



Montessori Moments

SPRING 2022



Administrative News

It's hard to believe it's the end of another marking period already! We have some exciting things happening for the remainder of the school year. GMCS students are currently participating in our 2022 Olympic Reading Challenge and will receive a bronze, silver, or gold medal for completing each reading challenge throughout the month. Students can also earn ice cream treats for their class or even the school if they meet their monthly reading goal. Later this month, members of the New Oxford Chamber of Commerce will be helping to judge our science fair entries. Students who participated in the science fair will be showcasing their projects on March 17, 2022. We are also excited to have Trooper Dounouk visit our school again this spring. Trooper Dounouk will be visiting each classroom during their lunch times. In April we will have our second Scholastic Book Fair which will include a BOGO option. During the last week of April and the first week of May, students in grades three through six will take the PSSA state assessments. All students will participate in a fun, school-wide rally to cheer on our third through sixth grade classes as they prepare to take the PSSA assessments. At GMCS we encourage students to do their best on these statewide tests by providing some extra special "treats" this week like extra time outside, special announcements in the morning, and special breakfast items for everyone ensuring our students have a good start to their day! Finally we will round out our school year with a school-wide field day and sixth grade graduation!

Sincerely,

Faye Pleso, MEd, PhD & Christine Kirkpatrick Ed.S. Hello Family and Friends,

Health News

It has begun...re-enrolling your children for next year. Yes, some forms ask for the same information, yet each serves and is kept in different offices: Administration/Front Office, Classrooms, Health, Special education, etc.

Emergency Contact and Health Form, Why is it important?

We have had few true health emergencies, but there were delays in care because contact information was either not current, had same contact listed multiple times, or reached out-of-state family members. Messages left on parent / guardians' phones went unanswered. The need for Urgent health care became 911 calls and hospital trip by ambulance.

The people you choose to list for emergencies need to be trusted, LOCAL; legal aged adults [family or friends] who may pick-up and care for your child. Parent and guardian contacts are always called first. Please return calls as soon as possible preferred within fifteen minutes. Remember once contacted, student pick-up is expected to be within an hour.

The back of the form asks for a brief health history of your child. Your answers truly impact health provider decisions in emergencies. Your consent for over-the-counter medicine and first aid products permits me to care for your child without calling and helps them stay at school.

Note:

- Due: Well Child Physicals for Kindergarten & 6th grade; Dental for Kindergarten & 3rd grade.
- Currently, GMCS friends and staff are getting a 'stomach bug'. Locally, Infectious diseases such as Type A and B flu, strep infections, and colds are on the upswing.
- Time to start spring Allergy medication; bed-time administration often is more effective.
- Tip: Have trouble teaching children the skill to swallow medicine? Check out the YouTube video showing multiple methods for swallowing pills. These techniques were researched and found effective. Individuals can discover what works best for themselves. Link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NUzRGKx79k4>
- Trusted health information: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions> This site is well organized, easy to understand, and includes alternative and home care tips.

Save the Date:

- **Staff Appreciation week**
May 2- 6, 2022
- **ASPCA Collection**
May 09-20, 2022
- **Career Day**
Friday, May 13, 2022
- **Reunion**
Friday, May 13, 2022
- **Field Day**
Wednesday, May 25, 2022
- **Music Club Event : Tuesday,**
May 17, 2022 6pm to 7pm
- **Kindergarten Graduation**
Thursday, May 26, 2022
- **6th Grade Graduation**
Thursday, May 26, 2022
- **Last Day of School – Half Day**
Friday, May 27, 2022
- **Join our Board of Directors!**
We are currently searching for a candidate to fill an opening, applications will be accepted until the last day of school.

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 6:00 pm on the following dates:

- Thursday, April 28, 2022
- Thursday, May 26, 2022
- Thursday, June 23, 2022
- Thursday, July 28, 2022
- Thursday, August 25, 2022

Please contact the office with any questions.

Classroom Updates

Kindergarten

Mrs. Fleurant & Mrs. Lawrence - OWe can't believe that there are only a few months left of Kindergarten! We are so proud of the growth we have seen in our students and are excited to watch how they continue to develop for the remainder of the year!

In our Wonder Reading Units, we have been learning about various types of weather and how to be prepared for such weather. We started learning about animals, comparing attributes and matching them to their habitats. In honor of Agricultural Week, we learned how farms grow the healthy food we eat, as well as virtually touring a local farm. We then were able to make our own milkshakes!

