

MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS

MOC-FV CSD

April

2021

Special points of interest:

- Dress Code Reminder
- President's Education Award
- Parent-Teacher Conferences
- Book Fair Thank You



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Dress Code Reminders

As the weather begins to get warmer, I want to send out a reminder on the student dress code. The main premise of the dress code is that student dress must be appropriate for the learning environment. Students' short length, tops, etc. need to reflect this main point. The fashions are for shorts to get shorter, tank top straps to get thinner, etc. however that is not in line with our policy. A good rule of thumb is for shorts to be mid-thigh length, and tank top straps to be two finger lengths wide. At no time should a student's undergarments show. The complete dress code policy can be found on the school website under Board Policies. The following is from the dress code policy 502.7:

These five areas will be focused on but not limited to:

1. No caps.
2. Length of shorts and skirts should be mid-thigh.
3. Strapless shirts are unacceptable. No undergarments may show at any time. Straps must be wide enough to be deemed appropriate for school.
4. No mid-riffs. If the stomach or lower back show when in a normal stance, it is considered inappropriate.
5. No references to alcohol, cigarettes, sex, drugs, offensive symbols or references, suggestions of gang affiliation, offensive language, or double meanings of a sexual or offensive nature, etc.

President's Education Awards

The MOC-Floyd Valley Middle School has recognized qualifying 8th graders with the President's Educational Excellence Award for the last 19 years. The award can be given at grade levels where the students are going to the next level of education, which means elementary to middle school, middle school to high school, and graduating from high school. The criteria for the award is:

A 3.5 or higher cumulative grade point average for the 8th grade year
(Cumulative GPA through the 3rd Quarter)

Eighth grade students meeting the criteria will receive a Department of Education Certificate and a lapel pin award at the Middle School Awards Assembly on the last day of school. A list of students earning this award will be posted prior to the Assembly.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

I want to send a "Thank You" out to everyone for their flexibility and willingness to meet with teachers during our virtual conferences. While this is different from in the past, I hope that this was still informative and helpful to you as parents/guardians.

Student led conferences are something that we will plan to continue at the Middle School level and hope to return to in-person conferences moving forward. Thanks again for your participation in these conferences.



Read All About It . . . 6th Grade Reading

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By: Mrs. TeGrotenhuis

I believe we are all excited to have the opportunity to complete the school year in the school building with our students this year! I am so looking forward to this fourth quarter!

During the third quarter, one of our class reading expectations was to read an award winning book. At this time, students are preparing their presentations about these books. This involves a small amount of research about the award the book won as well as information about the author. The students will use an online presentation to share about their book.

Shortly after our presentations, we will learn one more reading strategy from the *Notice & Note text* by Kylene Beers and Robert Probst. The strategies we have been learning are for fiction reading and help students notice important elements within text which aid in understanding/comprehension. After learning this last strategy, students will put them into practice using their own reading texts.

Our last novel we will be reading this year is *Freak the Mighty* by Rodman Philbrick. We will do a combination of reading aloud, small group reading, and individual reading while we continue to work on specific reading skills. One strategy I would like to focus on is questioning. This is an active reading strategy that I have demonstrated often. In addition, we will continue to work on vocabulary skills and responding to our reading with support from the text.

Please continue to encourage your child to read daily. Students should be reading 30 minutes daily and attempt to complete four books this quarter. Thanks for all you do to help!



6th Grade Science

By: Mr. H (Hoebelheinrich)

The 6th graders have been working hard on their Life Science curriculum that we started after Earth science. The basic foundation of life science in the 6th grade is the cell. We've looked at cells under a microscope, and identified the major organelles of a cell. This was a huge stepping stone for a majority of the 6th graders. They had the opportunity to practice using a microscope, and then after we talked about plant vs animal cells, they had to identify and explain what kind of cell they thought was under the microscope. The 6th graders then had an opportunity to make a 3D cell model of a plant or animal cell for extra credit. Right after learning about cells, and their different organelles we jumped right into the two different types of reproduction: sexual and asexual. Once we had a firm understanding of the two different types of reproduction, we learned about two cell processes: mitosis and meiosis. Mitosis is important for growth and repair of organisms, while meiosis is important for the creation of our gametes also known as sex cells.

