



The Principal's Piece

Dear GMCS Families,

Spring has arrived! Before we know it, this school year will be over and this exciting year will be just a memory.

During the 2016/2017 school year, we implemented a Kindergarten transition plan designed to help students and families transition from Pre-K to Kindergarten. The plan supports kindergarten readiness. It helps families know more about what they can do at home to help their children be ready for kindergarten. It also fosters community relationships.

We also implemented a 6th grade transition plan which will help our students and their families transition smoothly from our school to middle school. The plan supports middle school readiness. It helps to make families aware of education options after 6th grade and fosters relationships with community resources.

Each year, our students in grades 3-6 participate in the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA), which is required of us as a public school in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Since the Pennsylvania Department of Education gives us a large window of dates to take these assessments, we have arranged to take them over a period of time which allows us to spread them out. This way we can pretty much keep our regular schedule. In fact, most of the sessions will take only around an hour each day! We do not want the PSSAs to cause our students any stress. We will approach them with excitement and will offer extra snacks, gum, and mints and extra recess time.

The dates for the PSSA are April 4-7 (English Language Arts), April 25-27 (Math), May 2-3 (Science: Grade 4 only).

Here are some fun activities to look forward to over the next couple months:

- Pep Rally for our students taking the PSSAs
- BOGO Scholastic Book Fair
- Strawberry Hill Trout Release
- 5th and 6th grade Civil War Period Ball
- Spring Concert
- Field Day

Looking into next school year, we still have some spaces available so please tell your family and friends about our wonderful school. Open enrollment begins in April and we are filling up fast.

Sincerely,
Faye Pleso, Principal

From the Board

Board Vacancies – Did You Know?

Did you know that the board is a vital function of the school?

We are responsible for overseeing the financial, curricular, and personnel decisions made by the CEO/Principal. This means that we discuss and vote to approve things such as new hires, financials, and curriculum to name a few. We need hardworking, dedicated, and excited individuals to help our school thrive! The board currently is looking for volunteers to fill several positions. Please email board@gettysburgmontessoricharter.org to find out how you can be a part of our amazing school's governing body!

2017-2018 Budget

The GMCS Board is currently working on the preliminary 2017-2018 budget. We have identified priorities for the school and will be posting the proposed budget on the school's website in the next month. If you are interested in how the school sets its budget, we encourage you to attend next month's board meeting.

Important Reminders:

- ALL changes in transportation **MUST** be in writing and given to the office no later than 1pm on the day of the change or it will NOT happen. This needs to be sent to Mrs. Rogers, Mrs. Gugliette, and the child's teacher by email.
- Please be sure to check the lost and found, there are quite a few items there.
- As the weather starts to get warmer, please be sure to dress your child appropriately for outdoor recess.

Dates to Remember:

- **Tuesday, May 9th**
Spring Music Concert
- **Wednesday, May 17th**
Parent Information Night
- **Friday, May 26th**
Kindergarten Graduation ceremony

Upcoming Board Meetings

GMCS Board meetings are open to the public and we encourage you to attend. Upcoming board meetings will be held at 888 Coleman Rd. at 7:00 pm on the following dates:

- Tuesday, April 25
- Tuesday, May 30
- Tuesday, June 27
- Tuesday, July 25
- Tuesday, August 29



Classroom Updates

Kindergarten

Mrs. Edmond & Mrs. Lawrence - It's hard to believe that the third quarter of school is already complete and our Kindergarteners are well on their way to first grade!

The last quarter of the year will be an exciting time for our Kindergarteners. We have now planted pea seeds and are caring for them in the classroom in preparation for the first of many GMCS school garden projects. The children will love the upcoming units of study, with science focuses on weather, animals, outer space, and our environment. We will be exploring new ways to solve addition and subtraction problems in our last months of school and we will be increasing our fluency as we continue to grow more confident and independent as readers and writers. Perhaps the most exciting news we have to share is our upcoming field trip to Pine View Farm on May 17th for a day of hands-on fun in this farm-themed petting zoo and experiential learning site. Permission forms will be sent home in paper copies and email and volunteer chaperones will be needed. Please contact your child's teacher via email if you are interested in chaperoning this trip. Also, please keep an eye out for your invitation to our annual Kindergarten Graduation ceremony, which will be taking place on Friday, May 26.

