



Montessori Moments

SUMMER 2020

The Principal's Piece

Dear GMCS Families and Friends,

Until the closure, due to the pandemic, we had been very busy with fun and exciting activities. We had a PreK Story Night, Kindergarten registration and open house, a Montessori seminar, 6th Grade Transition Night, Read Across America activities, an open house revealing our building addition and a meet and greet with our architects and owner's rep, and Agriculture Week!

We did a fantastic job working together to educate our students through distance learning. It has been tough on the children and the parents, **but you did it!** Our teachers were able to implement Montessori into the distance learning. The children were encouraged to plan their day, with guidance, including quiet time and uninterrupted time to work, movement breaks and time to research. Some even created their own Montessori works, planned meals, learned practical life skills and worked in the garden. Others continued to practice grace and courtesy during Zoom meetings by being respectful and mindful of others who were participating. The children were able to work at their own pace and choose reading materials. Some even displayed levels of independence, such as setting up their own meetings with teachers and many participated in enrichment and choice activities.

We are planning our summer school program and how our 20/21 school year will look and will share that information with you when it is available.

Over the next few months, we will be going through the phases of design, architect construction documents, site design, permits and approvals, land development approval, and constructability review for our addition. We also plan to have some renovations done to the existing building, starting this summer.

I am pleased to announce that our charter was renewed for another five years. Gettysburg Area School District unanimously approved this on May 18.

It is such a pleasure to continue to serve as CEO/Principal of Gettysburg Montessori Charter School. Thank you for all of your support!

Sincerely,
Faye Pleso, MEd, PhD



From the Board

The GMCS Board appreciates the support given to the administration and teachers during these unique times. GMCS Board would also like to thank the administration for their hard work that has completed another successful charter renewal. Also please look for an upcoming survey that will help us get your feedback as we strive to continue our drive to make GMCS the best school for our community.



Classroom Updates

Kindergarten

Mrs. Edmond & Mrs. Lawrence - What a whirlwind of a last quarter we have had! First, we would like to show our gratitude to all of our families for being so supportive during this time. We could not have done it without your support, flexibility and dedication to your child's education. Kindergarten, you have been rock stars throughout our distant learning. We have loved seeing your videos and pictures of all the hard work you have accomplished. We are proud of the work you have done! Throughout our distant learning experience, we have explored word families, number bonds, and even a little bit of subtraction. In writing, our students even learned how to write a letter and address an envelope and then the students participated in a class-wide letter exchange!

In science, we learned about the life cycle of butterflies and experienced the life cycle of a Painted Lady Butterfly. For their riddle project, Mrs. Lawrence's class used awesome websites like Kids National Geographic and various Zoos posting live videos of the animals to make learning about animal habitats engaging. Mrs. Edmond's class participated in found-sound percussion activities via Zoom and then enjoyed a science and engineering in the arts project, where children designed and built homemade instruments with found objects from the home.

We would like to wish everyone a fun and safe summer. It's also important to keep working with your children to maintain their skills and continue to grow over the break. Make practicing sight words fun by writing them with chalk, spelling them in shaving cream, or building letters with play dough. Keep working on addition, subtraction, counting and recognizing numbers to 100, and skip counting by 5's and 10's. Work on reading fluency by having your child read to you every night and asking questions about what you read together. Sign up to access eBooks through your public library system. You can also continue accessing the ConnectEd Wonders website throughout the summer for access to the collection of reading stories. Your child's access to Reading Eggs, Zearn, and Typing Quest will also continue through the summer. Keeping a journal of summer adventures and continuing to exchange letters with friends and family are great ways to work on writing skills. Thank you again for your amazing collaboration! Have a great summer!

1st & 2nd

Mrs. Gebhart - Our Fourth quarter in Room 7 has been quite different with distance learning but we have made the best of it!

Zoom has been a wonderful tool in staying in touch with one another. From playing games to hosting Dr. Pleso on one of them, our relationships have not faltered. If anything, it's brought us closer with the ability to share pets, siblings, and discuss other fun topics.

As a class, we were successful in earning our third Stellar Stone Award! Even though we weren't able to attend this fun day as a class in school, Mrs. Gebhart has shared the easy-to-make- recipes for making our own sensory bottles at home.

In 1st grade Language Arts we have been studying many interesting topics. We joined in with 2nd grade to complete our final project for our writing activity "End of Year Reflection". This project was compiled with our memories of school and all the fun we got to have as 'Class 7'. It was a very memorable year and we wanted to end the school year with our favorite moments, activities, and also what we are looking forward to in the future!

1st grade Math consists of reviewing and mastering: math facts, both addition and subtraction, measurement, collecting data, and feeling confident with terms like: longer than, shorter than, fewer, etc.

