Commission of Western Association of Schools and Colleges

12420 Bentley Street
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Volume 9
Rebecca Berringer • Layout

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Roy Shimp • Editor

Dates to Remember

April 18-22

Spring Break

News from the Executive Director

How Can I Help My Child Get Prepared for the Standardized Tests?

Right before the test:

- o Make sure your child has a good night's sleep. Provide a good breakfast.
- o Have your child dress in layers. Children do better on tests if they do not have to think about how hot or cold they are.
- o Don't be too anxious. Say, "This test is important. I know you will try hard and do your best." Your confidence will be contagious.
- o On the day of the test, give your child these tips:
 - Skip a question and move on if you don't know the answer. You can always come back later. Maybe you will be ready to answer that question then.
 - Check your answers carefully. Make sure the numbers of your answers correspond to the numbers of the questions on the test.

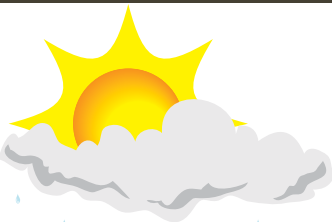
Information adopted from: *The Parent Institute, Questions and Answers about Standardized Tests*

What's Happening in April with CWCS?

A six member team of educators representing the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) will visit our school from Sunday, April 10 through Wednesday, April 13, 2011. Their purpose is to validate the findings of our self-study report: [Community Profile](#), [Critical Areas of Need](#), [Progress](#), [Criterion A](#), [Criterion B](#), [Criterion C](#), [Criterion D](#), [Criterion E](#), and our plan for improvement over the next six years [CWCS ACTION PLAN 2012-2018](#). The team will meet with administrators, teachers, staff, parents, and students to learn about our school. They will also make suggestions for improvements. We would like to thank our leadership team, ESes, classified staff, parents, and students for their help in completing the self-study and action plan. We look forward to meeting with the visiting WASC committee team and sharing with them the successes of Connecting Waters Charter School and how we make parent choice a reality. Feel free to call the school office to participate in meeting with the team at one of the learning centers.

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HAPPY SPRING!

STUDENT COUNCIL NEWS

Judy Orr, Student Council • jorr@connectingwaters.org

Roll out the red carpet! "Hollywood" has been chosen for the CWCS Prom theme on April 2nd at Hutchins Street Square in Lodi from 7-11 PM. The Prom registration form can be found at <http://www.connectingwaters.org/events/cw2011/promannandreg.pdf> and the Rules and Expectations can be found at <http://www.connectingwaters.org/events/cw2011/promrulesandexp.pdf> A guest pass can be found at <http://www.connectingwaters.org/SchoolPolicies/dancequest.pdf> The deadline to sign up for the Prom, submit payment, and turn in a guest pass (if applicable) was **March 26th**. E-mail Judy at jorr@connectingwaters.org with any questions.

The City Roster is available for parents who would like to arrange to carpool with other CWCS families to school events. Please e-mail Neriah at neriahh@sbcglobal.net to receive an electronic copy of the information for other school families in the city in which you live.

To sign up for the Parent or Student Listserve, e-mail parentlistserve@connectingwaters.org with your name, parent name, and e-mail address.



HEALTH NEWS

Heather Grossman, School Nurse • heathergrn@yahoo.com • 209-247-2710

New Immunization Requirements for 7th through 12th-grade students

Starting July 1, 2011, a new law (AB 354) changing California immunization requirements for all students entering 7th-12th grade, will go into effect. Students will now need to have a Tdap immunization booster in order to attend school the following school-year. This is for all schools in our state, including public, private, and charter schools.

Tdap is a booster vaccine for older children, adolescents, and adults. It safely protects against three dangerous diseases: tetanus, diphtheria, and whooping cough (also called pertussis). Your pediatrician, family doctor, or public health-care provider can assist you with this vaccination.