Thank you for all of your support throughout the year! We are so proud of our growing Kindergarteners!

1st & 2nd

Mrs. Johnson - Time feels like it has been moving in a whirlwind this quarter. Our students have been very busy and as always working hard. Mother Nature has kept us guessing about the weather this quarter as well. We go from winter to spring, and back to winter all in a week's time. As a reminder, please make sure that your children are dressing appropriately for the weather. We will be going outside as weather permits and want to make sure that our children stay warm and healthy.

In addition to our math and reading lessons, we have added writer's workshop into our schedule. So far, we have had the opportunity to write a winter story or a story of their choice. Currently we are working on making a how-to book (such as How to Make a Pizza, or How to Ride a Horse), and will soon be working on doing some mini research projects.

Some highlights from this quarter were having a visit from the Tooth Fairy, learning about famous Americans (Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, George Washington, and Abraham Lincoln), honoring Black History Month by making flip books about several famous African Americans (Ruby Bridges, Rosa Parks, Jackie Robinson, Thurgood Marshall, and Jessie Owens to name a few), and celebrating Dr. Seuss. Towards the end of the third quarter and into the fourth quarter we will honor Women's History Month by learning about Amelia Earhart, Helen Keller, and Jane Goodall. Another upcoming unit of study will be almost everyone's favorite...dinosaurs!

Miss. Rickell - I'm having a hard time wrapping my head around the fact that April is just around the corner leading us into our final quarter of the year. Over the last several weeks, we have completed unit 3 and begun unit 4 for our Reading Wonders programs. In guided reading groups, we are reading a variety of chapter books and leveled readers. Students seem to be thoroughly enjoying our books. I enjoy watching them get excited to read their books, or giggle at the silly parts! Lucky for us, these book groups will continue into quarter four.

In math we have finished up with addition and subtraction in our daily lessons. First grade has also done time and tables and graphs. Second grade is beginning time and will also move on to tables and graphs shortly. In the coming weeks, students will study measurement, fractions, and geometry as well. These are typically student favorites, so I am looking forward to the students' interactions with these new concepts.

In other news, quarter four means field trips and other fun events. This spring we will be taking a field trip with all of first and second grade, but we will be keeping you in the dark just a little bit longer. The final information will be revealed as soon as everything is finalized! Field Day and other school-wide activities will also be coming up with our warmer days. Hopefully the warm weather stays this time!

As always, thank you for your support at home, and I look forward to what the end of the year has in store for us!

Mr. Stare - We have been hard at work in Room 10 during our third quarter. In 1st grade we have learned about several interesting topics in unit 3. We have learned about time and how to measure it, plants growing, folktales, life in the past versus life now, and how things get from the farm to our table. In unit 4 we have learned about different animal features, animals living together with people, what wild means, and insects. In 2nd grade unit 3, we learned about Earth's surface, the sky, ways people can help others, weather, and expressing ourselves. In unit 4, so far, we have learned about different places on Earth, Earth's changes, our culture making us special, and folktales about nature. Our class has also become a class of writers. We have written fictional stories, book reviews, and how-to books.

Both 1st and 2nd grade are still working hard to master addition and subtraction. We are getting over our epic battle with regrouping and borrowing. We have begun to have W.I.N. Groups each Monday and Friday during our PM work block. W.I.N. stands for what I need, it offers students intensive lessons on skills that they are struggling with.

Room 10 has still been going through upgrades each quarter. This quarter we upgraded our morning work routine. The students in room 10 have begun to solve math word problems daily with the class. One student turns into a Mr. or a Ms. and they get to teach the whole class how to solve the daily problem. We are continuing with our daily handwriting practice as well. Our 2nd graders are in the depths of cursive handwriting, currently. Our 1st graders are still working on mastering manuscript. 1st grade will be done working on manuscript in a few more weeks. If you have a chance, families, ask your students to show off their hard work.

