

Aloha Pü‘ulu Koa Parents and Guardians, January 25, 2016

What We’ve Done Already

As you may already know, the students have been learning about environmental topics such as sustainability and systems thinking this year. They have done some reading, and participated in projects to gain the background necessary to tackle our upcoming team challenge.

The Challenge

We will be getting together as a team to “kick off” our team challenge on February 1st. We are challenging our students to work in groups to investigate the essential question, “What can we learn from nature?” Students will be challenged to identify a problem and then look to nature to find the solution. Students will be using the idea of biomimicry, or mimicking nature. Students will be conducting research, writing a paper, and then designing a solution to a problem based on a form, process, or system in nature. Students will be working on this project over the next few weeks. This is an interdisciplinary project that involves all core classes.

Although students will still see their core teachers for content lessons throughout the duration of the project the grades received from the biomimicry project will count heavily for all of their classes (science, English, social studies, and math). We would like to share important dates and deadlines in hope that you will support your child and encourage them to do well on this project.

**Important Dates**

2/1 -Biomimicry Challenge “kick off”

2/2-2/16 -Biomimicry Research Notes

-Notes due by 3:30 2/11

2/17-2/25 -Biomimicry Research Paper Writing

-Reflection #1 due 2/17

-Research paper due by 3:30 2/25

2/29-3/3 -Biomimicry Design

-Reflection #2 due 2/29

-Design due by 3:30 3/3

-Reflection #3 due 3/4

It is very important for students to keep up with these due dates, and to use their time in class well. There is more than enough time to get everything that needs to be done accomplished, provided students stay on task and remain focused.

The students have access to all of the required handouts and instructions on the project website (blogs.ksbe.edu/kmsbiomimicry). Please ask your child to share the grading rubrics with you so you can see how they will be graded.

Although students are working in a group, they will also be graded individually for their contribution to the group notes, their individual research paper, design, and reflections. In addition, due to the nature of group work, if you child is absent for an extended time, he/she may be required to complete an individual project or an alternate assignment.

Overall, we hope that the students will know that they can make a difference for themselves and others. Please feel free to contact any of the teachers if you have questions.

Mahalo for your continued support and participation in your child’s education,

Charlene Christenson Momi Akana Anne Lorenzo Christy Mishina

(math) (social studies) (science) (English)

Dr. Pua Ka‘ai Dr. Erika Cravalho

(Middle School Principal) (Curriculum Coordinator)