Over the next few weeks we'll jump into our Systems of the Body unit, where we'll answer the essential question of "How do our Systems interact with one another to help keep us alive?" This is an exciting unit as we will diagnose a patient while looking at different medical records and inferring how these systems are working/not working together. The kids are preparing for dissection at the end of this unit! They are thrilled to be able to have the opportunity to dissect not only a worm, but also a fetal piglet.



Putting It All Together in 6th Grade English

By: Mrs. Jacobsma

Thanks to you and your student for the work you have put in this year. The students' writing has come so far, it amazes me. Take some time to read what they are writing—it might impress you, too.

Next we will bounce around in a writing unit focusing on ideas and content. We are talking about the development of writing packed full of details and description. The students research a current issue and begin the intense process of writing a persuasive essay. This will undoubtedly be the longest and most in depth piece of writing for the year. Following the drafting, we will look at how to give a sound oral presentation. The kids will create a final draft of this writing; in addition, they will present the persuasive essay in a speech to their peers.

Be looking for the continuation of spelling. There will also be some more writing for parents to help revise and edit. Relish a little in the advancement of your student's writing. It is delightful.



6th Grade Social Studies

By: Mr. Nonnemacher

Time for a new unit, and a new gorgeous, historical, unique setting to talk about! The country of Italy is a wildly popular tourist destination, and we are going to spend a few weeks talking about it, focusing mostly on the city of Rome and the Ancient Roman Empire. We will be talking about the amazing geography and architecture of Rome, the emperors that ruled during the Roman Empire, the rise and fall of the empire, and the impact that Christianity had on the empire.

Following the civilization of Rome, we will be moving back the Middle East to talk about Ancient Arabia (cue the Aladdin fans), and we will finish the school year discussing Medieval Europe. It will be a sprint to the finish; enjoy the beginning of the spring and all the freshness that it brings!



6th Grade Math

By: Mr. Boersma and Miss. Kaemingk,

The sixth graders have very recently completed their unit about expressions and equations. These chapters dealt primarily with the rules and properties of algebra. This unit lays the groundwork for their upcoming algebra classes in 8th grade or high school.

Our next unit will be over some geometry lessons. We've already begun discussing some basics of geometry and will progress into concepts like area, perimeter, and volume of a variety of shapes. Our primary focus will be understanding the meaning of these three terms and our secondary focus will be on finding the area, perimeter, and volume of different shapes.

Our final unit of the year will focus on studying statistics. I find this unit particularly entertaining because we are able to collect our own data in a variety of ways which really helps with engagement. It's much more interesting to find the mean, median and mode or a game we do in class as opposed to a list of numbers from a textbook.

As I end this article for April, I would like to introduce to you my student teacher, Nicole Kaemingk. Miss Kaemingk is originally from Sioux Center, attended Unity HS, and is finishing up her time at Dordt University. If you have any questions for Miss Kaemingk or me, please do not hesitate to email me at jboersma@mocfv.org. Thank you!



Thanks SO MUCH for your support of the spring middle school online book fair! Scholastic Dollars earned will go towards purchasing library materials.



7th Grade English

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By: Mrs. VR (Van Regenmorter)

In the last newsletter, I wrote that the seventh grade English students were beginning to practice 4 kinds of writing that could appear on the ISASP state testing that will occur in April. The seventh graders have gone through the writing process for an argumentative essay and are in the process of completing an application letter. The application letter is very much a real-life kind of writing that seventh graders will need to know about for the future. There are very few jobs that do not require an application letter in addition to an application form when applying for a job. For the two kinds of writing that we have practiced so far, I have been very pleased with how well students have been using the time provided in class to complete the prewrites, write the piece of writing, and do revising and editing. They have been working hard! The next kind of writing that we will learn about and complete is a compare/contrast essay.

