MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS

MOC-FV CSD

November

2020

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- Middle School Party Night
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Veterans Day Program

In the past, the Middle School has hosted a Veterans Day program for our community. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 restrictions, we will not be able to hold this program for the community this year. While we are disappointed to not be able to hold this event, everyone at the Middle School would like to extend a large "Thank You" and our appreciation to the men and women that have served and continue to serve our nation.

Middle School Party Night Fall 2020

Typically, the Middle School has hosted a "Party Night" during November. However, due to the COVID-19 restrictions we will not be able to hold this event like we have in years past. The Middle School Building Leadership Team will be looking at ways that we can provide a fun activity for the students while ensuring safety for those that attend. Once an event has been planned, we will communicate with everyone.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Thank you to everyone that has participated in conferences this Fall. While we know that it is better to meet face-to-face with all of you, we appreciate the communication that we were able to have. I encourage everyone to have reflective conversations with your student about school, habits they are forming, and social-emotional issues that they may be facing. While they may not always show it, middle school students still need and desire your help and wisdom.

If you have any questions, after your conference, please feel free to reach out to your student's individual teachers. A list of their email addresses can be found on the Middle School webpage at: http://mocfv.org/index.php/schools/middle-school/ under the staff directory button.











Winter Dress

While inside the Middle School it is always "72 and Sunny" the temperatures outside of our building can be a different story. Students are encouraged to have warm clothes with them. There are situations where students may end up outside of the school (ie. Fire Drills, loading school buses, etc.) when the wind chills and actual temperatures can become dangerous if students are exposed to them for a duration of time. Students riding the school bus are encouraged to have pants in the event that there is an accident/situation with the school bus. The purpose of this is to keep students safe when the temperatures start to drop. Thank you for your help.

No School November 6

We will not have school on Friday, November 6. This is a Parent-Teacher conferences comp day.



Homework and Grades

Homework completion can be a struggle for some students and it may create tension in some homes. Students are provided with a planner that they can write their assignments down in every day. As part of APL strategies, classroom teachers write the daily agenda and Homework assignment on the board every day. Students are encouraged to copy this down at the beginning of the class period. However, should the student miss a class, not get the assignment written down, etc. assignments can be found on the Middle School webpage at: http://mocfv.org/ index.php/schools/middle-school/ under the Assignments Tab.

We will continue to send home three week grade checks with the students. However, if you want to keep up-to-date on your student's homework assignments and grades, you can log in to your Parent Portal account on Infinite Campus. On this account you will be able to see your child's schedule, attendance, grades, assignments, and lunch account. You can access this Parent Portal Account at: http://mocfv.org/index.php/resources/ in the Parents Column under the Infinite Campus button.











Dress Code Reminder

Just as a reminder, the foundation of the dress code at the Middle School is modesty. I realize that the new trend is to have ripped jeans. In and of themselves, the rips in the jeans are fine however when the rip gets too high on the leg it shows more skin than is deemed "modest". Students that have jeans with rips above mid-thigh will need to have something underneath their jeans so that there is no exposed skin above the mid-thigh level. If students do have exposed skin high on their thigh, they will be asked to correct their dress which may involve changing.











Weather Related Late Starts and Early Dismissals

Winter weather will soon be here and that means the possibility of late starts and/or early dismissals. Please talk with your child on what they should in the case of an early out or late start. Typically, it puts the students at ease when there is a "plan" for these situations. If school is dismissed early, it becomes a challenge to get phone messages to everyone at the end of the day. On a two hour late start, the doors to the Middle School do not open until 10:00am.

If school starts late, all of the following will NOT MEET: My Choice, before school meetings with teachers, athletic or fine arts practices, and no breakfast will be served. 8th grade students will still have their exploratory classes at the high school on late start mornings.

If school dismisses early because of weather, all of the following will NOT MEET: all practices & games, and any after school meetings and clubs.

Weather related information is available on the school website, through the school Twitter page, through Infinite Campus alerts, and will be on the following Radio and TV stations:

KSOU 93.9FM and 1090AM in Sioux Center KIWA 105.3FM and 1550AM in Sheldon KLEM 99.5FM and 1410AM in LeMars KDCR 88,5FM TV Stations: KMEG, KCAU, & KTIV



6th Grade Math

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By: Mr. Boersma

Whew, the first quarter is over! It was definitely a learning experience for me, as well as for the students (probably parents as well). During this time a few questions have arisen that I am going to try answer for you. As always, I would like parents to know that you can email or call me directly if you have a question/concern for me.

