



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

Greetings GK Families,

The month of February is a good time for all of us to reflect on all of the goals we set for ourselves at the beginning of January. Parent/Teacher Conferences will be held beginning at noon on February 14th. This is an excellent time for parents/guardians to meet with teachers and check in to see how their students are performing. Our teachers look forward to meeting with you and continuing to foster a positive home/school relationship. Please contact the office at 815-784-5222 to schedule a conference.

In response to the recent school closings due to weather we have altered the end dates for the Encore rotation of classes so that students may experience the full curriculum. This means that the current Encore rotation will end on February 22<sup>nd</sup> instead of February 15<sup>th</sup>.

On Wednesday, January 16th the district Spelling Bee was held. Grades 5-8 participated as three finalists from each grade earned their way to the finals. Congratulations to all of our finalists and champion Ally Poegel and runner up Aidan Zweifel who will go on to compete in the Regional Spelling Bee on March 2nd at Kishwaukee College. Our alternate speller is Jaelyn Wallace. We would like to thank the Genoa Lions Club for their continued sponsorship of the district Spelling Bee. We would also like to thank our Spelling Bee coordinator, Ms. Fowler, 7th grade Language Arts teacher, Ms. Schumacher who served as a judge, and Mr. Uili for serving as word caller.



## **Mr. Butcher Cont....**

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 [@gkmscogs424](https://twitter.com/gkmscogs424).

### **Upcoming Major Events**

**February 7th**--Progress Reports

**February 14th**--Conferences Noon-8pm

**February 25-27**--Scholastic Book Fair

**February 25th**--Rebecca Caudill Voting

**March 8th**--End of Quarter 3

**May 10th**--8th Grade Dance

**May 20th**--8th Grade Promotion

### **Book Fair - February 25 - 27**

We will be holding our spring Scholastic book fair February 25 - 27. All students will visit the fair with a class on Monday, February 25 and may make purchases that day or any day during the fair.

Research shows that children who read just 20 minutes per day score in the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile on standardized tests. Stock up on the books your student will love reading and ignite their reading habits.

Profits from the book fair are used to purchase books for the library and classrooms. Your past support has been amazing and we look forward to a successful spring fair!

## **Drama**

Auditions/Applications – Auditions will be January 24 & 25 & 28. Also online video auditions are available using FlipGrid. Applications to be part of the crew are due by January 28. The performances will be Friday, April 12, and Saturday, April 13, both nights at 7:00pm. Questions? Join my Google Classroom with code **mj4vma** to see all the forms and information.

## **PBIS Tier I**

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 middle of winter, teachers will be reinforcing expectations that are needed during the school day so that we can continue to have a great year!

Cool tools for expected behaviors continue to be taught weekly in Study Hall classes and reinforced that week in classes. Our focuses have been on being respectful to others, using the right tones in class, and knowing appropriate times to talk in class.

Students of the Week are chosen weekly and Quarter 2 Cogs of the Quarter were chosen and recognized. Congratulations to those students-you should be proud of your accomplishments.

School representatives are rocking it out in our PBIS Tier I 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.

## Art Club

It is NOT too late! I know and understand that other interests come up. Join us when you can! This club is a place for all of our GKMS artistic students to meet and share their talents. Project ideas are introduced but are always optional.

We meet (almost) **every** Thursday but in order to stay, parent **permission is required**.

Please email Mrs. Volden, Art Advisor, with questions.

svolden@gkschools.org

## From the 6th Grade Team

### Reading & Language Arts

This quarter will bring many challenges for the students as we lift the bar, but we feel confident that they will meet the challenges and exceed.

In Language Arts, we will be focusing on writing persuasive essays and debating using the correct processes. Our first topic is, "If you found \$100.00 on the ground in front of school, should you keep it?" We will also be generating an expository essay (informative). The students will be able to choose their topic to research. We have started Writer's Workshop this quarter. During each class period we focus on a short mini lesson whole class over a specific skill. For example adverbs, prepositions, and adjectives. Students then have an opportunity to practice that skill within their own writing as we continue to write RAFTs (identifying role, audience, format, topic for a given scenario.) As students apply these skills to their writing pieces, the teachers are then meeting regularly with all students to provide one on one support and feedback.

In Reading, we will be focusing on a variety of skills using different genres of reading. With fiction, we will be working on close reading strategies with "Magic Elizabeth." Students will be identifying theme, character change, main idea while supporting all answers with text evidence. As a cross-curricular opportunity, students will then use their narrative writing skills to add onto the story "Magic Elizabeth." As we go into non-fiction, we will be reading "paired passages" - two texts on a similar topic - that discuss the impact of zoos on animals. Students will find similarities, differences, and common themes among multiple sources. Did you know here are 6 main text structures in non-fiction text? Students will be learning the difference between and identifying compare & contrast, chronological order, problem & solution, descriptive, sequential order, and cause & effect text structures in a variety of non-fiction texts.

### Science

We are finishing up our study of the relationships between oceans, winds, and climate. Some of our investigations helped us understand that water has a high specific heat and the way ocean currents and winds move the heat from the Sun around Earth. How do weather systems form and change? What determines the climate of a specific area? What determines the weather of a specific location at a specific time? Fronts, air pressure, precipitation, wind speed and direction and temperature are the keys. We are studying the relationships amongst these factors and how they form weather and then climate.

### Math

This February we are going to be introduced to algebraic expressions. We will be using many algebraic properties to write and solve equations. After learning to solve equations we will be introduced to functions and inequalities. We will use multiple ways to represent functions. We will also be graphing and solving inequalities. Even though it is a short month, we will also try to begin our unit on geometry focusing on area of 2D shapes before moving on to 3D shapes.