Immunization forms or signed waivers for students who attend Connecting Waters can be mailed or faxed to:

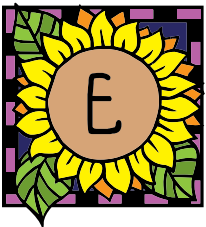
IEM-CWCS Student Records
4535 Missouri Flat Road, Ste. 1A
Placerville, CA 95667

Fax: 1-530-295-3583

Assessment News

BE PREPARED for STAR testing this month.
COMMUNICATE with your ES.
ASK QUESTIONS and **KNOW BEFORE YOU GO!**
Thanks for your positive attitudes and helpful work!

Here are a couple of "YouTube" links with reminders on:
Dress Code - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sx-EPCUk6gI>
Student Behavior - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=koiLGEaTeBw>



English



Department



ews

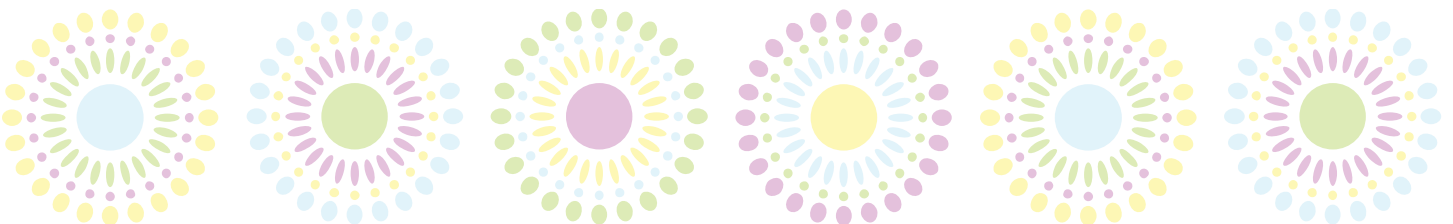
Teresa Matranga • English Department Chair • tmatranga@connectingwaters.org • 1-800-808-9895 Ext 4, then

The English Department teachers have been working hard again this year to maintain high standards in their online classrooms in order to prepare your students for STAR testing. If your student has been enrolled in one of our Elluminate classes, most or all of the CA standards were taught. Students who have been attending and participating in class discussions and who have been completing their assignments should feel confident and prepared.

Beyond simply getting them ready for testing, it was also the Elluminate teachers' goal to inspire in your students a love for reading and for discovering insights and connections to humanity through literature. And then there was the writing. Teaching students to write is challenging, however, helping students learn to think, develop, and organize their insights, connections, and new information continues to be an integral part of the classes.

STAR testing will continue through April 28th. If your student has not yet taken his or her tests, good luck!

Enjoy your spring break April 18th through April 22nd.



Math Department News

Debbie Kutz, Math Specialist • dkutz@connectingwaters.org • 1-800-808-9895 Ext 4, then 3

End-of-the-Year Math Fun

Are you looking for a fun and interesting way to end the year's math studies? Consider ending the year with some fun math activities or projects. This can be a great way to reinforce the concepts your child has learned over the year and allow for some creativity or real-life application. You, or the student, can select a particular strand and develop a project that involves those concepts.

Some general project ideas that can be applied to many concepts include:

- Make a picture book
- Draw a cartoon
- Write a song or Rap
- Report on a Mathematician

Some activities that involve specific concepts are:

- Cooking projects- measurement, fractions
- Building projects- measurement, fractions, geometry
- Design a Backyard- perimeter, area, volume, rate, adding decimals
- Plan a Trip- rate, measurement, scale and proportion (map reading), adding decimals

Here are some good resources for more ideas:

<http://www.mathguide.com/projects/>

<http://www.education.com/activity/all-grades/all-grades/math/>

<http://www.mathprojects.com/Lessons/Default.aspx>

<http://www.aimsedu.org/>

Math Contest

The high school math team will compete this month on Saturday, April 9 at CSU Stanislaus in Turlock. If you're interested in seeing some of the problems these Geometry through Calculus students will be working on, check out the sample problems on the Stanislaus Math Council's website:

