

Dear Osprey Families,

Next week, we close the first semester of the school year with **Presentations of Learning** (POLs) on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. This is a high stakes time of the year for our students as they work to finish strong academically. I know that many of you are having conversations at home about how to successfully manage stress and workload, and I appreciate, as a parent myself, that those conversations can be difficult. I also know that POLs are truly one of my most favorite things we do at Animas High School; they are often inspiring and transformative and I know them to be extremely valuable, particularly for students who are deeply authentic in their reflection. When community members share with me that they are impressed by our students' maturity, poise, self-awareness and communication skills (*which I hear often!*), I know that POLs are a key piece of the puzzle.

Through POLs, all students are asked to deliver polished, professional presentations before a panel of teachers, peers and community members who will ask them challenging questions. The format for POLs varies from grade to grade (please see attachments), but all students will use their digital portfolios, samples of their work and other evidence to illustrate their growth and learning. ***Much like finals, POLs are not optional; all students are required to successfully complete a POL in order to continue on with second semester at AHS.***

We will devote next Monday and Tuesday to supporting students in their **preparation for POLs**. There will be no regularly scheduled classes next week as grade-level teaching teams will work with students in small groups and individually. Students are expected to attend both of these days, which begin at 8:25. ***Please note that we will have early release at 2:15 on Monday, December 14; we will release at 3:15 as usual on Tuesday the 15th.***

***Parents are welcome to attend POLs in all grade levels, but are not required to do so.*** Please talk at home about what would be best for your family; it's important that students feel as comfortable, confident and supported as possible. For some students, this means presenting without the additional pressure of parents in the room, for others, a parent in the audience can help inspire excellence. Seniors will use POLs as a way to pitch their Senior Project ideas, and families of seniors are strongly encouraged to attend, as it will provide an opportunity for parents to help with the critique.

We are building **POL schedules** this week. Students are responsible for communicating with parents about when their individual POL will take place. All POLs are on the AHS campus. In addition to being at school for their own POL, all students are required to panel for a handful of their peers. This means that not all students will need to be at AHS for all of Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. The expectations in terms of attendance for each grade are as follows:

- **9th, 10th and 11th Grade**--All students will present and panel for others on either Wednesday or Thursday. Students will be required to be at AHS for most of the day on the day their POL is scheduled; individual schedules will vary. They do not need to be

on campus for the day that they are not presenting and paneling. Those who do not pass POL the first time they present will be asked to refine and present again on Friday. Those who pass POLs the first time will not be required to attend school on Friday.

- **12th Grade**--All students will panel for a handful of peers. Students will present and panel on two different days. POLs and paneling will be scheduled for Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, so students need to be available through Friday for presentation and paneling.

While students are not required to be on campus when they are not presenting or paneling, they are certainly welcome.

POLs require **professional dress**, which means that students must wear a buttondown shirt and tie, shirt with finished neck, sweater or blouse; a nice pair of slacks (no jeans), skirt or dress; dark socks to match trousers and dress shoes (no sneakers, no excessively high heels). Please communicate with an adult at school if procuring professional dress clothes is cost-prohibitive; we have extra clothes and will find a way to help.

It's worth noting that it is not unusual for students to need to do POLs more than once before they pass, and that being asked to redo a POL does not mean a student is a failure. It's important for students to head into POLs with a growth mindset and to recognize that when we hold them to high standards of excellence it's because we know they are capable of meeting them.

Please take the time to check in on POL preparation at home. Reflective work like this can be tough, but it can also be deeply rewarding, as students recognize the progress they are each making en route to the futures they want for themselves. I look forward to attending as many as I can!