

# MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS

MOC-FV CSD

February

2020

Special points of interest:

- Parenting A Middle School Student
- Student Drop Off and Pick Up
- February 14
- Valentine's Day



Scholastic Book Fair  
March 16-26

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## February 14

Due to the snow day on Friday, January 17, we will have school on Friday, February 14. This day was listed as the first snow makeup day on our district calendar.

February 7—1:15pm Early Dismissal

February 14 —Full day of School (Snow Makeup Day )

February 21—1:15pm Early Dismissal

## Student Drop Off and Pick Up

Please be cautious when dropping off and picking up students at the Middle School. Slippery roads, poor weather conditions, and excited students running into the road can make for a very dangerous drop off/pick up situation. Please use extreme caution during this time, as we want to keep everyone safe.

## Valentine's Day

We would ask that any Valentine's Day flowers or gifts to individuals be sent to the person's home address instead of here at school. Deliveries to the Middle School can become a disruption to the regular duties of the office personnel. Thank you for your cooperation.



## 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Science

By: Mr. H (Hoebelheinrich)

Over the last few weeks the 6th graders jumped into our Earth science unit. We discussed and learned about how things tend to flow in a unique cycle and are constantly being recycled on Earth. We also discussed the four spheres found on Earth: Atmosphere, biosphere, hydrosphere, and geosphere. Recently we just jumped into our Natural Disasters unit where we do a research project on how these disasters effect living things, and our precious Earth.

A driving question for a lot of young science students is how do scientists know some of these theories are actually theories? How do we know Pangea was here? How has our Earth changed? What changes our Earth? Moving forward we plan on answering some of these HUGE questions dealing with our beautiful Earth.

## Parenting a Middle School Student

Many times parents are unsure of how to parent Middle School students. The complexities of this age range (11-14 years old) can sometimes add to the feeling of helplessness for parents. Students at the same time are trying to navigate their “new world” and figure out how they will fit into this world. Multiple teachers, changing classes, social issues, changing bodies, first experiences with school sports, independence with homework (and an increasing amount), cell phones/technology and an increase in responsibility for the student often times lead to uncertainty and normal levels of anxiety. Because your student is experiencing these new things with kids their age, they often try to navigate these waters with their peers instead of looking to parents for advice. To us this seems silly because we have survived the “Middle School Years”, but to our students we may “not get it” or be “too old” to understand the world that they are living in. While it is true that none of us experienced Middle School with cell phones and social media, we had other challenges and experiences that can be beneficial for our students to hear. Sharing experiences of when you struggled with an issue in Middle School will help your student understand that they are not alone; we have all had those “awkward Middle School moments”. However, I know that talking to our students about tough issues and their experiences may not always be the most enjoyable thing to cover. It is easier to say, “How was your day? That’s good.” and let them move along with their day. However, those tough conversations will not only strengthen your relationship with your student, but also help to instill the values that you would like your child to have. If you are not helping your student navigate these challenges and helping to instill values for your child, then who is doing it? Their classmate? The internet? I would encourage you to continue to talk with your student and help them navigate the emotions, challenges, and great things that are going on in their life. Remember, our students want to formulate their own ideas and come to their own conclusions. Try using question prompts such as: “What do you think about....?”, “How did that make you feel?”, “If this were to happen again, what would you do differently?”. Being the source of all knowledge sometimes turns our students “off” to what we are trying to say.

There are parenting websites that contain some good information for parents with Middle School students. Some of the resources are free, while others you will need to purchase. While I have looked at and used some of the information on these sites, I am not endorsing the website. I am simply sharing these resources with you. I have found that the information shared was informative and helped with having some of those tough conversations.

The first is Parent Teen Connect. This website is ran by the Committee for Children out of California. Our Middle School uses their Second Step program to address the Social and Emotional Learning activities in our building. You can access this site at: <https://www.parentteenconnect.org/>.