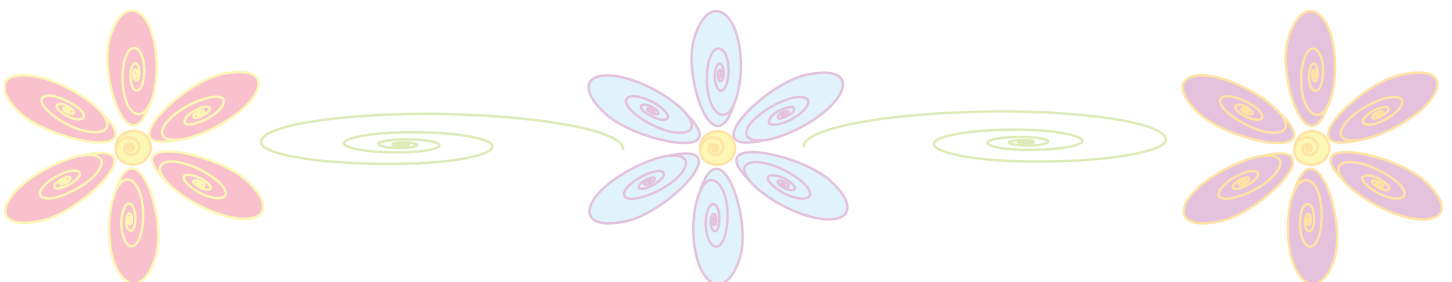
<http://www.stanislausmathcouncil.org/> Consider being part of the team next year!

Drop-In Math "Coaching"

Free math coaching for all ages will continue all semester at both learning centers. The times are listed below. This is a study hall format where students bring math assignments to work on and ask specific questions as time allows. Parents may also attend and bring content-related questions.

Modesto Learning Center
Wednesdays 2:15-3:45

Ceres Learning Center
Tuesdays 12:30-2:30



SOCIAL STUDIES DEPARTMENT

Lori Freeman, Social Studies Department Chair • lofreeman@connectingwaters.org • 1-800-808-9895 Ext 4, then 5

The end of the semester is near and most students are doing very well in their Social Studies classes. As a reminder, grades are based on the following breakdown: 25% Attendance, 25% Homework/ES Progress Report, 25% Projects/Portfolio, and 25% Assessment. Please monitor your student's grade and be sure they finish out the semester strong. You can view their grades at any time online by logging into Moodle using your student's account. It is important that students complete all assignments and do well on their final exam to earn a solid grade of which they can be proud of.

Students earning a-g credit will take their proctored final exam next month. The Social Studies Department finals are scheduled for Thursday, May 12th (Please note this change, as some syllabi had the date as Friday, May 13th). Please be sure your ES has signed them up at the nearest location. Students should be given a study-guide to help prepare them for their exam.

If you have any questions regarding Social Studies classes, please feel free to contact me at lofreeman@connectingwaters.org



Curriculum News

Lori Freeman, Curriculum Director • lofreeman@connectingwaters.org • 1-800-808-9895 Ext 4, then 5

Happy April! I can't believe the school year is just about over. I know everyone is looking forward to spring break and warm weather. I wish everyone a great vacation and holiday.

Soon, all 2nd through 11th grade students will have completed their STAR test. This is an important assessment for our school as it is used to determine how well we have prepared students to meet grade level standards. That all students will meet proficiency and demonstrate that the independent study home-school model is a successful option for students and families is our hope. As a reminder, the California Department of Education releases previous test questions for each subject area on their website. Reviewing these questions can be a great way for students to prepare for their test and help them know what to expect. You can review released test questions for your student at:

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/css05rtq.asp>

As a reminder, I hold curriculum office hours on the third Monday of each month at the Modesto Learning Center. If you would like to set up an appointment to meet, please contact me at lofreeman@connectingwaters.org.



**** Curriculum Spotlight ****

IXL Math

<http://www.ixl.com/>

“Math is about so much more than just numbers- so, IXL is too! We approach each math concept from all angles, offering visual representations, word problems, interactive activities, and more. With an abundance of math problems for every learning style, students can't help but build lasting skills and confidence.” website

This is a great math practice site for students in grades K-8. Students can solve 20 questions per day for free. Once 20 questions have been answered, a prompt will come up asking for membership, or to return the next day for more practice. Each grade level lists skills by concepts and students receive instant feedback on whether they solved questions correctly. All of IXL's math practice skills are aligned to state standards and the Common Core standards, making it easy to find the right skills to practice. IXL assesses performance on each standard, making it a great site to quickly assess if a student has mastered a concept.

