



The Howler



The Principal's Piece

Dear GMCS Families,

Welcome to 2017! I anticipate another year of growth and development here at our beautiful location. I wanted to update you on a few things. First, you may have noticed that our vestibule has transformed a bit and will now house Mrs. Rogers' office. Her office works in conjunction with our new security system. Over five different contractors helped to make this work. Our security system includes security devices on the outside doors of our main building as well as on our modular campus, in which our staff have key fobs to use for entry. All visitors will now press the bell button to gain entrance, which also chimes in our hallway, alerting us that someone is at the door. Visitors also have the ability to speak to us via a voice intercom installed in the bell button box. Mrs. Rogers will then release the lock and let them into the vestibule and then can release another lock allowing them to enter our lobby area. We now have panic buttons located throughout the main building and in the modular campus which if pressed, will silently notify the police. We also have security cameras along the perimeter of our buildings and within them. All of which are recorded and monitored.

As for our playground progress, Nurse Adrian has been working diligently on finding us quality equipment at a good cost. She asked our students what they desired to have on their new playground. The most popular pieces desired are a climber, a merry-go-round, and swings. She has been given approval to order these pieces so we can begin this project. In addition, we expect our imagination playground building blocks to arrive soon. Thank you all for participating in fund-raisers since this greatly contributed to this purchase. I expect work to start on the playground before the end of February.

We also have six buddy benches to place on our property thanks to a donation from The Brethren Home at Cross Keys Village. I'd like to thank Mr. Les Millar for arranging this with The Brethren Home and for his transporting of the benches to us.

Now that we have been in operation for four months, we have noticed some procedures that needed to be changed. One of them is our arrival procedure. We now have our bus riders go directly to their classrooms unless they want to have breakfast. Car riders and those finished with breakfast are escorted to their classrooms by a staff member. This eliminates wasted time in the morning and helps them start their day in a more calm and peaceful manner.

Finally, I'd like to thank my staff for all of their hard work on making GMCS such a wonderful school and for our families who volunteer their time and efforts to make our school even better.



Faye Pleso, Principal

Spread the Word!

Kindergarten Transition Night/Open House: February 8 and February 22, 2017

Students with last names A-M should arrive between 5:30 and 6:00 pm and students with last names N-Z should arrive between 6:15 and 6:45 pm. If you are able to attend please email areddig@gettysburgmontessoricharter.org as soon as possible.

Sixth Grade Transition Night: March 23, 2017 from 6-7 pm

Please RSVP to Katie Jarvis: katie@gettysburgmontessoricharter.org.

More information about these events is available in the *RTII* section of this newsletter.

WINTER 2016/17

Important Reminders:

- ALL changes in transportation **MUST** be in writing and given to the office no later than 1 pm 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 colder, please be sure to dress your child appropriately for outdoor recess.

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, January 31
- Tuesday, February 28
- Tuesday, March 28
- Tuesday, April 25
- Tuesday, May 30
- Tuesday, June 27
- Tuesday, July 25
- Tuesday, August 29

Classroom Updates

Kindergarten

Mrs. Edmond & Mrs. Lawrence - We hope everyone had a wonderful holiday break and is ready to get back into the swing of things! Our Kindergartners enjoyed our winter holidays study in the weeks before winter break, including explorations of the cultural roots and celebrations of Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Winter Solstice, and Diwali.

In our Wonders Reading Program, we are working hard to learn and practice the habits of a good reader. A good reader asks questions before and during reading, visualizes as they read and makes predictions. Please continue to practice sight words at home, as these words, along with the phonics we are studying, will provide your child with the "keys" to reading fluency and enjoyment.

Our super writers have been busy during Writer's Workshop making their stories and teaching texts into books. We know now that writers say "When we are done, we have just begun" and are learning to further develop and revise our writing to make it the best it can be.

We continue to reinforce math skills using the Montessori Materials. We are working on comparing numbers and quantities, reading and writing numbers (up to 100!) and addition.

We are excited to announce that the Tooth Fairy will come to visit GMCS to talk about dental hygiene in February!



1st & 2nd



Mrs. Johnson - This year seems to be flying by as our first and second graders continue to work hard to meet expectations and complete their lessons and assignments. Our read aloud this quarter was Because of Winn-Dixie and when we were finished we watched the movie. The class did a great job finding the similarities and differences between the book and the movie.