I have had a lot of people ask me about Study Island. Study Island is an ungraded, online opportunity for students to increase their number sense and build certain skills. Students are assigned one Study Island assignment each Monday and it is due the following Monday. A Study Island assignment consists of a lesson that the students read and sometimes watch a video that explains the material. Then, there is a "session" that may be done in either game mode or practice mode. The session consists of 10 questions and the students can pass it, or earn a Blue Ribbon, by achieving a 70% or higher. If a student receives lower than a 70% they are asked to do at least one more session. After that, the student may be done, or they may continue sessions attempting to achieve a Blue Ribbon.

I've also had a few parents who had questions about raising a student's score. I have a few suggestions in this regard. First and foremost, study for and do a great job on the math tests. Math tests are worth 60% of students' overall score. If the test did not go well, test retakes are always an option. Secondly, quizzes. Quizzes are worth 30% of the overall score. Quizzes are short (usually 4 questions) and will often be retaken a day or two following the original quiz. Finally, daily assignments. Daily assignments are worth 10% of the overall grade which may not seem like a large portion, but the daily assignments are one of the major ways students can practice skills for upcoming tests/quizzes. Assignments are graded for completion but corrected in class for students to see strengths and areas to improve. Learning from these mistakes is invaluable to students but awfully difficult to do with missing and/or late work.

So, to sum up. Complete assignments on time, learn from mistakes, retake quizzes when needed, and study for tests. However, one of the most valuable skills students can practice is asking questions. Whether that happens on assignment, practice tests, or retake study sessions, asking questions is an invaluable skill that can carry over to further grades or levels of education











Read All About It ... 6th Grade Literature

By: Mrs. Tegrotenhuis

November will be full of a variety of activities in literature class! We are currently wrapping up our unit on the book *Among the Hidden*. We will then focus on specific literary terms and devices that authors commonly use within literature. Additionally, we will begin working on our first quarter book shares, explaining the plot lines of a favorite book to classmates. The students have been reading a lot of different genres, and I look forward to hearing about these!

One of my favorite units to teach will begin in mid-November: a non-fiction unit centering around young heroes. In addition to learning about Malala, a 15 year-old girl who stood up to a deadly terrorist group in Pakistan and also won the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize, we will also learn about other young people who have faced adversity and positively affected those around them. During this time, students will work on close reading skills, finding the central idea, and using text evidence.

I encourage students to continue reading daily and recording their pages on their reading logs. Most students are doing a nice job with this and enjoy the freedom to read books of their own choosing. I will be challenging the students to read from different genres second quarter in order to expose them to different authors and types of books. Please encourage your child in this area! Thanks for all you do to help!

6th Grade Science

By: Mr. H (Hoebelheinrich)

Since the beginning of the school year, the 6th grade students have adapted well to the middle school setting. Science is much different than other subjects in the fact that we do a lot of hands-on activities with unique objects that they normally would not use. Therefore, it is very important that we understand how to act in a lab setting to ensure that no one is injured in the science classroom. After understanding the why behind behaving well in my class, we practiced gathering data by using observation skills, and the Metric System. This was a hands on unit, because the best way to learn how to measure is to practice measuring. The 6th graders are now able to find length, volume, temperature, and mass of certain things using the metric system.

We ended our Engineering Design Process unit a few weeks ago. During this unit, the students are learned the process through creating and designing their own unique catapult. This is a great way to end the first unit because they are using the Design Process, finding measurements/data, and learning how to work in a safe lab environment.

After the Engineering Design Process unit we jumped into the world of physical science. What makes everything up? How do 100 atoms off of the periodic table create everything we see in the world today? How does matter move? We've discussed the history of the atom and how the model of an atom has changed over the course of history. We jumped into the atomic structure of atoms and how the structure is important for determining many properties of a substance. We discussed that all matter is actually moving except at absolute zero where all movement stops.

What's to come?

