February 2026

Terrill Tidings

January Shining Forth Recipients



UPCOMING:

March

3/2-3/6: Spring Book Fair
3/11: 4th to 5th Grade Parent Orientation, 6-7pm
5th to 6th Grade Parent Orientation, 7:30-8:30pm
3/20: Eid Al-Fitr, Schools Closed
3/30-4/3: Spring Break, Schools Closed

Attachments

Anne Frank Art Contest (Page 11)

6th Grade Parent Orientation (Page 11)

Dr. Kevin Holloway, Principal
Dr. Brooke Kaska-Esposito, Asst. Principal

Fundraising for the 8th Grade Trip

Our recent sneaker drive fundraiser was an incredible success, and we are deeply grateful for the overwhelming support from you, our TMS Families and our staff. Every pair of shoes donated brings our 8th graders one step closer to their end-of-year celebration. As the costs for transportation and venues continue to rise, the funds raised through this initiative will be vital in ensuring that all of our students can participate in this milestone experience. We truly appreciate the generosity you have shown, as these contributions directly offset expenses and keep our trip accessible for everyone. Thank you for partnering with us to support the Class of 2026!



What's Happening at Terrill

As part of our celebration of America's 250th birthday, we are excited to share that one of our school-wide events will include a commemorative photo featuring the number 250 along with two stars. This will be a special moment for our entire school community!

To bring this photo to life:

- Grades 5–7 will form the number 250
- Grade 8 will create the two stars

To help make the design clear and visually striking, we ask that students wear the following on February 25:

- Grade 5: Red top
- Grade 6: White top
- Grade 7: Blue top
- Grade 8: White top

Wearing the assigned color is important so the photo comes together as planned. Students who are unable to wear the appropriate color may not be able to participate in the photo.

We are truly looking forward to seeing our students come together for this memorable celebration and hope to have full participation across all grade levels. Thank you for your support in helping make this event a success!

THANK YOU to the PTA and all of you for the delicious goody bags for Valentine's Day. We are grateful for your kindness and appreciation.



Electives

Project STEM

Terrill offered a brand-new, AI-based elective this year, Project STEM. The course introduces students to the exciting world of computer science through both cooperative groups and hands-on activities/projects. Applying foundational AI concepts, students will learn to think like programmers while exploring how technology shapes our world. This course builds problem-solving skills, creativity, and confidence in a fun, beginner-friendly environment.

Some STEM Objectives

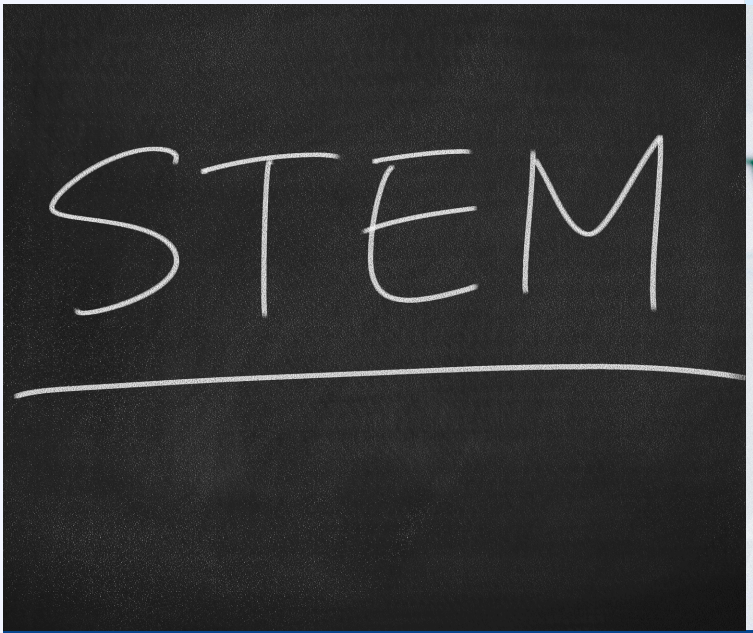
- Explore AI and its far-reaching societal impacts in our world.
- Explore how AI technologies can help solve problems and improve life for themselves and their communities.
- Build familiarity with AI technology and the current state of machine learning.
- Develop matrices that support machine learning and evaluate AI and social media platforms.

