

Welcome to our first school newsletter! We hope this will be one of many to increase our communication with you! We've been working hard this year and we want you to know how.

Classroom Updates

Don't forget to visit the website and view the 'Our Classrooms' section for weekly teacher blogs. You'll find out what's been happening in your child's class and news of upcoming events.



On February 26, Miss Heather's Pre-K/K class bundled up and took a field trip to Strawberry Hill Nature Preserve in Fairfield to participate in the maple sugaring program. The class learned about how maple sugaring was discovered, how to identify a maple tree and what tools are used to tap a maple tree. Then, everyone got to help tap a tree, harvest sap and watch the sap boil on a fire. Everyone went home with his or her own spile to try tapping a maple tree at home! What a great day!

Grades 1 and 2 are pleased to announce that they recently began art lessons with Jennifer Yablonsky. Jennifer, or Ms. Yabo, as the kids are allowed to call her, is volunteering her time each Friday morning in both classrooms to gain experience as an art teacher. Over the next few weeks, students will be discussing primary and secondary colors, how colors represent how we feel and Navajo sand paintings. We will also tie writing into our art lessons whenever possible to describe our work. The kids are really looking forward to having art class each week!



COMING SOON... The teachers in grades 1 & 2 and 3 & 4 are busy planning big field trips for late spring. Everything is under wraps for now, but the exciting details will be revealed soon!

Physical Education

In the coming weeks, Mr. Greg, the Physical Education teacher, will be working with 3rd through 6th grade students on nutrition. Students will be learning about macronutrients and micronutrients (such as vitamins and minerals), and how these nutrients affect their bodies. The older students will work on cooking skills, including how to properly handle a knife and limit salt intake while cooking. In PE, students in 3rd through 6th grades will work on cooperative games that help develop communication skills in a group setting as well as sportsmanship. Pre-K and Kindergarten students will also work on cooperative games with a focus on decision making, cooperation, teamwork and communication.

The 4th, 5th and 6th graders are beginning to learn about careers. Over the next few months, Miss Sara will help these students learn about careers they are interested in, as well as some careers they may not have heard of before. She will also help them identify what steps they need to take to achieve those goals.





THE COUNSELOR'S CORNER

Has your child mentioned being a Bucket Filler? The school counselor, Miss Sara, is working with all classrooms on growing social skills. Showing kindness fills people's buckets and making them feel good inside fills people's buckets. When we fill someone else's bucket, ours gets filled also! The school has set a goal to fill everyone's buckets, and to represent our bucket filling actions, a paper chain will begin to appear in the school hallway!

THE PRINCIPAL'S PIECE

It is with a heavy heart that I have decided to retire from GMCS effective June 30 of this year, however I have a wonderful new personal opportunity to babysit for my new granddaughter in Annapolis. I have enjoyed my time here immensely, and am very proud of the work done by all of the teachers, staff and students at this school each and every day. GMCS is poised to make some positive changes that will allow it to grow and expand in the coming years. I am very excited for the future of this amazing school! The Board has begun the search for my replacement and we all anticipate a seamless transition.

Robin Kirkpatrick, principal

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

- Registration for the 2015-2016 school year is due by **Tuesday, March 31** in order to be included in the lottery.
- Preschool registration begins on **Monday, April 6**. If you know of any families with pre-school aged children, please encourage them to call the office at 717-334-1120 for registration paperwork, or visit our website.
- Remember to review and return your signed Code of Conduct to the office no later than **Tuesday, March 31**.
- As the weather warms and we begin to see signs of spring, please be sure to dress your child appropriately for outdoor recess.

NOT GETTING OUR EMAILS?



If you signed up to get email updates but have not been receiving notices from the school, check your SPAM folder. If you still cannot find recent messages from the school and would like to be added to the contact list, email or call Dani at dani@gettysburgmontessoricharter.org or 717-334-1120.