## **6th Grade cont.....**

### **Social Studies**

Sixth grade students have started their unit on Ancient China. Students will learn about the achievements of the Shang, Qin and Han dynasties. Famous individuals like Qin and Confucius will be discussed along with their contributions to China. China is known for their many great inventions such as silk, chain pump, weaving machine, paper, and advancements in medicine. These will just be a few of the areas students will be spending the next few weeks learning about.

## **From The 7th Grade Team**

### **Math**

2019 is off to an interesting start! We were hoping to get into a nice rhythm during the start of third quarter, but alas, mother nature did not cooperate. One of the attributes of a good learner is being flexible and we had plenty of chances to practice that with our abbreviated/cancelled days during January. As for the curriculum, Acc-7 just finished up their chapter on percents and we had a successful assessment. Course 2 just finished Algebraic Expressions and have just begun working with Equations & Inequalities.

Throughout February, Course 2 will continue to learn about Equations & Inequalities as well as begin their unit on Geometry. Acc-7 will finish up the Algebraic Expressions chapter that Course 2 finished last month and then work on a similar Equations & Inequalities chapter as well. Acc-7 will finish up the month by working with Linear Functions.

Once again, I look forward to seeing what students create and learn during the month of February, as well as the rest of the year.

### **Reading & Language Arts**

In 7th grade reading classes, students will be reading a short novel titled "The Friendship." They will then move into a Black History Month project. Throughout the course of this project, each student will examine the lives, accomplishments, and contributions to society of at least five influential African Americans using a visual/written product of choice. The product choices will be Scrapbook/Poster/Google Slideshow/Brochure that contains five prominent African Americans. Students will select five influential people and discover new, interesting facts about their lives and how they helped influence society. Students will read "Only Passing Through" (the story of Sojourner Truth) as well as an African-American folktale entitled "The People Could Fly." They will also read a variety of Aesop's fables. Our next essay will be a narrative with the theme of breaking barriers. This essay is a chance for all students to share their personal stories and show how they use Jackie Robinson's values (citizenship, commitment, courage, determination, excellence, integrity, justice, persistence, teamwork) to face and break down their own barriers. During this unit, we will continue to focus on each of the 6 traits of writing: organization, voice, word choice, ideas, sentence fluency, and presentation.

# 7th Grade Cont.....

## Science

In January, students spent several weeks learning how to use a microscope, which is a vital skill in any life science classroom. Students learned the technological advances that have happened with microscopes over the last 500 years, how to use a microscope properly, and viewed both living and nonliving specimens with the microscope. At the end of our microscope unit, students completed a performance assessment where they had to use the microscope independently to examine two specimens, create field of view drawings, and determine which specimen was from a living organism.

Due to a grant the 7<sup>th</sup> grade Science Department received from the Genoa Kingston Education Association, some of our old microscopes that did not function properly were replaced with brand new ones. Thank you! The microscope unit went much smoother this year since I didn't have to keep telling students to look through another group's microscope since theirs wasn't working.

Next, we will move onto Genetics and Heredity. Why do you have the same color eyes as your mom/dad? Why don't you? Students will identify the difference between genotype and phenotype, learn how to make and use Punnett squares, and be able to recognize different patterns of inheritance. It will be a busy, but fun February in Room 253.

## Social Studies

Please check with your son/daughter about replenishing basic supplies (pencils, pens, paper, etc.). We will be needing a second composition notebook. Some students have already started a second and most are close.

This month we will focus on the expansion of our nation following the establishment of our constitution. In less than one hundred years, this new nation acquires the land all the way out to the west coast. There were new states and vast territories. We will explore whether the expansions were justifiable or not. Thousands of settlers made the journey west. Who were they? Why would they take the risks of relocating? How did they get where they were going? So many questions to examine... this will be an exciting month!

# From the 8th Grade Team

We will be doing a weekly newsletter.

## Music Appreciation

We are currently in our fourth rotation through the Music Appreciation Encore classes. The eighth grade will be starting a unit on program music. They will be exploring the symphonic suite “The Planets” by English composer Gustav Holst. After that, the students will be watching the musical “Fiddler On The Roof”

In Creative Drama, the seventh grade is producing a puppet show in small groups. They will be adapting stories into a script, then creating puppets and sets before rehearsing and performing for the class.

Our sixth-grade American Popular Music students will be learning about the development of Jazz in America. They will also be watching the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical “Oklahoma!”

## Health Tip of the Month:

The weather has significantly changed and can be dangerous as far as cooler temperatures. Make sure your son/ dress appropriately for these cooler days. It's important that they also wear a hat and gloves to help protect them. When wind chills are negative it can only take minutes for frostbite to hit.

## PE

The next few weeks in PE the girls will be playing Eclipse Ball. The girls will have to recall volleyball rules and apply tennis. The challenging skill to overcome is the skill of hitting the ball. This is different compared to other racket sports we have played.

The boys will be focusing on hockey. The main skills to focus on in this unit is stick and puck handling. The boys will be working on passing, hitting and targeting to move the puck down the floor and pass it to teammates.

## Health:

The 6th graders are learning about e-cigarettes and how harmful they are to the body. The 7th graders are working on decision making and refusing unsafe behaviors. The 8th graders are examining the impact illicit drugs have on a person's life and their relationships with family and friends.

Health tip of the month: Take time to laugh. This weather can get all of us feeling down and depressed. Laughter will boost your mood, reduce stress hormones and lower your blood pressure.

## Careers:

We are almost near the end of the 4th encore groups. The 6th grade is learning about the 16 career clusters and jobs in each cluster. 7th graders are focusing on skills needed to be successful in a career, like teamwork and work ethic. They are also looking into work values and the aspects of work that might be important to them. The 8th grade is analyzing the importance of problem solving at work and describing what traits an effective leader would display.

## 21st Century Skills

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!