

MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS

MOC-FV CSD

February

2021

Special points of interest:

- Valentine's Day
- Student Drop Off and Pick Up
- Parenting Middle School Student
- Snow Makeup Day
- Book Fair
- Moped Safety Course Offered



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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.



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.



MOC Floyd Valley Middle School Spring Scholastic Online Book Fair!

March 15-28, 2021

- Over 6,000 products including award-winners, bestsellers, boxed sets, and more
- Begin shopping online on March 15 at <https://www.scholastic.com/bf/mocfvms>
- All orders ship home
- Free shipping on book-only orders over \$25



Snow Makeup Day

Monday February 15 will be a Full day of school due to the snow day on Friday, January 15. This day was listed as the first snow makeup day on our district calendar.

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 contains 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 run 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.



6th Grade Social Studies

By Mr. Nonnemacher

Thank you for taking the time to read through our happenings in the 6th grade social studies classroom! We are halfway through our Ancient India Unit in class. Ancient India is 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 upcoming activity, the kids will be split into 5 different “levels” that are reflective of how Ancient Indians used to be separated. We will have priests, warriors, merchants, servants, and untouchables. We will also talk 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. It is my hope that after this activity is complete, your student will want you to hear all about what their experience was like! The school year continues to go so fast, and 6th grade continues to be a very enjoyable experience for both myself and the kids! I cherish the opportunities to connect with 120+ kids on a daily basis, and I look forward to this next month!



Lots of Creativity Flowing in 6th Grade English

By: Mrs. Jacobsma

February brings exciting times in English. We are putting all of our writing and thinking skills to the test as we create a choose your own adventure story. The development of this story is quite a task as it will have a grand total of EIGHT different endings. It will showcase the kids' writing skills in ways they can't even imagine. Stay tuned as the plot develops and look for the links to your child's story coming near the end of February.

We will also continue with spelling, editing, and grammar, of course. Smaller discussions and quizzes will help the students catalog and refine what they know about their language.

These next couple months are my favorite time of the year. We know each other well enough to relax and take some educational risks. We have built enough confidence in ourselves to try new things. Thanks for sharing your child with me.



READ ALL ABOUT IT . . . 6TH GRADE LITERATURE

By: Mrs. TeGrotenhuis

Our sixth-grade students will be taking on a daunting task – a research paper! 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. Yes, 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 began 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 will be anxiously waiting to read about the heroes of our current students!

Students have created new reading goals for the third quarter. One of my expectations for all students is 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 time aside each day to read and complete other homework is a great idea! Thanks!

7th Grade Literature

Page 4

By Mrs. Vermeer

3rd Quarter and 2nd Semester are here! Our class novel will be our focus for Quarter 3 and will take up most of the quarter. We will still have our reading goal, quarterly book project and some progress monitoring testing along the way as well.

Our class novel is *The Giver* by Lois Lowry. It is a Newbery Medal book meaning it has distinguished honors that its writing has contributed to American literature for children. The book is a dystopian genre which in short means it focuses on futuristic worlds that seem perfect but have hidden secrets. This novel is complex and really has the students challenged to read books at grade level that provoke deep thinking. For this unit I have broken the book down into 4 sections. For each section we will spend time learning new vocabulary for the section and answering questions tailored to those chapters. Throughout this unit we will also be spending time analyzing the dystopian genre. We will look at what makes this genre so unique and challenging for readers. We will also spend time figuring out our jobs as readers when reading this genre. As we continue to read the students are finding out that these worlds are very different however, they do connect to our world in many ways. As the unit continues this concept will continue to pop up and challenge the students to reflect upon their own lives.

Some additional items for this unit will be each student will be selecting a dystopian novel from a selection and reading it on their own. By doing so we will spend time comparing our class novel and their individual novel. This book does count towards their new quarter goal and towards their genre log. While the students were selecting books, many were very excited for what they found and are planning on reading a couple that they saw.

Being it is a new quarter means a new quarter goal. Like previous quarters the goal increases to continue to challenge the students. Quarter 3 goal is 700 pages or 4-6 books. We will continue to do a quarterly book project and this one focuses on technology. Students have the option to use any app, website, or Google Doc extension that they have on their Chromebooks to create a presentation that shares what their book is about. There will be a rubric to come with specifics for this project as well.

I am very excited for this new quarter, new challenges, and their excitement for our class novel and dystopian literature.



7th Grade Math

By Mr. Baker

In 7th 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. Soon the students will be 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.



