



## FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK—Mr. Lekkas

The **GKMS Drama** presentation *Night at the Wax Museum* directed by 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher Ms. Laben, will be held in our small gym. Performances are slated for the evening of Friday, April 6 and Saturday, April 7. Show times are 7 PM.

8<sup>th</sup> grade students participated in the **DeKalb County Career Fair** at KCC on Thursday, March 15. Professionals from throughout the county presented on many different career paths. Opportunities like this allow GKMS kids to gain knowledge and interact with professionals they would normally not see at school.

Reminder to parents that PARCC testing will begin April 9. Students perform best after a good night's rest and healthy breakfast. This is a great chance for GKMS students to show what they know.

Our entire 6<sup>th</sup> grade will be attending **STEM Read** at NIU on Tuesday, April 24. The activity aligns with Science, ELA, Math, and Technology standards. Thank you to PTO for making this trip possible!

Finally, a reminder **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Promotion** is taking place Monday, May 21, at 7:00PM in the HIGH SCHOOL Gymnasium. Our keynote speaker is Superintendent Brent O'Daniell. The 8<sup>th</sup> grade dance will be held Friday, May 11.

## **From the Assistant Principal**

The students are doing a terrific job of exhibiting positive behaviors in our school. Currently, 85% of our students have 0 or 1 detentions or referrals. We are well on our way of meeting our goal of having 80% of our students receiving 0 or 1 detentions or referrals by the end of the year. Referrals for the month of March were down 15% from the 2016-2017 school year. Keep up the fantastic job of making GKMS an awesome place to be!

As we return from Spring Break I wanted to remind everyone to dress appropriately for the weather. Students who are dressed inappropriately will be asked to change into their P.E. uniforms. The School Dress Code is located on page 15 of the handbook. Continue Being Respectful, Responsible, and Safe.

## **DRAMA**

GKMS Drama presents "Night at the Wax Museum". The show will start at 7:00pm on Friday, April 6, and Saturday, April 7. Admission is \$3.

## **PBIS**

Our theme for the school year, "You Can Get There From Here", is still going strong and students are really working hard towards their goals. Students are well on their way to making their year end goal and getting pizza and ice cream!

Cool tools for expected behaviors continue to be taught weekly in Study Hall classes and reinforced the following week in classes. Our focus has been on appropriate technology use and knowing when to get help from adults. We also have been focusing on the idea of If You See It, Say It. We want students to stand up for each other not put them down and this idea really works with this idea. Students have really been doing a nice job with these, and our growth as a school shows!

Students of the Week continue to be chosen weekly and Quarter 3 Cog of the Quarters have been chosen. Look for those yard signs in town to recognize those students! Congratulations to those students-you should be proud of your accomplishments.

Our five students that joined our PBIS Tier 1 team continue to help us with our efforts here at the school. Their ideas already have helped us to improve our efforts with PBIS. They are helping to bridge the gap with our students so that their voices and ideas can be heard for ways to change and improve positive behaviors here at GKMS. Again, thank you for your continued support! #gkccogs.

## **Student Council**

The 8th Grade dance will be on May 11th, 6:30-8:30. Tickets will be sold the week before the dance for \$5. Only 8th grade students that attend GKMS may participate.

## **From the 6th grade Team**

### **Reading and Language Arts**

We are spending time this last quarter enriching our writing skills. Students will be given a variety of writing prompts requiring students to identify the role they need to take, audience they are addressing, format required, and topic discussed. These are fun, creative prompts which invite students to do a variety of types of writing - a restaurant review, a message from a moldy container, and other engaging topics. In addition, we will be developing our skills with word work, word study and grammar.

Main Ideas, supporting details, central ideas, themes, and annotation... These are a few of the skills that we are continuing to work on using a variety of fiction and nonfiction texts, including Greek Mythology to enhance the Social Studies curriculum. We will continue taking advantage of our Scholastic Scope Magazines and the additional online and interactive resources available to us.

As part of the STEM program, through Northern Illinois University, the 6th grade students will be reading the book, *The Detective's Assistant*, by Katie Hannigan. Students will join experts to participate in a series of STEM challenges and puzzles based on the book. Teams of students will try to unravel the mystery and stop the plot against Abraham Lincoln. Students will work in groups to explore codes, ciphers, criminology, forensics, engineering, history, psychology and memory. Students will get a chance to meet Kate Hannigan.

### **Science**

After finishing plate tectonics, we will be investigating earthquakes, volcanoes, and the rock cycle. How are different rocks formed, and how do they change through the rock cycle?

# From the 7th Grade Team

## Reading and Language Arts

This will be a busy month in reading and language arts classes! Students will read and comprehend a variety of genres including fiction and non-fiction. They will apply close reading strategies while analyzing and critiquing these texts. Students will practice making text to text, self, and world connections, identifying story elements, determining the theme, central idea/main idea, mood, and tone while reading various texts. They will read a nonfictional narrative entitled “Justin Lebo” as well as a fictional narrative entitled, “The Amigo Brothers.” Students will read a nonfiction article on the topic of random acts of kindness. The 4th quarter book report is due on April 17. The directions and rubric can be found on your child’s reading google classroom. We will spend some time working on this book report in class.