Thank you once again for reading the middle school newsletter. Thank you for staying informed with what is happening in our school and in classes. We are heading into spring, and it can be difficult for students to stay focused on school. We are in our last quarter of a very unique school year. Please continue to communicate with your son or daughter about school, what's happening in their classes, homework assignments, etc. When you communicate with your child about school, it sends a message to them that what they do in school is important. Thank you and until next month...



7th Grade Science

By: Mrs. Vande Kief

Spring is here, and that got students wondering about a few things. How are plants and animals similar? How different are they really? Does the Venus Flytrap just trap flies, or does it actually eat them? The 7th graders kicked off spring and the Plants versus Animals unit by planting two genetic variations of corn to examine the differences and similarities of the two species as they grow in the window ledge. The two variations of corn seeds will serve as the phenomenon for our new unit where we are busy trying to answer our Big Question of "What is important to allow plants and animals to grow and reproduce?" During the course of this unit, we will be examining the similarities and differences in both plant structure, animal adaptations, and plant and animal behavior in attempts to survive, grow, and reproduce.

To start our exploration, we will examine plant reproductive structures in different kinds of flowers by dissecting them. Then, we will discuss various plant and animal adaptations that ensure individual and specific specie success such as pollination, seed dispersal, camouflage, mimicry, and many others. To better understand how important animal adaptations are in terms of natural selection, the students will compare the likelihood of survival in populations when organisms have the ability to adapt to their environment. During our discussion of animal adaptations, the 7th graders will participate in another lab that allows them to put their beaks to the test. In this lab activity, each student will use various tools that represent different types of bird beaks to attempt to locate and consume diverse food items to experience the importance of adaptations in relation to survival. Our investigation of adaptations will lead us into an investigation of how animal behavior plays an important role in reproduction and survival.

The Plants versus Animals unit will conclude with an in depth look at the importance of photosynthesis and cellular respiration in a plant and animals ability to grow. At this point, the two variations of corn will provide the 7th graders with a firsthand look at the necessity of photosynthesis to a plant's survival. Finally, we will make a direct comparison of the cycling of matter in both photosynthesis and cellular respiration.



7th Grade Math

By: Mr. Baker

The school year has gone extremely fast, and it's hard to believe that we are in the final quarter of the school year. In March the students will have the opportunity to design a game that would have a theoretical probability of winning. Then we will get everyone into the gym and play each other's games. This will not only be fun for the students, but interesting to see if their experimental probability matches up with their theoretical probability.

I look forward to a fun finish to the school year, and I thank you for your continued efforts in helping your child along with homework completion and for holding them accountable. This seventh grade class has been a fun group to work with. We will finish out the year learning about volume and surface area of three dimensional objects. It will entail a little memorization of formulas, but should be a fun last unit. We will then review everything we have learned so far this year and touch on a few topics from different chapters we have not gotten to.



7th Grade Literature

By: Mrs. Vermeer

Quarter 4 is here! We have lots of new things to cover in this last quarter together and the students are ready for some new challenges.

We have officially finished our class novel *The Giver*. The students are relieved as it is a long and challenging unit. However, they all should be proud of themselves. They have worked so hard and learned so much in one unit. I could not be more impressed with everything they have accomplished.

With a new quarter comes new reading goals. This quarter we have increased the goal slightly from last quarter. Quarter 4 goal is 800 pages or 4-6 books. This goal increased slightly as we will be doing more short story reading in class. Quarter 4 is an exciting one for book projects as well. This quarter students will be challenged to take any book they have read in the 7th grade and turn it into a children's book. There are a couple different options they have in creating this which include: drawing by hand or using a website provided through Google Classroom. This project will also be presented in front of their peers. Overall, this project has been a favorite in the past as it presents a new challenge of taking what they have read and sharing the same story for someone younger to understand.

