

# MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS

MOC-Floyd Valley

May

2024

### Special points of Interest:

- Be A Multiplier
- PBIS
- Leader-In-Me
- Field Trips



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## Be A Multiplier

The last month of the school year is here! It is challenging for me to remember all the parts of the school year, all the conversations with staff and students, and all the things I have gotten to witness in our middle school that make me smile. It is obvious, however, to observe and generalize how our students have grown academically, emotionally, and socially. It could be an eighth grader sharing how eager they are for high school, a sixth grader who now walks confidently down the hallway making eye contact with students and adults to say “hi”, or maybe it is the seventh grader who has gradually stepped out of a comfort zone to lead his or her peers. These, and many other examples, demonstrate how much our students grow and change throughout a school year. That stretching and growing happens through productive struggle, teamwork, and people wanting the best for others.

As I have done before, I like to share some insights from current books I am reading or have read. *Multipliers* by Liz Wiseman, is a book I am currently reading for the second time. The book engages leaders to create full-capacity schools, businesses, families, etc by bringing out the genius in others! As I reflect on the school year, I see our teachers doing this for one another. I see teachers bringing out the genius in our students. I have witnessed students bringing out the best in other students. ***What a beautiful gift all of us have in being able to bring out the full capabilities of others.*** Being a multiplier is challenging. It takes more time to “coach” others through opportunity and failures than it does to sometimes just do something ourselves. Being a multiplier is also highly rewarding and it makes everyone better. Below are five disciplines of a Multiplier, as defined by Liz Wiseman. These only scratch the surface of the meaning of being a Multiplier (the book goes into each of these in detail, should you be interested in reading it yourself!)

1. The Talent Magnet: Multipliers attract and optimize talent.
2. The Liberator: Multipliers find a way to require people’s best thinking.
3. The Challenger: Multipliers challenge those around them.
4. The Debate Maker: Multipliers seek shared debates and decisions.
5. The Investor: Multipliers instill accountability in others.



I celebrate on behalf of our entire middle school and all of you, how our students have grown over this past school year. I believe many of our students and staff have been multipliers for one another! We say “THANK YOU” for partnering with our middle school and school district to grow your children!

Blessings on a safe and sunny summer!



## The Push to the End--6th Grade English

By: Mrs. Jacobsma

The end is quickly approaching, and yet there is so much left to do. The best academic thing you can do for your child right now is to encourage him/her to keep moving forward. As easy as it is to spend evenings outside, the school day will come again tomorrow. In English, we have many items left on our academic list. We begin May with persuasive speeches! The last week of the year will bring self assessments of each student's progress and how they fared on our district's essential learnings. As always, please contact me at the middle school if you have questions.



## Read All About It . . . 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Reading

By: Mrs. TeGrotenhuis

Our literature classes are nearing the end of the novel, *Freak the Mighty*, by Rodman Philbrick. One area of focus has been character analysis as we've observed the changing of characters throughout the course of the book. Another area of focus has been vocabulary; students continue learning how to use context clues to develop meaning. This book has often become a favorite of my sixth graders as they enjoy the unique friendship that develops between two completely different characters. We will continue to do a mixture of reading aloud, small group reading, and individual reading while working on specific reading strategies.

Our last big activity of the year will be the creation of a brochure/poster "advertising" one of the books the students read this year. I will use these next school year to entice the new sixth grade students to pick up a new book. I look forward to seeing the favorites of the students!

As always, students are expected to read 30 minutes daily. Sometimes this becomes more difficult when the weather gets nicer outside! I appreciate those of you who encourage your child to read each day. I have so many students who enjoy a good book, and this certainly makes my job easier. Thanks for all you do to help!



## 7th grade Science

By: Mrs. Vande Kieft

It is hard to believe that it reached the end of the year. As a conclusion to seventh grade Science, the students will combine everything that they have learned into the Ecosystems Unit. Within this unit of study, each Team will examine populations in various ecosystems and how each organism interacts with others. The seventh graders will also discuss the importance of resource availability by looking at the migration and survival of various species. By referring back to the Plant vs. Animal Unit, the students will investigate how energy flows from the Sun to producers, to various consumers, and finally to decomposers in a food web. The final project for seventh grade and the finale of the Ecosystem Unit will consist of an Ecosystems Project that will allow each student to personalize and construct their own ecosystem to represent everything that they have learned this year in seventh grade Science. To celebrate all of their hard work and success, each Team will enjoy an Ecosystem Extravaganza where we will observe and admire everyone's projects.

I would like to thank you all for the opportunity to work with your children each and every day. It has been a memorable year in seventh grade Science!!

