Dear GMCS Families and Friends,

Our newsletter is a fantastic way for us to share all of the wonderful things we are doing in our school and for me to inform you of our future plans. We have a five year lease on our modular campus and expect to have an addition built onto the existing building by July, 2021, which will contain our K-6 classrooms, music and art rooms, and a library! I am happy to announce that we have made it through the preapplication phase for a USDA rural development, low interest loan for 35 years, to fund this addition. We have chosen Digsauf architect firm to take us through the process of design, bid, and build. We will soon ask for volunteers to be on the design committee and of course will ask the most important stakeholders of all, the students, to help us design the most amazing Montessori school ever.

I also want to inform you of the Future Pa Index. During the 2018-19 school year, the Pennsylvania Department of Education will introduce the Future Ready PA Index, a one-stop shop for comprehensive information on student and school success. The Future Ready PA Index recognizes that students and the schools that serve them, are more than just standardized test scores. The Future Ready PA Index illustrates academic proficiency, on-track progress, and college and career readiness, helping to demonstrate how schools are preparing students for success after they graduate. The dashboard is easy to navigate, searchable by school and includes basic information and demographic data for each school. You can visit the Future Ready PA Index online at www.FutureReadyPA.org.

Sincerely,
Faye Pleso, MED, PHD

The Board is happy to announce that Rose Thornberry is the newest member of the Board of Trustees and will be sworn in at November’s meeting. We are all incredibly grateful to her for volunteering to fill the recent vacancy on the Board.

The Board of Trustees is thrilled to be working with Digsauf, an award-winning firm practicing contemporary architecture, urbanism, and environmental design. We invite you to visit their website, www.digsauf.com for a look at the unique, high quality design expertise and Montessori knowledge that they will be bringing to GMCS.

The Board is extremely proud of Dr. Pleso’s efforts with the USDA in pursuit of funding for the next phase of Gettysburg Montessori’s growth. We look forward to sharing the next steps with our GMCS families in the coming months.

What is the purpose of the board?
The board has many crucial responsibilities that are vital in the operation of the school. Some of these responsibilities include overseeing the financial, curricular, and personnel decisions made by the CEO/principal of the school. The board is also responsible for voting on matters of spending and working with the CEO and financial accountants of GMCS to devise and ensure a balanced budget. All are welcome to attend our upcoming November 29th board meeting at 6pm.
Kindergarten

Mrs. Edmond & Mrs. Lawrence - It has been an exciting start to our school year! We have been working hard on learning rules, routines, and procedures in our classroom. We have had some great discussions on our four Respect Rules: respect self, respect others, respect environment and respect materials. We continue to practice how to choose a work, place it on a rug, work with it gently, and return it to the right spot when finished. We are practicing how to be independent and make good choices during work time.

In Wonders Reading, we have been reading and discussing weekly topics, including what makes us special, families, what we can do (now that we are getting older), how to be a good friend, using our five senses and shapes.

Our sight words so far are: I, can, the, we, see, like (please practice your sight words at home too!)

Letters of the week: Mm, Aa, Pp, It, Ss

In Eureka Math, we have learned to count, build, read, write, and find the hidden number partners within the numbers 1-10. We are beginning to explore the connections between these numbers with the phrases “1 more” and “1 less”.

All students have enjoyed individualized lessons on Montessori works in math, language, science, geography, and practical life skills, based on their interests, readiness, and abilities.

We will be looking for interesting guest speakers to come and present to the class throughout the year. If you have any special talents, or would like to talk about your job, please contact us!

If you would like to help in the classroom, with field trips, or at our classroom parties, you will need to complete 2 background check clearances. Please ask the main office for instructions for applying for these clearances.

We would like to congratulate Mrs. Edmond on the birth of her baby girl and welcome Mrs. Lansford; who will be filling in 'til Mrs. Edmond returns.

Thank you for your support!