The second resource is Axis. This resource has a more biblical approach. The website contains parent conversation starter kits, parent resources (basically a “Dummies Guide to.....” for various topics such as YouTube, Fortnite, Vaping, Sexting, etc), and a free weekly newsletter called the Culture Translator. The newsletter highlights what is “big” in a teen’s world and breaks it down for us parents. This newsletter is a free resource and helps parents connect to their teen’s world. You can access these resources at: <https://axis.org/>.

Parenting is tough...especially parenting a pre-teen and teenager. Thank you for continuing to parent during these challenging years. Know that you are not alone and there plenty of resources available to help with this journey.



## Growing and Changing in 6<sup>th</sup> Grade English

By: Mrs. Jacobsma

We rebounded after Christmas break with a real world writing unit. We've looked at multiple ways writing plays a part in the everyday world of adults. Then the students explored some of those styles and purposes in their own writing. This unit was done entirely on the chromebooks!

Following the real world writing unit, we returned to grammar and ramped up our writing skills. We will examine the basic structure of good sentences and then reconstructed our writing style with more complex and compound writing! Our next major writing assignment will be a hero essay where we look at what it means to be an everyday sort of hero. We'll choose someone who has made a significant impact on us and interview them. Then we'll create a tribute essay to honor them!



## READ ALL ABOUT IT . . . 6<sup>TH</sup> GRADE LITERATURE

By: Mrs. TeGrotenhuis

Our sixth grade students will soon be in the middle of their first major research unit! This will be the first time our students have gone through ALL stages of a research paper including the researching, note-taking, paraphrasing, organizing into different categories, drafting, editing, revising, publishing, and developing a works-cited page. Many steps are involved, and students will receive daily points for use of class time. First, we will learn about the characteristics of myths and read a myth about the hero Hercules. We will discuss his heroic traits and then compare heroes from ancient Greece to the heroes of today. Students will choose a cultural hero of their own and begin sifting through resources about their chosen cultural heroes. Our media specialist, Mrs. DeZeeuw, will show students available resources and help guide them while researching. I always look forward to reading about the cultural heroes of our sixth graders!

For individual reading, students made new goals for the third quarter. All students are expected to read an award-winning book, so please remind your child about this throughout the quarter. We recently completed a book project using the online website, padlet.com. Students were able to "tour" our classroom and visit everyone's padlet page. Many of our students were quite creative with their padlet, and I enjoyed reading about the books they chose. Additionally, I ask that you please keep encouraging your child to read daily. This tends to be a busy time of year with extra-curricular activities. Setting a time aside each day to read and complete other homework is a great idea! Thanks!



## 6<sup>th</sup> Grade World History

By: Mr. Nonnemacher

Thank you for taking the time to read through our happenings in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade social studies classroom! We have just completed our Ancient India Unit and are beginning our China unit. Ancient India was a fascinating unit for a lot of the kids, complete with discussions about karma, reincarnation, and one of our favorite class activities to date, the caste system. With that activity, the kids were split into 5 different "levels" that were reflective of how Ancient Indians used to be separated. We had priests, warriors, merchants, servants, and untouchables. We also talked about the significance and the difference in us only doing it for one class period compared to people in India living their entire lives in a certain caste. If you have not had a chance to talk to your child about that activity, I would encourage you to do that and hear about what their experience was like! The school year continues to go so fast, and this 6<sup>th</sup> grade teaching experience continues to be very enjoyable for me. I cherish the opportunities to connect with 120+ kids on a daily basis, and I look forward to this next month!

## 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Math

By: Mr. Boersma

The sixth graders are in the middle of our Ratios and Rates unit. Our first chapter of this unit was about ratios, rates, and unit rates. Then using these concepts and strategies to solve realistic problems. Our second chapter within this unit is centered around percents, fractions, and decimals. We've worked very hard on changing formats of numbers and how these numbers may look different but can be used to relay the same information. We will finish the chapter with a tough concept known as "percent of a number." For those of you who calculation sales tax, gratuities at restaurants, or even receiving the 30% of coupon at Kohl's, you know the importance of finding percent of a number.