Our Mission

The Gettysburg Montessori Charter School (GMCS) offers an innovative, standards-based education which embodies the theories of Dr. Maria Montessori by supporting a child-centered learning environment. Our school uses a holistic curriculum based on the Montessori educational philosophy to promote a lifelong love of learning and to achieve the Pennsylvania State Academic Standards.

School Updates

NOTICE OUR LOGOS! THIS IS WHAT THEY MEAN...

Used as main identity for the school and corporate communication. What the “outside” will also see...



Used for internal communication, from staff to parents and in less formal settings.



Used for communication from the parent/teacher group (formerly known as the PTO/Boosters).



SNOW DAY MAKE-UP DATES

Thursday, April 2
Monday, April 6
Tuesday, June 2, full day
Wednesday, June 3
Thursday, June 4, half day

WHY SHOULD YOU CHECK OUT OUR UPDATED WEBSITE!

www.gettysburgmontessoricharter.org

- 1) It's new and fun
- 2) Get regular school-wide updates
- 3) Learn more about the school & our wonderful teachers
- 4) View upcoming calendar of events



BACKGROUND CHECKS FOR VOLUNTEERS

Pennsylvania Law regarding volunteers/chaperones became more stringent beginning December 31, 2014. All volunteers need to update their clearances every 36 months. The clearances are: Child Abuse History, PA State Police Criminal Record Check & FBI Criminal Background Check.

With this new update, parents and guardians are encouraged and welcomed to volunteer and be chaperones once all three clearances are acquired. If you are interested in pursuing these clearances, packets can be picked up in the office for your convenience or found on our website.

WHITAKER ON WHEELS – APRIL 20TH

We are incredibly excited to announce that Whitaker on Wheels (WOW) will be bringing its one-of-a-kind traveling science theater to school on Monday, April 20. The proceeds from the 2014 Fall Fest have allowed us to book this amazing Science Center show. We would like to send a big thank you to Faye Esquivel, parent volunteers and teachers for all of their hard work on this year's Fall Fest and for bringing WOW to our school!



FINE ARTS NIGHT – MAY 28TH @ 5PM

One of the most exciting times of the year is when our students prepare for the Fine Arts Night Showcase. This year's theme is a patriotic one in honor of Memorial Day. All music classes will be participating and you will hear songs that range from America the Beautiful to Anchors Aweigh to Yankee Doodle and many more. Ever heard someone play a Boomwhacker? No?! Then mark your calendars because you won't want to miss it.

HISTORY COMES ALIVE!

Coming in April and May, Ms. Nancy Walker and Mr. Jef Savage, Rostered Artists for the State of PA, will be giving students a complete immersion into the history and cultures of Europe, English Colonial and Latin America, Mexico, Caribbean Islands and the U.S. from the 15th century to modern day, using social dances as a basis to enhance various curriculum.



the Parent Wolfpack

SCHOLASTIC BOOK FAIR – MARCH 30TH THROUGH APRIL 2ND

Shop the book fair before or after school! Books are tagged by each teacher as their favorite reads and designated for each grade of student. For each book purchased, our school gets a large percentage to help build our very own library.



FEBRUARY'S PAINT NITE FOR KIDS

Last month's Paint Nite was a great success! Over 40 students participated and each of them made a beautiful, unique penguin painting that each child created completely on their own. Thank you to all of the volunteers. Without you, we would not have been able to offer such an amazing event to the school. Be sure to check your child's folder for future after school art opportunities. We hope to offer additional dates this spring!

NEXT PLANNING MEETING – MARCH 19TH @ 3:15PM – OPEN TO ALL

If you would like to volunteer to help the Wolfpack with upcoming school events, please check the website under the Wolfpack page, and sign-up for our emails. If you can't attend a meeting and have a concern or idea, please email wolfpack@gettysburgmontessoricharter.org.



CONSIGNMENT SALE – MAY 30TH

By the request of our parents, the Wolfpack will be hosting our first consignment sale! 50% of proceeds go to consignors and 50% of proceeds go to our school. The focus will be on children’s clothing and items for infant to size 16. Shoes, toys, electronics, maternity and small furniture items will also be included. Specific information, along with sellers packets, will be going home to parents soon, so start cleaning out those closets and dusting off those bins!

