

MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS

MOC-Floyd Valley

November

2022

Special points of Interest:

- W.I.G.
- Veterans Day Program



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W.I.G.

W.I.G.... what in the world is a W.I.G.?? W.I.G. stands for Wildly Important Goal. It is a strategy employed to narrow the focus on what is most important. Setting a W.I.G is extremely challenging and requires some good thought and discussion. Our school district has established a few W.I.G goals, two of which the middle school is directly attached to and supporting. One of them is zeroed in on the culture and climate of the building. We are committed to cultivating a positive and welcoming culture and climate through authentic expressions of gratitude and encouragement. The middle school staff members have embraced this goal and are modeling gratitude and encouragement with our students and with one another. Our staff members have noticed how students are joining in the positive climate with these same gratitude and encouragement actions. We celebrate and seek to grow our culture and climate each day and we celebrate our students and staff owning this Wildly Important Goal.

A second W.I.G. is focused directly on student learning. Our goal is to use feedback, quality questions, observation, and many other methods of assessment to determine what our students know and then adjust and plan our teaching according to what our students need! Student achievement data is used along with the informal assessing strategies mention above to help determine the level, intensity, and method of instruction. Our teachers do a fantastic job of academic interaction with students to know what our students need to be successful.

Last, a piece of our Friday professional development is to evaluate on a weekly basis how we are doing with our W.I.G.s. Based on our discussion we plan, tweak, and continue to grow inside these goals. What Wildly Important Goals do you have? Or can you have?



Veterans Day Program

The Middle School will host the Veterans' Day program put on by the Floyd Post #200. The program will be Friday, November 11, 2022 at 10:15am in the Middle School New Gym. The public is welcome to attend.



Parents of Sixth Grade Math Students

By: Mr. Boersma

The sixth graders have recently completed a unit covering the multiplication and division of the dreaded fractions. For a fairly challenging unit, I've been very impressed with the understanding and quality of work from this particular group of students. It is a difficult task to reason "how much is $\frac{2}{3}$ of $\frac{3}{4}$ of a pound, but they've been up to it.

Our next unit is one of my absolute favorite math topics, Ratios and Rates. I love this topic because of all the real world uses of ratios. Recipes, grocery shopping, percentages are all things that will be covered in this unit and all things that people use quite frequently in their life outside the classroom.

I'm often asked by parents, how can I help my kid be successful in math. The math is so much different than when I was in school. There are a couple of things that I might suggest. First, be involved in their homework. At very least, ask them about their assignments, "what's due tomorrow?" "How is this week's Study Island coming along?" Ask them to show you their math assignment and explain what they are doing and how they've been taught to do the problems. Who knows, you might learn something from them!

A couple of practical items. First, every week the students are assigned an online assignment in Study Island. It's assigned on Monday and due the following Monday. If you look at the gradebook, all assignments are graded out of 2 points. If they have a 2, it means that it was done by it's due date. A 1 means it was turned in late. A 0 means that it is currently missing. The assignments are only worth about 10% of their overall grade. Most of the grade is made up of quiz scores (30%) and test scores (60%). Every time that we take a math test, the students will be given a practice test 2-3 days ahead of time in order to prepare for the assessment. There should be no surprises! If you have any questions about these items, please feel free to contact me, I look forward to hearing from you.



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 in a classroom setting. 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. The 6th graders are now able to find length, volume, temperature, and mass of certain objects using the metric system.

After our lab safety unit, lab materials unit, and our measurement unit we jumped into the Engineering Design Process. During this unit, the students learned the process through creating and designing their own catapult. The EDP is a great way to practice measurements, reading data, problem solving, teamwork, and working in a safe lab environment.

After the Engineering Design Process unit, we jumped into the realm of physical science. We are currently discussing the history of the atom.

What's to Come?

After understanding what makes everything up, we will dive a little deeper into the atomic realm of science. How do 100 atoms off of the periodic table create everything we see in the world today? What are chemical changes? How do particles move based on the state of matter they are in? How does this change with pressure? Temperature? These will be answered.



Read All About It ... 6th Grade Literature

Page 3

By: Mrs. TeGrotenhuis

Students will begin the month of November by reviewing books they completed during the first quarter and choosing one to share with their class. Students will explain the plot line of a favorite book, specifically focusing on the conflict of the story and how it relates to the main character. I am hopeful that students will get great ideas of books to read from this activity!

We are in the final stages of our Among the Hidden unit. We have finished the book and will focus on specific literary terms and devices that authors commonly use within literature. I am especially looking forward to teaching one of my favorite units which 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 (main idea), and using text evidence.

I would like to encourage the students to continue reading daily! Many students are doing a fantastic job of meeting our class goal each week, and several of them read beyond our goal! 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, too! Thanks for all you do to help!