Making Money Move$ 7

Making Money Move$ completed a very successful semester. All classes had a chance to dive into the world of finance, working on many activities and projects that focused on real-life applications of financial mathematics.

The students learned about tax, discounts, and how to save money. They learned how taxes affect the prices of all things, including a paycheck (gross vs. net). They effectively planned a budget and planned a financial life that mimicked how life will ook in the future. It was quite eye-opening for many!







Ciao!

Buenos días

Italian Classes

In Italian classes, students are actively using the language while exploring real-life topics. Seventh graders recently wrapped up a mini-unit on winter sports and the Olympics, connecting their learning to Italy as a host country while building vocabulary related to sports and personal preferences. They are now moving into a sports unit that continues to strengthen communication skills.

Eight graders are currently in the pranzo unit, learning about Italian lunches, food vocabulary, and daily routines. Students are practicing conversational Italian and comparing Italian lunch traditions with their own experiences, helping them make meaningful cultural connections

Spanish Classes

Sixth graders are learning to talk about activities they enjoy and exploring different animals, building vocabulary and confidence around everyday interests. Seventh graders are focusing on homes, furniture, and household chores as part of their language learning. As a culminating activity, seventh-grade students will present their dream home, describing its features, the people who live there, and the chores each family member completes. These activities encourage students to make personal connections to the content while practicing key language skills. Together, both grade levels are developing practical communication skills through engaging, real-life topics.

bonjour

6th Grade French

Students are building a foundation in basic communication by learning to share personal information, such as their origins and birthdays. Alongside language skills, they are exploring French culture through the life of Coco Chanel, connecting her impact on fashion history to themes of comfort, confidence, and independence.

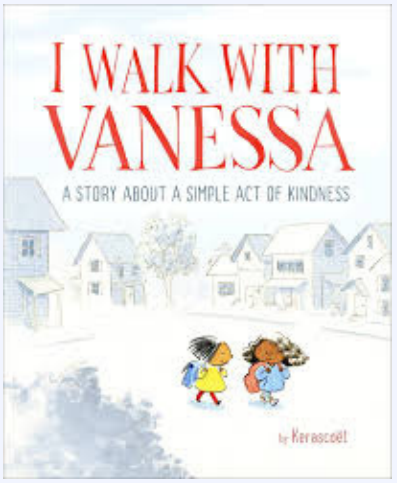
7th Grade French

Students are learning to express opinions on school life, as well as practicing how to explain their likes and dislikes regarding various subjects. They are also working on a collaborative “One Day Layover in Paris” project, where they research the 20 arrondissements to persuasively present why their assigned area is the ideal travel destination in Paris.

Social Emotional Learning

with the Guidance Counselors

5th Graders



In December and January, fifth-grade classes worked with the counselors to create their own picture books based on the book, "I Walk with Vanessa: A story about a simple act of kindness." by Kerascoet. This is a wordless picture book that depicts the experiences of a new student entering a school and how one person can truly impact the student experience and the lives of others. We were so impressed with the observations the students drew while interpreting a story told without words. They even picked up on a discrete detail of how the book used color to reinforce the student's positive experiences and feelings. We also learned how body language and facial expressions can give us a strong message as well. With the overarching theme of empathy, our students shared many real life ways to support those around us! We can't wait to see their finished products of what each homeroom created.

Fifth-grade excitement continued to build in February, with the Stepping Up for 6cess program. Our sixth graders have been excellent model ambassadors to share what the daily sixth grade experience looks and feels like through the eyes of a student. Spoiler alert: the 6th grade cafeteria school lunch options have been a hit! Looking forward to the remainder of our fifth grade homerooms enjoying their special day!



In February, 7th and 8th-grade students continue to build on this important work through lessons centered on empathy, connection, and kindness. Seventh graders will participate in The Science of Kindness lessons through science class that explores the effect that kindness has on brain chemistry and the benefits that accompany acts of service.

