



Montessori Moments

WINTER 2021



The Principal's Piece

Dear GMCS Families and Friends,

Happy New Year! I am so happy to say that we are into the second month of constructing our building addition. In case you were wondering, here are the major companies involved in the creation of our new school. We chose DIGSAU, an award-winning architect firm to design it. GREYHAWK is an award-winning construction management and consulting firm and they are managing the project for us. eciConstruction is in charge of the construction. Other key players are Rodney B. Smith, the mechanical contractor for heating and cooling needs, Hull's Electric, and Mann Plumbing for running lines for water and gas and sprinkler work.

So far, the underground electrical work has been completed, floor drains and under slabwork has been done, foundation has been poured, and the exterior walls are currently being framed! By the middle of January, eciConstruction will begin connecting into the existing building and will work in our new Art Room. In February, the roofer will be working on sheathing.

We have been back to school, in person, five days a week since November. We continue to be vigilant with our hand washing routines, cleaning, and disinfecting, and wearing our masks. I believe that these procedures and expectations along with the shields for our desks and tables, and the use of the electrostatic machine has helped to keep our GMCS students and staff healthy. Thanks to Coverall Cleaning Company for working hard at keeping us clean and sanitized. Thank you for communicating with Nurse Adrian and for keeping your children home if they are sick. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,
Faye Pleso, MEd, PhD

Vice Principal News

In the beginning of January, GMCS teachers conducted midyear benchmark assessments with both in-person and virtual learners. These assessments are conducted three times a year and provide teachers with information regarding the growth of individual students as well as help teachers provide targeted instruction. Benchmark testing is an important aspect of our assessment plan as it allows our school to improve outcomes and realize the potential of each student.

We have some exciting activities happening over the next few months. We will be celebrating National School Choice Week in January with daily spirit activities to promote our love of GMCS. Look for a flyer to come home soon with all the daily activities!

On January 20, 2021, our kindergarten teachers will be hosting a virtual storytime for preschoolers and their siblings. This event is provided to help promote kindergarten readiness and will allow children to participate in special activities and stories. Families wishing to join us for the virtual kindergarten storytime may call the office to register. Links will be emailed to interested families.

On February 3rd and 18th GMCS will host a Virtual Zoom Open House for all interested families wishing to learn more about our kindergarten program. During this Zoom event, our staff will conduct a virtual tour of the school, discuss the basic principles of Montessori education, and demonstrate some of our unique hands-on learning materials, as well as review important details such as the simple enrollment process and transportation options. Interested families may call the school to register for this event as well.

Finally, all our teachers will be participating in LETERS training over the next several months. This professional development opportunity will provide teachers with the background knowledge in the science of reading and skills to make a significant improvement in the development of literacy and language in their students.

Christine Kirkpatrick Ed.s.

Office Reminders:

AMAZON SMILES

Support Gettysburg Montessori Charter School when you shop at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com/ch/27-1306185). <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/27-1306185>

WINTER WEATHER REMINDER

Please check our website for weather delays at [gettysburgmontessoricharter.org](https://www.gettysburgmontessoricharter.org)

Please do not call the school, during early dismissals with general questions. Wait for a text /or an email for updates or check our website. For specific transportation changes, EMAIL your child's teacher and the office at info@gettysburgmontessoricharter.org

HELPING HANDS COMMITTEE

The Helping Hands committee is looking for more parents to help with fundraising and events once COVID-19 allows. This committee will be held monthly, meeting the second Tuesday of every month @ 6pm.

If you should have any questions, please contact the front office.

Click the following link to join the meeting from your computer:

<https://zoom.us/j/97693169707?pwd=ZUVYdEVxWGhJQR4VTI5MkZXSnZDUT09>

Meeting ID: 976 9316 9707
Passcode: nSxGj8

Dates to Remember:

- **President Day**
February 15th
- **Early Dismissal**
March 5th
- **No School**
March 19th
- **Spring Holiday**
April 2nd to 5th
- **Last day of school**
May 28th

Classroom Updates

Kindergarten

Mrs. Donahue & Mrs. Lawrence - Our kindergarteners have experienced some exciting activities during quarter two. The Mobile Agricultural Lab visited our classroom, 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 works in the classroom. In Eureka Math, we have wrapped up a unit of study focusing on geometry with flat and solid shapes, measurement, and weight. We will be continuing our studies on the attributes of numbers, using the terms "more than" "less than" and "are there enough" as we compare sets. Coming up we will be working on addition using number bonds. 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.