1st & 2nd

Ms. Cahill - We have had an amazing start to our school year! It is hard to believe that it is the end of the first quarter already. We have been hard at work learning the routines of the classroom and exploring all the wondrous works. We have really become a classroom family that cares about each other and cares for each other.

In math, 1st grade has been working on embedding and decoding numbers, counting on, adding on and the commutative property of addition. Second grade has been working on measurement and place value.

We are continuing with the Reading Wonders program. We are reviewing or introducing new high frequency words and utilizing our sight word buddies. We have also been reviewing phonics skills, discussing different genres, text features and sort elements. We have also been working on our grammar skills including types of sentences, appropriate punctuation and contractions.

In science and social studies we have been working on how plants grow and map skills. Our works are reflecting these areas.

Fall is one of our favorite times of the year! In September, we had an apple day. We made crockpot applesauce, did apple experiments and discovered how apples grow.

We enjoyed picking corn for Miss Rickell’s (Gulden’s) wedding and making our scarecrow who worked hard raising money for the SPCA of Adams County.

Mr. Stare - Our first quarter of the school year has been a whirlwind of excitement and learning. In our 1st grade Language Arts class we have been learning all about what we do in school, the places we live, our pets, what we do with our friends, and how our bodies move. 1st graders have been also learning about how to count to 120, writing numbers, place value, and greater than and less than.

2nd Grade has been hard at work this school year as well. In Language Arts they have learned how friends depend on each other, how families around the world are alike and different, how a pet can be a friend, how we care for animals, and what happens when families work together. 2nd grade has also been rocking in math class. We have learned about hundreds, tens, and ones, skip counting, reading and writing numbers, and greater than, less than, and equal too.

This quarter we also learned about Scarecrows. We made a scarecrow to help raise money for the Adams County ASPCA. We also read the fable The Fox and the Crow that depicts how sneaky crows can be and how we must be just as tricky to make sure that crows don’t take our food. We learned that Scarecrows are our way to trick those pesky crows. We wrote about what we would scare if we were a scarecrow, how we would scare it, and why we would scare it.

Room 10 has earned one Stellar Stone Award this school year so far. The students decided to have a popcorn, movie, and stuffed animal day. We are working towards our next day and we are super excited to pick our next award.

Room 10 has a new friend, this year, that is traveling to our homes for the weekend and his name is Bib. Bib is an alien that is on a boundless voyage to meet all of the students’ families in room 10. Bib has been on a few adventure so far this year. He has watched movies, went on a scooter ride, and ate ice cream. Keep an eye out for Bib to visit your house in the future if you haven’t met him yet.
Mrs. Lawrence - We had a wonderful beginning to our school year! We have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know the students and working with them. It is hard to believe it is the end of the first quarter already! We have been hard at work learning the routines of the classroom and exploring the many works throughout the room.

In math, 2nd grade has been working on sums, differences, measurement and place value. 3rd grade has been working on telling time, problem solving, multiplication, division and the distributive property of multiplication.

In language arts, the students have been learning new vocabulary words, reading different genres, learning about nouns, verbs and adjectives, looking at story elements and text features, and reviewing phonics skills. We have been busy writing many stories following the writing process. One of our pieces was an explanatory writing telling how to build a scarecrow. We also made a class scarecrow to help raise money for the ASPCA.

We have been utilizing the computers and working on our research skills. We researched animals, leaves, bats and the skeletal system. We also completed science experiments on candy corn, slime and capillarity. We enjoyed being scientists and working through the scientific method.

We are looking forward to a great 2nd quarter!

Mrs. Jan & Mrs. Stough - We are excited that this year has allowed us the opportunity to combine the 3rd and 4th grade classes to teach the core subjects by grade. This new change has presented us with many benefits which include; more time to focus on grade level standards, more time to meet the children's individual educational needs, a more focused environment during core instruction, and more opportunities/time for science, social studies, and Montessori works.

Along with our daily curriculum, Montessori works have been introduced and reviewed for all subjects.

This month the students really enjoyed creating scarecrows to raise funds for the ASPCA. We hope that families have spotted our scarecrows at different local businesses in the area.

