

# MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS

MOC-FV CSD

February

2021

## Special points of Interest:

- Moped Safety Course
- February 14 ~ Snow Makeup Day
- Student Drop Off and Pick Up
- Parenting a Middle School Child

February



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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.



## February 14 ~ Snow Makeup Day

Due to the snow day in December, we **will** have school on Monday, February 14. This day was listed as the first snow makeup day on our district calendar.



## 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



## Mark Your Calendar Spring Break

April 15 – April 18 ~ No School  
April 19 ~ School Resumes



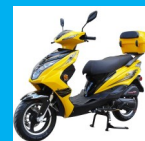
## Moped Safety Course

Neil Bracker, Instructor

When: February 25, from 1:30pm-6:00pm

Where: MOC Floyd Middle School – Room 121

Cost: \$50 per student. Bring cash or check payable to Neil Bracker



## Parenting a Middle School Student

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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 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.



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

By: Mrs. TeGrotenhuis

After learning about heroes of Greek mythology and comparing those heroes to our cultural heroes, our sixth-grade students are beginning to explore the heroic traits of a cultural hero of their choosing. This will result in a research paper and 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. Our media specialist, Mrs. DeZeeuw, will show students available resources and help guide them while researching. I always look forward to reading about the heroes of our current students!

Students have also 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 a time aside each day to read and complete other homework is a great idea! Thank you!



### 6th Grade Science

By: Mr. H (Hoebelheinrich)

Right before Christmas break we finished our physical science curriculum. We learned about everything dealing with atoms, and the movement of those atoms. We learned that as we add thermal energy (heat) the particles in a substance speed up and move further away from one another. As we take away thermal energy (heat) the particles seem to slow down and get closer to each other. We also learned that this can impact the actual state of matter a substance is in. If the particles are close together and moving slowly, they tend to be in a solid state. If the particles are moving around very quickly, and are spread about they seem to be in a gaseous state. Once we finished our physical science unit we jumped into Earth Science. The Big Essential question for this unit is: “What forces change Earth, and how does it affect living things?” We are currently learning that our plates are actually moving, which causes different rocks, and landforms to be made around the world. Over the next few weeks we will jump into a research project dealing with Natural Disasters and how they can impact Earth and the living things on Earth. The students will be researching important questions such as: What are some negative and positive effects that these disasters do for Earth and for living things? How do these natural disasters form? How do we mitigate the negative effects they have on Earth and on living things?



### 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.

## Global Studies

By: Mr. Wiering

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It seems like the month of January just flew by! We spent time reading, discussing, and researching information around the topic of Food Supply. Our work reviewed countries around the world that struggle with food supply and agriculture. Our classes were able to research the impact that Iowa has on the global food supply and the importance of supply chains. The final project encouraged students to ask questions, identify helpful information, and respond to the global challenge of Food Supply.

During the month of February our Global Studies class will explore the region of South Asia. Our focus will be on the physical geography of the region and the people of the region. One of the big global issues coming out of this region includes globalization and population growth. Our class will examine how these issues impact them even though they are happening thousands of miles away.

As always, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask. Thank you.



## 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. 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 short unit about writing emails. Writing emails is a real-world form of writing and communication. Today's students often need to write emails. For example, in the past month, I have received over 50 emails from students. Unfortunately, many of them are not communicating correctly or effectively in their emails, so we are going to learn how to write an email that communicates effectively and reflects positively on the sender. We will look at positive and negative examples and practice writing correct and effective emails. I have not taught this form of writing before, so I guess this is a "sign of the times" that we are a society which relies heavily on technology for communication.

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 Literature

By: Mrs. Vermeer

3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter and 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 challenges students to read grade level or above text as well as complex thinking. We begin the unit by first building our understanding of dystopian literature as the genre itself encompasses many different characteristics that affect it's learning. For the reading of the novel, we break the book into 4 sections. Each section will have its own vocabulary and comprehension question as well as a quiz. Within some of the sections we will complete various tasks on how this novel connects not only to our past but to our current world and why authors do this in dystopian literature. I am very impressed with how much knowledge the students have about dystopian literature. Many are realizing books and movies they enjoy are dystopian, this is also taking away some hesitations they have about this genre.

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.

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 600 pages or 4-6 books. We will continue to do a quarterly book project and this one will focus on technology. Students have the option to use any app, website, or Google Doc addition 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 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 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?" Through our investigations, the students will explore how gravity, magnetism, and electricity work and can influence other objects without physically touching.

Since returning from break, each class has been focusing our attention on gravitational force and how the strength of gravity is affected by mass and distance. We have also explored how the mass of various planets impacts both the gravitational force and the change in weight we would experience if we were to travel to each planet. During our work together, the 7<sup>th</sup> graders will investigate questions such as how can two objects land at the same time if they have different amounts of mass, what is difference between mass and weight, and what is the importance of inertia in gravitational attraction.?