2nd grade Math continues to review and master their progress with understanding place value and how to bundle and unbundle between ones, tens, and hundreds, and maybe even thousands! Some of 2nd grade even started on multiplication.

We ended this school year with a very creative "Goodbye Parade" where we got to wave "Cya later" to one another and wish everyone a great Summer break!

Even though there were some trying, uncertain hurdles we all overcame, **I am so proud of all we have accomplished, experienced, and created with one another. Happy Summer!**

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Mrs. Lansford - Fourth quarter brought a lot of changes to GMCS and Room 9! During our time of distance learning we have been reviewing previously learned materials

In **1st grade** Language Arts we have been studying how to make the short e sound using the letters e and ea. The students have been practicing determining the characters, setting, and events in stories. The students have also been enjoying interactive learning games online.

2nd grade has been working hard too. In Language Arts we have been reviewing inflectional endings and how to make the short u sound. We have been practicing our reading comprehension skills and working on reading fluency.

As of May 12, our class has read 413 books on Epic.com! That, of course, does not include the many print books being read at home.

In math our students have been completing math lessons on Zearn. Some students have even surpassed where we were when school was closed!

The class has been enjoying daily read-aloud videos. Mrs. Lansford has been reading The Doll People series to the class. We have completed The Doll People and are now reading The Meanest Doll in the World. We highly recommend the series!

Our class has been enjoying activities with Flat Mrs. Lansford. The students have shared their online ballet classes, camping trips, cake baking, and vehicle cleaning with their Flat Mrs. Lansford dolls.

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Mr. Stare - We have been hard at work in Room 10 during our digital fourth quarter. In 1st grade, unit 2 we learned about Jobs Around Town, Buildings, Our Community, Helping, and How to Use Maps. In unit 3, we have learned about time and how to measure it, plants growing, and folktales. In 2nd grade, unit 2 we have learned about Animals in Nature, Animals in Stories, Animal Habitats, Baby Animals, and Animals in Poems. In unit 3, we learned about Earth's surface, the sky, ways people can help others.

Both 1st and 2nd grade are still working hard to master addition and subtraction using manipulatives on Zearn. In first grade, we are learning about number sentences and most recently that numbers are formed by groups of tens and ones. In second grade, we have covered the topics of addition and subtraction with regrouping in one place value as well as addition and subtraction with regrouping in multiple place values. We have also been continuing to solve our equations using multiple strategies that we have learned in math class this year. Some 2nd graders have also started working with repeated addition and the construction of arrays.

It's hard to believe how much has changed this quarter. **I am so proud of each and every student in room 10 for embracing these changes and thriving in your new learning environments.** I am so happy that, as Montessori students, you were able to show grace and courtesy when beginning this endeavor and seeing it through to the end. I am also thrilled that the students in room 10 were able to be independent workers while balancing their practical and academic lives. I want to take this time to thank you for letting your child come hang out with me every day this past school year in person and digitally. Each and every student in room 10 has learned something new about themselves this year and have become a lover of learning, even if they don't want to admit it. I am going to miss everyone over the summer but I look forward to seeing you all again in August. To my 1st graders who are moving to 2nd grade, I look forward to getting to work with you all next year again. We are going to have a blast together! To my 2nd grade students who are moving on to 3rd grade, I will miss having you in room 10 every day. You have made the last two years an adventure that I would never want to change!

Classroom Updates

3rd & 4th

Mrs. Bechtel, Mrs. Jan & Mrs. Stough - **The third and fourth grade teachers would like to say thank you to the students and families for your effort in distance learning!** Your support and dedication to education meant so much to us. To the students, we saw how hard you continued to work at home. We see a bright future with your determination! To parents, we know that taking on a BIG role in your child's education was not easy, especially when you added that on top of your own jobs and everyday tasks. We just wanted to say that we appreciate all of you. This was a different and challenging time, but we persevered together! We cannot wait to see everyone in the fall!

ELA

3rd Grade: In quarter three and four, students learned about Earth and its neighbors, ideas we get from nature, how each event in history is unique, making healthy choices, and using our skills and talents to help others. Students also focused on identifying characters, settings, important events, similarities and differences, cause and effect relationships, point of view, and the main idea and theme of a text.

4th Grade: In quarter three and four, students learned about how one person makes a difference, how words can lead to change, ways science advances can be helpful or harmful, the importance of government, and why people run for public office. Students also focused on identifying point of view, cause and effect relationships in different text, and main idea and theme of a text.

Both Classes: Other skills both grades continued to develop are comparing and contrasting themes/settings/plots and determining types of genres. During our guided reading groups, students are practicing asking and answering questions to demonstrate understanding of a text on their reading level. The students are also continuing to build their vocabulary as the school year progresses.