During the next month the 6th graders will complete a Phet simulation dealing with how matter moves differently and how the space between the particles can be changed depending on other variables such as volume, temperature or pressure. This is important as we looked into how matter can change from one state into another. Lastly, we finished up discussing physical/chemical changes and how no matter what the change is matter is neither created nor destroyed.

6th Grade Social Studies

By: Mr. Nonnemacher

We continue to plug away in our Ancient Egypt Unit! This is always one of the most enjoyable and interesting units of the school year for us in 6th grade social studies. Soon, the kids are going to put all of their knowledge to the test. I tell the kids every quiz and test that we have, "This *could be* the easiest quiz or test you take all school year." My expectations for my students are that they listen and interact in class, stay caught up with their homework, and study when it comes time for studying. If they can consistently do those three things, I firmly believe that each test could be the easiest test they take all year. Following our unit test, we will spend a week comparing Ancient Egypt to Modern Egypt. They will use everything they have learned and combine and compare that to what is going on in the country today. They will be researching using Chromebooks, textbooks, and materials from the public library to complete this project. They will need to insert all of their research into a presentation platform such as Google Slides, Prezi, etc... I look forward to seeing what they come up with!

As always, we continue to make an effort to make others smile. We write down our Grateful Comments on a daily basis, and I provide an opportunity for my students to fill someone else's bucket. If you are a parent of a 6th grader, please ask them some of the things they are grateful for, and check if they have filled someone else's bucket recently! Go Dutch!







More and More Grammar in 6th Grade English

By: Mrs. Jacobsma

We have finished the voice writing unit--the scary story narrative. I LOVE this piece of writing because it ignites hope in so many kids that writing could be a valuable skill for them! They learn, through this unit, that they CAN write and maybe even enjoy it. I am tickled by the conversations with kids who had no idea they could write something entertaining and valuable. This is the piece that opens their eyes!

Following this writing, we will begin a grammar unit on punctuation. We will hit these rules with intensity and swiftness. In about a week, we will cover the unfamiliar rules and review the tried and true ones we've used for years.

Then we'll head into a short writing unit about keeping a writer's notebook. We'll look at why, how, and do some journaling, of sorts.

As always, please feel free to contact me if you have any questions at tjacobsma@mocfv.org.











Wieking's World

By: Mr. Wieking

The first quarter has come and gone and we're still in school learning face to face. Despite some challenges and changes in schedules our students have done a good job of getting on track with their learning. I am so thankful that we have the opportunity to teach and learn as a class in our school building.

Looking ahead to the next few weeks our global studies class will wrap up learning about Human Rights. We have already taken a close look at two different case studies involving human rights around the world - one in Chile and one in Myanmar. Both case studies primarily involved political rights and the ability for people to vote and express their ideas and opinions. Our final case study will examine the Lost Boys from Sudan and South Sudan. While we learn about these boys and their unbelievable journey we will identify groups and organizations that help to fight for human rights around the world. The purpose is to be able to identify human rights violations and to be able to find opportunities to help those who may have experienced circumstances that have taken away their rights.

It really does seem like we're falling into a good groove as the year progresses. I would like to encourage everyone to keep working hard and giving their best efforts on all homework assignments, projects, and tests. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at bwieking@mocfv.org.

7th Grade Math

By: Mr. Baker

In math we are continuing to learn new math skills each day. I feel like the pace has ramped up and keeping caught up with assignments is essential to their current success. Recently we finished up chapter two which dealt with integers. We used several real life examples of integers, played some fun games including Coordinate Battleship, and used different scenarios to remember how to handle adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing integers. We are now working our way through chapter three dealing primarily with fractions. A new step is added each day, which makes understanding the homework the night before very important.

I want to also thank you for all your support, encouragement, and assistance you have provided your son or daughter during the first quarter of school. Overall, the students have done a great job this quarter, and I look forward to working with each of them the rest of the year. The material will continue to get more difficult, so encouraging your son or daughter through some upcoming frustrating moments will benefit them greatly. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

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7th Grade English

By: Mrs. VR (Van Regenmorter)

The seventh graders have been writing an opinion essay in English class. The topic provided to them was, "Should students be allowed to use cell phones during school?" They read two articles about the topic and formed their opinion based on the information in the articles. Next, they completed some pre-writing assignments to help them develop an introduction, develop reasons for their opinion, find quotes to support their reason, and develop a conclusion. After completing these pre-writing assignments, they completed a rough draft of their opinion essay. As I write this newsletter, students are helping each other revise and edit their essays, and in the next couple of days, the final draft will be handed in. I'm anxious to read their opinions, their reasons, and how they used evidence to support their reasons.