In April we will begin working on our poetry unit. Another challenging unit as most students do not care for poetry. However, we look at presenting poems in a different way and by the end of the unit they do not think they are as bad. We will read a variety of poems including some from Edgar Allan Poe. Our poetry unit will take us through the end of April and will conclude with a poetry project.

March Madness will continue through April, so we are able to read a wide variety of stories and even some poems.

Keep up the awesome job 7th graders! You are doing a phenomenal job and are growing so much as readers!



Wieking's World

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By: Mr. Wieking

What a year it has been! It is great to feel the warm sun and pleasant temperatures again! It doesn't seem like that long ago that we started our global adventure. We are currently working our way through sub-Saharan Africa and soon we will begin to study other issues facing our world like population growth, globalization, and immigration.

This is especially interesting given our current circumstances. As our world continues to be globally connected, it is important that for our students to understand how events in one part of the world can directly affect us. I look forward to working with our students in an effort to help them understand the world around them.

The year seems much too short to travel and learn about our wonderful world! My encouragement to the students is to stay diligent and focused as the end of the year quickly approaches. Overall, the hope and goal is that our students leave global studies class with a greater and better understanding of our world.

Like always, if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach me at the middle school or by email at bwieking@mocfv.org.



8th Grade Literature

By: Mr. Boone

The 8th grade class is currently studying poetry in English and Literature. In Literature, we are reading *Love that Dog* by Sharon Creech, a comical dialogue between a student, Jack, and his teacher, Miss Stretchberry. Through Jack's entries, students watch how Jack grows to become a more confident student and poet. Students often find themselves relating to Jack, and use some of his strategies as they begin to model their own poetry after other poets we read in class. Along with *Love that Dog*, I will be using *Southbound on the Freeway* by May Swenson and *400 Meter Freestyle* to use visual imagery in their poetry. I look forward to watching students use their creativity and imagination.

At the completion of our poetry unit, we will be entering a Black History unit. At the beginning of the unit, students will select from the following six black history novels: *Turning 15 on the Road to Freedom* by Lynda Blackmon Lowery, *The Watsons Go to Birmingham* by Christopher Paul Curtis, *Fire From the Rock* by Sharon M. Draper, *Elijah of Buxton* by Christopher Paul Curtis, *Chains* by Laurie Halse Anderson, and *Copper Sun* by Sharon M. Draper. While students read their book, they will be discussing with their book club, identifying signposts, and writing a book response to their essential question. Students will also be reading various non-fiction texts connecting to the time period and setting of their historical fiction novel. This unit will be a great way for students to discover racial inequality throughout the course of history and recognize the effects of stereotyping and racism.



8th Grade Math

By: Mr. Mouw

The 4th quarter is here! It has been long winter, and yet, it seems like the school year has flown by. In Pre-Algebra we are finishing up a chapter on conversions and will soon be getting ready for our ISASP testing.

In Algebra 1 we are really getting into Quadratic Functions! We will be spending probably the next month working on factoring, solving, and graphing these types of functions. We will take a break for a couple of weeks to prepare for the ISASP.

For all math students, I have been reminding them that the start of the quarter is not a great time to dig yourself a hole, so put a little bit of extra effort towards making sure the start of the 4th quarter is a good one!

8th Grade English

By: Mrs. Colman

Can you check to see that your son or daughter has enough loose-leaf paper and pens, pencils, or highlighters to make it through the school year? It seems that they are running out. Thanks.

It's mid-March and we finished up our study of Anne Frank by attending *The Diary of Anne Frank* play at the Unity Knight Center on March 17. It was a wonderful opportunity to see Anne's story on stage! You would have been very proud of how well the MOC-Floyd Valley 7th and 8th graders represented our district! Great job students!