Seventh graders also participated with the second Start With Hello lesson: Practicing Empathy With Yourself. During this lesson they will explore what self-empathy looks like and why it matters. Students will reflect on how understanding and supporting ourselves can strengthen the way we extend empathy to others, and they will discuss meaningful ways these practices can positively shape our school community.

Eighth graders will also engage in their second Start With Hello Lesson: Reach Out and Help, focusing on how to recognize peers who may be feeling isolated and how to take thoughtful steps to connect with them. Through discussion and collaboration, students will identify simple yet powerful ways to reach out, culminating in the creation of posters highlighting the "Top Five Ways to Connect With Others." These student-created displays will serve as visible reminders throughout the school of the importance of inclusion, kindness, and taking initiative to support one another.



Grade 6 Math

Sixth grade math students are diving into fraction operations in our unit, Let's Be Rational. We are learning how to add, subtract, multiply, and divide fractions, mixed numbers, and improper fractions. Through problem-solving and real-world applications, students are developing confidence, accuracy, and a deeper understanding of how fractions are used in everyday situations.

Next, students will transition into our variables and patterns unit, where we will explore graphing, coordinate planes, and mathematical relationships.

In recognition of Black History Month, sixth grade students engaged in a cross-curricular project connecting mathematics, social awareness, and real-world issues. Following the Super Bowl, students were introduced to the NFL's Rooney Rule and examined how it aimed to promote more diverse, equitable, and inclusive hiring practices. Students were then called to action to identify inequalities within society, research their chosen topic, and use mathematical data and analysis to highlight disparities and propose meaningful change. This project encouraged students to think critically, use mathematics as a tool for advocacy, and understand how data can inform future societal progress.

Grade 6 Social Studies

In social studies, students have been learning about the Holocaust through a developmentally appropriate focus on choices, identity, and responsibility. We have explored how Jewish families were affected by discriminatory laws, ghettos, and forced separation, with special attention on the experiences of children. Through readings, discussions, and film, students have been examining the roles of upstanders, bystanders, perpetrators, and victims, and reflecting on how individual action can make a difference.

Looking ahead, we are honored to welcome Holocaust survivor Maud Dahme as a guest speaker on March 4th. Ms. Dahme survived the Holocaust as a hidden child in the Netherlands, and she will share her personal story of resilience, courage, and survival. This powerful experience will give students a meaningful opportunity to connect their learning to a real-life voice and deepen their understanding of history through firsthand testimony.



Grade 6

Writing Workshop

Students are working in small groups to prepare a structured debate, using credible research and effective persuasive techniques, such as pathos, ethos, and logos, to support their arguments. Groups will present their debates to the class next week in which the "jury" will decide which group has the stronger argument.

In January, sixth graders wrote "Dreams of Justice" poems to honor Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Before writing, students discussed Dr. King's life and legacy. Students' writing reflected themes of equality and fairness, peace and nonviolence, standing up for others, dreams for a better future, and kindness and respect. Students incorporated figurative language and strong adjectives they have studied in class. This activity provided students with an opportunity to connect their historical knowledge with creative expression.

DEBATE

Grade 7

Math

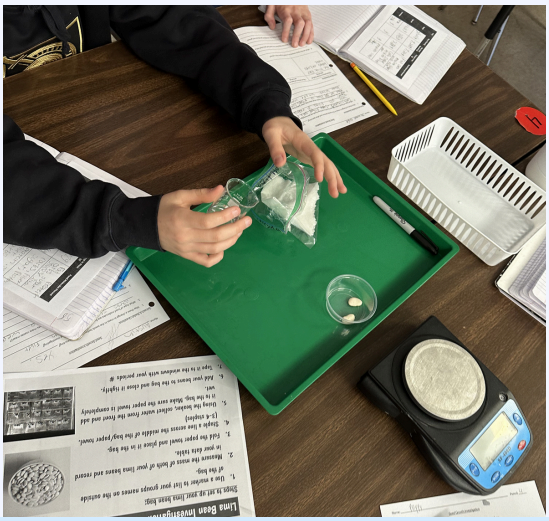
In Math, we are finishing the Comparing & Scaling Unit. Students have done a good job working on unit rates, ratios, and proportions. They have worked very hard on learning different strategies for the problems. Students have been engaged with the real-life applications from the unit as well. We are looking forward to our upcoming units, which include Probability and Pre-algebra skills. With the hard work students have shown, students will continue their success with our future topics.