Volunteers will also be needed to work this event. If you volunteer a minimum of three hours on this committee or for this event, you will be invited to the Preview Sale on Friday evening.

But wait, there’s more! Along with this fundraising event, we will host a bake sale to provide shoppers with the energy they’ll need. If you can’t physically volunteer, bake some goodies!

Contact Myfanwy Smith for details and information at: myfanwyjs@hotmail.com



COFFEE & BAKED GOODS

Order by **March 24th** and get your goods just in time for Easter weekend, extra guests, or just because it’s good stuff.

We are partnering with two small, local businesses who care about us and want to help build our field trip and special activities fund! During the summers, you can catch the smell of these two beauties at the local farmers market on the square.

ART HOUSE COFFEE is a craft coffee roasting company located in Gettysburg who specializes in fair trade, organically grown beans. Watch out – addiction possible.

FOSTER’S GLUTEN FREE BAKERY is run by a fabulous local gal who’s got the knack for satisfying that sweet tooth. Indulge your tummy, and even the sensitive ones (Celiacs included), with a special mouth-watering treat.

Contact Karen Millar for details and information at: kmillar@syncopatedconcepts.com

Don't Forget!

TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK – MAY 4TH - 8TH

Be on the lookout for information from the Wolfpack on ways you can volunteer to let our teachers know how much they mean to us!



Board Briefings

WHAT'S NEW WITH THE BUILDING?

Over the past few years, our school has enjoyed a great deal of success and has grown dramatically. As a result, we are running out of space. Our lease with the district expires at the end of the 2015-2016 school year, approximately 16 months from now on June 30, 2016. While we are making due with the current facility this year and all of next school year, the board and CEO are actively exploring new facilities which will allow us to continue to grow our school within the Gettysburg Area School District boundaries. While we are in the very early stages, we're excited about the opportunity to expand into a new facility for the 2016-2017 school year. We'll update you as we make progress. Remember, the school will operate as usual in the Eisenhower Center throughout next year's 2015-2016 academic year. Let's keep growing!

CHARTER RENEWAL

Do you know how Charter Schools operate? Charter schools are required to submit a renewal application to the governing school district every five years. On July 1, 2010, GMCS charter was approved for a five-year term by the Gettysburg Area School District. Since that time, the school has flourished, increasing in community support, enrollment and in academic performance. In December, the Board and CEO submitted our application for charter renewal to Gettysburg Area School District for another five years. Communications between GMCS and the District have been positive as we work through the renewal process. It is common to have an open dialogue and request for information after the submission, which is the stage we are currently in. The school district is required to provide an answer by June 30, 2015.

PARENT SURVEY

We want to hear from you! Be on the lookout for the upcoming school survey. If you have provided the school with an email address, you will receive a message with a link to Survey Monkey. If you have not provided the office with an email address, you will receive a paper survey in your child's FISH folder.

BOARD MEETINGS & NEW MEMBER

We are pleased to announce that Avner Dorman was sworn in at the March meeting to serve out the remaining term vacated by a departed board member. We'd like to remind you that our Board meetings are always open to the public. You can find Board agendas and meeting minutes on our website under the 'Our Leadership' tab. Our next Board Meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 20th at 7pm in the GMCS Teacher Lounge.

WHO DO I TALK TO AND WHAT ABOUT?

Dani • dani@gettysburgmontessoricharter.org
Handles lunch orders, absences & school communications

Leigh • leigh@gettysburgmontessoricharter.org
Handles bussing & Principal's admin

Robin • robin@gettysburgmontessoricharter.org
Manages school & staff, curriculum, gives tours

Sara • sara@gettysburgmontessoricharter.org
Guidance counselor

Becky • becky@gettysburgmontessoricharter.org
Special Education coordinator

Board • board@gettysburgmontessoricharter.org
Governance of school & management of CEO/
principal