In February we will take a closer look at magnetic and electrical force and the effect that changes in mass and distance can have on their respective fields. We will also examine how magnetic and electrical force can be attractive and repulsive by using those reactions to drive a Magno-Car without touching it. We will find out who can create the fastest and most agile design. Finally, the 7<sup>th</sup> graders will consider questions including what causes magnetism, why does static electricity tend to happen in the winter, how can electricity help to make a magnet?

## 7th Grade Math

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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. 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.



## 8th Grade Literature

By: Mr. Boone

I want to welcome Mr. VanderLey as our 8th grade Literature student teacher. Mr. VanderLey is from Dordt University and will be student teaching in my classroom for eight weeks. The students and I are excited to have him. Below is a brief introduction and biographical from Mr. VanderLey. Short biographical here.

Hello MOC-Floyd Valley MS families. My name is Zac VanderLey (Mr. VanderLey), and I'm a senior secondary education, English major at Dordt University. I write for the Dordt Diamond, coach in the Dordt JV Men's Basketball program, and sing in Dordt's Men's choir. I was born in Washington, about 35 minutes south of Seattle, and lived there the first 18 years of my life. My middle school and high school teachers had a tremendous impact upon my adolescent development, and I want to provide some of those same experiences for future students. Ever since elementary school, I've loved school: the sports, assignments, projects, teachers, friends and even homework. But what I realized in college is that I find joy in learning. While some concepts in school will fade, learning will stay with someone for a lifetime. I hope to instill a love of learning within all of the students I teach. In my free time, I play guitar, pickup basketball, and board games. I try to write every day and make time to read independently. These past three weeks with your students have been a blessing. Not only are they well-behaved and respectful, but they are also intelligent and a joy to be around. I'm excited for the opportunity to keep teaching them and getting to know them.

8th grade Literature students are amid the Holocaust research and presentation unit. 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 to help them analyze the text. Please take a moment to ask your child about their topic; your child will be required to rehearse their presentation in front of their parents, guardians, or older siblings. Following the presentations, students will be selecting a Holocaust fiction novel. Students will compare and contrast their novel with what they learned during the Holocaust unit. We will finish the unit by having them reflect on ways teenagers and adults can prevent prejudice, racism, and stereotyping in our schools, communities, and beyond. Mr. VanderLey and I look forward to leading students through the research and presentation preparation process.



## 8th Grade English

By: Mrs. Oolman

Ask your son or daughter a few questions about English such as ~

1. What did you choose for your "word" for 2022?
2. What is your personal goal?
3. What is your academic goal?
4. How are you doing in utilizing your step-by-step plan to meet your goal?

The answers to these questions will AMAZE you! Your sons and daughters are growing!

Since returning to school after winter break, students have been honing their KU Writing Skills. We will finish this up by the end of January.

**Up next?** Our study of Anne Frank!

The unit has three goals:

1. Learn the story of Anne Frank.
2. Learn to be a critical reader / viewer / thinker.
3. Learn how to write a compare / contrast essay.

### Who was Anne Frank?

We begin our study with background information on Anne Frank and other Jews~

**Over one million children under the age of sixteen died in World War II, not because of the bombs, but because they did not fit in as Hitler's image of the "perfect" German.**

Many children and their parents living in countries, which had been invaded by the Germans, were imprisoned and killed because they were Jewish.

Jewish people follow the religion known as Judaism. They are known as "Jews".

### Who was Anne Frank?

Anne Frank was an ordinary German Jewish girl. She enjoyed playing with her toys, riding her bike, and going to the seaside.

### Why is Anne Frank famous?

Anne Frank is well known because of her diary. It was first published as a book, in Dutch, in 1947. Since then, millions of people have read the thoughts and hopes of one young girl who was forced into hiding during WW II and have been inspired by them.

### Why were Jews imprisoned and killed during World War II ?

Hitler wanted to create what he saw was the perfect German, this meant that anyone who did not fit into his perfect image was persecuted (ill treated) and/or killed. Hitler persecuted German citizens who were Jewish, Gypsies, or otherwise "undesirables".

### How many people were killed because of their religion?

By the end of World War II, six million Jews were killed because they were, in Hitler's eyes, 'different'.



### What was life like for a Jew living in Germany?

Anne Frank and other Jews were forced to think they were lower and inadequate to everyone else just because they had a different religious belief. Because of this, Otto Frank, Anne's father, emigrated to Amsterdam, Holland. He and his family, including Anne, were not safe there either because Germany took over Holland in December 1940.

