



FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK—Mr. Butcher

Greetings GK Families,

Happy New Year!

As we begin 2019, it is a perfect time for students to reflect on the first half of the school year and make changes to make them successful for the second half of the school year. Every student is given the opportunity to start the New Year with a blank slate and make the rest of the year as great as they want it to be. I would encourage parents and guardians to speak with your students about the changes and/or improvements they want to make in the New Year. If you are looking for suggestions on how to create goals with your student click [here](#).

8th Grade Promotion will take place on Monday, May 20th at 7pm at Genoa-Kingston High School gym. The 8th Grade Dance will take place on Friday, May 10th in the gymnasium at the middle school. We are looking forward to a successful and memorable remainder of their 8th grade school year as they begin to make their transition to high school students. The Freshmen Orientation will take place on Wednesday, January 30th.

If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me at 815-784-5222 or by email at 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).

Respectfully,

Craig Butcher
Principal GKMS

Upcoming Major Events

January 7th--Classes Resume

January 9th/10th--Winter Benchmarking (timed 3 minute reading)

January 11th--Report Cards Go Home

January 16th--GK Spelling Bee at the Masonic Temple at 7:15pm

January 18th--Institute Day

January 21st--MLK Day, No School

January 22nd--School Board Meeting

January 30th--Freshmen Orientation

May 20th--8th Grade Promotion

From the Assistant Principal-Mr. Uili

And we're off! Entering second semester has been smooth and will continue to be that way as students and staff review our school expectations; Be Respectful, Be Responsible, and Be Safe.

We will be transitioning our PBIS Pride Program to a digital platform in hopes of providing a more positive experience for our students. In our lowest level intervention, students will check-in with a staff member at the beginning of the day in order to pick up any required materials for the day. After that, the design of the program is to have the student and classroom teachers participate in a quick 1 minute talk about the expected behavior each period about how well they did or areas for improvement. At the end of the day, they will check out with the same adult and earn a reward for their conversations and efforts to be a better student throughout the day. Each Friday students that meet their goal will be able to use school-wide study hall to celebrate with other students by shooting hoops, choosing prizes, or getting free technology time. If this is something that interests you or your child please contact me (auili@gkschools.org) expressing interest or have your student talk to any of their teachers and they can direct them to the grade level representative on the PBIS Tier II team.

Let's continue all the hard work that we put forth in first semester with a strong midyear push.

Art Club

A place for all of our GKMS artistic students to meet and share their talents. Project ideas will be introduced but will always be optional. This year we will be meeting **every** Thursday. I know and understand that other interests will come up. Join us when you can! In order to stay for Art Club, parent **permission is required**.

Please email Mrs. Volden, Art Advisor, with questions.
svolden@gkschools.org

GKMS Drama

SAVE THE DATES!!! Auditions for the spring drama performance will be held at the end of January. This year's performances will be Friday, April 5, and Saturday, April 6. More details to follow!

From the 6th Grade Team

Reading & Language Arts

We hope you and your families had a Happy Holiday! A fresh new year is once again upon us. It's the time to be thankful for the blessings of the past year and to take stock of all our achievements. 2019 is a brand new year to start afresh, strong, and yet another chance to do everything we want to do this year.

In language arts class we will be focusing on narrative/descriptive writing pieces. Showing, not telling sentences using imagery, adjectives, adverbs will be the help our writing come to life. All conventions will be reinforced through editing their own writing pieces which are in their writers workshop notebook.

In reading class we will be analyzing text structure such as chronological order, cause/effect, and question/answer. Inferences about characters and events will be supported by citing text evidence. As students become proficient in citing evidence they will use this skill to help identify reasons to support claims and arguments.

Science

In January we will focus on understanding the complex interactions that create our weather.

Math

We will begin the new year studying numerical and algebraic expressions. We will be focusing on using the order of operations to evaluate expressions. After learning to evaluate both numerical and algebraic expressions we will begin working with equations. We will start with the properties (Commutative, Associative, Distributive,...) of equations and work our way up to solving algebraic equations.

Social Studies

Students will be learning about Ancient India and the origins of Hinduism and Buddhism. Topics covered will include the Vedas, caste system, dharma, Buddha and Buddha's teachings. The second half of January students will learn about Ancient China and their many achievements during the Shang, Qin and Han dynasties.