We want to say a special thank you to Njang and her mother, Ms. Reyes, for conducting a presentation for the fourth grade about cultures and the stereotypes and challenges that diverse students face. Ms. Reyes also shared many artifacts from other countries around the world and even brought in empanadas, plantains, and honey tea from Chile for the students to try.

ELA

The students have been introduced to many types of genres, including: literature (fiction), realistic fiction, historical fiction, narrative non-fiction, informational text (nonfiction), expository, biographies, fantasy, drama and folktales.

Our reading program does a wonderful job incorporating social studies and science topics. So far, the students have read and learned about natural disasters, inventions, and landmarks and memorials. The students have also learned about many historical/cultural figures.

Math

This quarter, third grade focused on strategies for solving multiplication and division problems. The fourth graders have reviewed and built upon adding and subtracting skills with regrouping, place value, and rounding (all to the millions). Both 3rd and 4th grade students have been working on multi-step word problems and using visual representations to help us solve and better understand our answers. Mrs. Jan would like to thank all of the parents who have been supportive as we are learning a new style of math (Eureka) and have been taking time to help guide your students at home as we become stronger mathematicians! Please continue to use the “Parent Tips” packets that are being sent home at the beginning of each module and the Eureka website to help with understanding Eureka strategies for solving Math.

Mrs. Gulden & Mrs. Sauter - Quarter one has already come and gone! It is hard to believe how quickly it comes and goes each year! We have had a very busy start to our school year. Here is a recap of the many things we have experienced:

ELA: ELA has had a busy start. First, we reviewed many reading concepts in preparation to start our novels. We covered things such as character traits, theme, setting, plot, etc. Then we began our first novels. Fifth grade read The BFG and sixth grade read Tuck Everlasting. Students did very well adjusting to the new format for reading classes. They are also becoming far more independent in completing their reading skills and activities.

Math: Students spent the first part of the year reviewing and learning new skills using our Eureka materials. Everyone has worked on math fluency and explaining their mathematical thinking processes. Fifth grade has worked on powers of ten, place value, reading and comparing decimals, and addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division of decimals. Sixth graders have worked on exploring ratios and different techniques for solving ratio problems, and using charts, double number lines, and coordinate planes.

Social Studies: We were once again fortunate enough to get to start our year with Artists in Residence. We learned about many dances from around the world throughout our ten classes. Students also worked on embroidery patterns from the different countries we learned about as well. All students had the chance to learn about and practice respect for themselves and peers.

Science: This year has been jam packed with science so far. We began the year with looking into the characteristics of living things. Then we received our chick eggs from the 4-H program. The chicks should be hatching about the time of conferences. In the weeks up until then, students will have learned about how to tell the difference between fertile and non-fertile eggs and the life cycle of chicks.

If your family is interested in adding a few new, fuzzy members to your family, keep this project in mind!

Harry Potter Book Club: Our book club friends have finished their first book and have had the opportunity to enjoy the movie together over lunches. They are working very hard and seem to be enjoying themselves all in one! Book number two, Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets, begins this month!

Report Cards: Grades are listed as ‘B’, ‘I’, and ‘P’. A mark of ‘B’ indicates that the class is just beginning the material, or your child is struggling with the skill listed, receiving scores of 69% or lower. ‘I’ suggests that your child is in the improving range. This could mean they are doing the work with teacher assistance, or they are scoring between 70 and 89% on given tasks. ‘P’ means your child is proficient with the listed skill. They can complete the work independently and make few errors, receiving a score of 90-100%. Remember, each mark can have more than one meaning, so if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to email us!

MUSIC

Musical greetings to all! The students have started practicing for the winter concert! We will have two concerts - the first is on Tuesday, December 11th for grades K-2 and our theme is holiday food and fun! It will be a delightful time of music with our youngest performers! The second concert is on Thursday, December 13th for grades 3-6 (+ Mrs. Lawrence’s 2/3 class!). The drama team and classes have been having a snowwarious time as we expect a blizzard in our mini musical! Special performances by the drum and recorder clubs also! Both concerts will begin at 6:30pm with a report time to their classrooms at 6:00pm.

