

MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS

MOC-Floyd Valley

February 2026

News From The Principal

Dear Families,

Happy February! This month, we continue to focus on supporting the whole child—academically, socially, and emotionally. Middle school is a period of rapid growth, and families often share that they are looking for guidance in navigating shifting friendships and keeping communication strong at home. Below you'll find practical strategies to help build and maintain connection, support healthy peer relationships, and encourage your child to open up about the things that matter most.

It's completely normal for friend groups to shift during middle school. Students are discovering their interests, values, and identities—and relationships often evolve along the way. You can support your child through these transitions with understanding and tools for healthy connection.

Normalize the Ups and Downs

Let your child know that friendship changes are a natural part of growing up. Hearing this can reduce anxiety and help them see that they are not alone when relationships shift.

Encourage Healthy, Diverse Connections

Encourage your child to engage in clubs, activities, or sports that interest them. These environments help them build friendships around shared passions—relationships that are often more stable and positive.

Teach Conflict Resolution Skills

When your child comes to you upset about a friend:

- Listen quietly first
- Acknowledge their feelings ("I can tell this really bothered you.").
- Help them brainstorm respectful ways to approach the situation. Avoid immediately intervening or trying to solve it for them—coaching builds confidence

Spot Red Flags and Step In When Needed

Most friendship challenges are typical. However, contact your child's counselor or a trusted school adult if you notice:

- Persistent exclusion
- Manipulation or unhealthy power dynamics
- Sudden changes in mood, academic engagement, or self-esteem. We're here to help and partner with you.

Many families tell us they want to connect more with their middle schooler but aren't always sure how. Below are strategies that help communication feel natural and supportive.

Create Low-Pressure Moments to Talk

Kids often talk more openly when the conversation doesn't feel formal or planned. Try checking in:

- during car rides
- while cooking or doing chores together
- on a walk
- at bedtime

These relaxed settings feel safer for sharing.

Ask Questions That Invite Conversation

Instead of "How was school?" (often met with "fine"), try:

- "What was something that made you laugh today?"
- "What's one good thing and one challenging thing from this week?"
- "Who did you enjoy spending time with today?"

Open-ended questions encourage real conversation.

Listen More Than You Fix

Students at this age often want empathy more than solutions. Try responses like:

- “Thanks for telling me that.”
- “That sounds rough—I’m glad you shared it with me.”
- “Do you want advice, or do you just want me to listen?”

These statements build trust and promote open dialogue.

Create a ‘Safe Landing Spot’

Let your child know you’re always available to listen—without fear of immediate consequences or criticism. When children feel emotionally safe, they are far more likely to share what’s really happening in their lives.

Raising and teaching middle schoolers is truly a team effort. Thank you for the partnership you bring to our school community each day. Should you ever have questions or concerns about your child’s friendships, well-being, or school experience, our teachers, counselors, and administrators are always here to support your family.

Wishing you a warm, connected, and joyful February!

Go Dutch!

Mr. Carlson
MOC-FV MS Principal



Exciting Happenings in 6th Grade

1 Minute Update

Science: We have begun learning about **plate tectonics**, focusing on how the movement of Earth’s plates shapes the planet’s surface. Over the next few weeks, students will transition into a **large research project on natural disasters**, where they will investigate events such as earthquakes, volcanoes, hurricanes, and floods, and analyze how these powerful forces change Earth and impact life on it.

Social Studies: In World History, we have spent the last couple of weeks discussing the religion of Judaism from an historical standpoint. We’ve discussed some of the prominent Jewish leaders from the ancient days. In addition to that, we have learned a bit about some of the popular holidays in the Jewish culture. It has been fun to compare some holidays that are mostly unheard of by Northwest Iowans to the holidays that we ARE familiar with. We have some exciting projects and activities coming up shortly as we begin to prepare for our Ancient China unit!

Math: Dividing a fraction by a whole number or a fraction. We will be applying this skill to word problems.