Click on your grade level to view the topics and skills:

Kindergarten

Identifying shapes, patterns, skip-counting, and more. [See all 104 skills >>](#)

First grade

Bar graphs, addition word problems, counting coins, and more. [See all 151 skills >>](#)

Second grade

Place-value models, reading clocks, fractions, and more. [See all 211 skills >>](#)

Third grade

Multiplication facts, line graphs, adding decimals, and more. [See all 212 skills >>](#)

Fourth grade

Adding mixed numbers, calculating probabilities, and more. [See all 203 skills >>](#)

Fifth grade

Multiplying fractions, finding percentages, area, and more. [See all 263 skills >>](#)

Sixth grade

Variable expressions, exponents, permutations, and more. [See all 251 skills >>](#)

Seventh grade

Pythagorean theorem, proportional relationships, and more. [See all 248 skills >>](#)

Eighth grade

Linear functions, solving equations, cube roots, and more. [See all 255 skills >>](#)



Brought to you by your

Special Education Department

TEST TAKING STRATEGIES

As exam time and testing approaches, students with learning disabilities often find themselves overwhelmed with the amount of information they need to remember. Research tells us that if we review information within 24 hours of learning it, we are much more likely to remember it in the long run. Well thought-out homework and home school lessons are designed with this kind of review in mind. Each student should choose strategies for memorization that fit their own learning styles.

- **Sort Information:** Help your retrieval system by putting new information into categories. You can group by dates, people, formulas, etc. It may help to make a chart as you study.
- **Frequent review:** Studying new information the same day you heard or read it will improve memory significantly. A small review each day is essential if you have memory problems.
- **Use humor or exaggeration:** Information stays in memory longer if it is related to something novel and interesting. Make up something funny or exaggerated that ties in to what needs to be memorized.
- **Explore the senses:** Try learning the information visually, verbally, and kinesthetically (with movement) and find which sense works best for you. Some people need to combine two or more senses.
- **Color code:** By using colored pens, highlighters, post-it notes and flags, index cards, etc. you can make an impression on your memory. This is a way of sorting information for storage as you assign colors.
- **Make visual aids:** Draw pictures or cartoon characters, graphs, tables, charts, time lines, etc. to aid memory. Even simple stick figures and drawings are useful if you are a visual learner. Pay attention to pictures, charts, etc. in textbooks.
- **Rehearse aloud:** Verbal rehearsal is an effective memory tool. Study with someone or use a tape recorder to say aloud what needs to be memorized.
- **Make it physical:** Adding a physical activity such as pacing, jumping, throwing a ball, or writing enhances the memory for many people. Typing or rewriting notes is a very effective memory device for people who need to learn kinesthetically.
- **Turn memory practice into a game:** Make cards to match words and definitions, math facts to answers, etc. and play a memory game by turning over two cards at a time. Time yourself to see how long it takes to match all the cards. The act of making the game also helps memory.

For more information on memory, read these two on-line articles by Regina Richards:

[Memory Strategies for Students: The Value of Strategies](#)

[Making It Stick: Memorable Strategies to Enhance Learning](#)

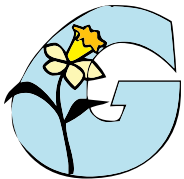
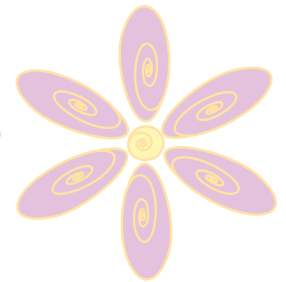
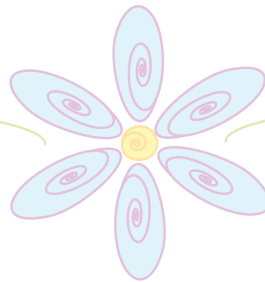
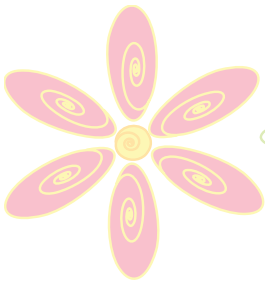
ESLR OF THE MONTH