### End Of The Year Field Trips

May 14 ~ 6th Grade ~ Big Sioux Recreation Center

May 29 ~ 7th Grade ~ Sioux Falls

May 22 ~ 8th Grade ~ Okoboji

## 7<sup>th</sup> Grade English

By: Mrs. Van Regenmorter (Mrs. VR)

Since the last newsletter, students in seventh grade English have begun another project. Students are working with partners to create a book that tells about “The ABC’s of 7<sup>th</sup> grade English.” In the book, there is a page for each letter of the alphabet. Students needed to find something that we learned about this year that begins with that letter. On each page, they must display the letter, an explanation that tells what they learned and know about this, and a picture or illustration that represents the item and its explanation. They also will create a front cover, a title page, and a back cover for their books. As I write this newsletter, students are working on the pages. When the pages and covers are done, they will put their books together, and I encourage them to find a way to assemble the book without using staples!! In the past, I’ve seen students use needle and thread, ribbons, rubber bands, twist ties, key chain rings, and many more items to make a binding. This project gives students a great review of twenty-six things we learned this year, and an opportunity to be creative. I can’t wait for their books to be done so I can read them!

When the ABC books are completed, students will begin their final unit for the school year, which is the End-of-the-year Self-assessment. For this unit, students complete a final assignment that asks them to assess their schoolwork, tests, writing, and overall performance during seventh grade English. In addition, they will look at some work in their sixth grade portfolios. Students will analyze their growth from sixth grade to seventh grade by responding to essay questions. They will use both their sixth and seventh grade portfolios that contain writings, tests, and projects to help them self-assess and formulate answers to the self-assessment questions. It’s always eye-opening for students to see how much they have grown and developed as students, writers, and individuals since sixth grade!

Thank you for reading the Middle School newsletter and for staying informed about what your son or daughter is doing and learning in school. Also, thank you for the privilege of teaching your child this year. At this time of the year, it is very fun and rewarding to see how my students have grown in their abilities and character.



## 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Math

By: Mr. Baker

What a fun year of seventh grade math! We will finish our seventh grade math year learning about probability.

I wanted to say thank you for all of your support of your son/daughter and me. I am confident the growth your son/daughter has displayed will carry them forward into eighth grade math. Have a wonderful summer!



## Wieking’s World 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Global Studies

By: Mr. Wieking

The springtime always seems to fly by. Our students have done a wonderful job throughout the school year. So far we have read, researched, and discussed new places, people, and events. Our students have asked good questions, connected ideas, and thought critically about difficult topics. As April ends and May approaches our students will explore the issues of migration, population growth, and standard of living. These are big issues that connect the people of the world and embody the idea of a global citizen. There is little doubt that the world will continue to become more interdependent and our students will play a significant role in shaping the future.

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](mailto:bwieking@mocfv.org).

## 7th Grade Literature

By: Mrs. Vermeer

It's hard to believe that our school year is almost over. In April we spent the whole month working on poetry. Our poetry unit is often a unit we start out not like but by the end we can say some students tolerate and even enjoy poetry. Our focus for the unit is spent making meaning of poems and connections to our lives. We will also read from various well-known poets including Shakespear and Edgar Allan Poe. To wrap up our poetry unit we complete a Tic Tac Toe board of various poems to read and complete an activity over. This gives the students the opportunity to read many different poems and work to build a connection to their own lives.

Quarter four book project is an exciting one that requires more work in the creativity skills. For this project students will be taking a book they read and turning it into a children's book. The challenge with this project is sharing only the main plot elements of the story and using vocabulary that a child would understand. The students will have the option for this project to use a website I have or create by hand. Most of the time students choose the website as it is easy to use and allows for a lot of custom creations. Once they have completed this we read the books aloud to the rest of the class to see everyone's creativity. We are also opening this project to allow students to write their own children's book. Both options will be provided with a outline and guiding tool to help them organize their thoughts and make the writing and creation process easier.

To wrap up our seventh grade year we are going to be doing a reader's theater. Each student will be assigned a part based on how much reading they would like. The show is based off a TV show, and we will watch that as well. The goal for this is to build reading fluency by reading aloud. Second, we will work on comparing text to the digital screen version. Finally, we will work on the 4C's of communication, creativity, collaboration, and critical thinking through another breakout room.

Reminders for some upcoming due dates the genre log is due on May 15<sup>th</sup> and the quarter book log will be due May 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Great work seventh graders! Looking forward to finishing up an exciting and learning filled year.



## 8<sup>th</sup> Grade English

By: Mrs. Oolman

The year will wrap up with a few short units.

