Dear GMCS Families and Friends,

Welcome 2020! This is a big year for us! We had a special visitor on January 24. Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Aimee Viana, visited GMCS. Other attendees were Kendyl Willox and Michael Chamberlain from the Communication and Outreach Team of the Office of Education, Senator Doug Mastriano, his Field Representative Bev Frey, Adams County Commissioner Jim Martin, Gettysburg Mayor Theodore Streeter, and Executive Director of PA Coalition of Public Charter Schools, Ana Meyers. Many students, staff, and parents eagerly shared their stories of how GMCS has changed their lives and why they love our school.

We are currently going through the charter renewal process, developing our Comprehensive Plan, and the construction of our building addition will begin this summer. Soon, you will have an opportunity to meet with our architectural firm, DIGSAU, to hear more about the project and to ask questions.

This summer, we will be celebrating our 10th anniversary and the 150th birthday anniversary of Maria Montessori. I was thinking that we should have a huge Back to School Night (Day?) to celebrate both events. Contact me if you are interested in being on the planning committee for this anniversary celebration.

We have some new events to look forward to, in the last half of this school year. We will be having a Science Fair, a GMCS Talent Show and a Feed the Farmers Breakfast. We also will be having a graduation ceremony for our 6th graders. Keep an eye out for information regarding these events. As always, if you are interested in helping, please let me know.

Sincerely,
Faye Pleso, MED, PhD

Dear GMCS Families- THANK YOU!
The overwhelming response of giving which so many of you extended to our school families this holiday season during our SHARING TREE event was unbelievable!

EVERY SINGLE FAMILY who submitted a list was able to receive one or more items off of their lists and in some instances, the families received above and beyond! We could not have done this without you! Thank you so much for caring, sharing, and uplifting one another this holiday season and always!

Grateful, Your GMCS Staff

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 6:00 pm on the following dates:
- Thursday, February 27th
- Thursday, March 26th
- Thursday, April 30th
**Kindergarten**

**Mrs. Edmond & Mrs. Lawrence** - Our kindergarteners have experienced some exciting activities during quarter two. We visited the Mobile Agricultural Lab twice, to learn about both insects and the role farms play in providing food to the community. We also enjoyed doing winter themed activities throughout the month and at our Winter Celebrations before break!

**Let's have a great start to the New Year!** Our Kindergarteners are showing responsibility and habits of lifelong learning as they challenge themselves with new work in the classroom. In Eureka Math, we have wrapped up a unit of study focusing on geometry with flat and solid shapes. Next in Eureka, we will be working on measurement. We will also be continuing our studies on the attributes of numbers, using the terms “more than” “less than” and “are there enough” as we compare sets. In Language, we have learned many new sight words and are applying our knowledge of words and phonics to reading and writing stories and informational text. This quarter, science and art converge as we explore color mixing.

We are looking forward to celebrating our students’ 100th day of school coming up soon!

Please ensure that your child comes to school prepared for outside recess in winter weather. Warm winter jackets, hats, and gloves are a must. If your child wears boots to school, we recommend sending sneakers in their backpack for inside use.

We appreciate your efforts to help provide healthy snacks for our Kindergarteners. On your snack day, please consider sending fresh fruits, vegetables, yogurt or cheese.

Both classes are looking for donations, which include: paper bowls, paper towels, and tissues. Please also watch for upcoming opportunities to volunteer at our Valentine’s celebration.

Thank you for your ongoing support!

**1st & 2nd**

**Mrs. Gebhart** - Our second quarter in Room 7 has been tremendous!

We absolutely loved the Agriculture Lab experiences we got to attend. Our first one was all about one of our classroom materials, crayons. We compared the similarities and differences between crayons made from oil versus crayons made from a renewable source, soy. Our second experience was all about trees and how they give us one of the most important sources to us, oxygen. It’s exciting to know we will get more experience with the lab in the spring!

As a class, we were successful in earning our second Stellar Stone Award: Camping Day! This day was a wonderful few hours of fun which consisted of: fort building, flashlight reading, and even one of our classmates bringing in some material to make a pretend campfire…. it looked real to us!

Right before our winter break, we had the opportunity to take a field trip to The Majestic Theater for our annual field trip to see “A Christmas Carol”. Our faces could have said it all, we were in awe! And we were very proud of ourselves for being such a great audience in those awesome theater chairs.

In 1st grade Language Arts we have been studying many interesting topics. We joined in with 2nd grade to complete our very first piece of writing, “How to Catch a Gingerbread Man.” After we read the original version, Mrs. Gebhart shared with us some fun twists on the original classic. Then we took that knowledge and applied it to what we would do if we could attempt to catch the Gingerbread Man ourselves. Coming up, we will continue our mastery on the writing process with a new subject - “If I were stuck inside a Snow Globe…”!

