



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

Greetings GK Families,

December is here and so is the cold! As I stand at the bike rack each day after school I see many kids walking home or waiting for busses without hats, coats, or gloves. I remind them to bring them on the following day, but many show up day after day well underdressed for the weather. Cars break down, keys get lost, and garages don't always open. Please remind your student to dress appropriately for the weather by wearing cold weather clothing when appropriate.

The GK Community and GKMS students always rise to the occasion when given the opportunity to help their local community. During the month of December GKMS will be having two events to benefit local families.

As we have for many years now, we will have our tree set up in the lobby to collect **Hats, Scarves, and Gloves**. We will be collecting new and gently used items through January. The tree comes down after Winter break, but we will still be collecting in the office. All donated items will stay in our community and help local families.

GKMS will also be participating in a Toys for Tots fundraiser that will begin December 1st. Students may choose to donate a new and unwrapped toy (\$5-\$10) that will benefit families of DeKalb County and many local Genoa-Kingston families. The last day to turn in a donation is December 21st. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me at 815-784-5222 or by email at [cbutcher@gkschools.org](mailto:cbutcher@gkschools.org). You can also follow us on Facebook at [GenoaKingstonMiddleSchool](https://www.facebook.com/GenoaKingstonMiddleSchool) and Twitter [@gkm-scogs424](https://twitter.com/gkm-scogs424).

## Wishing Everyone a Happy Holiday Season!!!

### Upcoming Major Events

**December 6th**--GKMS/GKHS Choir Concert in the High School Auditorium at 7pm.

**December 10th**--GKMS Band Concert in the High School Auditorium at 7pm.

**December 11th-14th**--Winter MAP testing(7th Grade on Dec. 11th, 8th Grade on Dec. 13th, and 6th Grade on December 14th)

**December 21st**—End of 2nd Quarter

**December 24th**--Winter Break begins

**January 7th**--Classes Resume

**January 11th**—Report Cards sent home

## **From the Assistant Principal-Mr. Uili**

After the extended Thanksgiving Break we are revisiting our expectations of Being Safe, Responsible and Respectful making sure that we make a strong push into winter break.

Here is some guidance on what to look for this time of year.

### **Being Safe:**

Wear appropriate winter clothes to school, stay warm!  
Watch where you walk, snow can make things slippery.

### **Being Responsible:**

Make sure that Chromebook is charged!  
Keep your locker clean and avoid the huge locker mess at winter break.

### **Being Respectful:**

Be good to yourself, put forth your best effort in class!  
Be mindful of people on your bus and your bus driver.

As for our school-wide PBIS incentive, we currently have 94.6% of students with one or fewer referral. Remember, in order to meet our goal we need to have more than 80% of students with 1 or fewer referral by the end of the year. We are on track to get there with ease. Let's just keep up our three school expectations and get there.

## **PBIS Tier 1**

We are continuing to "Imagine Greatness" here at GKMS. Individual grades are continually working towards goals and many students have done a great job reaching these goals set forth. As we move into the few weeks before Christmas, teachers will be reinforcing expectations that are needed during the school day so that we can have a great transition to 2019!

Cool tools for expected behaviors continue to be taught weekly in study hall. These are reinforced throughout the week in classes. Our focuses have been on not having your cell phone during the school day and appropriate Chromebook usage. Also, keep remembering to have your child plug their chromebook in nightly!