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 how plants drink water. We compared the similarities and differences between straws people use versus how plants take in the liquid through their roots. Our second experience was all about insects and their body parts.

As a class, we were successful in earning our second Stellar Stone Award- PJ and Movie Day! This day was a wonderful couple hours of fun to kick off the start to our Winter break.

Right before our winter break, we had the opportunity to bring our yearly field trip to The Majestic Theater to the classroom by listening to the classic book "A Christmas Carol". Our experience was sure different from not seeing the play but we loved having a virtual fireplace crackling in the background as Mrs. Gebhart read through each chapter daily. We ended the week with comparing the book to "A Muppets Christmas Carol".

In 1st grade Language Arts we have been studying many interesting topics. We joined in with 2nd grade to complete poems on the main characters from "A Christmas Carol". Then we took that knowledge and applied it to making final copies to display in the hallway.

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 and even through 1,000!

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 fantastic combination of fun and learning in Room 9!

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 is working hard toward our next Stellar Stone award. For our last reward we decorated gingerbread people cookies! We had a lot of fun decorating and drinking hot chocolate in our pajamas!

In place of our annual trip to the theater to see A Christmas Carol we read a more classic version of the book and watched A Muppet Christmas Carol. We had a lot of fun comparing and contrasting the two. The students enjoyed talking about how Scrooge changed from the beginning of the story to the end.

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. 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 and were in quarantine for 14 days after their trip from the North Pole. The students really enjoyed finding Pepper and Mint daily once they were out of quarantine and seeing what kind of mischief they were getting into.

We weren't able to make it to the Majestic Theater this year to see A Christmas Carol so we brought A Christmas Carol to room 10. We read A Christmas Carol in class during ELA and we learned all about the characters, settings, and events. Room 10's favorite Spirit was the Ghost of Christmas Future. They liked how creepy he was and how he could see the future.

3rd & 4th

Mrs. Bechtel, Ms. Dohler & Mrs. Taylor - The ¾ team teachers would like to wish everyone a happy, healthy new year. Welcome 2021!

The ¾ students have been watching construction happening right outside our windows. We are super excited to see our new school gradually being built. In honor of the groundbreaking, ¾ students read the book If I Built a School by Chris Van Dusen. In writing, the students had a chance to write and illustrate what they would do if they built a school... It is very exciting watching our new school being built! We can't wait to see when it is finished!

ELA

We have been working diligently in ELA class practicing our proofreading skills, developing critical thinking and reasoning skills, expanding our vocabulary, and improving our fluency and reading comprehension.

In third grade, we have finished our unit on the concept of cooperation. In this

Classroom Updates

unit, students explored ideas of how people have worked together, with one another or animals, to solve a problem or how to navigate in an unfamiliar situation. We are now starting a new unit focusing on the concept of what makes us unique.

In fourth grade, we have finished our unit on the concept of literary lessons. This unit focused on all the different things animals can teach us through their interactions with us, each other, and how they inspire authors. We are now starting a new unit focusing on the concept of friendship and how to build strong relationships.

Each class certainly has had fun learning about different types of poetry in which third grade was able to create fun and festive holiday limericks and fourth grade was able to create their own holiday haikus! We continue working on our creative writing as students wrote stories for Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas using a picture or writing prompt.

Math

In Mrs. Taylor's 3/4 math class, students have made huge growth! Third grade is learning about area, and will be moving into perimeter and fractions. They have become experts at multiplication!

Fourth grade has learned how to solve multi-digit multiplication as well as long division. We just started a new fraction module. They have done a great job persevering and solving challenging problems!

Mrs. Taylor would like to thank all the parents that have been supportive as we are learning a new style of math and have been navigating the challenges of virtual learning!

Science/Social Studies

I hope everyone enjoyed their holiday break. I must say that since the students have returned from break, they have been rejuvenated and eager to move on in Science and Social Studies.

We started Quarter 2 out by making Q-Tip skeletons in 4th grade and a movable skeleton in 3rd grade which fit right in with Halloween. Moving forward, while many of us were out voting for our new president, our friends in 3/4 were voting for a new theme for our science fair. The winner was an invention of your own. I cannot wait to see all the cool ideas the students come up with.

Next, was our unit on Native Americans and the first Thanksgiving. Students created their very own teepee out of a brown paper bag and skewer sticks for our first STEM project of the year. I was very impressed with all the awesome teepee inventions.