1st grade Math is consisting of mastering those tricky teen numbers. We are really working hard on understanding how to subtract numbers as well. Thank goodness there are different techniques we can choose from to help us with our understanding, especially our number lines!

2nd grade Math continues to progress with understanding the exchanging of 1’s and 10’s so we can work on our subtraction skills with numbers through 100.

Things are getting more challenging around here but as always, with a wonderful attitude, we can accomplish anything!

**Mrs. Lansford** - Second quarter in Room 9 has been a delightful combination of fun and learning!

We are continuing to work on meeting classroom expectations by doing our best work, whisper talking in class, raising our hands when we want to say something, and controlling our bodies. Our class has earned two stellar stone rewards this quarter and is working diligently toward our third. For our first reward the students voted for a pajama day and to watch a movie. We saw The Secret Life of Pets 2! We had a lot of fun building miniature gingerbread houses and drinking hot chocolate in our pajamas of course!) for our second reward.

The students completed a writing assignment on how they would catch a reindeer. Their ideas were wonderful! This assignment was topped off with a drawing to show how they would catch those sneaky reindeer.

In 1st grade Language Arts we have been learning about contractions, how to measure time, how maps help us, and what jobs need to be done in a community. In 1st grade math we have been learning different methods to subtract single-digit numbers from teen numbers, place value and adding numbers within 20.

2nd grade has been working hard as well. In Language Arts we have learned how animals survive and what we do at school. We have also studied fables and how they use animals to teach a lesson. In 2nd grade math we have continued our work with place values, counted and compared numbers to one-thousand, and the methods we can use to add and subtract numbers up to 200.

We are looking forward to next quarter and are excited to see what it will bring!

**Mr. Stare** - We have been hard at work in 1st and 2nd grade. We just finished our 2nd unit in our Language Arts curriculum and have moved on to unit 3. 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 learned about number bonds, the Arrow Way, and Make 10 Equations. We have also been solving word problems with the help of Mine Craft C.U.B.E.S. We have been Circling the numbers, Underlining the question, Boxing the buzz word, Evaluating what strategy to use, and then Solving the problem. As a class we discussed how to build our confidence up by asking questions, volunteering to teach during lessons, and by paying attention when lessons are going on.

In the month of December our class elves Pepper and Mint came back to room 10. They brought Salt the reindeer back as well as Cinnamon the St. Bernard. The students really enjoyed finding Pepper and Mint daily and seeing what kind of mischief they were getting into. During one Fun Write Friday the students came up with a way to trap the elves. The 2nd grade students wrote narratives about how they would catch an elf and what they would do with an elf. The 1st graders wrote about why winter is their favorite season.

Hedwig has still been going on weekend post deliveries with the students as well. Her journal is filling up with beautiful artwork and wonderful letters to the class. Hedwig rode on a dirt bike, had a laser tag battle, saw Frozen 2, and went to an orchard. I can’t wait to hear more stories from Hedwig’s Owl Post this coming quarter.
Mrs. Bechtel, Mrs. Jan & Mrs. Stough - **Math** - In Quarter 2, 3rd Grade students have completed Eureka Module 2 which focused on Place Value and Problem Solving with Units of Measure. Within this module, concepts such as time measurement, problem solving, measuring weight and liquid volume in metric units, rounding to the nearest ten and hundred, two- and three-digit measurement addition using the standard algorithm, and two- and three-digit measurement subtraction using the standard algorithm have all been explored. We are now heading into Eureka Module 3, which will focus on multiplication and division with units of 0, 1, 6-9, and multiples of 10. A new parent tip packet will be sent home for this module so that you can guide your student as we learn new concepts.

In Quarter 2, 4th Grade students have completed Eureka Module 2 which focused on unit conversions and problem solving with metric measurement. This was a short module and we progressed quickly into Eureka Module 3, which focuses on Multi-Digit Multiplication and Division. The concepts that will be explored in this module are: multiplicative comparison word problems, multiplications by 10, 100, and 1,000, multiplication of up to four digits by single-digit numbers, multiplication word problems, division of tens and ones with successive remainders, reasoning with divisibility, division of thousands, hundreds, tens, and ones, and multiplication of two-digit by two-digit numbers. Please be sure to use the parent tip packet and any of the online Eureka videos to help you as you work with your student on these concepts.

*It would be very beneficial for all families to be practicing basic multiplication facts at home along with going over any work that students may be struggling with from Eureka and WIN.

**ELA** - 3rd Grade: This quarter, students learned about the importance of government and voting, how to help animals survive, good ways to solve problems, unique animal traits, and leadership. Students also focused on identifying point of view, problem and solutions, and cause and effect relationships in different texts.