After the 7th graders hand in their final opinion essays, we are going to move onto a capitalization unit. Much of the unit will review things that they have learned about capitalization in the past, and then we will learn some new things about capitalization within our English language. At the end of the unit, there will be a test given so the 7th graders can demonstrate that they are able to correctly use capitalization in writing.

Needless to say, the first quarter of this school year has been like no other. Never before have I taught to students through a computer screen at the same time as teaching to students in my classroom. Never before have I had to prepare lessons and assignments to be done totally online. Never before have I done parent-teacher conferences through a computer screen. The list could go on and on. Because of our persistence, resilience, and hard work, we are making it all happen. Parents, thank you so much for your patience, understanding, and grace as I navigate this new path of educating students. I appreciate the communication I have with so many of you. As we move forward in a school year like no other before, let's continue to work together. Finally, thank you for taking the time to read the middle school newsletter. By reading our newsletter and staying informed, you have opportunities to talk with your son or daughter about school and what they are learning!

7th Grade Literature

By: Mrs. Vermeer

We are officially done with our Signpost units and the kids could not be more excited. It is a long unit with lots of new information to learn. I am very proud of all the work they have done and it's great to see them already using the signposts to better understand their books. We are also wrapping up our first full vocabulary unit. Each unit is made up of four sets of vocabulary words. With each set they take notes over the definition, complete a couple practice assignments, and then take a quiz. Overall, the students are doing a great job getting the assignments done on time and passing the quizzes.

Looking ahead we will be starting one of our more difficult units of 7th grade and this is our bias unit. In this unit the students will be challenged to analyze two or more articles and pull out facts to support a statement. After doing this they will be asked to determine which article agrees with the statement. However, the challenge comes when the students will have to decide if the facts are presenting the whole part of the fact or just the part the author wants you to be aware of. This unit will challenge them, and we will work through the challenges together.

Just before the 1st quarter ended we did a book project over a book we read. The 1st quarter project was writing a letter to the author of a book we read. The students have enjoyed writing to the authors about what they liked and encouraging the author to write more. Some students have chosen to also send the letter to the author so those will be going out soon. They are very eager to hear back from their authors!

In the 2nd quarter independent reading expectations will change. We will challenge the students a little more this quarter with the reading challenge of 500 pages. I have no doubt the students will make this goal.

Keep up the amazing work 7th graders and you will have a successful year!

7th Grade Science

By: Mrs. Vande Kieft

During the month of October, the 7th graders have been playing the role of a medical student in the Emergency Room in attempts to diagnose a patient. We have used this opportunity as a means of exploration of the various systems of the body in attempts to answer our Big Question: "How do things in our body make us feel the way that we do?" To conclude our tour through the body systems, each Team examined the different structures that they had learned about in a complex organism similar to humans. In order to view these body systems first hand, each Team dissected fetal pigs in small groups to examine the similarities and differences from what we learned about the human body. By diagnosing our patient and investigating the anatomy of a fetal pig, the 7th graders were able to gain a greater understanding of the complexity and cooperation of the various body systems.

Why do I have blue eyes? Why do you have brown hair? Can you roll your tongue? The 7th graders will be investigating the answers to these questions in November along with our Big Question: "Why do offspring with the same parents look different?" during science class as part of the Genetics and Heredity Unit. Each Team will be exploring various traits that they have inherited from their parents and comparing those traits with their teammates. During this unit, we will be conducting investigations to isolate DNA from various fruits, determining the importance of DNA in expressing who we are, and predicting the probability of various genotypes and phenotypes for potential offspring. Within the unit on genetics, we will also be looking at the occurrence of mutations and its effects on different organisms. Students will gain a better understanding of the common mutations that they may have or find around them in nature while determining if those mutations pose a potential harmful, beneficial, or neutral effect.

Finally, we will explore the new area of science, epigenetics, to see how much the environment plays a factor in the genetics and growth of various organisms.