1. Team- teaching Black History (reading and writing) with Mrs. Hoppe.
2. Poetry and literary terms reading and writing.
3. Signing up for courses with HS Guidance Counselors (4-yr. plans) in prep for "bump up day" the Thursday morning of Tulip Festival weekend.
4. A self-evaluation of student growth in writing and speaking over the course of three years in the Middle School.
5. Thank you note writing.
6. Formal letter writing where students will introduce themselves to the HS Principal and their freshman English teacher.

The end of the year tends to come RUSHING at us! I want to take this newsletter opportunity to thank you for a few things. One, thank you for sharing your son or daughter with me this year. It has been fun to watch this group grow! They have learned about leadership in many ways and have tried putting into practice speaking up for themselves and others. Two, thanks for taking a genuine interest in your son or daughter's education and for partnering with me from home. Your support means a lot and goes a long way as well. Best wishes for a safe and happy summer and a smooth transition to FRESHMAN year!



## Our Corner of History: 8<sup>th</sup> Grade American History Class

By: Mrs. Phelan'

The end of the school year is nearly here! This month, the eighth grade has had the opportunity to welcome a new student teacher Calvin Voorhees from Dordt into MOC-FV. Mr. Voorhees will be with us until the second week of May.

This past April, students have spent their time exploring the presidencies of Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, and Jackson. Most recently, we have investigated the question of "Andrew Jackson: hero or villain?" and evaluated his legacy and role in Jacksonian democracy, the bank of the United States, and the Trail of Tears. My goal is for students to see historical figures less as a name on the pages of their textbook and more as dynamic, yet complicated people. We will continue to take this concept and apply it toward other figures as we progress through the Civil War.

At the end of the year, eighth graders will be watching the film *Glory* to wrap up our last unit over the Civil War. *Glory* is a 1989 movie about the 54th Massachusetts Regiment, the first all-African-American volunteer company to fight in the Civil War. The movie offers an unforgettable history lesson about soldiers who transcended the racism and ignorance of their time to display dignity, courage, and valor when given the opportunity to prove their worth. In portraying the realistic obstacles that these soldiers faced, the film does contain some scenes of wartime violence, thematic material, and racially-charged language. To prepare students for viewing the movie, I will be spending some time in class to introduce the film and explain some of the more intense things they will see; along with my expectations for handling such scenes with maturity. I do believe *Glory* is a highly valuable teaching tool for learning about the Civil War and encourage its viewing. Feel free to contact me with any questions prior to viewing the film and thank you for supporting your student's education!



### PBIS Update

As we wind down the remainder of the year, it is a great time to celebrate the impact that PBIS has on the climate and culture at the Middle School. Due to the clear expectations aligned to our PBIS matrix and the intentional recognition of students who are making positive choices, the Middle School is a safe, welcoming, and exciting place for students to learn and grow. It is truly a joint effort of the staff and students that contribute to the positive environment.

April and May have been exciting months in terms of student leadership in PBIS. First, the PBIS Team along with student volunteers worked together with the help of a group of High School students to create a PBIS Instructional and Promotional videos. Watch for the final videos to be showcased on the district social media sources. Second, the PBIS Team continues to work collaboratively with students interested in a direct role in the planning and leading of our monthly PBIS assemblies. Student leaders formed monthly Action Teams that continue to use their creativity, cooperation, and leadership skills along with teachers to plan, prepare, and lead the end of the month PBIS activity. These student leaders also select prizes to give away as well as market/promote the assembly throughout the school. Both of these opportunities have been a great way to partner with students to continue to promote a positive learning experience in the Middle School.



May 18 ~ 11:15pm Dismissal  
May 19 ~ No School



## 8th Grade Science

By: Mrs. Hoogeveen

To make Newton's 3 laws more relevant to the eighth graders, we applied the laws to their reality of driving a car. Our labs were tied into learning the laws, testing the laws, and watching videos of how Newton's 3 laws apply to driving a vehicle. Newton's First Law of Inertia is why we have headrests, seatbelts, and airbags in the car. The second law relates the force of a car to its acceleration and mass. A car full of their friends has more force and takes more to slow down. Newton's third law is known as the action - reaction law. We learned a bit of how cars are designed to help save the passengers with collisions. We looked at how speed can be a big factor when collisions occur. The last portion of this section investigated if my speed triples, the distance required to stop increases 9x.

April is severe weather safety month, and we will begin our adventure of learning about how our atmosphere is a battle ground between warm and cold air.

The first part of May, we will be learning about the complex ways water flows through our atmosphere and underground. The eighth graders will create a poster to show many different steps to the water cycle and how our Sun is the engine that begins the process. When the air cools all sorts of crazy things happen as water returns to the surface and gravity takes hold to try to return some of it back to the ocean.