Math

In Quarter 3, 3rd Grade students have completed the mid-module exam for Eureka Module 3 which focused on Multiplication and Division with Units of 0, 1, 6-9, and multiples of 10. Within the first half of this module, concepts such as the properties of multiplication and division, multiplication and division using units of 6, 7, and 8 have been explored. After students took the mid-module assessment on these concepts, we took a break from Eureka to further prepare for the upcoming P.S.S.A. for Mathematics. We have been utilizing a Common Core aligned test-prep booklet that gives students sample problems like what they will see on the actual test. During distance learning, we reviewed previously covered lessons and concepts from modules 1, 2, and 3 to end the year.

In Quarter 3, 4th Grade students have completed the mid-module exam for Eureka Module 3 which focused on Multi-Digit Multiplication and Division. Within the first half of this module, concepts such as multiplicative comparison word problems, multiplication by 10, 100, and 1,000, multiplication of up to four digits by single-digit numbers, and multiplication word problems were all explored. After completing the mid-module assessment, we took a break from Eureka to further prepare for the upcoming P.S.S.A. for Mathematics. We have been utilizing a Common Core aligned test-prep booklet that gives students sample problems like what they will be tested on. During distance learning, we reviewed previously covered lessons and concepts from modules 1, 2, and 3 to end the year.

Science/Social Studies/Writing

Quarter 3 and 4 were very busy quarters for Science/Social Studies/and Writing. In Writing, 3rd and 4th grade worked in their handwriting book. Students also practiced writing different procedures and steps for the many experiments we conducted. Using the Scientific Method process, we did several experiments including Elephant's Toothpaste, The Marshmallow Experiment, Dancing Rice, The Gummy Bear Science Experiment, and made our very own lava lamp bottles. We have also conquered several S.T.E.M. challenges. Everything from building a snowman with toothpicks and marshmallows, to creating a skier with a piece of aluminum foil, two tongue depressors, and tape. We raced these skiers down a slope and then discussed force, friction, and motion. With their safety goggles on, our students were very busy scientists this year. The students completed three projects at home, and everyone did a wonderful job! The first project was their Science Fair project. If we were able to participate

in the Science Fair at school, I know the judges would have had a tough time trying to determine winners. They were all fantastic! Our second project was The Animal Research Report Project and again, everyone did a fabulous job with that project, too. I learned many new things about many animals that I really didn't know. We explored plants and matter, and finally were able to create slime. Moving ahead to Social Studies, we looked back at the American Civil War, and the students completed their last project. For this project the students became a spy, child, soldier, or woman for a day during the Civil War and created a project of their choice. There were diaries and PowerPoint presentations, dioramas, posters, lapbooks, and videos where students dressed up in character. I am super proud of all the hard work and effort that all the 3rd and 4th grade students put forth with their projects this year! Finally, we ended the year with a virtual field trip to the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History.

Montessori Works

All students were offered these Montessori works during free work choice time: multiplication boards, math file folder games, place value beads, multiplication and division bead boards, place value stamp game, teacher made science works, vocabulary, grammar and reading comprehension activity cards. home with information about this event.

5th & 6th

Mrs. Gulden & Mrs. Sauter - This fourth quarter has been anything but what we expected; however, it has been a great learning opportunity for all of us. It has taught us how to be flexible and learn in new ways, even if not our favorite methods. **We appreciate all the family and student support during this time while the teachers had to learn a whole new way of instructing and students had to engage in a whole new way of learning.**

For ELA, students continued with novel studies, just new books. Students were able to read their selected novels on EPIC! and then complete their comprehension practice online in their Schoology portals. We are very fortunate sites such as EPIC! opened up their resources to us during this time. While options for novel studies may have been more limited, many students seemed to enjoy the novels that were selected.

In math, students reviewed many concepts. Mrs. Sauter would lovingly create Loom videos for students to review, and then they could complete their practice questions on Schoology. Concepts reviewed included: multiplication with multi-digit numbers, the division algorithm, the four operations involving fractions, order of operations, and perimeter, area, and volume.

Overall, students did a fantastic job adapting to the Schoology platform, and as always, we are very proud of the work they accomplished! It just goes to show how hardworking and dedicated our 5th and 6th graders are at GMCs! We are beyond bummed that we will not be able to end the year as we usually do for our sixth graders, but have no fear, we have a few things up our sleeves!

RTI

Thank you to the parents, guardians, and family members who have supported our students and staff in such an unprecedented way the last few months. You are rock stars in our eyes! Although education looked different and felt different, the majority of our students remained engaged in learning academics and/or life skill tasks. We wish a warm, happy, healthy summer for all of our students and their families!

Special Education Updates and Information:

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, 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, Rebeka Black, at: becky@gettysburgmontessoricharter.org.