Our Kindergarteners are working hard with phonemes (the sounds we hear in words), identifying syllables, rhyming, and listening for the first, middle, and final sounds we hear in words. We continue practice with reading and writing, with a focus on Word Families (i.e. cat, sat, mat). Our kid writers are becoming more and more confident in writing complete sentences with "kid spelling", appropriate capitalization, spaces in between our words, and punctuation. Also, please remember to continue practicing those sight words with your child at home!

During our Eureka math lessons, we have been working on addition stories and creating number bonds and number equations to match. Number bonds help students to identify the parts that make the whole. We have also started to explore subtraction with "take away" stories.

Kindergarten had fun celebrating Dr. Seuss's birthday during Read Across America week. Students enjoyed listening to the silly rhyming stories. We also enjoyed some yummy green eggs and ham after listening to the story!

We have been enjoying the nicer weather and are excited to start learning more about plants and the life cycle of a butterfly. The kindergarten classes will get a special surprise soon, to help us learn more about butterflies.

1st & 2nd

Mrs. Lansford, Mrs. Needham, Miss Stowman - Third quarter brought many exciting things to 1st & 2nd grade!

We are continuing to work on meeting classroom expectations by doing our best work, whispering while talking in class, raising our hands when we want to say something, and controlling our bodies.

In 1st grade ELA, we have been learning a lot about animals. We have discussed how animals survive in nature, how animals' bodies help them, and how animals help each other. We have also learned about how life long ago compares to life now. In 1st grade math we have started comparing pairs of numbers, learning place value and adding and subtracting to 40!

2nd grade has been working hard, too. In ELA, we have talked about different cultures and have compared how children around the world live. We also learned a lot of interesting facts about the Earth, nature, and how weather changes the Earth. In 2nd grade math we have been working on strategies for adding and subtracting within 1,000. We have also learned how to compose and decompose tens and hundreds.

Mrs. Lansford's class has been making learning fun. We were visited by 3 baby goats, got to play with them, and learned about different breeds of goats. We earned a class award this quarter and, as a result, were able to spend the day with Mrs. Lansford's Corgi, Izzy. She kept us entertained with her smile and silly antics! We made leprechaun traps in an effort to try to catch that pesky leprechaun, to no avail. We have learned how plants grow, sprouted dried black beans, and have even started a special Mother's Day surprise. We are looking forward to quarter four and everything it brings!

Miss Stowman's class is blooming with new knowledge after quarter 3! We have earned 2 classroom rewards over the past several months and got to see Miss. Stowman's dog, Daisy Mae, once again. We attempted to make leprechaun traps in early March, but were not very successful. We added another baby

Betta fish to our classroom aquarium. The kids named her Snowflake and they love watching her grow. Of course, now they want more! Most recently, we learned about plants and what they need to survive. We planted Chamomile and Parsley using egg cartons, and even started growing a little something for Mothers day! We are so excited to finish up the last few months of school with positive attitudes and enthusiasm for what's to come.

Mrs. Needham's class is springing into learning! We earned a Stellar Stone reward and chose to have show and tell days. It was so much fun seeing all the different objects, from wooden shoes and a ship in a bottle to Pokémon cards and favorite stuffed animals and many other awesome items. We also built leprechaun traps to celebrate St. Patrick's Day. Several students reported that they did catch a sneaky leprechaun at home, but most of the leprechauns were able to escape. Recently we planted lavender and chamomile in egg cartons in our class. We watch them daily, waiting for them to sprout. Mrs. Needham's class is bursting with excitement for all that is to come in the upcoming weeks!

3rd & 4th

Mrs. Bechtel, Ms. Dohler & Mrs. Taylor - We can't believe that we are heading into the fourth quarter! This year has flown by! Third quarter was packed with activities. We started with our second quarter Stellar Stone reward of a STEM Lego Challenge. Students worked with a partner and had thirty minutes to create a model based on their theme. It was a great team building experience! The next challenge activity was creating a snowman out of marshmallows and toothpicks. Again, such creativity and imagination was used!

The students had a visit from Tyer, the Irish Wolfhound who is an extremely large but gentle service animal. The students enjoyed asking questions and learning more about his role in therapy.

Our next grade band activity was our field trip to the Conococheague Institute in Mercersburg. The students enjoyed learning about life in Colonial times and learned about the daily activities and survival of settlers in the colonial world. We learned how to start a fire with flint and steel, how people cooked, what they ate, the process of making clothes, and how people traveled. It was a great experience!