Math - Our first-grade friends continued to explore numbers and operations by comparing numbers, adding two-digit numbers, adding and subtracting 10, and looking at addition and subtraction relationships. Our second-grade friends also compared numbers and began adding and subtracting two and three digit numbers with and without regrouping. In addition to these concepts, our second graders also began adding more than two, two digit numbers ($21+15+10=36$).

Reading - Both grades worked through Unit 2 of our Reading Wonders program. Both grades worked on strategies such as making predictions; identifying characters, setting, and events; identifying the beginning, middle, and end of a story, and as well as

finding the main ideas and key details of a text. We also explored the genres of fantasy, realistic fiction, informational (nonfiction/expository) text.

We are all looking forward to this next quarter's lessons and activities.

Miss. Rickell - This last term has flown by, especially with all the holidays included! I hope you all had a very happy, healthy, and safe winter break. This term we have worked on a variety of skills. We finished unit two of our reading Wonders programs and have moved into unit three. When it comes to math we have looked at a variety of different addition and subtraction skills, such as adding and subtracting double digits both with and without regrouping. Students have also been provided with a ton of new math folder works to explore! They are enjoying trying these new works and reviewing skills or learning new ones. Over the last few months we had the chance to do some fun activities in the week before our holiday break, too. The students absolutely loved the Grinch Goo, you would have thought they won a prize!

We have many more things ahead of us this year. We will continue to work on our handwriting, reading our Scholastic News, and we will be starting some new writing activities. I look forward to all the fun ahead!

Mr. Stare - We have been hard at work in 1st and 2nd grade. We just finished our 2nd unit in our Language Arts curriculum. We learned about Jobs Around Town, Buildings, Our Community, Helping, and How to Use Maps in 1st Grade. In 2nd Grade we have learned about Animals in Nature, Animals in Stories, Animal Habitats, Baby Animals, and Animals in Poems.

We have been having fun Adding and Subtracting in Math Lessons. We are learning that there are many different ways to solve a problem and still come to the right answer. We have also been solving word problems every morning to get our brains revved up for the day. We have been finding the questions we need to answer, the important details of the problem, and the strategies that we used to know that our answer is correct. Mr. Stare has even started to let the students play a video game in class. We have been playing Prodigy, a math game that reviews what we've learned all year as we navigate around an imaginary world catching animal pets and battling other players to save the world.

In the month of December we had the privilege of being visited daily by an elf. Our class came up with a list of names and then we took a poll to see what we were going to name him. The class chose the name Pepper. Pepper brought a pet reindeer to the class two weeks before Winter Break. The student named him Salt. We wrote letter and stories in class that the students gave to Pepper. The students even gave Pepper and Salt goodbye post it notes before Winter Break.

Elliot, the Dragon, has still been going on weekend adventures with the students as well. His journal is filling up with beautiful artwork and journal entries. Elliot has fought a pet cat for pizza, gone to the doctor, and even played Madden on an Xbox to name a few of his adventures. I wonder what new adventures Elliot will go on in 2017?



Classroom Updates

3rd & 4th

Mrs. Jan & Mrs. Stough - *What we've been working on...*

We have been working hard on developing our multiplication skills. Practicing at home will improve mastery in multiplication as this is an important skill that we'll build off of as the year progresses. This quarter in Language Arts, some of the concepts we continued to work on were distinguishing points of view, comparing and contrasting themes/settings/plots, and determining types of genres. Through our weekly Wonders assessments and in our whole group lessons students are practicing asking and answering questions to demonstrate understanding of a text. We are pleased with all of the students' hard work this quarter!

What we're looking forward to...

In Math, we will be starting units on division, fractions, decimals, and measurement in the upcoming quarter. In Language Arts, 3rd grade students will be reading about Earth and its neighbors. 4th grade students will be reading about important people from the past and ways science advances can be helpful or harmful.