Math is a unique subject. Some students love it, others hate it. Some feel gifted while others find it extremely frustrating or difficult. If your son/daughter is feeling frustrated with a concept, assignment, or all of math, I encourage you to let me know. It helps me when someone communicates this frustration so I can try to help relieve the stress that I understand some people feel about math. Thank you for all of your help and for encouraging your child to perform their best in math class. As always, I want parents to feel comfortable communicating with me by phone (712-756-4128) or email me at [jboersma@mocfv.org](mailto:jboersma@mocfv.org).



## 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Math

By: Mr. Baker

In 7<sup>th</sup> grade math we have just finished up a chapter on proportions and similarity. During this chapter the students worked with unit rates, scale drawings, and similar figures. Currently the students are working on a scale model project in which they choose an item to either enlarge or reduce in size. The students have to draw a quick sketch of their object, a scale drawing with an appropriate scale, and actually construct the object they drew a scale model of. The students have handouts with all the information regarding this project, and I look forward to seeing some very interesting models being on display in the classroom and in the hallways. The students seem to enjoy the change of pace from our "normal" class periods.



## 7<sup>th</sup> grade English

By: Mrs. VR (Van Regenmorter)

Before Christmas break, the 7th grade students wrote rough drafts of personal narratives, which is a true story about an experience that happened to the person who is writing it. Students learned the elements of a good narrative and four traits of good writing: voice, content, organization, and conventions. After returning from break, they revised and edited their personal narratives. We focused on the important difference between revising and editing. First, they revised, which means they worked to improve the content, details, description, and "showing" in their stories. Secondly, students edited, which is correcting conventions. Conventions is the term used for spelling, punctuation, sentence structure, correct language use and paragraph use, etc. After editing, they made the necessary corrections and produced their final personal narratives. Consequently, I'm in the middle of reading some neat stories about my students!

Earlier this school year, we learned about the most difficult punctuation mark, the comma, and how to use it correctly in our writing. Next, the 7th grade English students will review and learn about some other punctuation marks and their correct use in writing--semi-colons, colons, quotation marks, underlining (italics), and apostrophes. The 7th graders will have a final test over these punctuation marks, but just as when we learned about commas, the actual test will be using the punctuation correctly in their own writing. We learn how to correctly use punctuation to make our writing easier to read and understand.

Once again, thank you for reading the middle school newsletter and staying informed so you can communicate with your son or daughter about what's happening in school.

## Wieking's World

By: Mr. Wieking

Our return from Christmas break has found us covering the topic of free trade and globalization. We examined our free trade agreement, NAFTA, and discussed the benefits and drawbacks of these agreements. Another part of our unit revolved around globalization and the interconnectedness of our world. Our class researched where our shirts were made and connected the idea of global trade to our consumer spending. It was encouraging to listen to conversations surrounding working conditions, wages, and quality of products produced in other nations and the impact they have on us, the consumer. It really is amazing at how our world is becoming more and more connected and interdependent.

One of the core values of our school district is to foster and encourage civic responsibility in the lives of our students. A great opportunity and challenge we get to address in social studies is our government the many of the different ideas, opinions, and beliefs on how the country should be run. The students ask really good questions and show a genuine interest in the content, I'd like to encourage you to have a conversation around what is happening in our great country. Like me, you may be surprised at some things your student has questions about.

In the future we'll cover a short unit about financial literacy. This is a new content standard for seventh grade social studies and I am excited to see how it will go. Managing budgets, credit/debit cards, and planning for the future are values that students can take with them beyond the school building.

We will continue to move throughout the regions of the world to examine issues, challenges, people, and geography that shape all parts of the globe. One of the great things about technology integration in social studies is that we have the opportunity to make far off places come to life using tools like virtual and augmented reality apps. It's engaging, interesting, and raises a lot questions from the students.