From The 7th Grade Team

Math

Welcome to 2019!! December flew by along with a successful first half of the school year. We finished up the calendar year with assessments in both classes. Course 2 completed the first half of the Expressions chapter and Acc-7 tackled Percents. Both classes also got to experience the Mystery Box review game. Ask your students how it went!

Overall, we had 20 additions to our “Imagine Greatness” legacy wall. I would love to see this number increase during the second half of the year. I will be looking for more and more great moments from your students. Out of the box thinking and excelling on exams are two ways to get on the wall.

Congratulations to all students who made it atop each of the leaderboards at the halfway point of our year-long game. Those who are not quite at the top, keep working hard as we still have another half of the year remaining. Diligence and some good fortune can really go a long way.

As for this month, Course 2 will continue to learn about Algebraic Expressions and begin Equations & Inequalities near the end of January. Acc-7 will finish up the Percents chapter with a focus on financial literacy. The end of the month will bring Algebraic Expressions and Equations & Inequalities, the same topics that Course 2 just completed.

2018 is over and I am looking forward to seeing how each student grows in regards to their mathematical thinking in 2019!!

Reading & Language Arts

In reading classes, students will practice making inferences in literature and poetry. Students will conduct research on an American poet and complete a research poster with a partner. Each partner will be assigned specific details to research and will only be assessed on their portion of the project. Students will participate in a gallery walk in order to admire and learn about various American poets from their classmates. Students will also read about Martin Luther King Jr. and analyze his “I Have a Dream” speech. We will read a novel called “The Friendship” which takes place during the time of segregation. Students will focus on making inferences throughout the story.

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, and rhythmic. The trait “ideas” includes the main message, the content of the piece, the main theme, together with all the supporting details that enrich and develop that theme. Students will also learn ways to add voice and use appropriate tone in their writing. 7th grade students are becoming excellent writers!

7th Grade Cont.....

Science

In December, we focused on finishing up our study of important organelles (mini-organs) found inside plant and animal cells along with how they work together to help the cell function. We have also been learning the basics of chemical reactions so we can understand how cells make energy through cellular respiration and how plant cells make food through photosynthesis. How are plants able to make the food they need when they cannot go to McDonalds and order a cheeseburger?????

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

Social Studies

January is the start of third quarter but we will be continuing to acquire knowledge about our Constitution. We will look at how our federal constitution is similar and the basis for our Illinois state constitution. By the end of the month, we will begin exploring the expansion of our nation from the original thirteen states to territories out to the west coast.

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.

From the 8th Grade Team

We will be doing a weekly newsletter.

Music

GKMS music students gave fantastic concerts in December. During class, students took time to reflect on the learning process to see where we can continue to make progress for our spring concerts. Students will continue applying music skills developed in class to new concert music. Please keep encouraging your student to practice their concert music outside of class. Any student who would like additional practice material can ask Mr. Ferguson!

Music Appreciation

We are currently beginning our fourth rotation through the Music Appreciation Encore classes. The eighth grade will be starting a unit on our National Anthem. We will then be exploring program music with a unit on the symphonic suite "The Planets" by English composer Gustav Holst.

In Creative Drama, the seventh grade is learning about impromptu speaking as well as pantomime acting. We are learning about the elements of effective story writing in preparation for producing a short puppet show in small groups.

Our sixth-grade American Popular Music students will be learning about the works of Stephen Foster and Scott Joplin, as well as Louis Armstrong. We will soon be learning about the 12-Bar Blues and will also trace the development of Jazz in America.

Health

We are off to great start in Health for the second half of the school year. 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: Try to **Eat something fishy**. It is heart-healthy, low in fat and contains beneficial omega-3 fatty acids.



Careers

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. These include soft skills, employability skills, and workplace behavior. The 8th grade is analyzing the rights and the wrongs in workplace ethics, along with taking different types of interest surveys to see the career possibilities that match their interests..

Physical Education Classes

Through the month of January girls PE will be participating in Basketball, while the boys will participate in Volleyball . Volleyball 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. Basketball work focus 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 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.

21st Century Skills

In 21st 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, 6th 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.

7th 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 8th 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 2nd semester.