Next, we began our holidays around the world unit. This year students got to learn about cultures and traditions in England, Italy, France, Sweden, and Russia. They learned the many different names of Santa Claus and we used venn diagrams to compare other countries' traditions to the ones we have in the United States. The students made ornaments that represented each place we visited.

Since returning from break, we are starting our presidents unit. Students just received a packet on our second big project in Science and Social Studies. Each student randomly picked one of our 46 presidents and will do a biography report in a book person project (very similar to our inventors project last year). The students are very excited to complete this project and presentations will begin on February 1. Please ask your child about this project since it will be worked on in class but will also be an at home project. I am just as excited as the kids to learn about the presidents that aren't as well known.

After our presidents unit, we will move on to the solar system. Third graders will learn about the planets and fourth graders will review the planets and focus more on the moon phases and constellations. I am very proud of how hard all of my third and fourth graders have worked in Science and Social Studies... they are ROCKSTARS!

5th & 6th

Mrs. Gulden & Mrs. Sauter - Hello Everyone! Another semester has already come and gone. This year has gone faster than ever! This quarter your students have continued to work on projects alongside their classwork.

ELA: In ELA, 5th grade wrapped up Hidden Figures (nonfiction) and moved into Esperanza Rising (historical fiction). This is a new book for our novel studies, but students already seem to be enjoying it! In 6th grade, we completed our nonfiction text, Almost Astronauts. We will be moving into Percy Jackson: The Lightning Thief and diving into the novel as well as Greek Mythology in quarter three.

Math: In quarter two, 5th grade finished up with multiplying and dividing with decimals and moved into multiplying with three-digit multipliers and division. As quarter three approaches, 5th grade will move into operations with fractions. In 6th grade, students spent the second quarter learning about unit rates and how to solve problems involving percent as well as number theory. We will continue with number theory in third quarter and move into negative integers.

Science: In science, students learned about genetics and heredity and even created their own snowmen using punnett squares!

Writing: Our focus has been on narrative writing. Students are in the editing phase of the stories and will be compiling their completed and illustrated story soon!

Projects: After turning in their biographies, students worked on their first Market Day project this quarter. All students selected and researched a country in Asia. We then wrapped up this project with presentations for their classmates! Upcoming in quarter three will be their book project. This will be assigned in February and due in March.

Along with all of this, 5th and 6th grade adopted two cows, Bella and Edith. To go along with this we will complete a number of lessons to teach your students about cows and the dairy farming industry. Students also got to take a virtual field trip to the farm show!

Here's to a great quarter three!

MUSIC NOTES

Hello everyone! We are halfway done with the school year! Students had another fun quarter in music class! We had music themed lessons for Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Kwanzaa, and Hanukkah. The students also got to watch parts of The Nutcracker Suite. For K-2 grade, we also talked about Moods of Music, Echos, and instrument sounds. For 3-6 grade, we started an International Music Unit. We talked about Japan, Africa, and Spain. Students were able to learn about the different kinds of music and instruments used in each country/continent. Looking forward to our next quarter! Have a musical day! - Mr. Swiger



SPECIAL EDUCATION

Our processes for identifying students who may be eligible for special education services include, but are not limited to, Multi System of Tiered Support (MTSS) including Response to Intervention (RTI), 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 outside of the Special Education Coordinators office. For further information, feel free to contact our Special Education Coordinator, Rebeka Black, at becky@gettysburgmontessoricharter.org.

RTI

Math tips for grades K – 2:

Did you know one way to improve math skills during the primary grade levels is with the use of math manipulatives? Manipulatives are any items that students can use or “manipulate” with their hands. Like training wheels, once your child’s math skills improve, he or she will no longer need to use manipulatives. Until then, having hands-on objects to use during math can boost math skills significantly.

Math tips for grades 3 – 6:

What are some ways to motivate students to want to learn math? When they realize that math skills are needed in every day life, students become motivated to learn it. Adults should point out the everyday applications of math to students. For example, estimating prices and totals when shopping, using fractions when cooking, using decimals when dealing with money, and measuring skills when doing activities such as sewing and woodwork. If students take an interest in one of these activities/tasks, chances are they will be motivated to learn the math skills they need to excel in the activity/task.