Many of the 7<sup>th</sup> grade students will take on a new responsibility this semester – taking their chomebook home! Please help them set good habits with acceptable use, management, and taking care of school property. Students need to make sure their chromebooks are charged and ready for use at school.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns by calling the middle school or emailing me at [bwieking@mocfv.org](mailto:bwieking@mocfv.org)



### 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Science

By: Mrs. Vande Kieft

Why do two objects fall and hit the ground at the same time? What do magnets have to do with my earbuds? How does electricity make my hair stand up when I rub it with a balloon? The 7<sup>th</sup> graders are working to answer these questions and many more during our Forces and Interactions Unit where we are busy trying to answer our Big Question of "How do objects interact at a distance?" So far, each class has examined gravitational force and the effect that changes in mass and distance can have on the attraction of gravity. Through our investigations, the students have answered questions such as how can two objects land at the same time if they have different amounts of mass, examined the importance of inertia in staying in your seat in an upside down roller coaster, and also the role that inertia plays while dropping objects with different masses from various heights.

In February the 7<sup>th</sup> graders will be taking a more in depth look at the effects of electricity and magnetism and how each can impact objects without any contact between them. Our exploration of electricity and magnetism will conclude our studies for the Forces & Interactions Unit. During this month, each class will find out the answer to what causes magnetism while also comparing various magnet shapes and sizes to see their effect on the attraction or repulsion of other objects from a distance in preparation to design a Magnetic Car to race to the finish line. Our final investigations before break will be examining how electricity works and why static electricity tends to happen in the winter.

## 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Literature

By Mrs. Vermeer

This year is flying by us, we are already in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter and ready for the new challenges ahead of us.

We are diving into our class novel *The Giver*. This year we are trying some new things to help understand this complex text. Currently before reading chapters we are completing mini lessons that will help build understanding of dystopian novels. The students are enjoying these lessons and reading short dystopian passages and articles to build their understanding. We are not very far into *The Giver* yet but it won't be long before we are half way through. This unit will last most of the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter.

A new task has been given to the students that has affect on their independent reading, however we are hoping this will assist in their understanding of dystopian novels. The students selected a dystopian novel from a selection found by our librarians. The goal is to read this book in a month and complete our weekly log based on this book. This book is taking the place of their independent reading book. This is a requirement for all students to read a dystopian novel and complete it in a month. As we continue in this unit students will be asked to complete different tasks and assignments that focus on their book so it's very important that they are reading at home.

With the new quarter comes our new reading goal of 400 pages and a new book project. This project will have the students focus on using technology to present their book. This project will be the first presentation done in front of the whole class.

As we continue in *The Giver* unit I am excited to see the learning the students will accomplish and to see how they handle the new challenges and new ways of thinking about books!



## 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Math

By: Mr. Moww

Hopefully you are all keeping warm during these winter months! The 8th grade Pre-Algebra students have been working hard lately on linear equations and seeing if we can get ourselves up to mastery on that subject. We are preparing for the new standardized testing we will be taking this year which will include a lot of questions on linear equations and systems.

In Algebra 1, we are just finishing a unit on systems of equations and inequalities and then also will be preparing for the new state standardized tests.

If you can, please continue to encourage your child during these long winter months to really stay on top of their homework. The 3rd quarter is when we tend to see a lot of students 'fall of the homework cliff'. I have a student teacher in my room, Ms. De Haan who is currently a senior at Northwestern, she is doing a great job so far and learning the ropes of being a middle school math teacher.



## Our Corner of History

By: Miss Van Wyk

Welcome back for second semester, everyone! It's always good to be back in the classroom and re-connect with students after a long break. Returning to school, the eighth graders researched some of the untold stories of the Revolutionary War and have since moved on to learn how the colonies united to form a new nation following their defeat of the British. Students have examined the many challenges that the young country faced and are beginning to realize that forging one new nation out of 13 independent colonies is a very tricky business. Our focus will soon be shifting from the creation of the Constitution to the words of the document itself and how it spells out the rights of every U.S. citizen and establishes the plan for how our government will function.