ESLR #1

Effective Communicators (Reading/Writing)

“Student will read and write effectively.” Student:

- reads actively and derives meaning from written media.
- reads extensively for a variety of purposes.
- writes using grammatically acceptable English.
- adjusts tone and style of writing for purpose and audience.
- supports statements using well-rounded facts, theory, and opinion.
- separates fact from opinion.
- logically reaches conclusions based on sufficient evidence.
- clearly and succinctly states key points.
- organizes ideas in a variety of ways.
- demonstrates creativity through style, organization, and development of content.



Guidance



Department

Greetings from the Guidance Department! Guidance can help you determine your future academic and career goals.

Contact information:

Mary Halter, School Counselor

1-800-808-9895 ext. 4 then 2

mhalter@connectingwaters.org or guidancecounselor@connectingwaters.org

Check out the Guidance page online!

For Scholarship Information:

go to www.connectingwaters.org, choose departments and then guidance then “Scholarships/ Grants” and then “Current Scholarships”



Class of 2011

Attending Community College Next year?
Now is the time to check in with your community college!
You will need to take assessments and attend orientation meetings!
Start Early, Start Now!!!
If you need help, please contact Mary Halter in the Guidance Department!



High School Students – Class of 2011

Planning to start at MJC in the Fall?

Make sure you attend StartSmart!

StartSmart is a way you can satisfy your orientation/advising requirement *and* 'bump up' your registration date!

With the high demand for MJC courses, sometimes even a one day 'bump up' of your registration date and time can make a difference in being enrolled in the course or having your name added to the waitlist because the course is full!

Here's how to attend StartSmart!

Step 1: apply online http://www.mjc.edu/prospective/getting_started/

Step 2: take your assessments www.mjc.edu/assessment

Step 3: sign up for a StartSmart date www.mjc.edu/startsmart



Upcoming College Fairs!!!

if you can make it,
it's worth your time!

<http://wacac.org/fairs>

Sunday, April 3: University of the Pacific, Stockton

Monday, April 4: CSU Stanislaus, Turlock

Tuesday, April 5: Sonoma State, Rohnert Park

Wednesday, April 6: Dominican University, San Rafael

Thursday, April 7: Mission College, Santa Clara

Friday, April 8: CSU East Bay, Hayward

Saturday, April 9: St. Mary's College, Moraga

Sunday, April 10: St. Mira Loma High School, Sacramento



a-g Class Finals Information!

(For Elluminate and Portfolio Reviews for Department Teachers)

Please Arrive 15 minutes Early!

For more information, contact your HQT Instructor
Any questions please contact your ES

Wednesday, May 11, 2011

English

10:00am – 12:00pm

***Break 12:00pm – 12:30pm**

***Break at MLC site 12:00pm – 1:00pm**

Science

12:30 – 2:30pm

* MLC site 1:00pm – 3:00pm



Thursday, May 12, 2011

Social Science

10:00am – 12:00pm

Spanish

10:00am – 12:00pm

***Break 12:00 – 12:30pm**

***Break at MLC site 12:00 – 1:00pm**

Mathematics

12:30pm – 2:30pm

* MLC site 1:00pm – 3:00pm

***Feel free to bring a snack or lunch for your 30-minute break time. *MLC site has a 1-hour break time.**

Only water will be allowed during test times.



a-g Class Finals Information Continued

****You will not be allowed to leave the building for your break****
****Cell phones will be collected before tests begin and returned when finished****



“Please be on time”

You will only be allowed to complete the test during the specified time. Pace yourself to complete the test in the allotted time provided.

Make sure you go to the site your ES signed you up for!