On February 25th and 26th, our students will participate in a two day project exploring the Civil Rights Movement through Mathematics. They will be working in collaborative groups where students research topics such as voter registration, school integration, employment rates and income disparities. They will analyze historical data using multiple resources to create ratios, proportions, fractions, and percentages and create visual displays to demonstrate how math can help tell and show the story of change and progress during this time of history.

Science

In Science, we are continuing our unit on how living things use and transfer energy through processes like photosynthesis and cellular respiration. Last week, students ran a lab using a color-changing indicator solution (BTB) to show that sprouted lima beans release carbon dioxide as they grow. This helped demonstrate that plants, like animals, carry out cellular respiration to use stored energy.

Students also learned that seeds use stored food (starches) to begin growing before the plant is able to make its own sugar through photosynthesis.
Next, we will look at what happens to plant and animal matter after it dies and how that energy and nutrients are returned to the environment, helping complete the cycle of energy flow in ecosystems.



Language Arts

IIn Language Arts, we are reading the nonfiction memoir, Alive in the Killing Fields by Nawuth Keat. Students are discovering the difficult truths of the Cambodian Genocide and exploring the idea of how power can affect groups/individuals. Students have been actively participating in class discussions and are engaged in their reading.

More Grade 7



Writing Workshop

In Writing Workshop, students are in the middle of our research-based informative writing unit! We encourage you to ask your students to share their writing projects with you - they are working very hard on conducting research, evaluating sources for credibility, and synthesizing information into a polished final product.

- Mrs. Siverio's classes are researching an important event that happened during the year that they were born and are writing a research article about the event.

- Ms. McCracken's classes have researched a creature from mythology or folklore and are getting ready to present an informative slideshow to their classmates.

During the week of February 23rd, students will be learning about the Harlem Renaissance and Langston Hughes for a Black History Month mini-unit. Students will read, analyze, and discuss the themes in his short story "Thank You Ma'am."

Social Studies

Mrs. Hulick's Social Studies classes have been taking a look at the compromises that went into the Constitution at the Constitutional Convention. Students have been looking at all of the different perspectives of people who lived in the United States at the time and what they would have wanted to see in the new document. We are really looking forward to diving into a deep study of how our government works today and the principles that went into the Constitution that has kept it alive until present day!

Mr. Parvin's Social Studies classes are analyzing the Articles of Confederation and Shays' Rebellion to determine what makes a successful government. Through simulations, students are exploring the challenges the new nation faced after becoming independent. We are looking forward to continuing our study of government as we begin to move into the creation of the Constitution!

Grade 8 Social Studies

Ancient Civilizations

What makes a civilization great? Successful? Worth studying? Eighth graders have been studying various Ancient Civilizations across the world and have been tasked with creating a Museum Gallery Walk on a specific civilization to showcase for parents, as well as the Terrill 5th, 6th, and 7th graders.

Through gallery walk, students were tasked with creating a poster to show different aspects of their civilizations, artifacts that demonstrate their civilization's creativity and innovation, as well as being an interactive part of the exhibit itself by dressing up as someone from their civilization.

