

MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS

MOC-Floyd Valley

February

2024

Special points of Interest:

- Stay Hungry
- 2025 DC/NYC trip
- PBIS
- Leader in Me



Inside this issue:

6th Grade	2
7th Grade	3-4
8th Grade	5-8



Stay Hungry

Happy February Everyone! I would anticipate that most of us who have experienced a winter season or two in the Midwest have felt the mental and emotional drag that can happen in February. As winter seems to linger on, we crave warmer temps, longer days of sunlight, and time spent outside. Our staff recently spent a few minutes looking at some positive nudges from the “STAY HUNGRY” portion of a leadership book that give us intentionality when we might be slipping into the “February Blues” (I learned this phrase from a former basketball coach!).

I have tweaked the questions under each of the points of emphasis to hopefully give some options for your children/our students (or you!) to think about. I encourage you to read the book. It is full of simple ways for all of us to remain humble and be driven at the same time.

H3 Leadership: Be Humble Stay Hungry Always Hustle (Brad Lomenick)

Be Humble (Who are you) Stay Hungry (Where are you going) Always Hustle (How will you get there)

“STAY HUNGRY”

Ambition – Development an appetite for what is next.

How do we keep our students eager to learn? What one consistent small thing will you be intentional about to act on this ambition?

Curiosity – Keep learning

Can your son or daughter commit to asking questions in class or after class to learn more about something they are interested in?

Passion – Love what you do

Challenge your son or daughter to spend 5 minutes reflecting on the thing they are most passionate about! Why are they passionate about it? What is it they love about school?

Innovation – Stay current, creative, and engaged

Express appreciation for any creativity you see in your son or daughter! Encourage them to stretch themselves by thinking creatively!

Inspiration – Nurture a vision for a better tomorrow

Can we encourage our students (your son or daughter) to see the best in another student and share that with them? The best in one of their teachers...and share it?

Bravery – Take calculated risks

Is there something or someone your son or daughter wants to know more about? An activity they want to be involved in but have hesitated?

Parents, maybe a couple of these items can be a nudge for you to STAY HUNGRY as we anticipate the arrival of spring! We love our partnership with you! Thank you for sharing your sons and daughters with us! I have said it before and it is worth repeating; your sons and daughters allow us to live out our passion to influence and make a difference in young people! THANK YOU!

READ ALL ABOUT IT . . . 6TH GRADE LITERATURE

By: Mrs. TeGrotenhuis

In the month of February, the sixth graders will be deep into their hero research! After learning about heroes of Greek mythology and comparing those heroes to our cultural heroes, the students have begun exploring the heroic traits of their own cultural hero. This will result in a research paper involving several stages: 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. Mrs. DeZeeuw, our media specialist, will show students available resources and help guide them while researching. I am always interested in finding out who our sixth graders see as heroic!

Additionally, students have created new reading goals for the third quarter. One of my third quarter expectations is for all students 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 created incredibly creative pages. Please ask your child about it! I also 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!



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 your child to share their story coming near the beginning of March.

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.



6th Grade World History

By: Mr. Nonnemacher

Some popular sayings may be, “When in Rome” or “Rome was not built in a day” or even, “All roads lead to Rome.” There is so much history, both good and bad, when it comes to the Roman Empire. There was a silly joke (meme??) going around a couple of months ago, and Mrs. Nonnemacher asked me... “How many times per week do you think about the Roman Empire?” I naturally answered that I think about it maybe 2-3 times per week, and it was this whole funny thing! That pales in comparison to Mr. H, who says he thinks about the Roman Empire maybe two to three times every day! No matter the answer, the fact is that the Roman Empire was an incredibly powerful system. We are spending a few weeks in class talking about different leaders, the way they train their soldiers, times that they were defeated, and ultimately their downfall. Every day is a great day in Social Studies class, and I’m blessed to have the role that I have in these kiddos’ sixth grade school year!