In language arts classes, we will continue to work with the 6 of traits writing focusing on sentence fluency and ideas. Sentence Fluency is the rhythm and flow of written language, the sound of word patterns, the way in which the writing plays to the ear, not just the eye. How does it sound when read aloud? Fluent writing is graceful, powerful, rhythmic. Ideas are the main message, the content of the piece, the main theme, together with all the supporting details that enrich and develop that theme. Successful writers do not “tell” readers things they already know; but, “show” readers the unusual, unique, bits and pieces of life that might otherwise be overlooked and varied. We will show what we have learned about sentence fluency and ideas with a well crafted expository benchmark paper at the end of the unit on the theme of *integrity and local volunteer opportunities*.

## Science

In March, we finished up our unit on adaptations and natural selection. Through numerous examples, students were able to see how changes in a given environment can cause changes in the population of organisms that live there. We also looked at the various pieces of evidence scientists use to support the theory of evolution. After exploring these pieces of evidence through readings, video analysis, and other hands on activities, students were asked to choose which piece they felt was most convincing and cite sources (activities done in class) to support their choice.

As we move into April, we will begin looking at each group of organisms more carefully (i.e. bacteria, fungus, plants, animals) and explore how they interact with each other and the environment around them.

## Math

The school year continues to fly by as we head into the warmer months, hopefully.

Students in Course 2 have been exploring geometry concepts lately and recently created “Geometry Towns.” Students used their knowledge of angles, triangles, and scale to create a town using their imagination. Geometry will continue for the time being, but we are now moving on to area, surface area and volume.

The Accelerated MATH class continues to work hard and have been focused on functions and slope. This has proven to be a difficult topic for many, but all students continue to persevere and have discovered different strategies for being successful. Once we finish functions, students will explore statistics and probability.

# From the 8th Grade Team

## Reading

Welcome Spring and with that means here in Reading class we are busy, busy, busy!!!! We are just getting done with our tall tale/fairytale unit. We analyzed the structure of these and looked at how they changed from generation to generation. Students were very engaged in a jigsaw activity that allowed them to become “experts” to share with others on their specific story.

This upcoming month will have students looking critically at different reading pieces on the same topic to demonstrate how multiple texts and paired texts can help to make understanding of a topic even easier. We will then be moving into our Sci-Fi Unit where technology becomes “out of this world”. Students will continue to have goal centered sheets weekly, known as the red folder sheets, and Newsela weekly. Newsela now is accompanied with an in depth summary worksheet that needs to be finished instead of the quiz. Any questions, never hesitate to email me at [cstoll@gkschools.org](mailto:cstoll@gkschools.org). As always, thank you for your ongoing support!

## Math

With April quickly approaching and part of March taken up with spring break there has been an uptick in the tempo in which all classes are covering content. If things progress as they have since January then all 8<sup>th</sup> graders can consider themselves prepared for high school math by the end of the year.

Algebra and Geometry still have to deal with the end of semester growth final. This will not be considered a grade in the gradebook, but it is another tool I use to gauge if a student has mastered the high school content and the scores will be sent along to the high school.

By now, all Algebra students can sing the quadratic formula. Feel free to have your child show you. However, I’m not responsible for wrong notes or off pitch singing. That blame falls solely on Mr. Ferguson. We will continue to work with quadratics for the remainder of the year. After graphing them we will factor and simplify rational expressions and simplify radical expressions to round out April and enter May.

Geometry students have now progressed through one of the toughest chapters, circles, and progress into areas of complex polygons. By the end of April we will work with polygonal prisms, their volume and surface area.

Course 3 students are also well into their geometry standards and have been working with triangles and polygons and transforming them. However, now we begin to arduous task of comparing polygons and proving them. Yes, they will have to write simple geometric proofs! Once that pleasure (please read this as “painful process”) has been finished, we will stick with the geometry theme and determine volume and surface area of basic prisms (cubes, rectangular prisms, triangular prisms, cones, spheres...).

All in all 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter ended on a high note,. I’m hoping we carry this over into 4<sup>th</sup> quarter and the strong push through the end of the year.

## **Science**

We have just begun the final lap of our school year and Middle School is coming to an end for our 8th grade students. I am proud to say that the students of the 8th grade class have grown in many ways and improved greatly in their academic abilities. Before we send them on their way, we will begin the exciting study of one of my favorite units, Atomic Bonding & Compounds!

Currently we are learning how atoms join together and form Chemical Bonds. In this unit we will study the different types of Chemical bonds and how electrons are responsible for these bonds. We will strengthen our understanding of valence electrons by describing what occurs when different elements bond together. For example, what do you get when one atom of sodium (Na) bonds with one atom of chlorine (Cl)? Salt (NaCl)! We

I would also like to again encourage all parents to ask their students about the things we are doing in school, to keep checking assignment connection and grades on Powerschool. As you know middle school students are not fully independent and need support from home studying for tests, completing projects and finding purpose in the lessons they are taught.

Thank you for your support and your fantastic kids!

