

LEVEL 3

Seventh and Eighth Grade News

Friday, August 31, 2018

ROPES!

It was one of the best ROPES experiences we've ever had in Level 3! The support, kindness, peer encouragement, genuine listening, and teamwork played a huge role in making Level 3's 22th ROPES course a great success this year. Each year we, as teachers, feel honored and humbled to witness the many small miracles that happen in our adolescent group during this special retreat, and this year was especially notable.

Today, our 7th and 8th grade students wrote reflections on their ROPES experience, and we were struck by the degree of insight and self-awareness in many of their responses. Below are excerpts from several students:

Question: What was your greatest personal victory at ROPES?

"Being able to jump off of that 40 ft pole, trusting myself that I would be okay, trusting my friends that they could get me to the ground safely and not drop me.

"Trusting my classmates with my life on the catwalk, and doing the catwalk with my arms free."

Question: What did you learn about yourself at the ROPES course?

"I learned that I can face my fears, and that it is a good thing to step outside my comfort zone to do crazy things, make good memories, and just have the best time of my life."

"I learned that I can really push myself to do something and I just have to breathe." I also learned that we can all work together if we communicate and listen to one another."

"I learned that I can calm down and help the team, not just myself."

Many students felt the activity known as "The Nitro Crossing" was the group's best team victory. In this activity, each student had to traverse a muddy patch of ground via rope swing, and then land in one of five hula hoop circles on the other side. The goal was to get the entire group to the other side. If a person landed with feet in two different circles or landed with one foot outside of the circles, the *entire* group had to start over again. There were many daring moments, but

the level of communication, cooperation, and strategizing is what really amazed us as teachers. Here are a few exciting moments that we caught on camera:



It's this last picture that really captures what was great about this 6th-7th-8th group activity. This picture does NOT show a spontaneous response by the group; *it was carefully planned and executed.*

An aspect of the ROPES course we especially appreciated this year was the many different ways our guides mixed up ages and grade levels. Eighth grade students prepared tree climbing knots for 6th graders and helped them literally “learn the ropes” for tree climbing. The 6th and 7th grades were paired for several activities, as were the 7th and 8th grades. And of course, we did several whole group challenges, which have left us all with some heartwarming, proud, and funny memories.



End of ORIENTATION; Beginning of Cycle 1

Our first cycle, the Orientation cycle, will be Friday, August 31. Our first real 6-week cycle will begin when we return from the three-day weekend. Students are strongly encouraged to take home any incomplete work from Orientation to finish up over the three-day weekend. Seventh and eighth grade students can see the list of all assigned work for the Orientation Cycle at:

<http://level3678.com/7th-and-8th-grades/weekly-work/>

First Land Lab Trip

We're looking forward to our first land lab trip where we will harvest some giant bamboo, set up and try out a strap line (sort of like a tightrope that's about a foot and a half off the ground), and groom vines over our gazebo, and more.

Questions?

PARENTS AND STUDENTS: We encourage you to contact us with any questions and concerns. The best time to call us is in the evening; alternatively, you can email or text us any time:

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Thank You to...

- All of the parents who drove students to the ROPES Retreat on Tuesday, August 28: Katrina Matt, Steve Smith, and Mara Fulk,
- Our nighttime male chaperones, Adan Caycho and Ivano Tirapelle, and
- Our parent drivers to the land lab today: Kelli McLemore and Joe Zejavac.

Level 3 Families, we are always grateful for all that you do!

Mark Your Calendars

Labor Day: No School.....Monday, September 3
Cycle 1 Begins.....Tuesday, September 4
First MATHCOUNTS.....Wednesday, September 5 3:15-4:00 PM
Level 3 Potluck and Presentation on Early Adolescence.....Tuesday, October 2
Teacher Work Day: No School.....Friday, October 12
Conference Day: No School.....Monday, October 15
Camping Trip to Ginnie Springs.....October 16-18

Regularly Scheduled: Tuesday Tutorials.....3:15 - 4:30 PM

MATHCOUNTS: Wednesdays ..3:15 - 4 PM

The Level 3 Team (Robin, Deana, Erica, and Beronica)

Please send any email address changes and updates to redidin@gmail.com