6th Grade World History

By: Mr. Nonnemacher

As I write this update, we have just completed our first quarter of the school year! What a fast and furious 9 weeks it was! It's always fun to observe the 6th graders as they realize just how fast the school year goes when we have our daily class rotation and quick 42-minute class periods. We are just finishing up our Mesopotamia unit in World History. I think my favorite part of this unit is seeing many of the kids' faces when we start talking about Abraham and Moses as part of this civilization. So many of the students know those two in a different light, and they never would have thought that individuals such as them would "cross" over into our area of study. We discovered more about the geography and the lifestyles of Ancient Mesopotamia, as well as different leadership styles from kings throughout the time period. We even created some fun flour "tablets" with cuneiform writing on them! We are just beginning our unit project. The kids will be in small groups, and each group will be in charge of developing their very own city-state. This is one of my favorite projects of the year, and I'm excited to see how it turns out for all my different groups. As we have learned in this unit, city-states are self-governed, so it will be very interesting to see some of the rules and regulations that the kids come up with for their city-state!



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! We will kick off November with an exploration of poetry with our student teacher, Madelynn Harre, from Northwestern. Our students will read, analyze, and appreciate some poetry, and then, of course, create their own. Following this writing, we will jump into another writing unit called Real World Writing. Kids will explore many different types of writing that they might encounter in the real world -- everything from emails and business letters to word games and blog posts. As always, please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. tjacobsma@mocfv.org

7th Grade English

Mrs. VR (Van Regenmorter)

The seventh graders have been busy in English class. During first quarter we did the following units: Listening Unit, Capitalization, Simple & Compound Sentences, and Complex Sentences. After learning strategies to be good listeners, we started with simple and compound sentences, making sure they know how to find the subjects and verbs and how to check if a sentence is complete. Next, the students moved on to learn about complex sentences. They worked hard with much repetition, so they are able to use different kinds of sentences in writing. They have written some paragraphs in which they focused on correct sentence structure and using a variety of the kinds of sentences we learned about. Varying the kinds of sentences in writing creates fluency, which makes writing flow and enjoyable to read.

As we enter the second quarter, 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 40 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 them, the sender. We will look at positive and negative examples and practice writing correct and effective emails. This unit is a "sign of the times" that we are a society which relies heavily on technology for communication.

Thank you for taking the time to read the middle school newsletter. By reading our newsletter, you stay informed, and it also gives you opportunities to talk with your son or daughter about school and what they are learning.



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 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?" Through our investigations, the students will explore how gravity, magnetism, and electricity work and can influence other objects without physically touching.

In November each class will be focusing our attention on gravitational force and how the strength of gravity is affected by mass and distance. We will also explore 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 7th graders will investigate questions such as what causes two objects to land at the same time if they have different amounts of mass, what is the difference between mass and weight, and what is the importance of inertia in gravitational attraction.



Wieking's World

7th Grade Global Studies

By: Mr. Wieking

It is hard to believe that the first quarter has already passed! It seems like time is flying by, but I suppose that happens when you are having fun. During the past month we have learned about and discussed our culture and the influences of religion, economy, and government.

I am looking forward to the coming weeks ahead when we will take on some real world global issues like human rights and globalization. These big ideas are often seen and heard on the evening news but not always shared at a grade level appropriate for our students.

I anticipate our students will have plenty of questions, insights, and new learning opportunities. The goal is to provide our students with new understanding into global issues and to promote an awareness of different ideas they could encounter as they become more involved citizens.

If you have any questions or concerns 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 just finished up chapter two which dealt with integers. We used several real life examples of integers, played some fun games including 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.



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 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. To present their findings, students got into groups and recorded video essays reporting what they had learned. With two tests under our belt, students have also been practicing important skills like time management, assignment prioritization, using study tools, and written expression of big ideas. Coming up in November, students will begin their inquiry projects that will explore topics related to Veteran's Day. These projects usually foster some great conversations about the sacrifices made by service members on behalf of our country and I encourage you to check in your students as we get closer to the Holiday for an opportunity to hear what they have been learning about in class!

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 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.



8th Grade science

By: Mrs. Hoogeveen

In middle school, we are using the Next Generation Science Standards as organized by Iowa Core as our curriculum. 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 be 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 of climate-related topics. We noticed several trends that have been occurring since the Industrial Revolution of the 1950’s. 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 pace causing sea levels to rise, 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 everyone 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; devastating 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.

A vast majority of the students are completing their homework on time. A Big THANK YOU to all the students!! Homework is a vital part of classroom instruction and reinforcement. I am very appreciative of the parents encouraging your son / daughter to be responsible young adults.

November 25



No School: Nov. 23, 24, & 25 ~ Thanksgiving Break

8th Grade English

By: Mrs. Oolman

As we are finishing up the Colors / Mindset / Grit / Personality / Learning Styles unit, students will be “tasked” to choose their own assignment. In other words, they will be asked to share what they learned in a way that works for them! This is my second year ending the unit in this manner, and I am super excited to see what students create to show what they know! I would encourage you to ask your own student what “color” they are and what that means. Or, ask them HOW they are smart. Or, ask them what it means to “push pause” or have “no regrets” or what their “circle of control” is. Or, ask them what “grit” is. Or “productive struggle”.