## 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Science

By: Mrs. Hoogeveen

In December, we focused our attention on how sound works for us. Students explored echolocation, sound waves, and musical instrument vibrations translated to wave formation on an oscilloscope. We touched on how sound affects our ears. Eighth graders learned details about the “quietest place on Earth” which is a sound booth in Minneapolis. We did a wide variety of labs on how the energy from sound waves can move through different mediums as well as how and why waves move through materials. Using springs, we created standing waves and tuning forks show us how sound waves can move objects.

In early January, we shifted gears to focus on how the electromagnetic spectrum works for us. First, we explored what the electromagnetic spectrum (EM) is. Then we investigated how the EM waves are different than sound waves but that they still use the terms frequency and wavelength.

In our Mirror Lab, students trace reflective patterns, completed a light maze, tried to write words using a mirror, and compared concave mirrors to convex and plane mirrors. The last component was to apply how these mirrors are used in the world around us.

We currently are delving into how the visible light portion of the electromagnetic spectrum is reflected, transmitted, or refracted through different media. Our labs consist of refracting light through water, convex lenses, telescopes, fiber optic cable, different shaped lenses, and much more. After exploring the characteristics of refracting light waves, we want to make connections of how the electromagnetic spectrum is used by students in the world beyond the classroom.

The students are doing a fantastic job of increasing their awareness of their attention to detail and asking great, thought-provoking questions!



## 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Literature

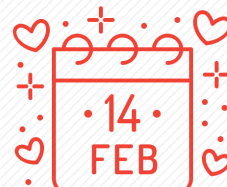
By: Mr. Boone

The 8<sup>th</sup> grade literature students are in the midst of researching their Holocaust topics. The Holocaust unit is in conjunction with Mrs. Oolman’s class, as they study and read the play, *The Diary of Anne Frank*. In literature, students are learning the research and note-taking process by identifying an essential question and guiding questions for their research, identifying central ideas and supporting details, along with using the Notice and Note Non-Fiction Signposts. Once the research is completed, students will prepare a presentation on their topic. Students will be required to rehearse multiple times in front of peers, parents, or siblings. These short presentations are essential incremental steps in creating effective communication skills and workplace readiness skills. Please take a moment to ask your child about their topic and encourage them to rehearse in front of you prior to their presentation. Following the presentations, we will spend a week making connections to the Holocaust and present-day forms of genocide.

I have enjoyed watching and helping students through the research process, and I look forward to watching their presentations. If parents would like a digital copy of their child’s presentation, please contact me, and I will be more than happy to share a digital copy of the presentation with you.



*Valentine's Day*



## 8<sup>th</sup> Grade English

By: Mrs. Dolman

MARVELOUS! That's the word I would use to describe the students' work on their last big piece of writing done for me! I absolutely enjoyed the entire process of writing this last piece, called the Me Collection. Three drafts, each done in a different "register" (either humorous, descriptive, or memoir), one of which was taken to a final draft. We reviewed and experimented with word choice, sentence patterns and structures, introductions, conclusions, and transitions. We worked hard at titling our stories in creative ways. It was such fun watching the kids take a mini-lesson and apply their knowledge! The end products were MARVELOUS!

Next, kids were challenged to give a speech about something that is important to them based on one of the three rough drafts they wrote. We again reviewed introductions and conclusions, but added choosing a topic, preparing a speech, creating notecards, tips for speaking, how to use our voices, and the importance of rehearsing. This particular group of students has some reservations about public speaking, but they are meeting those reservations HEAD ON and persevering! Impressive!

Up next?

### Who was Anne Frank?



Imagine you are 13 years old (about the age of your son or daughter now) and are literally being "hunted" by a group of police officers because of your religious beliefs or cultural heritage. This is the story of Anne Frank, a young German girl who flees Germany with her family in hopes of finding safety in Amsterdam.