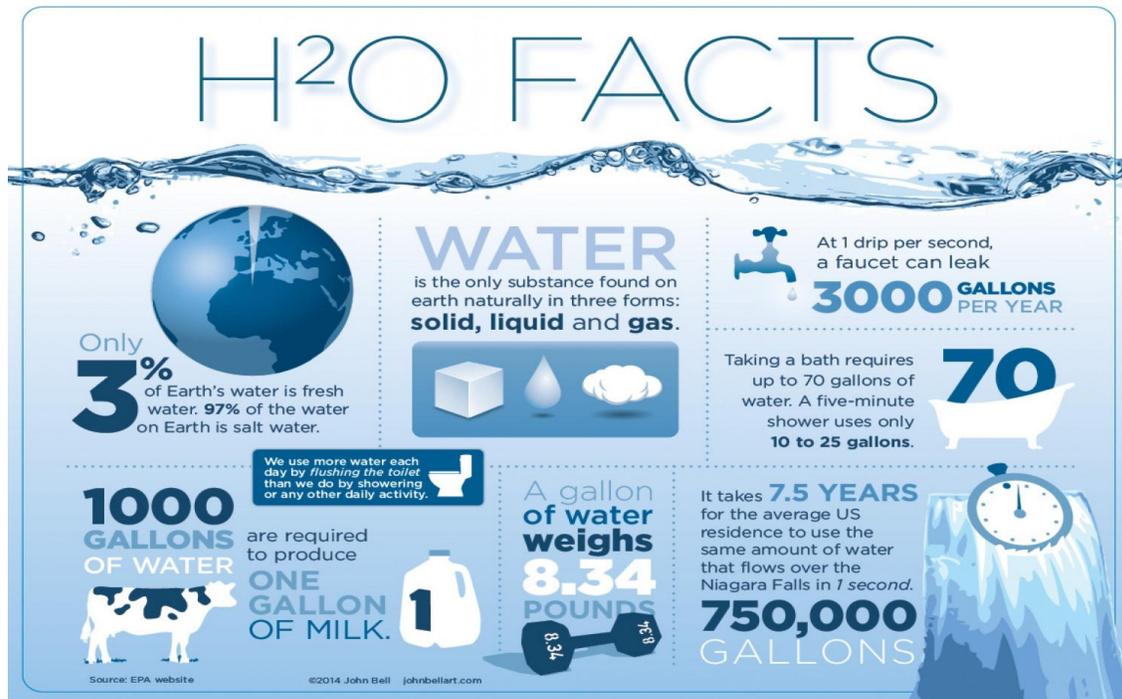
Students of the Week are chosen weekly and Quarter 2 Cogs of the Quarter will be chosen at the end of December. Congratulations to those students-you should be proud of your accomplishments.

Student representatives are rocking it out in our PBIS Tier 1 team and will continue to help us with our efforts here at the school. Their ideas are truly helping 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. Again, thank you for your continued support! #gkcogs.

# From the 6th Grade Team

## Science

Water, water everywhere! In December we will be analyzing the processes of the water cycle and why we need to conserve water. In January we will delve into the atmosphere and weather.



## Math

The end of the year will bring us the end of the Fraction, Decimal, and Percent unit. Students are focusing on solving many different word problems involving percents. And as many real life problems as possible. After wrapping up the Percent problems, Integers are next up, just in time to talk about the negative temperatures in the months to come. We will be introducing the uses of negative numbers and using them to compare and order amounts. This leads us to ordered pairs on a graph using all 4 quadrants.

## Social Studies

Sixth grade students have been learning about Ancient Egypt. Students have already learned about the geography of Egypt and are now learning about the great pharaohs Khufu, Senusret, Hatshepsut and Ramses the Great. Students will pick two of these pharaohs to write a compare and contrast essay. Next up, we will be studying what daily life was like for the Egyptian people.

# 6th Grade Team Cont.....

## Reading & Language Arts

There is no better way to start this holiday season than with a letter from the 6th grade Reading and Language Arts teachers, keeping you up to date about what is happening in the classroom! First, we wish everyone happy, safe, and healthy holidays!

In Language Arts, specifically word work, we have completed the root word unit successfully and will be moving on to some Tier II words and application of the words.

### Words Included:

compare	identify	contrast
summarize	infer	describe
assess	cite	hypothesize
define	apply	recognize
determine	explore	elaborate

In the area of conventions, we are focusing on pronouns: subjective, objective, possessive, reflective, gender specific, singular, plural, and intensive. This will bring us right up to the winter break.