You will be absolutely amazed at the mature answers you hear! Finally, ask them what the sign on their locker states.

In the midst of the unit, we also reviewed some basic “language skills” we need to know. This is information that “scaffolds” or holds up our writing and speaking in English. We began by reviewing the use of quotation marks and underlining in our writing. From there, we reviewed the eight parts of speech (nouns, verbs, pronouns, adverbs, adjectives, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections). Once those were mastered, we tackled the ten punctuation marks (period, colon, semi-colon, question mark, exclamation mark, parentheses, quotation marks, hyphen, comma, and apostrophe). After some practice time, tests were given. Tests needed to be passed with a C or above, or retakes were given.

Our next unit deals with “registers”. This unit shows students that we often use correct words when speaking, but when tasked with writing those same words we can tend to make mistakes. So, we will be learning about word choice and homonyms and homophones. Words like their, they’re, and there. To, too, and two. Aisle and I’ll. Accept and except. Rather than doing “worksheets” to learn the information, we will be working on some group projects and presentations! A test on the words we learn will wrap up the unit.



8th Grade Literature

By: Mrs. Van Der Wilt

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. Students will practice identifying textual evidence, paraphrasing, and citing.

Also, we are focusing on how characters reveal themes. After each chapter, students are given excerpts of the chapter and in groups they identify how each of those excerpts support the five “big ideas” in the book. Our five big ideas in the novel are divided communities, empathy, preserving childhood innocence, self-sacrifice and honor, and individual identity. This is a challenging task for students, yet I am impressed how they have analyzed the literature and are continually improving. At the end of the novel, they will use this analysis to write a thematic essay on the novel.

After finishing the book, we will be watching the movie and writing a final essay. I believe watching the film 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 Outsiders* or an independent reading book.



November 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 NWI 8th Grade Honor Choir at St. Lake 4:00pm-8:00pm Parent-Teacher Conferences	2 End Exploratory Cycle 2	3 Begin Exploratory Cycle 3	4 No School ~ Teacher Comp Day	5 NWIBA Jr. High Honor Band Concert at Storm Lake
6 Daylight Saving Time Ends	7	8 Election Day 4:15pm BB:B vsSpencer 7 th (A) 8 th (H)	9	10	11 Veterans Day 10:15am Veteran's Day Program 1:15pm Early Dismissal	12
13	14 4:15pm BB:B vsSergeant Bluff-Luton 7 th (A) 4:00pm 8 th (H)	15 Qtr. 2- 3 Week Grade Check	16	17 OPUS Honor Choir Festival --Ames	18 1:15pm Early Dismissal 4:15pm BB:B vsSioux Center 7 th (H) 8 th (A)	19
20	21 4:15pm BB:B vsBoyden 7 th (A) 8 th (H)	22	23 No School	24 Thanksgiving No School	25 No School	26
27	28 4:15pm BB:B vsCentral Lyon 7(H) 8 th (A)	29 4:15pm BB:B vsLe Mars 7 th (H) 8 th (A)	30			
	Makerspace					

December 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 5px;">1</div> 4:15pm BB-B vsSioux Center 7 th (H) 8 th (A)	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 5px;">2</div> 1:15pm Early Dismissal	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 5px;">3</div>
				Makerspace		
<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 5px;">4</div>	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 5px;">5</div> Qrt. 2 6 week Gr. Check 4:15pm BB-B vsSheldon 7 th (H) 8 th (A)	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 5px;">6</div>	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 5px;">7</div>	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 5px;">8</div> 4:15pm BB-B vsRock Valley 7 th (A) 8 th (H)	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 5px;">9</div> 1:15pm Early Dismissal	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 5px;">10</div>
<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 5px;">11</div>	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 5px;">12</div> 4:15pm BB-B vsLeMars 7 th (A) 8 th (H)	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 5px;">13</div> MS Holiday Concert @NWC Christ Chapel	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 5px;">14</div>	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 5px;">15</div> 4:15pm BB-B vsSergeant Bluff-Luton 7 th (H) 8 th (A)	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 5px;">16</div> 1:15pm Early Dismissal	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 5px;">17</div>
<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 5px;">18</div>	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 5px;">19</div>	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 5px;">20</div>	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 5px;">21</div> Winter Begins	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 5px;">22</div> End 2 nd Qtr./1 st Sem.	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 5px;">23</div> No School	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 5px;">24</div>
					Winter Break	
<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 5px;">25</div> Christmas Day	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 5px;">26</div> No School	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 5px;">27</div> No School	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 5px;">28</div> No School	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 5px;">29</div> No School	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 5px;">30</div> No School	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 5px;">31</div>
Winter Break						