Next quarter we will be taking our class field trip. Our field trip will be in the month of May, stay tuned for more information on the location and chaperone opportunities. We will also be wrapping up our Elliot's Adventure Journal. Elliot has almost visited everyone in room 10's house. Elliot has experienced so much with the students, he was fed a blue slushy, he built a magnet block castle, he had tortillas for breakfast, and he even got a little crazy on his bus ride home.

It's hard to believe how much we have grown over the last 3 quarters. We can't believe that we will be 2nd and 3rd graders soon.

3rd & 4th

Mrs. Jan & Mrs. Stough - *What we've been working on...*
This quarter the third and fourth grade students studied fractions. Third grade has been practicing customary and metric measurement. In Language Arts, we practiced determining different perspectives and points of view. Other skills we continued to develop were comparing and contrasting themes/settings/plots. We worked on asking and answering questions to demonstrate understanding of a text. We also learned about agriculture, making healthy choices, and the importance of government.

As we are coming toward the end of our school year, we are proud to see the growth that the students have made so far!

What we're looking forward to...

In Math, third and fourth grade will be practicing converting types of measurements. Third grade will be learning and working with money, time, and calendar, graphs and probability, geometry, and preparing

Classroom Updates

for algebra. Fourth grade will be working on graphs and probability, geometry, and preparing for algebra to end the year. Students will also continue to build upon their reading strategies. Third grade will be learning about different types of inventions and technology within flight. Fourth grade will be learning about astronomers and how they study wonders in the sky, such as stars, planets, comets, eclipses, and the Northern Lights.

5th & 6th

Miss. Jarvis - Upper Elementary is excited for all of the upcoming events taking place in the spring. Our first major spring assignment is our second Market Day research project. Students will be given their project guidelines for this experience the week of March 27, 2016. This time, our class will be studying the continent of Asia. The project due date is set for April 21. Please be sure to ask your child to show you the expectations for this project. Feel free to join our class during student presentations as they enjoy showing you their hard work.

May will also be filled with lots of great activities! At the end of April, expect guidelines for our Economic Fair projects. Students will be expected to create a product to sell to the younger students for Peace Points. Start discussing with your child the ideas they have for products they would like to create and sell during this event. This is one of Upper Elementary's favorite activities! Stay posted for more details.

The end of April and beginning of May will also include Artists in Residence. Miss Nancy and Mr. Jef will be joining Upper Elementary several times a week to teach about the different types of arts from the Civil War Era. This is a great program which teaches students about an important time in history. We will be holding our second annual Civil War Ball on the evening of May 24th. We encourage parents of Upper Elementary students to attend so that your child can share with you all that they have learned!

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Due to the inclement weather, our Parent Information Night on March 16th was postponed. We are hoping to reschedule the March topics at our next event. On May 17th, GMCS will be hosting our final Parent Information Night for the school year. TrueNorth Wellness will be sharing information on Autism Spectrum Disorder and Anxiety/Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD). We are hoping to have Jerry Mitchel, with the PA Office of Attorney General, share a presentation about internet safety as well. Please return the "save your spot" attachments from the flyer to let us know you are planning to attend. We plan to offer childcare and light refreshments at our May event. ALL parents are invited to attend!

Our processes for identifying students who may be eligible for special education services include, but are not limited to, Response to Intervention and Instruction (RTII), 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 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 above the sign-in/sign-out table in the front lobby of our school. For further information, feel free to contact our Special Education Coordinator/Teacher, Rebeka Black, at becky@gettysburgmontessoricharter.org.

MUSIC

Ms. Bartoli - *Notes from the Music Room* GMCS has a piano in the music room!!!! A few months ago, a man called and said that he had a piano and did we want it? We said YES and he showed up within minutes with a piano for us. We tried it out and had it tuned and it is getting lots of use in our music classes. To this anonymous man, a huge

thank you for this amazing addition to our music room!!!