5th & 6th

Miss. Jarvis - Students in Upper Elementary have had a very eventful few weeks! The students worked extremely hard on their Market Day projects during the month of December. On Friday, January 6th, the students were finally able to present their projects to their peers and families. We learned so much about the continent of Europe, saw some great costumes that represented specific areas, and we were able to share in some very scrumptious dishes. Everyone did such an amazing job on this project! On Friday, January 13th, the fifth and sixth graders were able to attend the Pennsylvania Farm Show in Harrisburg, PA. Students were able to see and pet many animals that are raised on local farms, learn about different crops native to PA, see the infamous butter sculpture, watch the equestrian show, and of course- slurp down a milkshake! This was a very enjoyable experience for all who attended.

Upcoming projects: Keep an eye out! Students will be completing a book report as their next big project. Guidelines on the book report will be given out near the middle of February.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Thank you to all parents/guardians who could attend our Parent Information Night on Thursday, November 10th and January 17th! Gettysburg Montessori Charter School will be hosting our next Parent Information Night on Thursday, March 16th. Jerry O'Mitchel with the PA Office of Attorney General will be sharing a presentation about internet safety. Our second topic is not confirmed yet, but will be announced closer to the event date. Please return the "save your spot" attachments from the flyer to let us know you are planning to attend. We are hoping to offer childcare and light refreshments at our March 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 - *Musical Notes for January*

In November, we learned about how music can tell stories. K-2 graders studied Peter and the Wolf by Sergei Prokofiev. 3-6 graders studied the Carnival of the Animals by Camille Saint-Saens. We analyzed how the instruments were used to create pictures of people and animals and how all of this together can tell a story.

Our Holidays around the World Winter Concert was held in December and the children did a fabulous job. The children enjoyed the performance and many were featured in singing or speaking roles. The kindergarteners accompanied their singing with sticks and egg shakers. They demonstrated their knowledge of melodic rhythm and the beat. The 1-2 graders showed their knowledge of quarter and eighth note reading, as well as their ability to hear steps in the melody. The finale of this K-2 program was Jingle Bell Rock and One Small Voice, which both featured amazing solo groups of our children. The 3-4 graders highlighted their fabulous singing voices in Diamonds in the Night, one of their favorite songs. The 5-6 graders accompanied an African harvest song with drums and shakers. The 6th graders accompanied a song on their ukuleles. They concluded this program with Auld Lang Syne and the Peace Carol, which featured some of our incredible students. Thank you all for being there to share this evening with us.

This month, we are learning about Tone Color and Sound. We will examine how sound is made and why instruments don't all sound the same. We will learn about instruments and will analyze how they are the same and different. In February, we will be studying the expressive elements of music. We will discover how the elements of dynamics, articulation and tempo are used to create excitement and drama in music.

3-6 grade Music Enrichment students are learning how to play instruments and how to act. We have 2 Flute, 2 saxophone, 1 trombone, 2 trumpet, 8 guitar, 4 piano, 3 ukulele, 2 violin and 2 viola students. We have 14 acting students. These students meet once a week to learn and grow. We are making fabulous progress and we are anxious to show you all that we have learned in the spring. A special thank you goes to Mrs. Jan, Mrs. Stough, and Ms. Jarvis for all their patience and support of these young musicians and actors being pulled from their classes.

A happy, musical New Year to you all.

HEALTH NEWS

Last month, I began the first PA mandated health screenings. The growth screen includes the students' height, weight, and BMI (body mass index). I'll send a report to you in the next few weeks. Other grade specific screenings will be conducted during the spring (hearing and vision).

Some really nasty illnesses are making the rounds: upper respiratory infections, strep throat and a 24 hour stomach bug. Remember good hand washing and using disinfected wipes on door handles, faucets, and toilet handles can help reduce the spread of illness at home as well as school.

To you and our students, **"Have fun, learn lots, and be safe!"**
Nurse Adrian

RTII

Please spread the word as we are hosting our first annual kindergarten and sixth grade transition nights. Kindergarten's first transition night is "Storytime" on January 24, 2017 from 6 - 7 pm. This is open to preschoolers ages 3-5. Children are encouraged to come in their pajamas to listen to a story read by our kindergarten teachers and enjoy cookies and milk. If you are able to attend please email areddig@gettysburgmontessoricharter.org as soon as possible.