****Don't forget your textbook if you have an open book test! Textbooks will not be provided at the learning centers**

****Please bring your own pencil or pen, only scratch paper will be provided for you!**

“As with any school function, the CWCS dress code must be followed”

****Students will stay in the room until 90% of the group has completed the test before people can leave.**

****If taking the Math Final, you may bring a calculator (if approved by instructor), calculators will not be provided! “No cell phone can be used as a calculator!!”**

TEST SITES

Modesto Learning Center 4713 Greenleaf Ct. Suite A Modesto, CA 95356 209-543-7803 800-808-9895 Ext. 2	Ceres Learning Center 3641 Mitchell Road. Ste. F Ceres, CA 95307 800-808-9895 Ext. 1 209-541-1531 Phone	Livermore- Proctor: Kim Shepodd (West Livermore) 330 Thrasher Avenue, Livermore, CA 94551 925-784-7163
Stockton-Proctor- Denetrice Howard- Progressive Community Church 2820 South B Street Stockton, CA 95206 209-298-4674 or Church office 209-546-0399	Newark- Proctor: Catherine Dorman 36551 Mulberry St. Newark, CA 94560 510-790-3871	Gilroy- Proctor Lisa Bender 1462 Goshawk Court, Gilroy, CA 95020 408-438-0389

Policy for leaving the building

Dear Parents,

For your child's safety, we are not allowing any students to be without adult supervision while at the learning center during break time or after class. Students will be asked to remain inside the building until you arrive to pick them up. We ask that you review this policy with your child(ren). If you would like your student to leave the premises after testing, please send a signed note with a phone number where you can be reached giving him/her your permission.

Thank you for your cooperation!

Connecting Waters Charter School

Student Dress Code Policy

The CWCS dress code sets standards that promote a positive and safe learning environment for students. Students should wear neat, clean and appropriate clothing at all school activities, including school dances, graduation activities, and testing.

The following guidelines shall apply to all regular school activities:

1. Students shall dress appropriately for educational activities in which they will participate so as not to endanger their health, safety, or welfare, or that of others, or cause a disruption to the educational process. Clothes shall be sufficient to conceal undergarments when sitting or standing. The following articles or clothing are not permitted:
 - Shorts, pants, skirts, and tops that fail to conceal undergarments, back, abdomen, and cleavage. No oversized saggy pants (all pants must be worn at the waist). Fabric can be any, but no frayed hems (as on cut-offs), and no holes such as in worn-out denims;
 - Muscle shirts;
 - Back-less, strap-less, or spaghetti strap tops;
 - Low cut tops and dresses;
 - Bare-midriff tops;
 - Chains of any sort, wallet or utility-type chains.
 - See-through garments.
2. All attire must fit appropriately and must not be too small or too large. Shorts and skirts shorter than mid-thigh are prohibited.
3. Shoes shall be worn at all times. Steel-toed boots and bedroom slippers are prohibited.
4. Clothing, accessories, and jewelry shall be free of writing, pictures, symbols or any other insignia which are crude, vulgar, profane, obscene, libelous, slanderous, or sexually suggestive. Clothing, accessories, or jewelry that degrade any cultural, religious or ethnic values, that advocate racial, ethnic, or religious prejudice or discrimination, or that promote sex, the use of tobacco, drugs, alcohol or violence or any unlawful acts (including gang activity) are prohibited.
5. Dark glasses shall not be worn indoors, except for valid medical reasons authorized by the administration and verified in writing by a physician.
6. Gang-related clothing or accessories, including but not limited to bandannas, or other symbols, emblems or insignia are prohibited. Gang-related web belts with or without punched out metal buckles are prohibited. School officials shall consider student history and information obtained from community agencies and resources when making these judgments. Dangerous clothing accessories are prohibited (i.e., spiked jewelry, studded collars, studded belts, hanging belts).

Hats, caps and other head coverings are prohibited indoors during regular school hours except as specifically authorized by a school official for such school activities as athletics and theatrical performances or other approved personal reasons such as health needs. Hooded sweatshirts when used to conceal identity are not permitted.

Any student dressed **inappropriately during state/school mandated testing will be subject to school discipline and will be sent home. Student subsequently will be required to travel to the school office in Waterford to do the testing** on specified dates. Alternatively, the student **may be required to wear a t-shirt** provided by the school at the test site.

The Executive Director of the school or her designee makes the final decision of what is appropriate school attire. The Executive Director of the School or her designee may issue more specific dress code guidelines at any time.