



AIM HIGH PARENT NEWSLETTER

February Newsletter 2016

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We Want To Hear From You About The Parent Newsletter

We hope you enjoy the first electronic version of the Aim High Parent Newsletter. By moving to a web based or electronic format, we can include photos and links to other websites. Let us know topics you would like information articles about. Any other ideas you have on inclusions for you, your student or rising Aim High child are appreciated.

If you forward this newsletter to others, please use the forward but and enter their name and email in the appropriate boxes. You can also direct friends to our website to view the newsletter at [Aim High Parent Newsletter](#)

Kindest Regards

Jim Jordan, Director of Programs

Newsletter editor

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Twenty-Five Villa Voyagers Explore the Mississippi R.

On Saturday, January 9 Villa achievers demonstrated they were true explorers by coming out in the rain and snow to visit the flooded Mississippi River in Alton, Illinois. We visited the National Great Rivers Museum, operated by the Army Corp of Engineers. The entire group went to the top of the lock and dam, which was the first day it was reopened due to flooding in early January. It was spectacular to see the surrounding landscape covered in water and to see a barge slowly approach the lock on its journey upriver. Later on, some of the students confided that it was scary to walk out to the center of the lock. But everyone helped and encouraged each other in true Aim High spirit.



The museum was fun as we explored interactive exhibits, including a simulation where you piloted a barge down the river. Students were amazed as the amount of "stuff" that was shipped up and down the river including grain, coal and oil, iron ore and steel, and forest products.

We ended our morning by visiting *Liberty*, a mature bald eagle from the World Bird Sanctuary (WBS). It was cool to be 5' from our nations symbol of freedom and to learn from the WBS handler. Bald eagles are even nesting and raising chicks in the area! Well Done Achievers, we are proud of your adventurous spirit and willingness to explore the unknown.



Aim High 2016 Saturday Dates and Trips



AIM HIGH

All-Site Saturday Dates 2016

On and Off-Site Trips

	JBS	Priory	Villa
February 13	At Burroughs GYPO		Christner Architect Field Trip
February 20		Clayco Construction Field Trip	
April 9	Incredible Pizza Celebration		Incredible Pizza Celebration
April 16		Incredible Pizza Celebration	

SAVE THE DATES

Sunday, May 22; 1 to 4 pm – Family Picnic at Turkish Pavilion Tower Grove Park

Friday, June 17 – First Day of Aim High Summer Program

Something New is Coming to Your Aim High Campus

New Games are being added to Physical Fun! We tried them and were well received by about 20 Achievers at Burroughs on Saturday, January 22.

- Is Aim High adding the latest and greatest computer games? No, not active enough.
- How about more sports like field hockey and soccer? Uhhmm, think about a team approach with a twist.
- Dunk the Site Directors?!? That would be fun to see Mr. McKone go splashing in icy water, but he points out it is not in his contract.

“By all means let us cherish the traditional sports for their many beauties, their unplumbed potential, and for the certainty they afford. But the time has come to move on, to create new games with new rules more in tune with Aim High’s goals. Games in which there are no spectators and no second-string players, games for the whole group in which aggression fades into laughter, where creative play rules the day—NEW GAMES!” adapted from Georg Leonard, ultimate athlete and co-founder of New Games.

New games are not so much a way to compare our abilities as a way to celebrate them. A way to work together, not against each other. A way let off some steam and extra energy while laughing and playing together. How do you judge the success of new games? Listen—the louder the players’ laughter, shrieks of excitement and accomplishment, and invites to join in the challenge—the more engaged the students become.

This is what happened at John Burroughs on Saturday, January 22 as Jim Jordan introduced about 20 students who did not want to play hoops in the gym to games with titles such as *Stand Up*, *Knots*, *Spiral*, and *The Blob*! New games take cooperation between the students to win. It takes determination to try again when you fail the first, second or third time. It takes problem solving and communication to succeed and raise hands of the group in victory. If someone decides to sit out on one game, a new one is just a few minutes away. Take a look at some of the games played last January.

Creating a Thunderstorm



Blob - A New Way of Playing Tag



Untie The Knot



Aim High Team Work



Walking Our Talk at Aim High

One of our most important jobs here at Aim High is to help your students become persistent learners, always striving for their next personal best and finding the joy in lifelong learning. We've been modeling that example ourselves over the last few years at Aim High.

We know that our program is special and effective, but we are always gathering information and reviewing our work to find ways to do and be better at helping our students Aim High.

Here's some of what that has looked like:

- 1) Strategic Planning - is a long-term plan that, among other goals, is guiding us to explore new partnerships and programming opportunities for our students while they're with us in middle school and into high school as well. Those parent and student focus groups we're offering is an important step in our learning.
- 2) Board Education - our board of directors is constantly working to make sure Aim High meets it's mission and that they have the right knowledge, information and capacity to ensure your Achievers are successful. They set aside time each year and at monthly board meetings for education sessions on topics like governance, fundraising, justice and equity and more. This Spring, they're planning a weekend retreat for just this purpose.
- 3) Understanding Our Impact - Numbers tell a story. When we look at your student's attendance, how many come back to Aim High each summer, what kind of grades they're earning, and how many graduate, we learn and adjust in ways that help us become a better partner in your student's learning and development. Again this year, we'll be asking you to provide feedback on changes you see in your child and will gather

academic data from their schools. We'll continue our partnership with Washington University to understand the influence of social and emotional development on academic success. And we'll be reaching out to high school and college age alumni to learn where they are and where they're headed in the years post-Aim High.

Thank you for your partnership. We look forward to continued learning and growth in the year ahead, together.

Julie Angelica, Executive Director



Aim High board members, staff and faculty spend their Saturday developing new brand and marketing tools.

STAY CONNECTED WITH AIM HIGH!

Aim High is on social media so you can always stay in the loop! We have a Facebook page and Twitter account that we regularly update with program information, pictures of student activities, and more. Use the links below to find us on Twitter and Facebook or click the icons below. No worries if you don't use social media sites. You can still view our information on either site without creating an account.

Twitter- <https://twitter.com/aimhighstlouis>

Facebook- <https://www.facebook.com/Aim-High-St-Louis-166574511442/>



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