The next atmospheric battle will be how our air masses form and the results of when warm and cold air collide. Throw in a little bit of how the ocean affects our atmosphere and things start getting evening crazier. Now set all this in motion as the Earth spins throwing air into different wind belts and ways the air spins in the northern hemisphere as opposed to how it spins in the southern hemisphere. So many different battles occurring at the same time in our atmosphere. Who knew?



### Leader in Me

As we venture into the end of the school year, the focus of the Leader in Me lessons have continued with the idea of **Learning to Lead Others** with *Habit 5 – Seek First to Understand, Then to be Understood* based on the idea that we must “Listen to People Sincerely.” The lessons in Habit 5 are a great opportunity for the Middle School students to practice using attentive-listening while building good social and communication skills in attempts to appreciate and work effectively with others. Students worked to hone life skills such as the use of body language in communication, how to be an empathetic listener, and the importance of providing appropriate and effective feedback in their interactions with others.

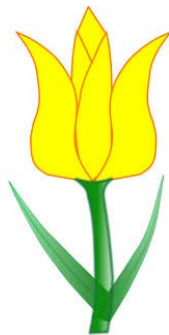
#### Focus: Learning to Lead Others

Showing Consideration for Others

Having the Courage to Stand up for Others



May 19



## 8th Grade Literature

By: Mrs. Hoppe

The eighth grade Literature students are currently reading their black history novels. Your student had the opportunity to listen to book talks and read a synopsis of each of the novels below before providing input into which book they would like to read. They were then placed in groups of two to five members where they have been learning to orient themselves to historical fiction text, aligning the events of their novel to historical events, and learning how the characters respond to trouble and adversity. It has been exciting to see how students have begun to think deeply about what they are reading and engaging in good conversations about their novels.

- *Copper Sun* by Sharon M. Draper
- *Chains* by Laurie Halse Anderson
- *Elijah of Buxton* by Christopher Paul Curtis
- *Fire from the Rock* by Sharon M. Draper
- *Lions of Little Rock* by Kristine Levine
- *The Watsons Go to Birmingham - 1963* by Christopher Paul Curtis
- *Nightjohn* by Gary Paulsen

At the conclusion of the novel, each student will write a book response in the form of a reflection by answering the essential question, "How does an agent of positive influence demonstrate courage amid adversity?" Students will choose one of the quotes below, or identify one of their own, and explain how the ideas of courage relate to a character in their book. Students will provide textual evidence from the book, along with examples from their own life.

*"He who is not courageous enough to take risks will accomplish nothing in life."*

~ Robert Frost

*"I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear."*

~ Nelson Mandela

*"Courage is the most important of all the virtues because without courage, you can't practice any other virtue consistently."*

~ Maya Angelou

*"Courage is the ability to do the right thing, all the time, no matter how painful or uncomfortable it might be."*

~ Tony Dungy

I am enjoying watching students show an enjoyment for reading and engaging one another with rich conversation. I look forward to reading their responses and seeing their final projects.




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Have a good  
Summer!



# May 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Qrt 4 6 Wk Gr Chk	2 4:15pm MS Soccer vs Sheldon 5:30pm Boys	3 1:15pm Early Dismissal  4:30pm 8 <sup>th</sup> gr. MS Track Siouxland Conf. Big 4 @ Okoboji	4 <span style="background-color: #90EE90; padding: 2px;">MS Band Pella Tulip Time</span>
5 <span style="background-color: #90EE90; padding: 2px;">MS Band Pella Tulip Time</span>  Cinco De Mayo	6 4:15pm MS Soccer vs Sioux Center	7 7:00pm MS Spring Concert Choir & Orchestra	8	9	10 1:15pm Early Dismissal	11
12 Mother's Day	13 4:15pm MS Track @ West Sioux	14 6 <sup>th</sup> gr Field Trip	15	16 Bump Up Day(5 <sup>th</sup> to MS 8 <sup>th</sup> to HS)  11:15 Early Dismissal-Tulip Festival	17 <span style="background-color: #FFFF00; padding: 2px;">No School</span>	18
				Tulip Festival		
19	20	21	22 8 <sup>th</sup> gr. Field Trip	23	24 1:15pm Early Dismissal	25
26 Commencement	27 Memorial Day  <span style="background-color: #FFFF00; padding: 2px;">No School</span>	28	29 7 <sup>th</sup> gr Field Trip  End Exploratory Cycle 6	30 End 4 <sup>th</sup> Qrt./ End 2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester  1:15 Early Dismissal	31 Professional Development   <b>SCHOOL'S OUT</b>	
						Summer Break