Many laws were passed saying what Jews could and couldn't do, Anne describes some of these in her diary:

**"Jews were required to wear a yellow star, Jews were forbidden to use trams, Jews were required to turn in their bicycles, Jews were forbidden to use any public sports centres, Jews were not allowed to watch any form of entertainment and so on"**

### Why is Anne Frank's diary important?

Through her book, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, people all over the world are able to see what life as a persecuted Jew was truly like during World War II, thus gaining an appreciation for the sacrifices people made in the struggle to stay alive.

Anne describes in her diary how she felt while she was in hiding, and how it was very hard to survive in such a small living space.

- **When did Anne receive her diary and what was the occasion?** Anne received her diary on her 13th birthday in 1942, a gift from her parents.
- **What did she name her diary?** Anne called her diary "Kitty".

Anne Frank did not become famous until after her death in the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp and after the liberation of all concentration camps. Otto Frank, the only surviving member of the people hiding in the Secret Annex, later had Anne's diary published.

### Activities with this unit will include the following:

- Reading the play *The Diary of Anne Frank*.
- Watching the movie *The Diary of Anne Frank*.
- Taking note of major differences between what we read and what we are seeing in the movie and then comparing / contrasting both of these to what we KNOW to be her true story.
- Writing a compare / contrast essay.
- The kids do a lot of writing during the unit. A pre-unit assessment of what they know about prejudice and the Holocaust. Some responses about Anne's life. An essay on a hero. The compare / contrast essay. And, finally, a summarizing response to what they have learned about prejudice, intolerance, Anne Frank, and the Holocaust and HOW they will apply their knowledge to their own lives.

## 8th Grade Science

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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!



## Our Corner of History

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! As is civil discourse, which I will be reviewing in this unit for students to apply and practice. This skill is especially important in the age of social media where inflammatory comments and personal attacks seem to attract more attention than active listening and reasoned debate. Don't be surprised if students come home with questions because this unit usually results in generating thought-provoking discussions!





# February 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Exploratory Cycle 4 Ends	2 Ground Hog Day  Exploratory Cycle 5 Begins	3 4:15pm WR:MS @ MOCFV MS	4 1:15pm Early Dismissal	5
6	7 4:15pm GBB VS Rock Valley 7 <sup>th</sup> (H) 8 <sup>th</sup> (A)  4:15pm WR:MS @ West Sioux High School	8	9	10 4:00pm GBB vs Sergeant Bluff-Luton 7 <sup>th</sup> (A)-4:15pm) 8 <sup>th</sup> (H)	11 6 <sup>th</sup> Gr. Cone Park Trip  1:15pm Early Dismissal	12
National Counseling Week						
13	14 Valentine's Day  Snow Make-up Day  4:15pm GBB vs Sheldon 7 <sup>th</sup> (A) 8 <sup>th</sup> (H)  5:00pm School Board Meeting	15 Qtr. 3-6 Week Grade Check	16	17 4:15pm GBB vs Sioux Center 7 <sup>th</sup> (A) 8 <sup>th</sup> (H)	18 7 <sup>th</sup> Gr. Cone Park Trip  1:15pm Early Dismissal	19 My Choice Ski Trip (8 <sup>th</sup> Grade)
20	21 President's Day  4:15pm WR:MS @ Sheldon Middle School	22 School Bus Driver Appreciation Day  4:15pm GBB vs Cherokee 7 <sup>th</sup> (H) 8 <sup>th</sup> (A)	23	24 4:15pm GBB vs LeMars 7 <sup>th</sup> (A) 8 <sup>th</sup> (H)  4:15pm WR:MS@ Sheldon Middle School	25 8 <sup>th</sup> Gr. Cone Park Trip  1:15pm Early Dismissal	26
27	28 MS Solo Performance Night (Orchestra and Band)					

# March 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 Ash Wednesday	3	4 1:15pm Early Dismissal	5
6	7 Exploratory Cycle 5 Ends	8 Exploratory Cycle 6 Begins  7:00pm Grade 7-12 Jazz Band Night @ HS Auditorium	9 MS Track Practice Begins	10	11 End 3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter  1:15pm Early Dismissal	12
Makerspace						
13 Daylight Savings Time Begins	14 Begin 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter  7:00pm MS Choir, Band, Orchestra Concert @ MS	15	16	17 St. Patrick's Day	18 Report Cards Go Home  1:15pm Early Dismissal	19
20 Spring Begins	21 4:00pm-8:00pm Parent-Teacher Conferences	22 4:00pm-8:00pm Parent-Teacher Conferences	23 AEA Hearing Checks	24	25 No School Teacher Comp Day	26
27	28 6:30pm FFA Banquet	29	30	31		