We are finishing up the focus on informative writing, specifically compare and contrast. We have been applying ways to improve the introduction and conclusion paragraphs and the use of transitions throughout the writing piece. We are always writing! The first goal includes writing descriptive short pieces using imagery. We are focusing on “show me, don’t tell me” writing.

### For example:

**Tell:** My brother is talented.

**Show:** My brother modifies sports car engines, competes in ballroom dance tournaments, and analyzes chess algorithms.

In addition to the writing pieces we are starting a writers workshop where the students will be taught specific concepts and then go back to older writing pieces to apply new knowledge directly to their own writing.

During the month of December in Reading, we will start out with a focus on figurative language. Students will be defining, identifying, and generating different types of figurative language. We will transition into the study of poetry and narrative fiction. This study will involve the analysis of the pieces of literature to determine development of theme, setting, and plot. We will continue to dive further into the study of author’s purpose along with central and supporting ideas. Students should be able to identify whether a piece of writing is written to persuade, inform, or entertain. They are also becoming experts at finding the main idea and text evidence to support that idea. Right before break we will begin our study of different genres which will take us on a journey to determine the similarities and differences in themes and topics. Students will begin to describe the characteristics of the different genres.

We have started Book Clubs in reading classes. Students have all selected books at their reading level to participate in literature circles which focus on deep questioning, inferencing with text support, and summaries. These have been implemented to replace the monthly book reports with the goal quality discussion about books and application of reading skills students are learning in class.

January, in Reading, will involve building on skills from earlier in the year; students will continue their study of theme, setting, plot, author’s purpose, and genres. However, we will be adding in the study of fiction and expository nonfiction. Our study will include analyzing text structure such as chronological order, cause/effect, and question/answer. Students generate inferences about characters and events along with citing text evidence that supports the inference. As students become proficient in citing evidence they will use this skill to help identify reasons to support claims and arguments.

# From The 7th Grade Team

## Science

The smell of vinegar wafted through room 253 for about a week after Thanksgiving while we used eggs (yes regular chicken eggs you buy at the store) to explore how water can diffuse across a cell membrane. This lab was just one of the investigations students have been using to help them analyze how organelle structure influences function. We are in the midst of our Cell Unit right now as students are using various sources (videos, texts, labs, diagrams, activities) to understand how the main organelles of plant and animal cells (cell membrane, nucleus, mitochondria, and chloroplasts) help the cell survive. We will also be learning the basics of chemical reactions so we can understand how cells make energy through cellular respiration and photosynthesis. How are plants able to make the food they need when they can't go to McDonalds and order a cheeseburger?????

In January, we will begin our Microscope unit, which is always a hit with the students.

## Reading

We will continue to identify and analyze notice and note signpost moments in our everyday reading. Students will practice making inferences in literature and poetry. We will also focus on determining theme, central idea/main idea, mood, and tone of various texts and analyze their development. Students will read paired poems and compare and contrast the theme, mood, and tone in 2 poems that are on the same topic. We will continue to close read various non-fiction articles of the week. The watercolor book reports will be due on December 14. Students will be given class time to work on this project. The requirements for this book report can be found on reading google classroom.

## Language arts

We will continue to focus deeply on each of the six traits of writing. We will focus on organization, voice, tone, and word choice in writing. Students will apply what they have learned about the six traits of writing while composing a persuasive essay on a topic of choice. They will go through each stage of the writing process from brainstorming, to outlining, drafting, revising, editing, peer-reviewing, and publishing. Students will also continue to practice analytical writing based on stories they read during reading class in the form of constructed responses. We will continue collecting vocabulary words to use on weekly ROK cards. 7th grade students are becoming excellent writers!

## Social Studies

Our Constitution is a living document that has been in practice for over 200 years, longer than any other across the globe. This great document was written in only a four month period during the unusually warm summer of 1787 in Philadelphia at Independence Hall. We are analyzing our Constitution, looking at the detail the founding fathers included as well as gaining understanding of its inner workings. Once we have an understanding of our constitution, we will be pulling it all together with a mock government activity to try it out ourselves.