Come out one and all to enjoy the sounds of the season!
Another school year is in our midst and we’ve been making some exciting projects in art class!

Kindergarten began the year by learning about different line types and we turned those lines into colorful shooting stars! After that, we used our fine motor skills to make ‘scribble drawings’ and talked about taking our time by coloring inside the lines. We are now learning about how we can see shapes in the world around us.

First through sixth grade began the year with self portrait drawings. Last year, we did regular self portrait drawings. This year, I decided to switch things up. First through fourth grade got to make crazy hair portraits. I told them their face should look like themselves, but their hair could be anything imaginable. We had some amazingly creative results! Fifth and sixth grade made self portraits that were half themselves and half imaginary characters. Again, the creativity I see in our students is beyond wonderful!

First and second grade also made mosaic pumpkins. We traced large pumpkin shapes and tore orange pieces of paper to glue on. This taught students critical thinking skills for filling the inside of their pumpkin shape. We should have a pumpkin patch in the hallway soon!

For the entire month of October, we took a break from our regular projects to work on our Original Works fundraiser. Students were asked to create a drawing on 8.5 x 11 paper that was original and not copy righted. I also asked them to use a lot of color. It’s one thing to see what students create when I give them a set outcome, but to see what they make with no true direction; it blows me away!

As Pablo Picasso once said “Every child is an artist”. I remind my students often that we are all artists in our own way, even if our work looks different from others. That is what makes us all unique and we should be proud of that!

Our processes for identifying students who may be eligible for special education services include, but are not limited to, Response to Intervention and Instruction (RTI), Speech and Language screenings, Occupational Therapy screenings, teacher referrals, and parent requests. Gettysburg Montessori Charter School currently provides Learning Support services, Speech and Language services, Occupational Therapy services, Physical Therapy services and Deaf and Hard of Hearing services. Brochures reviewing the student identification process, the parents request for an evaluation process and additional topics are available to all parents and located on the green shelf in the lobby of our school. For further information, feel free to contact our Special Education Coordinator/Teacher, Rebeka Black, at becky@gettysburgmontessoricharter.org.

Greetings from RtI! Did you know that playing board games with your children is incredibly beneficial to their brain health? Encourage your children to put away the electronics and engage in some old good fashioned board game family fun. Board games have proven to promote better memory and cognitive functioning, decrease the risk of mental diseases, and speed up response time. In addition, when children use materials such as dice they are building their subitizing and number sense skills! Make tonight a family board game night!

Mr. Woodward - This quarter in Physical Education and Health we have done so many fun exciting and new things! Montessori students had the chance to learn their 8 basic locomotor skills and use them in many different games and activities. The units covered in quarter one were scooters, parachute activities, soccer, castleball, and capture the football. In Health students discovered the importance of hand washing, hygiene, and sportsmanship. We also had the opportunity to learn all about bacteria and how the immune system helps keep us HEALTHY!

Nurse Adrian - On this beautifully clear and crisp day, I reflect on personal and GMCS happenings during this first quarter. I am happy to share that I am a Nationally Certified School Nurse. I am proud and pleasantly surprised by the positive impact it has made in my practice. School time typical illnesses come and go; such as a stomach/intestinal bug, bothersome colds/allergies, and recently headache with fever [probably viral]. We battle them as best we can with hand washing and sanitizing.

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Greetings from the counselor's corner! It’s been a busy school year so far for the counseling department. Classroom lessons are under way and the topics discussed with each grade band have been on bullying and respect. Small groups will begin soon and focus on social skills and communication skills. Your counselor has been busy helping with our bingo event coming up on November 4th. Come on out to bingo for some food, fun, and prizes. Lastly, I will be working on the up and coming Career Café and will be searching for parents who would like to volunteer to talk about their professions. Please contact me at: cfelicetti@gettysburgmontessoricharter.org.