We have begun the poetry unit! This is one of my favorites. What the kids produce in their writing is often outstanding and amazing! The poetry "princess" appeared and knighted all students writers of poetry! Famous poetic works by Robert Frost, Emily Dickinson, Lew Sarett, William Shakespeare, and Theodore Roethke will be read and studied. In addition to learning how to read and understand poetry, students will also be learning how to write several kinds of poetry. In conjunction with Mr. Boone's literature class, students will be reading and writing poetry for each of us for a few weeks. Ask to see your son or daughter's work and encourage him or her to do their very best. You will be amazed. We promise.



8th Grade Science

By: Mrs. Hoogeveen

In late February and early March, the 8th grade science students researched how a synthetic material was made. This involved what natural ingredients were needed to create the product and how those natural ingredients were extracted from their natural surroundings. Next, they investigated how the natural materials were processed into their new synthetic material. Thirdly, they were to find a natural alternative that came close to accomplishing the same desired result as their synthetic material. Several combinations were Kevlar vs ancient armor, fiberglass insulation vs wool insulation, margarine vs butter, lifesaver mints vs essential oils--to name just a few. Finally, they made a presentation to their classmates as to what they found.

Now we have shifted gears and are trying to figure out how driving a car, basketball, hockey, simple tricks, and so much more can be explained by Newton's 3 Laws of Motion. We have just begun this process and are currently striving to understand how Newton's 1st law of inertia is why we need seatbelts and headrests in the car.

Coming up next, we will be exploring our adverse weather patterns in April.



Our Corner of History

By: Miss Van Wyk

In 8th grade American History, students have been learning about the origins of political parties. We hosted our first ever Socratic fishbowl discussion where students had to work together as a section to thoroughly answer the question "Do political parties help or hurt democracy in the United States?" Each group impressed me with their engagement in the topic!

Moving forward, we will be learning about the start of American History post-Revolutionary War. Presidents such as Thomas Jefferson and James Monroe have significantly shaped the role and power of the United States government. Whether it's expanding out west through the Louisiana Purchase, boldly demanding that Europe stay out of the Western Hemisphere, or making compromises to put a band-aid over the issue of slavery, America is changing and growing drastically. As we continue forward for this final quarter, we will look at the unresolved issue of slavery and how it ultimately reaches a boiling point in American politics.

April 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 No School	2 Good Friday No School	3
				Spring Break		
4 Easter	5 No School Teacher Comp Day	6 Qrt. 4 3 Week Grade Checks	7	8 7:00am My Choice	9 1:15pm Early Dismissal	10 7:30pm Jazz Band Dance @HS Old Gym
	Spring Break					
11	12	13	14 5 th ,6 th ,7 th gr. Honor Choir @ Storm Lake	15 7:00am My Choice	16 1:15pm Early Dismissal End Cycle 6 Exploratory	17
	ISAP Testing					
18	19 Start Cycle 7 Exploratory	20 4:30pm TR: MS @MOC-Floyd Valley NWC Track	21	22 Earth Day 7:00am My Choice	23 1:15pm Early Dismissal	24
25	26	27 4:30pm TR: MS @Sheldon High School Qrt. 4 6 Week Grade Checks	28	29 7:00am My Choice 4:30pm TR: MS @Sioux Center High School	30 Arbor Day 1:15pm Early Dismissal Professional Development Jr-Sr Prom	

May 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4 4:30pm TR: MS @Central Lyon High School	5	6 4:00pm TR: MS @LeMars High School	7 4:30pm TR: MS @Sioux Center High School	8
9 Mother's Day	10 MS BSB & SB Practice Begins 7:00pm Middle School Choir & Orchestra Concert @Middle School	11 6 th Gr. Field Trip	12	13 11:15pm Early Dismissal	14 No School	15
				Tulip Festival		
16	17	18	19	20	21 1:15pm Early Dismissal	22
23 2:00pm Commencement @HS New Gym	24	25	26 1:15pm Early Dismissal Last Day of School End 4 th Quarter	27 Professional Development	28	29
30	31					