Coming up, we will continue to look at Federalism. We will work at understanding how the federal, state, and local governments work together to keep this nation strong.

Please check in with your son/daughter in regards to supplies. We will be in need of a second notebook and it seems as though many are in need of pencils now.

## 7th Grade Cont.....

### Math

November had a lot of different happenings during the month. Parent-teacher conferences at the beginning of the month were a great opportunity to discuss strategies to make each student as successful as possible during 7th grade. We ended the month with Thanksgiving break, hopefully everyone had a chance to rest up and recharge for the excitement that awaits in December!

We keep making additions to our "Imagine Greatness" Legacy Wall. Great job to those of you who made it, keep up the exceptional work! To those not yet on the wall, keep working hard and I will keep my eyes out for your magical moments.

We also had our second Snowball Quiz of the school year. These short, quizzes require that all students work together to be successful. Collaboration is a big focus for us in 7th grade math this school year.

The students also completed a rational number timeline that required them to list meaningful events in their lives before and after they were born. The students had to focus on not just the year of the event, but the month as well. They are currently on display outside of room 101 in the 7th grade hallway.

As we move towards the end of the calendar year, Course 2 will be getting Volume 2 of the textbook and will begin their exploration of Algebraic topics, starting with expressions. Acc-7 will end the semester working on percents and the real-world situations that involve them.

The first half of the school year has flown by and I look forward to seeing how each student grows as we get closer and closer to 8th grade!

# From the 8th Grade Team

## Science

Currently in 8<sup>th</sup> grade science we are finishing up our unit on Forces. We have learned what forces are, how forces are measured and how forces are useful in our day to day lives. We now understand the natural forces that cause objects to change their motion such as Gravity and friction. We also understand that forces causing motion are unbalanced while balanced forces keep objects at constant speed. In addition, we have applied mathematical calculations to everyday situations to find unknown values of force.

In the coming weeks we will be investigating Newton's Laws of Motion. We will learn that these laws explain the movement of all of the objects in our day to day lives. We will understand that greater force causes greater acceleration and that all forces are balanced by an equal but opposite force. We will apply mathematical calculations to everyday situations to find unknown values of force, mass or acceleration.

I would also like to encourage all parents to ask their students about the things we are doing in school, to keep checking assignment books 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!

## Social Studies

As we head into the final weeks of the semester, we will be focusing on the unit's essential question: What factors and events influenced the outcome of the Civil War? As we collect evidence to help us answer the question, we will be focusing on the following standards:

- 1.. SS.IS.1.6-8: Create essential questions to help guide inquiry about a topic.
2. SS.IS.2.6-8: Ask essential and focusing questions that will lead to independent research.
3. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.8.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
4. SS.H.1.6-8.MdC: Analyze connections among events and developments in broader historical contexts. Activities include the analysis of photographs, first-hand accounts, and technological advancements.

## **8th Grade Cont.....**

Hello math students and families! Happy winter and all the Holidays that come with it!

Pre-Algebra Course 3 students are solving equations with rational numbers. They have just completed a formative assessment on 2-step equations and are now solving equations with variables on both sides and solving equations using the distributive property. Equations with two variables will follow in the next unit.

Algebra students have conquered the weighted averages equations - the most difficult part of the chapter, and are ready to complete the CSA. Linear functions unit is next, which will begin with graphing linear equations and solving linear equations by graphing. This leads to rate of change and slope will problems

Geometry students have completed the study of the slopes of lines and equations of lines, and will begin exploring how to find distances between a point and a line using the relationships formed by perpendicular and parallel lines. The study of triangles is next.

Tip of the month:

Learning mathematics takes practice. You may have understood everything that was covered in class, and you may have completed problems in class without any questions before the teacher went over them. However, when you have the chance to complete problems on your own, you will truly know if you understand the material. Make sure you are completing all the homework that your teachers assign, so you get the chance for that “on your own” practice. This will allow for the chance to ask homework questions (if they do come up) during class the next day.