In February, we learned about expressive elements in music. We learned how to talk about music using the standard Italian terms. In March, we have been examining music and the movies. We have watched scenes with music in the background and without to analyze just what music adds to the scenes. As a culminating activity, each class has written a story. Each child has written a page. Then each child created a musical accompaniment for their page of the story, to help us understand that page. These are being presented in a Parent Visitation Day on March 28-29 during all of the music classes. We hope you received your invitation and joined us for that special day.

In April, we will be learning about musical form and how music is organized. We will finish the year studying about musical theater and Broadway. The K-2 classes will be watching Rodgers and Hammerstein's Cinderella. The 3-6 classes will be watching Hairspray. Through these musicals, we will learn about all the different parts of a musical and how dance, drama, and music combine in this uniquely American art form.

Mark your calendars for the Spring Music Concert on Tuesday, May 9. K-2 is at 6:00pm and 3-6 at 7:00pm. Our GMCS Voices will also be performing at the 3-6 concert.

Music and Drama enrichment classes continue to meet weekly. Progress reports will be included with report cards this quarter. Parents should be looking in their emails for a survey regarding the enrichment program.

Mark your calendars with two important dates. Our instrumental students will share what they have learned on Monday, May 15 at 1:30 in the All Purpose Room. Instrumental parents are invited to join us for that concert. Our Drama students will present 4 one-act plays on Friday, May 19. We will be performing the same plays four times during that day. Drama parents may choose to come to any of the four performances that day. We will perform at 10:00, 11:00, 1:00 and 2:00.

We are happily busy in Music this Spring!!

RTII

Dear Families,

Get excited! You can now purchase keepsakes and gifts that feature your child's artistic accomplishments, and support our school at the same time! By now, you should have received your child's Square1Art catalog which includes their custom artwork. Each child worked diligently to create their artwork in hopes that fun and exciting items, that display their creativity, could be purchased. Each item purchased helps provide materials for our classrooms. **Orders are due by April 12, 2017.** Celebrate your child's artistic side by ordering timeless keepsakes to cherish for years to come!



What is RTII?

A multi-tiered system that uses a data to drive small group instruction. The data is used to teach to students specific need and match appropriate instructional strategies.

Response to Intervention (RTII) is a way to see if the student responds to receiving additional help in the form of small group instruction. This program lasts about 4-6 weeks, with a progress report sent home at the end of the 6 weeks. The student will be in the regular classroom, but will be pulled out for half hour increments during each school day to meet with the RTII instructor and work on the specific area of concern.

Thank you!
Loren Householder and Ashley Reddig

HEALTH NEWS

Nurse Adrian - We, at school, are committed to re-enforcing good hygiene practices such as: covering cough and sneezes or keeping fingers out of mouths. Formal and informal instructions and reminders are done individually and in groups. Students are encouraged and given time for handwashing before meals and during restroom breaks. We have placed posters of superheroes practicing good handwashing and keeping areas clean in the bathrooms and cafeteria/multipurpose room. Our classrooms and buildings are disinfected DAILY.

Unfortunately, despite our best efforts students do become ill. We have had several different bouts of flu this winter and seemed to be past the worst of it. Yet, this week I have been informed of a couple of students who have tested positive for flu and/or strep throat. Last week, one parent advised me that her child had been diagnosed with a variation of hand, foot, mouth disease. So I am adopting the slogan, "It happens!" in regards to childhood illnesses and various "bugs" that make their rounds. Most infections are most contagious BEFORE any symptoms appear. We will never stop our efforts to keep our school as healthy as possible. We will teach and model good hygiene, and limit exposure whenever possible.

Now to Playground news...We are hoping to get the playground installed in the next few weeks, weather permitting. Several parents have contacted me with their commitment to help. David Beale has experience in construction. We met last week to discuss some of the details. He is helping me identify and get needed supplies and equipment. We will keep you all apprised of the progress and schedule the build as soon as possible. I am very grateful for Mr. Beale's advice and willingness to help organize and direct volunteer efforts in completing this project.