Science: Third quarter has been crazy busy in Science/Social Studies class. We spent the quarter working on our Science Fair projects. We began the quarter reviewing the scientific method, then students began brainstorming ideas to help them decide what experiment that they would like to do. Third graders were new to the expectations of our Science Fair, but with the help from 4th graders they caught on quickly and asked a lot of great questions.

The entire 3/4 team were very excited as we counted down to March 17th. While we were working hard preparing for the "BIG DAY" we pushed on in class and actually completed several STEM projects, investigating weather including blizzards and snowstorms. We read and learned all about Snowflake Bentley, the man responsible for how we see snowflakes. The students made paper snowflakes and did an experiment using the Scientific Method which resulted in the creation of beautiful, crystalized pipe cleaner snowflakes (a shout-out to the Littlestown Sheetz for donating 90 small coffee cups to use to make those snowflakes!). Along with snow came our STEM Ski Jumper, where students learned how important math is when doing science. The challenge was to make your ski-jumper go the farthest. We stretched yardsticks out in the hall and students measured and recorded their results. Congratulations to Jordan K., Autumn S, and Noah S. for recording the longest jump!

Finally, the anticipated "BIG DAY" arrived on March 17th. The students were to create a tr-board displaying The Scientific Method after conducting an experiment.. The students did a FANTASTIC job on their projects and I was very proud of all the effort that was put forth. Many compliments were received regarding 3/4 students' projects.

I would like to thank everyone for supporting our team by coming out and viewing all of the projects. Also, a BIG thank you to Jessica Dean and Tasha Hansford for volunteering and helping with the set-up of the Science Fair! This was a huge success, and I am already thinking of ideas for next year.

Classroom Updates

Moving on from here, we are now exploring our Motion and Force Unit. We have a few more experiments heading our way and a big 3 day STEM project to explore. This project involves aluminum foil, tongue depressors, and tape. Students will measure, time, and race their skiers down a slope. Finally, we will begin prepping for our Science PSSAs. Third Graders will join in, helping 4th graders review and prepare for this very important test. Once PSSAs are finished we will complete a very short unit about life during the Civil War and will end the year with our Rock Unit. Students will complete a Pet Rock Project and we will have our final field trip to Indian Echo Caverns.

We continue to push on and the students continue to work very hard in Science/Social Studies. I cannot believe that we are almost at the end of the school year.

Writing: February was Black History month and we celebrated it by recognizing and learning the accomplishments of some big names (Martin Luther King, Jackie Robinson, Etta James, Rosa Parks, Linda Brown, and Barack Obama). This month is Famous Women's month and the students have all been given a person to research and create a timeline. The students will present these to their peers at the end of the month.

Thank you for all of your dedication and continued support.

Math: Where do YOU use fractions in your daily activities? Both third and fourth grades have been exploring fractions during math class. As they gain a deeper understanding of fractions, they are finding more and more places we use fractions in our lives.

We are also preparing for PSSA tests at the end of the year. Each week we take some time to get comfortable with the various problems they will be required to solve, like multi-step word problems and equations.

Keep practicing those basic adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing skills! They are the foundation of all we do in math. Math fluency, along with a positive mindset, is key to success.

ELA: Happy Spring Equinox! We are certainly welcoming the warmer weather and longer days this month has brought. In ELA, we continue to develop our proofreading skills, deepen our critical thinking and reasoning skills, expanding our vocabulary, and improving our fluency and reading comprehension. Both 3rd and 4th graders have continued to group and improve their knowledge on concepts such as theme, point of view, compare and contrast, and cause and effect. We have also taken the time to explore some wonderful biographies and learn more about the life of Martin Luther King Jr. and Dr. Suess. We will begin preparing for the ELA PSSAs which will take place at the end of April. I encourage all students to continue reading at home and asking questions about what they have read in order to develop a deeper understanding of the information they have read and be able to apply it to their everyday lives.

The first week of March, we kicked off Read Across America week with a Dr. Seuss inspired theme week. Each day, students got to express their reading spirit with a particular themed day ripped right from a classic Dr. Seuss book! Some of the costumes from 3/4 students were just phenomenal! Also within this month, we have a Winter Olympic Reading Challenge sent home where students are challenged to complete a Bronze, Silver, and Gold Reading log, each with a 15-minute block of time and have an adult sign off on them. If all students in a class complete all three reading logs and earn their bronze, silver, and gold medals, that class will earn an ice cream party. If the whole school reaches Gold, the WHOLE SCHOOL will earn an ice cream treat! Who knew reading could be so fun?!?! It truly brings joy to my heart to see so many students thrilled about reading and making it their own! I encourage all students to continue reading at home for a fun activity to keep practicing those critical reading skills.