Anne Frank was 13 years old when she received a diary from her father for her birthday. A few weeks later, she and her family were forced into hiding from Adolf Hitler and the Nazis as part of World War II's plan of destruction of over 6 million Jews. While Anne did not live to see her diary published, she did dream of becoming a famous author one day. Her dream came true when her father, Otto Frank, the only survivor of the eight who hid in Amsterdam for over two years, did indeed publish her diary in 1947. Since then, her diary has been published in over 65 different languages and millions of copies have been sold.

As part of our study on the Holocaust and Anne Frank, 8th graders will use her story in several formats to discover the answer to a couple larger questions.

1. When do movie makers and play producers have a responsibility to tell the truth about one's story in the work that they do?
2. When do WE as consumers of media (TV, movies, and play productions) have a responsibility to seek the truth ourselves?

To be specific, students will learn the truth about what Anne Frank endured and how she lived from a series of Google slides and background information notes given in class. Next, students will read the play version of her story and find contrasting information to the truth. Finally, students will view the movie version of her story and once again find contrasting details to the truth. Finally, students will assess WHY these changes are made. A culminating essay will conclude the unit.



# Groundhog Day

# February 2





# February 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3 4:15pm <b>GBB</b> vs Sibley-Ocheyedan 8 <sup>th</sup> (A) 7 <sup>th</sup> (H)  4:15pm WR: MS @West Lyon High School	4 End Exploratory Cycle 4  3wk grade chks-Qtr. 3	5 Exploratory Cycle 5 Begins	6 7:00am My Choice-Dodgeball  4:15pm WR: MS @MOC-Floyd Valley Middle School	7 1:15pm Early Dismissal	8
Makerspace						
9	10 4:15pm GBB vs. Rock Valley 8 <sup>th</sup> (A) 7 <sup>th</sup> (H)  4:15pm WR: MS @West Sioux High School	11	12	13 7:00am My Choice  4:15pm GBB vs. Sergeant Bluff-Luton 8 <sup>th</sup> (H) 7 <sup>th</sup> (A)	14 Valentine's Day	15 My Choice Ski Trip-Mt. Kato
16	17 President's Day  District Jazz Festival-LeMars HS & MS  4:15pm GBB vs.Sheldon Middle School 8 <sup>th</sup> (H) 7 <sup>th</sup> (A)	18 4:15pm GBB vs LeMars 7 <sup>th</sup> (H) 8 <sup>th</sup> (A)  4:15pm WR: MS @Le Mars Middle School	19	20 7:00am My Choice  4:15pm GBB vs.Sioux Center 8 <sup>th</sup> (H) 7 <sup>th</sup> (A)	21 1:15pm Early Dismissal	22
23	24 AEA Hearing Tests  3:30pm MS Solo Performance Night (Orchestra and Band) @Middle School  4:15pm WR: MS @Sheldon Middle School	25 Qrt. 3 6wk grade chk  4:15pm GBB vs. Cherokee 8 <sup>th</sup> (A) 7 <sup>th</sup> (H)	26 Climate & Belonging Survey	27 7:00am My Choice  4:15pm GBB vs.Le Mars Middle School 8 <sup>th</sup> (H) 7 <sup>th</sup> (A)  4:15pm WR: MS @Sheldon Middle School	28	29

# March 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3 Board Vote	4	5 7:00am My Choice	6 1:15pm Early Dismissal	7
Makerspace						
8 Daylight Savings Time Begins	9	10 Exploratory Cycle 5 Ends	11 Exploratory Cycle 6 Begins  MS Track Practice Begins	12 7:00am My Choice  7:00pm Mass Band Concert (Grades 6-12) @HS New Gym	13	14
15	16 7:00pm MS Choir & Orcehstra Concert	17 St. Patrick's Day  End of 3rd Qtr	18	19 7:00am My Choice  4:00pm-8:00pm Parent-Teacher Conferences	20 Spring Begins  Begin Quarter. 4  1:15pm Early Dismissal	21
ISASP Testing						
22	23 4:00pm-8:00pm Parent-Teacher Conferences	24	25	26	27 No School Teacher Comp Day	28
29	30 6:30pm FFA Banquet@HS New Gym	31				