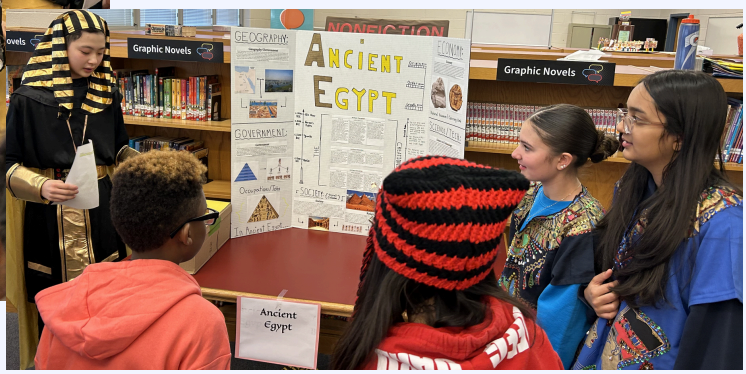
Up next, in 8th grade world history, students will explore what happened to these civilizations. In our upcoming Anatomy and Autopsy of Civilizations
project, students will research and illustrate why these ancient civilizations rose and then analyze why and how these once great civilizations declined and collapsed.











More Grade 8

International Holocaust Remembrance Day

The 8th grade Algebra stucents participated in a Holocaust Remembrance Activity on Tuesday, January 27th. In groups, students applied slope concepts and they pythagorean theorem using speed and distance formulas to help them calculate total time of the mission. These skills assisted them in analyzing rescue routes from Denmark to Sweden during the Holocaust. Students were able to demonstrate how mathematical skills can help us understand important historical events.

Grade 8 Language Arts

In 8th grade Language Arts, Team Titan is currently reading *The Wave* by Todd Strasser. Through this novel, students explore the important themes such as: **dissent, peer pressure, conformity, power and authority, and ethics**.

Students are analyzing how these themes develop through the events and characters. Students will also make meaningful connections to real-world situations and issues in our society today. Class discussions, activities, and written responses encourage students to think critically, express their ideas respectfully, and reflect on how individual choices can impact a larger community.

Grade 8 Science

Eighth-grade science students have recently concluded the sound unit. Since our last update, students have learned about amplitude, frequency, and how sound travels as compressed air particle bands through a medium such as air. We also learned that all sound receivers vibrate when receiving sound, and we investigated our own ears and how they are able to hear so many different sounds.

We have also recently begun our forces at a distance (magnetism) unit. Students watched a video of a maglev train and developed questions about the maglev train and other magnetic interactions. We recently conducted an investigation where students created their own electromagnetic and experimented with ways to increase the fields, how a maglev train works, and other advanced uses of electromagnets.

Students also selected and began reading a nonfiction book on a science topic of their interest. While reading their book, students will note what they learned and new terms they encounter.



The weather outside is frightful, but our yearbook staff has been so delightful! Purchase a yearbook today for $50 by visiting jostens.com so you won't be left out. Be sure to secure your yearbook soon!

Important Dates

Friday, June 12: *8th Field Day, 1:15-2:30pm*
Friday, June 12: *8th Grade Party, 7-8:30pm*
Wednesday, June 17: *8th Grade Trip, 8:30am-3:30pm*
Thursday, June 18: *8th Grade Awards Assembly, 9:00-11:00am*
Monday, June 22: *8th Grade Recognition Rehearsal, 8:30-11:00am*
Monday, June 22: *8th Grade Recognition, 6:00-8:00pm @ SPFHS*



the Holocaust Resource Center of Kean University

GALLERIES KEAN UNIVERSITY

Art Contest

Anne FrankandChildrenoftheHolocaust

We invitestudentstocreatephysicalworks of art inspired bythe livesofAnneFrankandotherchildren of the Holocaust. Students'workwillbedisplayed in the Human Rights InstituteGalleryinApril2026in honor of Holocaust & Genocide Awareness Month.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE:

h March 30, 2026

¼ Artwork must be delivered

. Awards presented in early May

Register Here!

For students grades 6-12

For more information, please contact: hrc@kean.edu

Terrill Middle School

invites you to

GRADE 6
Parent Orientation

for parents only

Date: March 11, 2026

Time: 7:30 P.M.

Enter via Door 3.

Escuela secundaria Terrill

te invita a

Orientación para padres de 6.º GRADO

solo para padres

Fecha: 11 de marzo de 2026

Hora: 19:30 horas.

Entrar por la puerta 3.