

Exploring Identity, Culture, and Community: A Meaningful Week of Learning

Connected to our work for **Black History Month**, our 6th and 7th graders are exploring how identity, culture, and community shape our experiences. While our 8th graders are in Rome, students at home are engaging in deep reflection on the role culture plays in shaping who we are and how we relate to one another.

This week's activities connect to our **anti-bias, anti-racism (ABAR) education**, reinforcing that understanding our own culture helps us appreciate the histories, perspectives, and lived experiences of others.

Family Culture and Traditions Project

The **Family Culture and Traditions Project** encourages students to reflect on their own cultural identity, communication styles, and traditions, fostering **empathy, respect, and appreciation for diverse perspectives**. All grades completed this project last year, and it was such a success that we are refining and expanding it into our advisory program this year to increase the positive impact across our school community.

Why This Project?

- **Celebrate Diversity:** Our unique traditions and values are worth sharing.
- **Understand Identity:** Culture shapes how we speak, connect, and interact.
- **Build Community:** Learning about each other strengthens our relationships.
- **Improve Communication:** Recognizing differences helps us collaborate effectively.

What We Did This Week

Tara, Terra, and Alex shared their family traditions—family meals, making mochi, and preparing sticky rice, highlighting how food, responsibility, and shared experiences shape culture. Students tried sticky rice and engaged in meaningful discussions about how understanding each other's backgrounds builds a stronger community.

Looking Ahead: Presentations & Community Connection

On **April 9th & 10th**, students in all grades will present their family traditions in Advisory. Last year, students shared traditions through slideshows, storytelling, food, and even family guest speakers.

SEL Work with Julie: Strengthening Connection

Students also participated in **SEL activities** focused on **collaboration, problem-solving, and self-awareness**:

- **7th graders** worked on breaking out of cliques, valuing differences, and building accountability, connecting this to social dynamics in Advisory Circles.
- **6th graders** focused on teamwork, flexibility, and balancing fun with inclusivity through problem-solving games and group reflections.

What's Next?

Tuesday (Today!):

- 7th grade are engaging in SEL learning.
- 6th and 7th grade students bring home a [worksheet to complete with family](#) (due Friday).

Wednesday:

- Final Outdoor Education (OE) Day

Thursday:

- 6th-grade SEL activities
- 7th Grade Play (Students arrive at 5:20 PM, show at 6:00 PM.)

Friday:

- Family Culture and Traditions Worksheet Due
- 6th graders share their Family Culture Project drafts and give each other feedback.
- Friday Fun Fest

Continuing the Learning

This week has been an opportunity for students to **connect their personal experiences to the larger themes of culture, identity, and belonging**. Whether through examining their own traditions, strengthening their social-emotional skills, or collaborating in new ways, students are deepening their understanding of what it means to be part of a community.

Thank you for your support as we continue this important work!