8th Grade Pre-Algebra & Algebra 1

By: Mr. Mouw

It is crazy to think the first quarter is over already! It has flown by. Now that parent teacher conferences are over it would be a great time to make sure your student doesn't 'relax' and keeps going strong throughout the second quarter.

In Algebra 1, we are just starting linear equations. This will be completely new for them but I think we are off to a pretty good start. As I have been reminding the Algebra 1 students, the calculations we make in this class are really no harder than what they do in 6th grade. What is harder, though, is knowing what to do! Encourage them to continue to focus on making sure they understand the larger concepts involved and ask questions if they are unsure about something.

In Pre-Algebra, we just got done solving one and two step equations and are going to be moving on to equations that are going to be a little bit more challenging! As always, please encourage your student to continue to do quality daily work and to use their notes as they work on their assignments.



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8th Grade Science

By: Mrs. Hoogeveen

In 8th grade, we have transitioned from Earth science to the new Next Generation Science Standards. We will not be using a textbook but rather using multiple resources to guide us through our different topics. Much of what we will be using will accessible through Google Classroom and the Internet.

"How has natural processes and human activities changed Earth's climate?

The eighth graders just finished up exploring our changing climate. We used NASA's websites that have been tracking a variety climate-related topics. We noticed several trends that have been occurring since the Industrial Revolution. First, of all the greenhouse gases, carbon dioxide has experienced the most change. Second, globally, the northern hemisphere's temperature has risen the most. Third, our glaciers are melting at a very fast past and that our natural "air conditioning" may be gone and very difficult to replace. We researched natural causes of CO₂ emissions to see if they have significantly caused changes. Lastly, we explored options that each and every one of us can do to reduce our impact. After all, small steps make big changes.

"How do we track the changes of organisms over time?"

We are just delving into fossil formation, how fossils become exposed, what clues fossils give us about the past, and how fossils are similar and yet diverse. We will explore how fossils show that animals change due to a variety of reasons, such as; devasting destruction of habitat, extinction of prey, plate tectonics, and more.

In November, the 8th grade science classes will be synthesizing information about how technologies have influenced the inheritance of desired traits in organisms.

Most of the students are completing their homework on time. Homework is a <u>vital</u> part of classroom instruction and reinforcement. I am very appreciative of you reminding your son / daughter to be responsible young adults. Thanks!











8th Grade Literature

By: Mr. Boone

In 8th grade literature, we are currently reading *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton. Throughout the book, we will be analyzing characters using five key elements of character analysis – traits, motivation, conflict, point of view, and relationships. I have divided the novel into four sections. During each section of three chapters, students will learn new vocabulary, answer reading guide questions, and connect the novel to other text including informational text and poetry. In the second half of the book, we will turn our focus toward how characters reveal themes within a novel. Since the book contains many teenage applicable life issues, we have had great class discussion, and in order to make connections to our culture and society today, I have developed four big idea questions to help frame our reading.

- 1. How do social groups play a part in school?
- 2. How does someone's appearance affect how others view him or her?
- 3. How do you define the word "family"? Does a family mean different things to different people?
- 4. What do you think contributes to violence or bullying among teenagers? What can be done to prevent teen violence or bullying?

After finishing the book, we will be watching the video and writing a final essay. I believe watching the video is a great way for students to compare the visual image of a movie to the visual image they have created in their mind while reading the book.

Finally, I want to continue stressing the importance of independent reading. Practicing and learning to enjoy reading is essential to improved reading rate, accuracy, and comprehension. I want to encourage parents to engage their child in a conversation about the book *The Outsiders* or an independent reading book.

8th Grade English

By: Mrs. Oolman

We have tackled and mastered troublesome words! Words such as to, too, and two. There, they're, and their. Quiet and quite. Accept and except. Students did a fantastic job learning these words. We are now working on applying their knowledge and skills in real situations; this is more of a challenge.

Up next? Students will be learning how to form an opinion and put that opinion into a piece of writing and backing UP that opinion with specific evidence! We will be reading a couple of articles about student "mental health days" and "school start times". Once done reading, students will form an opinion, choose important facts and details, and form an opinion essay about their topic of choice. This is a great opportunity to practice and learn writing skills!