## **Language Arts**

Students will continue to develop their vocabulary through daily practice with Membean. Currently, students are producing expository speeches on a topic related to the theme of strength. We will also be creating a project to coordinate with students' social studies content. We will also be writing a science fiction story.

## **Social Studies**

As we enter 4th Quarter, we will be studying the rise of industrial America. This time period has many facets which will take us from studying the growth of monopolies, the rise of big business, the emergence of a leisure class, technology and innovation, the impact of industrialization, the rise of the labor movement, women's suffrage and the progressive reforms. As we study these events, we will continue to analyze primary and secondary sources and apply economic concepts.

## STEM

In the second semester of STEM Concepts students will be having me as their Encore teacher for the second time this year. All students in 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grades will be assessed in their ability to meet the keyboarding standard as described in Common Core to: “demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of three pages in a single sitting.” All of my current 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade classes have an account in Typing Club to practice their keyboarding which can be accessed at <https://gkschools.typingclub.com>. Students who are not able to meet the standard will be given daily and weekly practice in class. But all students are encouraged to practice on their own time as well.

In 6<sup>th</sup> grade students will first be learning the fundamentals of coding using the lessons found at <https://code.org>. We will learn how to program animations using Scratch found at (<https://scratch.mit.edu>). Then we will create a model to describe the role of gravity in the motions within galaxies and the solar system using Scratch.

7<sup>th</sup> grade students will be building upon the Engineering and Design lessons from first semester. We are solving an engineering design problem to create a puzzle out of excess 3/4" wooden cubes. And they are to design a therapeutic toy for a child with cerebral palsy. Working individually and in groups, they will be planning, drawing and designing on the computer their ideas. Every student should be taking home a puzzle cube that they designed and assembled themselves.

8<sup>th</sup> grade students will be using the Engineering Design Process to develop a tool or system to solve a problem. Then we will be learning how to program VEX Robotics using RobotC (a form of the C programming language). Then we will apply the Engineering Design Process with VEX Robotics and C programming to make automated machines and robots to solve problems.

We have a lot of learning to do in just 6 weeks!

## Track Schedule

<a href="#">04/05/2018</a>	<a href="#">Thu</a>	<a href="#">vs. Harrison, Fox River Grove, Westminster - CANCELLED</a>	<a href="#">H</a>	<a href="#">4:15 PM</a>	<a href="#">GKHS Stadium</a>	<a href="#">=</a>
<a href="#">04/11/2018</a>	<a href="#">Wed</a>	<a href="#">vs. Harvard, Prairie Grove, Riley, Oregon</a>	<a href="#">H</a>	<a href="#">4:15 PM</a>	<a href="#">GKHS Stadium</a>	<a href="#">=</a>
<a href="#">04/14/2018</a>	<a href="#">Sat</a>	<a href="#">@ Winnebago Invitational</a>	<a href="#">A</a>	<a href="#">9:00 AM</a>	<a href="#">Winnebago</a>	<a href="#">=</a>
<a href="#">04/16/2018</a>	<a href="#">Mon</a>	<a href="#">@ Harvard, Harrison, Fox River Grove</a>	<a href="#">A</a>	<a href="#">4:15 PM</a>	<a href="#">Harvard</a>	<a href="#">=</a>
<a href="#">04/23/2018</a>	<a href="#">Mon</a>	<a href="#">@ Marengo, Prairie Grove, North Boone</a>	<a href="#">A</a>	<a href="#">4:15 PM</a>	<a href="#">Marengo</a>	<a href="#">=</a>
<a href="#">04/27/2018</a>	<a href="#">Fri</a>	<a href="#">@ Harrison, Fox River Grove, Riley</a>	<a href="#">A</a>	<a href="#">4:15 PM</a>	<a href="#">Mc Cracken Field, Mchenry East HS, 3712 W. Kane Ave.</a>	<a href="#">=</a>
<a href="#">05/01/2018</a>	<a href="#">Tue</a>	<a href="#">@ Oregon Jack &amp; Jill Invite</a>	<a href="#">A</a>	<a href="#">4:00 PM</a>	<a href="#">Oregon</a>	<a href="#">=</a>
<a href="#">05/02/2018</a>	<a href="#">Wed</a>	<a href="#">vs. GKMS Invitational</a>	<a href="#">H</a>	<a href="#">4:15 PM</a>	<a href="#">GKHS Stadium</a>	<a href="#">=</a>
<a href="#">05/08/2018</a>	<a href="#">Tue</a>	<a href="#">@ MNC Boys Conference</a>	<a href="#">A</a>	<a href="#">4:15 PM</a>	<a href="#">Harvard</a>	<a href="#">=</a>
<a href="#">05/12/2018</a>	<a href="#">Sat</a>	<a href="#">@ I E S A Sectionals</a>	<a href="#">TBA</a>	<a href="#">TBA</a>	<a href="#">tba</a>	<a href="#">=</a>

## Important Dates:

4/6 & 4/7: Drama 7:00 @ M.S.

4/12: Check Power School for Progress Reports

4/23: All incoming 6th graders for 2018/2019 school year Orientation 6:00 @ M.S.

4/30: 5th & 6th Grade Band Concert 7:00 @H.S.