Wieking's World

7th Grade Global Studies

By: Mr. Wieking

We have finished our units about sub-Saharan Africa and Food Supply. We discussed the challenges 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 are wrapping up our unit on Food Supply with a project. Students will take a hands on approach to the project by generating their own questions they would like to research and answer.

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 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.



7th Grade Math

By: Mr. Baker

In Seventh grade math we have just finished up our fourth of eight units. Our percentages unit was a lot of fun. I'm hoping your son/daughter can pay for the bill the next time you go out to eat! In our next unit we will be working with negative numbers. This can be a challenge for kids based on my experience. Leaning on their own hard work as well as their group will be vital for their success in this unit. Please let me know if you have any questions.



7th grade Science

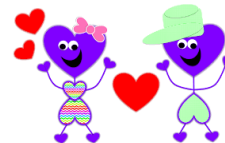
Mrs. Vande Kieft

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 seventh 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 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 complete a series of magnetic and electrical lab challenges. In our Magno-Car Challenge we will find out who can create the fastest and most agile design to drive their Magno-Car without ever touching it. While taking a closer look at electricity, we will be turning on a light bulb without a light fixture and attempting to create a magnet using electricity. Finally, the seventh 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.



February 14



7th Grade Literature

By: Mrs. Vermeer

Third quarter and second semester are here! Our class novel will be our focus for quarter three and will take up all 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 City of Ember*. We will spend most of the third quarter reading our novel, understanding dystopian literature and the characteristics of this genre. Throughout this unit we will analyze the novel and compare it to the book they are reading on their own, which is also dystopian. This unit is a challenge because it is unlike any other genre with its connection to history and relating to people. However, by the end many students find the genre to be one they enjoy reading. Different projects we will be completing with this unit include comparing our book to our history and present day. Analyzing why dystopian has become so popular in recent years. Learning about how authors come up with their stories and what movie producers do to make these books come to life. After reading the novel we end with watching the movie and seeing how cinematic features affect the understanding and emotion of the story. Finally, we wrap up the unit with a breakout room putting everything we have learned about *The City of Ember* and dystopian together.

Being it is a new quarter means a new quarter goal. Quarter three goal is 700 pages or four to six books. We will continue to do a quarterly book project. This one student will be writing a review about their dystopian novel they have read. They will explain what it's about, give it a rating and explain why they gave the rating they did.

I am very excited for the new challenges dystopian and the novels we read will expand the student's learning!



7th Grade English

By: Mrs. VR (Van Regenmorter)

Before Christmas break, the seventh 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 narrative and four traits of good writing: voice, content, organization, and conventions. They also revised their personal narratives. Revising means that a writer works to improve the content, details, and description in their writing. To do this, the seventh 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 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 they handed in right before Christmas break.

After returning from break, they went to work on editing the second rough draft of their personal narratives. 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!

Once again, thank you for reading the middle school newsletter. Being informed gives you more opportunities to communicate with your son or daughter about what's happening in school. When parents have these conversations, kids know their parents are staying informed and care about their education. Thank you!

8th Grade Literature

By: Mrs. Jill Hoppe

Happy New Year and Happy 2nd Semester! After Mother Nature forced us all to take a few extra days off, we are back in the swing of things and ready to get back to “normal”. We have some exciting things planned for this month.

After spending some time building background, the eight grade Literature students are starting 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 and identifying central ideas and supporting details 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 reflecting on ways teenagers and adults can prevent prejudice, racism, and stereotyping in our schools, communities, and beyond. I look forward to leading students through the research and presentation preparation process.



Our Corner of History

By: Mrs. Phelan

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!



Leader in Me

During the months of January and February, the focus of the Leader in Me lessons have been based on **Learning to Lead Self** with a shift in focus devoted to **Habit 3: Put First Things First**. Habit 3 encourages students to recognize the importance of planning ahead, focus on their priorities, and strive for organization. During various lessons, the students have discussed and practiced life skills that will help them to attain their future goals such as time-management, accountability, work ethic, and flexibility.