ART

Hello everyone! This quarter has been packed with so many fun art projects! **Kindergarten** has continued to explore the elements and principles of art. We learned about textures and drew animals. We learned about patterns and made holiday ornaments with patterns on them. We are currently learning about colors! There is so much to learn in the world of colors and right now, we are exploring color mixing. **First and second** grade began the second quarter reviewing color vocabulary. We discussed warm and cool colors and did a project based on that. After that, we got very creative and made wild and crazy sandwiches that filled the paper! Our next project was a review of line types and we made very detailed hot chocolate mugs! We are currently doing an activity called Imagine That. Students are given a worksheet with boxes on it and a design in the box. They must turn each design into a picture! It is always so fun to see what students come up with!

Third and fourth grade started off the quarter learning a little bit about Pablo Picasso and played an art game based on his art. Then we worked on our cursive writing skills! We turned our names into interesting bugs! After that, we made wild and crazy sandwiches, filling the paper with things you don’t normally find between two pieces of bread. Before winter break, we did a snow globe activity, where they got to draw their homes inside of a snow globe. After returning from break, we learned about the three parts of a picture: foreground, middle ground, and background. We used these three parts to create a landscape, while reviewing line types for coloring. We are currently doing an activity called Imagine That. Students are given a worksheet with boxes on it and a design in the box. They must turn each design into a picture! It is always so fun to see what students come up with!

Fifth and sixth grade started off the quarter with some intriguing 3D art. We made 3D hands and a 3D tunnel after that. Then we got into some art history. We learned about an artist named Wayne Thiebaud, who painted a lot of pastries. Then, students learned how to make a cake with a slice cut out of it. I showed them how to add shading and then they added color. The last project we worked on was a poem about ourselves. They were to look up adjectives that described them and to write them down on a piece of paper, while adding color and detail.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION/HEALTH

I cannot put into words how much I have enjoyed my first two months working with your children! It makes my day every time I am able to share a smile and a laugh with these wonderful students here at GMCS. While we spend our fair share of time playing and having fun, we have been busy as well. I stress effort, sportsmanship, and respect in my class and am happy to report we seem to be on the same page to this point.

Some of the key topics we have been discussing in Physical Education have been the 5 health related fitness components (Flexibility, Body Composition, Cardiorespiratory Endurance, Muscular Strength, and Muscular Strength), the importance of movement, as well as dental hygiene. It’s been so great

being able to incorporate our online students in our warm-ups every day, I am hoping we can continue fantastic attendance from virtual students in PE.

The main topics we have discussed in Health Class have been MyPlate (food groups), calories, and the benefits of physical activity and exercise.

I am so proud of the hard work, learning, and fun that has been happening. Please keep up the good work!

HEALTH NEWS

Proud & Loud Praise for GMCS Healthiness

The Adams County Department of Health has praised our families for your unprecedented level of cooperation in contact tracing and school exposure risk assessments. Your actions support GMCS staff’ in their on-going diligence and feedback to sustain and improve our mitigation efforts. Together our combined efforts have kept our GMCS community free of any confirmed transmission of Covid-19.

Phase B of Covid-19 vaccine distribution is expected to begin in a few weeks. GMCS teachers’ and staff who want to get the Covid-19 vaccine have been registered. We are poised to be among the area’s first educators to be immunized.

Health Screenings have begun and will ramp-up in February. The desired goal is to complete all in-person student screenings by the end of February. I am still working out the logistics to conduct screenings for our On-Line Students. I will contact our virtual attendees with details...I’d love to hear your ideas.

Yours with a grateful heart,
Nurse Adrian

FROM THE BOARD

Board Vacancies – Did You Know?

We are a Board made up of student family members and community volunteers all giving a little time each month to help keep the school growing and going strong. We need your help!

Any time you can give, any involvement you are able to make – and your commitment can be flexible as the Board understands how busy our families and lives are – would help keep the school we all love moving in the right direction.

Volunteerism is a crucial part of the Montessori Philosophy and we need all family members – parents, guardians, grandparents – to play a part in any way they can.

No matter what your background, availability, or experience there is a place for you on the Board! The Board is currently looking to fill two positions. Please email board@gettysburgmontessoricharter.org to find out how to become part of our amazing school’s governing body!

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, January 28, 2021
- Thursday, February 25, 2021
- Thursday, March 25, 2021
- Thursday, April 29, 2021
- Thursday, May 27, 2021
- Thursday, June 24, 2021
- Thursday, July 29, 2021
- Thursday, August 26, 2021

Mckinney Vento Act:

Homelessness is not only living on the streets. If you are living in a shelter, motel, camper or doubling up with someone, you are considered homeless. We are here to help! Please reach out to us!