Literature: The sixth graders are expected to read an award-winning book during the third quarter and will still be expected to read 30 minutes daily. After our winter screening, we have seen so many of them improving their comprehension! We will also be finishing up our hero research paper in February. Students have been working diligently on taking notes and getting citations from their sources. The next unit will be exploring literature set in the middle ages - a fun unit where we learn about knights, peasants, and nobility. Can’t wait!

English: The young authors are really starting to blossom. We are headed into a short unit on sentence structure where we examine the parts of speech and how they fit together into simple,



Valentines's Day
February 14



Look ☺☺ What is Happening in 7th Grade

1 Minute Update

Page 3

Science: Examining the Earth—Sun—Moon system. Learning How this movement causes: Eclipses and Lunar Phases

Math: Wrapping up Unit 5: Rational Numbers. Beginning Unit 6: Expectations.

Literature: Studying the elements of a dystopian novel. Reading the book *The City of Ember* to explore themes, structure and world-building.

Global Studies: Studying India and South Asia. Focusing on how physical features impact human populations. Preparing to begin a new unit at the end of February on globalization, including: How trade connects countries and How resources move around the world.

English: Completed final personal narratives. Beginning a unit on application letters, and important real-world writing skill.



8th Grade Minds in Motion

1 Minute Update

Science: Students recently completed a Pros and Cons research paper and practiced evaluating multiple perspectives on scientific issues.

Math: Students are working on solving equations and applying different strategies to find solutions.

Literature: Beginning the research and speech unit centered on the Holocaust, focusing on historical understanding, research skills, and effective presentation.

American History: Starting a Civics unit focused on: The U.S. Constitution, The Bill of Rights and how these documents shape government and individual rights.

English: Wrapping up a Growth Mindset unit. The unit will conclude with a student-created project demonstrating their understanding of mindset concepts.



Upcoming Events

February 11~ 6th Grade Ice Fishing

February 16 ~ Snow Make up Day

Winter Field Trip: Roller skating in Sioux Falls

8th Grade DC/NYC Trip: Watch for more information —ask your student for details

February 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2 Groundhog Day 4:15pm GBB vs Spirit Lake 7th (H) 8 th (A)	3	4 Morningside Jazz Festival	5 4:15pm B Wrestling @ MOC-FV	6 1:15pm Early Dismissal	7
		Makerspace				
8	9 Qrt. 3 3 Wk. Gr. Chk. 4:15pm GBB vs Rock Valley 7 th (H) 8 th (A)	10 8:00am 7 th & 8 th Gr. Jazz Band Festival @ MOC-FV High School	11	12	13 1:15pm Early Dismissal	14 Valentine's Day
15	16 Presidents Day NWIBA District Jazz Festival in LeMars 4:15pm GBB vs Sheldon 7 th (A) 8 th (H)	17 4:15pm B Wrestling @ Le Mars	18 Ash Wednesday	19 4:15pm GBB vs Sioux Center 7th(A) 8 th (H)	20 1:15pm Early Dismissal	21
22	23 4:15pm GBB vs. Cherokee 7thH) 8 th (A) 3:30pm MS Solo Performance Night	24 End Exploratory Cycle 4	25 Start Exploratory Cycle 5	26 4:15pm GBB vs LeMars 7 th (A) 8 th (H) 7:00pm MS Jazz Band and Copper Street Brass @ High School	27 1:15pm Early Dismissal	28

March 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2 Augustana University Jazz Fest	3 6:00-9:00pm. Jazz Band night @ Prairie Winds Event Center	4	5	6 1:15pm Early Dismissal	7
8	9	10 7:00pm Middle School Concert @ MOC-FV Middle School.	11	12	13 1:15pm Early Dismissal	14
15	16 4:00pm – 8:00pm Parent Teacher Conferences	17 St. Patrick's Day 4:00pm – 8:00pm Parent Teacher Conferences	18	19 End of 3 rd Qrt.	20 Spring Begins No School (Teacher Comp Day)	21
		Scholastic Book Fair				
22	23 Begin 4 th Qrt. 6:30pm-7:30pm 2026 Middle School DC/NYC Meeting @ MOC-FV Middle School	24	25	26	27 1:15pm Early Dismissal	28
					DC/NYC Trip	
29	30	31				
			DC/NYC Trip			