5th & 6th

Mrs. Gulden, Mrs. Naugle & Mrs. Sauter - Third quarter has come and gone already! Our fourth and final quarter is upon us! Check out what we have been doing in each of our classes.

ELA: In 5th grade, we have been working hard with nonfiction. This includes studying the text features, what they are and how they help us as readers, learning text structure and creating our own magazines using those structures,

and reading Hidden Figures or other nonfiction pieces. Nonfiction studies will continue for the start of quarter four.

In ELA, 6th grade moved into our nonfiction study as well. This included nonfiction text features and our Almost Astronauts text. We will be moving into nonfiction text structures at the start of quarter four.

Math: In quarter three, 5th grade focussed heavily on fractions. They learned to identify fractions, make equivalent fractions, and compare fractions. Students also learned how to add and subtract fractions and mixed numbers with unlike denominators as well as change mixed numbers into improper fractions. They did a great job with this unit! In quarter four, students will learn about multiplication and division of fractions as well as area and volume.

Sixth grade focussed on positive and negative integers and rational numbers in the third quarter. This was the foundation they will need to complete our next unit of algebraic expressions and equations. Additionally, in quarter four, the sixth graders will cover area, surface area, and volume of shapes.

Science/Social Studies: In social studies, 5th graders began learning about the events leading up to the American Revolution. This was our Road to the Revolution unit. This study will continue into the start of the next quarter. We will then move into our study of the branches of government. In science, students were learning about the moon phases. We will continue the year by looking at inventions and their effects and well as the waste and recycling processes.

In 6th grade, we studied and researched Asia during the third marking period. In science, we were digging into rocks and minerals. We will finish out the year studying economics as well as leadership.

Projects: Students just wrapped up their Book Reports and their Science Fair Projects. Quarter four will hold their final Market Day Project, as well as the beloved Economic Fair!

Upcoming: We will also have the privilege of having a virtual visit from a scientist as well as an on site experience this coming quarter. Mr. Jef and Miss Nancy will also return for another ten days of Artists in Residence!

MUSIC NOTES

We have had another successful quarter in music class. Also all classes got to help write the 2021-2022 School Tune from School Choice Week. The song is still being worked on and hopefully will be finished soon.



Kindergarten - They learned about They also started talking about Body Percussion and Instrument Sounds.

1/2 Grade - They finished learning about the instrument families. We then moved on to talking about Carnival of the Animals and then Body Percussion.

3/4 and 5/6 Grade - They finished learning about music from other countries such as Russia, China, United Kingdom, and Australia. They also worked on playing the recorder while earning belts as they played each song.

Have a musical day everyone! - Mr. Swiger

ART

Quarter three has come and gone but we are moving right along with our learning!



Kindergarten learned about color mixing and how a color wheel can be used. Students pretended they were mice, just like in the book Mouse Paint, and mixed paint on large white paper. Next, they made spring birds that go in rainbow order. Students could only use red, yellow and blue crayons to make orange, green and purple! Now we are moving onto drawing self portraits! First and second grade some beautiful winter scenes with three pine trees painted in a green tint. Then they glued them into cold color paper

for the background and used white oil pastels for the falling snow. After that, we learned about perspective art. We looked at photos that show perspective with the use of a horizon line (where the sky meets the ground) and a vanishing point (where it looks as if items disappear. Students drew farm fields or gardens with either real plants or things that they wish they could grow, such as pizza and ice cream! Now we are learning about symmetry. We looked at pictures of things that look the same on both sides, not just in shape, but in color too. Students created a bug and added details like legs, eyes, spots and more! Now we are using watercolor to paint them!

Third and fourth grade finished their weaving project and then we moved onto some art history! Students learned about the artist Georges Seurat who was a Pointillism painter in Paris. He painted only with dots because he felt the colors were more vibrant and the objects stood out better. Students were asked to draw a picture of their favorite food(s) and they colored them in with paint by using Q-Tips! Our next project will be clay bead making and we will be learning about the Maasai Tribe in Africa. Fifth and sixth grade also learned about perspective. We reviewed the main points, like the horizon line and vanishing point, but they also learned how to draw a house, sidewalk, driveway, and road with one point perspective. For their final copy, they were asked to draw a house of their own design and a road. They could add any other details they wanted and they could try another shape, rather than a house. Next we will be moving onto watercolor techniques and students will be using those techniques to make a painting of their choice!