The other kindergarten transition night is our Open House. The open house will be for upcoming kindergartners who are interested in attending GMCS in the fall. Please come to learn more about Montessori education, touring our school, and meeting the GMCS family. If you decide Gettysburg Montessori Charter School is a great fit and enroll your child, they will receive a free GMCS t-shirt. Open house is on February 8 and February 22, 2017. Students with last names A-M should arrive between 5:30 and 6:00 pm and students with last names N-Z should arrive between 6:15 and 6:45 pm. If you are able to attend please email areddig@gettysburgmontessoricharter.org as soon as possible.

Sixth grade transition night will be held on March 23, 2017 from 6-7 pm. We have a variety of community organizations and schools in attendance including: charter, public and cyber schools. There will be tables set up providing information about the various schools as well as the community organizations. For those students transitioning to a middle school setting, this would be a wonderful event to attend to look for options for next school year. Please RSVP to Katie Jarvis: katie@gettysburgmontessoricharter.org.

Thank you!

Loren Householder and Ashley Reddig

COUNSELOR'S CORNER

Greetings from the counselor's corner! The year is continuing to move along quickly, and I am so impressed with all of our bucket filling friends. I have a feeling that our school will be getting Bucket Filler Bingo in the very near future! When this happens our whole school will celebrate together, and then we will work toward filling our bingo board again. Small groups have begun, and will continue to run throughout the school year. Our most recent classroom lessons focused on friendship and empathy. In the next few months, I will be beginning to start the process of finding volunteers for a Career Café. This is an event for our 3rd-6th grade friends, giving them an opportunity to meet individuals and learn what career options their futures hold. If you are interested in participating in this event, please feel free to e-mail me now (sara@gettysburgmontessoricharter.org), and be on the lookout for more information. This will be our third year having a Career Café, and I am looking forward to hosting it in our new school!



Play, Learn and Grow.....Together!

ATTENDANCE FAST FACTS!

- A note is required for every student absence. This note must be received within three (3) days of the absence in order for the absence to be excused.
- If a student is out of school for three (3) consecutive days, a Doctor's note is required for the student to return to school.
- If a student has missed ten (10) days of school, cumulatively, a Doctor's note is required for every absence beyond the first 10 days.
- If a student leaves early, or comes to school late due to an appointment, a Doctor's note is required in order for the appointment to be excused.
- Tardies add up! If your student regularly arrives late, or leaves early (even if it's just five (5) minutes), this time will add up to a half or whole day of school missed.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION/HEALTH

Mr. Arentz - In Health, K-4 recently finished a fun filled unit on the 5 senses and are now starting their Nutrition unit.

5-6th recently completed their unit on peer pressure, self-worth, and positive body image and have also started their Nutrition unit.

Please be on the lookout in the next few weeks for a letter home about our New Fruit and Vegetable Party!

In K-6 PE, we have transitioned from Cardiovascular and Muscular Fitness to our Jump Rope unit in preparation for our Jump Rope For Heart Event coming in February! JR4H is a fundraising effort to raise money for the American Heart Association which culminates in a fun and exciting jump rope event for each class. Please be on the lookout for information coming home on how to fundraise!



Our days are hectic and busy, filled with all sorts of events and chores making it difficult to find time to be physically active on some days. Here are some suggestions on how to be physically active in your home, doing things you would have to do anyway!

- Get your kids active while doing housework. Place a sticky note on all of the items that need cleaning or tidying (like the kitchen table, the sofa, the bed). Your child will collect each sticky note after they clean the item. Make it a friendly competition to see who collects the most stickies. You could even offer a prize (like a Frisbee or jump rope from the dollar store) for the winner with the most stickies. Your kids will be physically active, helping with household chores and having fun!
- Increase the intensity of household chores by using time limits. Put on a favorite CD and allot a certain number of songs to complete each chore. For example, allow two songs to vacuum the living room, three songs to wash the dishes, and one song to pick up toys in the playroom. You and your kids will be moving faster and working harder to beat the clock, causing your hearts to pump harder and get stronger.
- Get the entire family involved. After dinner, assign everyone a task in the clean up. Everything from clearing the dishes, loading the dishwasher, and putting away leftovers can get the family up and moving. Finish off the evening by going for a family walk or doing group physical activities like stretching. Not only will everyone be out of their chair, but this will also be fun bonding time for you and your family.

With a little creativity, you will be surprised by all the ways you and your family can be physically active in your very own home!