In the upcoming quarter, we're looking forward to reading about Earth and its neighbors.

4th Grade: In quarter two, students learned about how all living things are connected, different traits that help animals survive, how animals inspire writers, how to welcome new friends, and how to help your community. Students also focused on identifying point of view, and the main idea in different text.

In the upcoming quarter, are looking forward to reading about important people from the past and ways science advances can be helpful or harmful.

**Both Classes:** Students continued to work on comparing themes/settings/plots and determining types of genres. Through our leveled 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.

**Science/Social Studies/Writing:** Students have been super busy this last quarter in Science/Social studies/Writing class. First, I would like to thank everyone for their help along with the students, for such great effort on our first independent home project for Social Studies. The students did an excellent job on creating and presenting their inventor person biography. Next, we moved on to exploring the Mayflower and life of the Pilgrims and Native Americans. We created bead bracelets to represent the first Thanksgiving. Then we traveled around the world to discover different traditions of Christmas. Students made a suitcase, which carried their passport and stamps of different countries. Then they were able to create a different ornament for every place we visited. Moving forward into the new year, we will be putting on our science goggles and working in our new PHD science program. We will start with leaning the scientific method, make crystal snowflakes, have a STEM snowman building contest, design an anemometer, which will measure the wind, and look at fossils. I am also in the process of putting together information for our upcoming science fair. Please be on the look out for a packet that I am sending home with information about this event.

**Mrs. Gulden & Mrs. Sauter -** Quarter two has been crazy, but beyond fun, in 5th and 6th grade. This time of year always goes so quickly with the holidays and special projects.

**ELA:** In ELA, students have been working their way through our novel studies. Fifth grade has completed Narnia’s The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe and moved into Bridge to Terabithia. I love seeing all their excitement each time we come to the end of one novel and move into the next! Sixth grade is still chugging along through Percy Jackson’s The Lightning Thief. This is a longer unit, really breaking down reading skills and tying in a large amount of information about Greek mythology.

**Math:** The fifth graders have spent the last marking period continuing to learn strategies to solve multi-digit multiplication and long division problems. As we enter into the third marking period, our next focus will be on fractions. In sixth grade, students have been learning to solve problems involving percentages. This is an extensive skill for the sixth graders! In quarter three, we will be focusing on arithmetic operations including division of fractions.

**Social Studies:** The students worked extremely hard on their Market Day projects during the month of December. At the beginning of January, the students were able to present their projects to their peers and families. We learned so much about the continent of Africa, saw some great costumes that represented specific regions, and we were able to share in some very scrumptious dishes. Everyone did such an amazing job on this project!

**Artemis Fowl Book Club:** Our book club friends just wrapped up book three in our series and we are beginning book four, Artemis Fowl and the Opal Deception.

**Field Trips:** The fifth and sixth graders were fortunate enough to have two field trips this quarter. First, they went to Dill’s Tavern, thanks to a gentleman named Ben Newton. He paid for the bus fees as well as the admission for all students to have this learning experience! Then on Thursday, January 9th, 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, and of course- slurp down a milkshake! This was a very enjoyable experience for all who attended.

**Up and Coming:** 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 January 21st, and the project will be due March 6th. Please encourage your child to read their book and work on the project at home as it will be due in just a few short weeks.

**MUSIC NOTES**

Hello to all! Happy Winter! Music is in full swing with new studies of the instruments, orchestra and fun songs about the presidents! We will be having fun exploring the families of instruments with some live demonstrations! The fun continues with the drama group, who is preparing for the Music Club Event in April with an earth day theme. Band and recorders are also performing at this event, so mark your calendars for April 16th from 6:00-7:00pm. Hope to see you there!

**ART**

It’s hard to believe that we are halfway through the 2019-2020 school year! We have been making some incredible projects in art class! In Kindergarten, we are working on our color unit. We are learning about color mixing and color temperature through January and February. *First and second grade* are also learning about colors. We are making turtle color wheels! *Third and fourth grade* are finishing up their Navajo woven blankets. We are adding the yarn tassels to the ends. *Fifth and sixth grade* are continuing with their magazine cut out artwork. They were asked to find one or more pictures in a magazine to glue onto blank paper. Then they needed to create a background for their cut-out picture.
Greetings from RTI! Does your child read with you at home? Many parents ask us how often their child should read, and for how long. Extensive research has been done on this topic to answer these very questions. When it comes to reading—"Think 15!" An analysis done recently by the Education Leader's Guide to Reading Growth compared the engaged reading time and reading scores of more than 2.2 million students. It found that students who read less than five minutes per day saw the lowest levels of growth, well below the national average. Even students who read 5–14 minutes per day saw sluggish gains that were below the national average. Only students who read 15 minutes or more a day saw accelerated reading gains—that is, gains higher than the national average—and students who read just over a half-hour to an hour per day saw the greatest gains of all. Many parents ask us how they can help their child at home and reading with them is always our number one answer. The research is there, and the benefits are astounding! Just think 15!