Focus: LEARNING TO LEAD SELF

- Prioritization and Organization
- Time Management
- Wildly Important Goals (WIG)
- Perseverance
- Accountability

8th Grade English

By: Mrs. Oolman

Ask your son or daughter about their new year's resolution. Find out how they are doing on their "calendar". Ask them how many days they have been able to "check off" their commitment to their goal or resolution! Ask about the "WORD" of the year on their locker. Upon our return from winter break, we challenged ourselves to choose and commit to making a positive growth change in ourselves. We will continue to check back on "ourselves" with our goals and our "word" for the year to see how we are doing. You may be surprised at the mature choices your sons and daughters made about where they want to be moving forward.

Following goal setting, we revisited interviewing and speech writing. All new partners began conversations to learn and share about their peers. Some possible topics included the following:

- Something you want others to know about you...
- Best place to eat in the school district...
- Best thing you ate over break...
- Favorite chips and why...
- Resort relaxation or touring / learning trip....
- Room decorating...
- Gifting another person...
- Daring or scary thing you'd do for \$1000...
- Three things or people you can't live without...
- Where you'd like to live when an adult...
- Your favorite way to be creative...
- Something your parents always tell you...
- Five ways life will be different a year from now...
- Pie Graph of winter break time...

Speeches will follow. The kids are making excellent growth in giving speeches!

Our study of Anne Frank will follow our speeches.

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.

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 a plan to destroy Jews during World War II. 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.

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?



Continued on next page

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. Watch for a permission slip coming your way for the film viewing. To stay true to the inhumane ways the Nazis treated the Jews, there are some “hard to view scenes” in the movie. Students may easily refrain from watching those parts should they wish to. Finally, students will assess WHY these changes are made. A culminating essay will conclude the unit.

Students will next be working hard to learn the story of *Anne Frank* by taking notes during the background information Google Slide Shows, viewing the movie, and reading the play. Students will use a form called the “Writing Recipe” to construct a compare / contrast essay on *Anne Frank*--the play and movie versions. This skill is an important one where I ask students to use their knowledge of a subject and to critically view a similar plot line / story. Specifically, students will analyze the purposes of telling Anne’s story in a play or movie format, what motives a director may have in making changes to her true story, and which one, the play or the movie, was most like the true story of Anne Frank. This will be a great chance to share with students how media forms of all kinds tend to distort the truth to share what sells or to share whatever “platform” that media is promoting. Critical thinking and viewing and taking in information is a huge skill to take into the “real world” and adulthood. This is always one of my favorite units for the content knowledge kids gain in Anne Frank’s story as well as in writing.



8th Grade Science

By: Mrs Hoogeveen

In December and early January, 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. To wrap up the sound unit, students completed research on a wide range of topics dealing with sound waves. Some of the topics included: hearing waves, cochlear implants, sound in space, how animals react to sound, sonic weapons, sound barrier, music vs intelligence, CDs, 8 track tapes, cassettes, LP records, and so much more!

We have now shifted our attention to focus on how the electromagnetic spectrum works for us. First, we will explore what the electromagnetic spectrum (EM) is. Then we will investigate 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 we will apply is how these mirrors are used in the world around us.

We will delve 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!

2025 DC/NYC Trip

By: Mrs. Oolman

MOC-Floyd Valley MS Trip Coordinator

All 7th grade Parents and Students!

You are invited to attend the informational meeting for your son or daughter's trip to Washington DC and New York City in the Spring of 2025!

The meeting will take place as follows:

1. Date: Monday, February 26, 2024 (FOLLOWING Middle School Music Solo Night)
2. Time: 7:30 p.m.
3. Place: Middle School Big Gym
4. Length: about 30 minutes
5. What: Learn about the trip, the costs, how to register, how much money your son / daughter has raised, the DISCOUNT for signing up early and much more!