Getting smarter and wiser every day! Go COGS!!

## **Reading**

In 8th grade reading, students are reading book club books. Students have selected their book, they've received a calendar to keep on schedule, and teachers have scheduled lots of time for reading. During the last week before break, students will be completing a summative project about the book they've read.

## **Language Arts**

In language arts, we are continuing to work on the 6+1 Traits of Writing. Students are researching a topic related to the theme of Mysteriousness. Students are excited to learn more about ghosts, Big Foot, the Bermuda Triangle, and lots of others! After researching, students will compile their information into a magazine article.

## **Health Tip of the Month:**

It's cold and flu season. Make sure you are taking care of yourself. Take time to exercise and get plenty of rest. Wear appropriate clothing to protect your skin with the cooler temperatures. Make sure you cover your cough and sneeze to prevent the spread of germs along with washing your hands.

## **Physical Education Classes:**

Through the month of December girls PE will be participating in the volleyball unit while the boys will participate in basketball. The volleyball unit will focus on bump, set and serving for skills. They will also work on game play by knowing court rotation, rally scoring and what it takes to win a match. The basketball unit focuses on dribbling components, shooting and game play.

**Reminder: After the holiday break, students will be flipping their PE/ Encore times. Morning PE classes, will have afternoon PE and afternoon PE will have morning PE.**

## **Health:**

The 6th graders are learning about nutrition and how important it is to add fruits and vegetables to their diet. The 7th graders are working on decision making and refusing unsafe behaviors. The 8th graders are discussing topics on relationships and how to make healthy decisions in those relationships.

Health tip of the month: Make sure to eat something for breakfast. It kick starts the body and makes it easier to maintain energy throughout the day.

## **Careers:**

We are halfway through the 3rd encore rotation. The 6th grade is learning the 16 career clusters and jobs in each cluster. 7th graders are focusing on skills needed to be successful in a career. These include soft skills, employability skills, and workplace behavior. The 8th grade is analyzing the rights and the wrongs in workplace ethics, along with resume' building

## **Music Appreciation**

We are currently in our third rotation through the Music Appreciation Encore classes. The eighth grade just finished a unit on our National Anthem and are now exploring program music. We have learned how music can enhance a scene in a movie and are now listening to the orchestral suite, *The Planets*.

In Creative Drama, the seventh grade have explored impromptu speaking and pantomime acting. They are currently learning about the elements of good story writing in preparation for developing material for group puppet shows.

Our sixth-grade American Popular Music students are learning about the development of Jazz in America, from New Orleans Dixieland through Louis Armstrong and to the Swing Bands.

## **Band & Chorus**

Students are working hard to prepare their music concert. Students should be continuing to practice this music at home so they can develop the individual skills necessary to perform well.

All concerts take place in the HS auditorium. Students will need to arrive at 6:30 to get ready together. They should arrive wearing their concert white and black dress clothes! There will also be a 50/50 drawing for any parents who may wish to buy tickets!

The concert dates are as follows:

December 6th - 6th-8th Grade Chorus

December 10th - 6th-8th Band and Jazz Band

## 21st Century Skills

In 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills students 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 current students of my 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 addition to keyboarding, 6<sup>th</sup> grade students will be learning how to be good citizens in the digital age. Topics include: internet safety, privacy and security, relationships and communications, cyberbullying, digital footprint and reputation, information literacy, and creative credit and copyright.

7<sup>th</sup> grade students will be learning the importance of the field of engineering to our society. They are determining how to accurately show 3D objects on paper. Then they are learning how to make those objects using a 3D modeling program on the computer.

In 8<sup>th</sup> grade students will be applying their engineering skills we learned last year to the design of an object that solves a problem. They will be using the Engineering Design Process to guide them through their decision making. And at the end of our 6 weeks together we will begin to make geared machines that will form the basis of our robots we will be making during 2<sup>nd</sup> semester.