For more ideas on how to help your child’s continued success or for resources on where to find great books, feel free to contact the RTI team here at GMCS. We’re always eager and ready to help!

PHYSICAL EDUCATION/HEALTH

Hello again! I cannot believe how quickly the school year is flying by! Being apart of the GMCS family has been such a pleasure. I can confidently say I know every student by name! Each grade has been so fun to teach. Specifically, lower elementary, has been learning so much information about physical education and health. This marking period we focused on Manipulatives, which are tools for teaching. They engage students visually and physically and include objects such as beanbags, scarves, and balls. I believe focusing on Manipulatives also improved the students’ hand-eye coordination skills. Upper elementary began the marking period with football. The students learned vocabulary and concepts used in the game. It was incredible to see the growth from the first week to the last week. Students that could not even old the football were throwing spirals at the end! During the holiday season, I tried to make exercise fun by creating themed station activities for the students to practice individual skills, such as, accuracy, overhand and underhand throwing, and problem solving. The students mentioned that they love the stations and have so much fun that gym class flies by! Recess has been going well! Students are finding ways to stay active even when we have indoor recess due o below freezing temperatures!

Like I mentioned before, I am writing lesson plans for the classroom teachers to deliver to the students. Both lower and upper elementary focused on nutrition during the holiday season. I planned this to have the students thinking about making healthy choices when surrounded with so many sweets. I also made sure to include the importance of moderation in my lessons. Indulging in an unhealthy snack is not wrong or shameful if done in moderation. I like to encourage the 80 20 rule. If you are eating whole and healthy foods 80 percent of the time then indulging in sweets and salty snacks 20 percent of the time, that is okay! Both lower and upper elementary have also focused on safety this marking period. Including the following topics: fire safety, water safety, car/bike safety, and stranger safety. I am excited for the students to learn more about healthy habits that contribute to their overall wellness. If you would like to get involved in the wellness committee I am looking for parent volunteers! Please reach out! sboechner@gettysburgmontessoricharter.org

Thank you for reading about what the students are learning in Phys. Ed and health class! Your involvement is appreciated and so important to our community! - Coach B

HEALTH NEWS

Nurse Adrian - Greetings and Gratitude for the New Year! A long time ago I read the book Jonathan Livingston Seagull. It shares this gem, “We teach best what we most need to learn.” Learning is discovery and dynamic exchange. Please assist me by sharing your knowledge on topics that will further the health and well-being of our school family and larger community such as:

- Who knows an eye doctor that is great for young students?
- Could someone help me with Excel and a program called Smart Charts?
- What community resources have you discovered and love?
- What are your top places for healthy eating, family fun or being active?
- Where’s the best place to buy food or health supplies?

Hope you and yours stay healthy and strong during this flu season.

We would like to thank all of our volunteers, donors and families for your support and help in raising money for our school. So far we have raised money with the following fundraisers and we couldn’t have done it without you!

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fundraiser</th>
<th>Gross Revenue</th>
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<tr>
<td>Box Tops</td>
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<tr>
<td>Giving Spree</td>
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<td>Original Works</td>
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<td>Book Fair</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yankee Candles</td>
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Every year, our students help create a scarecrow with their classmates. When the scarecrows are complete, we set them up at local businesses where members of our community are able to make donations. Our students then vote on an organization in which to donate these funds. This year we raised $716.85 and our students chose to donate that money to the East Coast Exotic Animal Rescue in Fairfield. Visit https://www.eastcoastexoticrescue.org/ for more information.

Each of the following businesses displayed one of our scarecrows:

- Starbucks - Mrs. Edmond’s class
- The Gardens at Gettysburg - Mrs. Lawrence’s class
- Olive Branch - Mrs. Gehhart’s class
- Next Step Karate - Mrs. Lansford’s class
- Fairfield Family Medical - Mr. Stare’s class
- Kennie’s Market - Mrs. Bechtel’s class
- Hickory Falls - Mrs. Gulden’s class
- Weis - Mrs. Sauter’s class

Next year Yankee Candle orders will be placed online and shipped directly to your home. We hope this change will make the ordering process smoother.

If you would like to volunteer for our fundraisers, or have ideas you would like to share, please contact Megan Parks at: MParks@GettysburgMontessoriCharter.org.