Plan to attend EVEN if you are unsure about the trip at this time. The information can help you decide. See You There!



PBIS Update

PBIS Student Leadership opportunities has been the theme of PBIS in January and February. With the start of the second Semester and a new year, it was a great time to refresh our schoolwide expectations with a PBIS Reboot where PBIS Student Leaders from the seventh and eighth grade facilitated the reteaching of the three expectations of the Middle School: Doing Your Best, Doing What's Right, and Treating Others How You Want to be Treated. This was a great opportunity to have students model and explain the importance of the school expectations in various scenarios both inside and outside of the Middle School. The student leaders did such a fantastic job!

As we begin February, PBIS is offering two additional opportunities for student leadership. First of all, the PBIS Team is excited to partner with students interested in a direct role in the planning and leading of our monthly PBIS assemblies. Student leaders will work with teachers to plan and lead a monthly PBIS activity, select prizes to give away, and market/promote the assembly throughout the school. Second, the PBIS Team long with student volunteers are very excited to be recruiting the help of our former students from the High School to create a PBIS instructional and promotional video. The promotional portion of the video will be shared with our community to inform about the purpose, goals, and benefits of PBIS in the Middle School. The instructional portion of the video will be available for new students and their parents and may provide options for future use. The Middle School student leaders are excited to take the lead roles in both videos directed and filmed by their High School partners. We encourage you to keep on the lookout to see if you know any of these future acting stars!

Presidents' Day February 12



Remember our
Presidents



February 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				¹ 6 th gr. Cone Park 4:15pm MS Wrestling @ MOC-FV	² 8 th gr. Cone Park 1:15pm Early Dismissal	³
⁴	⁵ 4:15pm GBB vs Rock Valley 7 th (H) 8 th (A) 4:15 MS Wrestling @ Sioux Center	⁶	⁷ Morningside Jazz Festival	⁸ 4:00pm GBB vs Sergeant Bluff-Luton 7 th (A) 8 th (H)	⁹ 6 th gr. Ice Fishing 1:15pm Early Dismissal	¹⁰
¹¹	¹² MS Strong Foundations Honor Band 4:15pm GBB vs Sheldon 7 th (A) 8 th (H)	¹³ MS Jazz Festival 4:15pm MS Wrestling @ Le Mars	¹⁴ Valentines Day Ash Wednesday 7 th gr. Cone Park	¹⁵ Qrt. 3 6 wk gr. chk 4:15pm GBB vs Sioux Center 7 th (A) 8 th (H)	¹⁶ 1:15pm Early Dismissal	¹⁷
¹⁸	¹⁹ Snow Makeup Day	²⁰ 4:15pm GBB vs Cherokee 7 th (A) 8 th (H)	²¹	²² 4:15pm GBB vs LeMars 7 th (H) 8 th (A) 4:15pm MS Wrestling @ Sheldon	²³ 1:15pm Early Dismissal	²⁴
²⁵	²⁶ End Exploratory Cycle 4 3:00pm-9:00pm MS Orchestra and Band Solo Performance 7:30pm DC/NYC 7 th gr. Parent Meeting	²⁷ Start Exploratory Cycle 5	²⁸	²⁹		
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;">Makerspace</div>						

March 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 1:15pm Early Dismissal	2
3	4	5 7-8:30pm 7-12 gr. Jazz Band Night	6	7	8 1:15pm Early Dismissal End 3 rd Qt.	9
10	11 Start 4 th Qt. 4-8pm Parent Teacher Conferences	12 4-8pm Parent Teacher Conferences	13	14	15 No School - Teacher Comp. Day	16
17	18	19 7-8:30pm Middle School Concert	20	21	22 1:15pm Early Dismissal	23
					DC/NYC Trip	
24	25	26	27	28 No School -Spring Break	29 No School-Spring Break	30
DC/NYC Trip						
31						