PHYSICAL EDUCATION/HEALTH

This school year is flying by and we are now approaching the end of the school year. In kindergarten through second grade, we have been continuing to practice hand-eye coordination, teamwork games, scooter activities, and learning to move our bodies in different ways with yoga. In third through sixth grade, we have been learning how to play badminton, teamwork games, and are currently learning how to play floor hockey. Looking forward to the next two months, we will be learning how to play basketball and tennis. In health class, we have been learning about how our heart works, what heart disease is, and ways we can try and prevent heart disease. We also have been learning about our teeth and how to keep them healthy as well as how to be respectful and show kindness to our teachers and peers. We have also learned how being kind and unkind can affect our health. In the upcoming weeks, we will learn about how being honest and telling the truth is important, what anxiety is and strategies we can use to overcome anxiety, and ways we can save our planet to keep us healthy.

I look forward to the next two months we have remaining together so we can continue having fun in wellness class.

LIBRARY

Greetings from the Library!

We are all continuing to enjoy our beautiful new library. In this marking period we have explored the nonfiction section reading topics such as Arctic animals, Groundhog Day and Lunar New Year. We celebrated MLK's birthday, Black History Month, Presidents' Day and Read Across America Week. We also learned about the Newbery and Caldecott Awards and read some award winning books, explored kids magazines, wordless picture books and finally books about Spring! Thanks for your continuing help keeping track of the library books!

Happy Reading!
-Emily Windover, Librarian

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Our processes for identifying students who may be eligible for special education services include, but are not limited to, school-wide benchmark assessments, Multi System of Tiered Support (MTSS) including Response to Intervention (RTI), Speech and Language screenings, Occupational Therapy screenings, Physical Therapy screenings, teacher referrals, and parent requests. Gettysburg Montessori Charter School currently provides itinerant and supplemental level services to all IDEA eligible students, which may

include but is not limited to Learning Support services, Speech and Language services, Occupational Therapy services, Physical Therapy services, Vision Support 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 guardians in the lobby. For further information, feel free to contact our Special Education Coordinator, Rebeka Black, at becky@gettysburgmontessoricharter.org.

RTI

Response to Intervention (RTI)

How can parents help their child become a strong and fluent reader? There are many strategies parents can use. The following are some suggestions proven to be effective to help students become fluent readers.

1. The best thing parents can do is to play an active role in their children's literary development. This means reading to them, pointing out things in their environment to talk about, using interesting vocabulary and making reading a happy, positive experience.
2. Create a quiet, special place in your home for your child to read, write, and draw. Keep books and other reading materials where your child can easily reach them.
3. Help your child see that reading is important. Set a good example for your child by reading books, newspapers, and magazines.
4. Take your child's dictation. Have them recount an experience or make up a story. A typical first story may be something like, "I like fish. I like my sister. I like grandpa." Write it as it is being told, and then read it aloud. Point at the words when you read them. Over time, with lots of rereading, your child will start to recognize words such as "I" or "like." As children learn some of the words, you can write them on cards and keep them in a "word bank", using them to review later.

COUNSELORS CORNER

Greetings GMCS families. I hope everyone is doing well. Wow! I cannot believe it is April and we are getting ready for spring break. The school year is flying by. In the next few paragraphs, I will tell you what we have been discussing in each of the grade bands since returning from the Holiday break.

In grades kindergarten through second, we began the new year by discussing topics such as say it or think it and impulse control. In the weeks following that, we discussed responsibility and dealing with worry. We concluded this quarter by completing our "Career Books", discussing how to ignore distractions, and the difference between telling versus tattling.

In grades three and four guidance lessons were equally important. We discussed topics such as bullying and giving your best effort. We then went on to discuss career clusters, using self-talk to avoid distractions, self-esteem and perseverance.

In grades five and six guidance lessons we focused on completing requirements for the biztown trip. We conducted the "Biztown Elections", we completed the CEO packets and attended the Biztown field trip. After the trip we discussed topics such as self-esteem and reputation. We also discussed developing smart goals, responsibility and effective coping skills.

I have enjoyed working with our kids here at GMCS. I look forward to continuing to provide the best service I can. I look forward to the upcoming Career fair on May 13, 2022. This will be a great opportunity for our students to sit down and talk with people in the career fields they are interested in. Just a reminder to the parents that have volunteered to participate in our career fair, please ensure you obtain the clearances and get them turned in as soon as you can. Thank you!