Following the opinion essay, students will be reviewing KU Sentence writing strategies and refining their knowledge of compound, complex, and compound-complex sentence construction. This short unit will prove invaluable as students continue to write for English and other content area classes. One of our writing pieces during this review is a Preposition Poem. It's pretty easy to write, but does ask kids to reflect and focus on an event or space that's important to them. Fun to read!

We've used our chromebooks in many ways in English. We have completed bell ringer reviews, written our rough drafts, worked collaboratively on revising and editing our pieces of writing, and we've used a program called NoRedInk for reviewing and learning new grammar and writing concepts. This program allows students to practice their grammar and writing skills related to their personal interests like sports, celebrities, and music. Even more, NoRedInk provides immediate feedback and differentiated lessons for those needing more or less practice on a concept. Students work at a pace set by them. Tutorials are provided when learners get "stuck". Mistakes are corrected and students go on! Each student has an account connected to mine, and I can track progress on homework, practice, and quizzes. NoRedInk has already proven to be a fantastic resource for our students! In addition to NoRedInk, students find Google Classroom works well for taking spelling tests, reviewing for tests and quizzes, and for getting information / instruction from teachers! Quizlet has been a great program to use to create reviews for tests. The Chromebooks are pieces of educational equipment and have been a true blessing for which we are super grateful!

Whenever students are absent (be it a whole day or just for an appointment), we as a team ask that they (and you, as parents, too) consult the website for a list of assignments made. Additionally, all of us are posting a video of the day's overview or teaching a lesson (or both). I post information right into Google Classroom as well. Students should also be checking this resource when absent. Thanks for PARTNERING with us to stay caught up and "in the know" in these strange times!











Our Corner of History

By: Ms. Van Wyk

In 8th grade American History, we have just finished studying the first groups of European settlers who came to North America. We have learned about where they settled and more importantly why they chose to migrate to America. Students discovered that settlers came for many different reasons: to spread their faith, to seek riches, to obtain glory, etc. In our first annual Document Based Question assignment, students had the opportunity to read the direct words of the earliest settlers. Taking the role of detectives looking for evidence, the 8th graders studied the documents for clues about the relationship between Europeans and Native Americans. Soon, we will look at life in each of the three regions of the 13 colonies: New England, the Middle Colonies, and the Southern Colonies.

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November 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	Election Day NWICDA 8th Honor Choir @ LeMars	4	7:00am My Choice	6 No School Teacher Comp Day	7 NWIBA Jr. High Honor Band Concert at Storm Lake
8	9	10	Veterans Day	7:00am My Choice	13 1:15pm Early Dismissal Professional Development	14
15	16 QTR. 2 3 Week Chk. 4:00pm BB: B vs Sergeant Bluff-Luton 8th(H) 4:15pm 7th (A)	17 4:15pm BB: B vs Sioux Center 7th(H) 8 th (A)	18	7:00am My Choice	20 1:15pm Early Dismissal Professional Development	21
22	23 4:15pm BB: B vs Boyden 7th (A) 8 th (H)	24 4:15pm BB: B vs Sibley-Ocheyedan High 7th(H) 8 th (A)	No School	26 No School Thanksgiving Day	No School	28
29	30 4:15pm BB: B vs Central Lyon 7th(H)8 th (A)					

December 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		4:15pm BB-B vs LeMars 7 th (H) 8 th (A)	2	7:00am My Choice 4:15pm BB B vs Sioux Center 7 th (A) 8 th (H)	1:15pm Early Dismissal	5
6	7 Qrt. 2 6 week grade checks 4:15pm BB B vs Sheldon 7 th (H) 8 th (A)	8	9	7:00am My Choice 4:15pm BB B vs Rock Valley 7 th (A) 8 th (H)	11 1:15pm Early Dismissal	12
13	14 4:15pm BB B vs LeMars 7 th (A) 8 th (H)	15	16	7:00am My Choice 4:15pm BB B vs Sergeant Bluff-Luton 7 th (H) 8 th (A)	18 1:15pm Early Dismissal	19
20	Winter Begins MS Holiday Concert	End 2 nd Qtr.	No School	No School Winter Brea	Christmas Day No School	26
27	28 No School	29 No School	30 No School	No School		School Resumes January 5
Winter Break						