7th 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. Before writing their personal narratives, we talked about the elements of a good narrative and four traits of good writing: voice, content, organization, and conventions. Since returning from break, students have been focusing on revising their personal narratives. Revising means that a writer works to improve the content, details, and description of their writing. To do this, the 7th graders read three other classmates' stories and helped those classmates find where the content (information) needed improvement. When peer revising was completed, students looked at the suggestions for improvement from their classmates and went to work improving the content, details, and description in their personal narratives. Often, students believe that revising and editing happen at the same time, but these are two different steps that should be completed separately. Consequently, after students made revising improvements to their stories, they had a rough draft #2, which then needed editing. Editing means that a writer corrects conventions in the writing. Conventions is the term used for capitalization, spelling, punctuation, sentence structure, language use, paragraph use, etc. Once again, students helped each other find these errors, and they corrected the conventions in their stories. Once all these steps were completed, the students produced their final personal narrative to hand in. By the time you read this newsletter, I'm sure I'll be in the middle of reading some neat stories about my students!

With the completion of the final personal narrative, we will move on to a punctuation unit in English class. We will review and learn more about using commas, semi-colons, colons, quotation marks, and apostrophes correctly in written language. The 7th graders will have a final test over these punctuation marks. However, the actual test will occur when students show they can use these punctuation marks correctly in their own writing. Ultimately, we learn how to correctly use punctuation to make our writing easier to read and understand.

Once again, that covers what has been and will be happening in 7th grade English classes. Thank you for reading the middle school newsletter and staying informed. Being informed gives you a chance to communicate with your son or daughter about what's happening in school. Until next time.



7th Grade Science

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By: Mrs. Vande Kieft

How small are we on Earth compared to the rest of the Universe? Why do eclipses only happen every so often? During January, the 7th graders explored the vastness of space in our Earth in the Universe Unit. To kick off our exploration, we began with investigating our Big Question, "How can we predict eclipses?" To help us find the answer to this question, the 7th graders tracked the phases of the moon each day to analyze its effect on the probability of an eclipse. This led to our discussion about the movement of the Earth, Sun, and Moon and its importance to Lunar and Solar Eclipses and the various phases of the Moon. To gain a better understanding of how the movement of the Earth, Sun, and Moon create these phenomena, we created actual eclipses and moon phases using a 3-D "moon" and light source. The focus of our exploration then shifted to what lies beyond the Earth, Sun, and Moon within our own Solar System. The 7th graders read various scientific articles to better understand what lies beyond Earth, our Solar System, the Milky Way Galaxy, and out into the universe. We traveled through our Solar System in a Virtual Reality tour using Google Expedition where we were able to view the various aspects of the Universe. As part of our tour we visited the Sun, each planet, our Moon, and various other features found in our Solar System.

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 7th graders are currently 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?" In February each class will examine gravitational, magnetic, and electrical force and the effect that changes in mass and distance can have on the attraction. Through our investigations, the students will explore how gravity, magnetism, and electricity work and can influence other objects without physically touching. The 7th graders will investigate questions such as how can two objects land at the same time if they have different amounts of mass? What is the importance of inertia in gravitational attraction? What causes magnetism, and why does static electricity tend to happen in the winter?



Wieking's World

By: Mr. Wieking

We have finished our unit in Central America and the Caribbean. Within this unit we have spent some time discussing the contemporary global issue of standard of living. We discussed the inequalities that exist in our societies and the factors that contribute to them. I am reminded each class period of the curious nature of our students and their compassionate attitudes. We finalized this unit with a project over various issues in our society and how we can work to improve them. Students were free to choose a topic that they cared about and was interesting to them. We had great presentations that addressed issues related to education, healthcare, poverty, and unemployment. These topics aren't always easy to discuss or to research, but our students handle this with understanding, maturity, and a desire to know more. I was reminded more than once about all the wonderful things our community does for others who experience situations that are more difficult than our own.

Our next unit takes us to parts of Asia. We'll examine ancient cultural traditions, new world conflicts, and challenging trends in global issues like food supply, population growth, and globalization. I look forward to guiding our students through these real world issues that are becoming increasingly more and more relevant.

Thank you for all you do to help ensure the success of our students. I know we are all looking forward to longer days and warmer weather. This can really be a challenging part of the school year without much of a break from school. Thank you for your continued efforts to encourage your student and carry on with helpful study and learning habits.

8th Grade English

By Mrs. Oolman

MARVELOUS! That's the word I would use to describe the students' work on the KU Writing Strategies we finished up just before winter break!

Up next? Our study of Anne Frank!

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, Netherlands / Holland.

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 by 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 as follows:

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.

Mrs. Oolman's Student Teacher

Hello! My name is Alex Tiedemann, and I will be student teaching in Mrs. Oolman's room until the first week of March! I am currently finishing up my senior year at Dordt University, and student teaching helps me fulfill my final requirements. In May, I will be graduating with a degree in elementary education and a middle school math and language arts endorsement. I hope to stick around here to teach after graduation!

To tell you a bit about myself, I am originally from Boyden and attended Boyden-Hull Community School all my life and graduated from there in 2018. After graduating, I went on to Dordt to pursue a degree in education. Alongside being a student, I am also a cheerleading coach for Boyden-Hull Basketball, a cheerleading coach for Boyden-Hull Rock Valley Football and a high school youth sponsor at American Reformed Church in Hull. Between cheer and youth group, I work at a Hope Haven house in Hull and spend time assisting individuals' needs. Beyond all of these things, I am excited to continue to get to know your students and grow as a future educator!