Your generous donations to the health clinic at the start of the school year have lasted until now; and in fact, there are only a few types of items we are in need to supplement our purchases. If you are able to donate any of the following BRAND or GENERIC items for the health clinic, we would appreciate the help:

- Tylenol/Acetaminophen – Children's Liquid and JR. Chewable Tablets
- Motrin/Advil/Ibuprofen - Children's Liquid and JR. Chewable Tablets
- Children's Pepto – Chewable Tablets
- Spray Benadryl/Generic Itch Relief Spray
- Coban/Generic Self-Adhesive Sports Wrap 3 and 4 inch widths [NOT elastic or tape]
- Facial Tissues
- Paper Towel Rolls
- Disinfectant Wipes

COUNSELOR'S CORNER

Greetings from the counselor's corner! It's hard to believe that spring has arrived, and it's time to start preparing for our last events of the school year! It's time to officially start preparing for our Career Café. While this is the 3rd year GMCS will be having a Career Café, it is the first time we will be hosting it in our new school, and without volunteers from Vida Charter School. I'm excited to be able to continue this event, but I need your help! Letters will be coming home with all of our students, looking for volunteers for this event. The Career Café will take place on May 5th from 1:00-3:00pm. If you are interested in volunteering, please be on the lookout for the letter that is coming home, or feel free to call or email me at sara@gettysburgmontessoricharter.org.

This past marking period, small groups have continued to run and draw to a close, while other small groups are beginning. Volunteers from the Children's Advocacy Center and from Survivors Inc. came to our school and provided our classrooms with lessons about personal safety. As I mentioned in our last newsletter, we were close to earning Bucket Filler Bingo, and WE DID IT!!! Our students have worked hard, and continue to work hard at filling each other's buckets, and spreading kindness throughout our school. We look forward to celebrating this achievement together, and hope to get Bingo one more time before the year comes to a close. Thank you all for your continued support!

PHYSICAL EDUCATION/HEALTH

Mr. Arentz -

K-6th Health- Having just celebrated healthy eating with our New Fruit and Vegetable Day, all classes are wrapping up their nutrition unit in Health class. In the fourth quarter, we will be covering mental, community, and environmental health.

K-6th PE- Students and staff had a great time at our Jump Rope for Heart event. As a school we raised nearly \$3,000, thank you for your help! For the remainder of the school year in PE, we will be tying up any loose ends before introducing our Outdoor/Adventure Ed unit, and cooperative activities.



6 Simple Ways to Spring Forward into Fitness

1. Identify the "why"

Getting in shape does not always mean losing weight. Perhaps you just want to feel better about yourself, have more energy and know that you're doing something good for your body. If you identify why you want to get fit, it will help you power through a tough workout or give you the willpower to say "no thanks" to the bagels your co-worker brought to the office.

2. Find a way (or a few ways) to be active every day

If you find activities that you truly love, you will find joy in being active every day, even if it's just going for a walk in your favorite place. Eliminate the "I don't have time to work out today" excuse by embracing the short but effective exercise session. Anything you can do to get your body moving will put you in a better place mentally and is better than being completely stationary.

3. Eat real, whole food

Forget counting carbs and calories; instead, focus on fueling your body. If you are eating nutritious foods with as few ingredients as possible — fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, healthy and clean proteins — you're treating your body well.

4. Don't think of health as a punishment

Find physical activities and nutritious meals and snacks that feel like you're giving yourself a reward. This is exactly what your health should be — a gift, something that makes you feel healthy and happy.

5. Don't skimp on sleep

Easier said than done. In our hectic, overscheduled lives, sleep often gets pushed to the back burner. But sufficient rest should be one of your top priorities.

6. Hydrate

Drinking more water is one of the simplest ways to achieve a healthier you. Proper hydration aids digestion, refuels our bodies for upcoming workouts, boosts energy, nourishes the skin... the list of benefits goes on and on. Keep a water bottle at your workplace as a constant reminder to drink more H₂O, or carry a water bottle with you. The weight of a heavy water bottle will remind you to do your best to empty it!