February 2

**GROUNDHOG
DAY**

Our Corner of History

Page 8

By: Ms. 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 have been studying how the colonies united to form a new nation following their victory over 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. We will be looking at how it spells out the rights of every U.S. citizen and establishes the plan for how the U.S. government will function. Understanding what the Constitution says and how it works is crucial to a healthy democracy! Don't be surprised if students come home with questions because this unit usually results in generating good conversations!



8th 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 showed 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!



8th Grade Literature

By: Mr. Boone

The 8th 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, *Diary of Anne Frank*. In literature, students are learning the research and note-taking process by identifying an essential question, writing guiding questions for their research, and identifying central ideas and supporting details. Once the research is completed, students will prepare a presentation on their topic. Students will be required to rehearse multiple times in front of their 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.

MOPED SAFETY COURSE

Neil Bracker, Instructor



When: Friday, February 26th, from 1:30pm-6:00pm

Where: MOC-FLOYD VALLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL-ROOM 121

Cost: \$45 per student. Bring cash or a check payable to **Neil Bracker**.

What is this course: This course is a review of basic rules of the road and safety concerns for young drivers. It does not include any actual driving of mopeds. Lectures, note-taking, videos, and group activities are all a part of the course. There will be several quizzes, worksheets, activity projects, and a final examination. You will get a ten-minute break about every hour.

What you need to bring:

1. Your complete name and mailing address.
2. A pen or pencil for note taking and tests.
3. Money (cash/check) for the course fee.
4. Bring something to snack on and a drink.

Course Completion: Students who successfully complete the course will be issued a certificate which must then be presented to the drivers' license examiner. You will be required to take and eye exam and pass a written test. If you lose your certificate a fee of \$5 will be charged for a replacement certificate.

Use of School Facilities: You will be allowed in just a few areas of the building and may not roam the halls during breaks. Use only the restrooms in the hall by the class room. The gym, other class rooms and locker rooms are off limits.

School Rules: All school rules applying to student conduct will be in effect just as on any school day. If you become a behavior problem, you will be asked to leave the class and will receive **NO** credit for work completed. All litter needs to be disposed of properly and before the final exam begins.

February 2021

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|-----------------------|---|--|---------------------|--|------------------------------|-----|
| | 1 4:15pm GBB vs Sibley- Ocheydan 8th(A) 7th(H) 4:45pm MS WR at West Lyon HS | 2 Groundhog Day Begin Exploratory Cycle 5 | 3 | 4 7:00am My Choice 4:15 MS WR @ MOC-FV MS | 5 1:15pm Early Dismissal | |
| 7 | 8 4:15pm GBB vs Rock Valley 7 th (H) 8 th (A) 4:15pm MS WR @ West Sioux HS | 9 | 10 | 11 7:00am My Choice 4:00 GBB vs Sergeant Bluff-Luton 8 th (H) 7 th (A) @ 4:15pm | 12 1:15pm Early Dismissal | 7 |
| 14 Valentine's Day | 15 FULL Day of School~Snow Makeup Day 4:15pm GBB vs.Sheldon 7 th (A) 8 th (H) | 16 Quarter. 3-6 wk Grade Check. 4:15pm GBB vs LeMars 7 th (H) 8 th (A) 4:15pm WR @LeMars MS | 17 Ash Wednesday | 18 7:00am My Choice 4:15pm GBB vs.Sioux Center 7 th (A) 8 th (H) | 19 1:15pm Early Dismissal | 14 |
| 21 | 22 4:15pm MS WR @ Sheldon | 23 4:15pm GBB vs Cherokee 7 th (H) 8 th (A) | 24 | 25 7:00am My Choice 4:15pm GBB vs LeMars 8 th (H) 7 th (A) 4:15pm MS WR vs Sheldon MS | 26 1:15pm Early Dismissal | 21 |
| 28 | | | | | | |

March 2021

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|-----------------------------------|---|--|---------------------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 7:00am My Choice | 5 1:15pm Early Dismissal Professional Development | 6 |
| 7 | 8 3:30pm-9:00pm MS Solo Performance Night | 9 | 10 MS Track Practice Begins | 11 7:00am My Choice | 12 End 3 rd Quarter. 1:15pm Early Dismissal Professional Development | 13 |
| 14 Daylight Saving Time Begins | 15 Start 4 th Quarter. 7:00pm Middle School Concert @ MS | 16 | 17 St. Patrick's Day | 18 7:00am My Choice | 19 1:15pm Early Dismissal Professional Development | 20 Spring Begins |
| 21 | 22 | 23 4:00pm-8:00pm Parent-Teacher Conferences | 24 | 25 7:00am My Choice 4:00pm-8:00pm Parent-Teacher Conferences | 26 1:15pm Early Dismissal Professional Development | 27 |
| 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | April 1 No School | April 2 No School | |
| | | | | Spring Break | | |