

MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS

MOC-Floyd Valley

February

2025

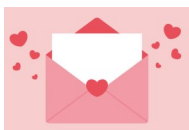
Special points of Interest:

- February Challenges in the Midwest
- PBIS Update
- Leader in Me



Inside this issue:

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



February Challenges In The Midwest

February in the Midwest during a school year can have some challenges! It is important to remain as proactive as possible with our days and our time. I recently read an article that was written for students. It expressed some of the challenges of the middle of the school year. It did not give attention to the cold temps and shorter days that occur in our area. Most important, is that the article gave some helpful hints to sustain a focus during the middle of the school year. I have highlighted a few of them below. As I read them, I think these can apply to any of us, not just students!

Break your tasks into Manageable Chunks: Smaller, manageable tasks can remove the feeling of being overwhelmed and often provide small victories of motivation.

Stay Organized: Again, this helps avoid the stress of “last minute” in our lives. Take time to plan ahead, it promotes a growth mindset.

Stay Connected: We tend to think we are the only ones fighting through the mid-year struggles; stay engaged with friends even when the cold weather suggests staying home.

Focus on your Health: Sleep, eat well, and exercise! This improves our concentration and focus.

Remember your Why!: Like many things, when we get into the middle of them... we often focus on the “what” that has to be done and we lose the motivation of “why” we are doing it.

I encourage you to be intentional with a few things to remain focused and productive. Likewise, share any of these that you believe your son or daughter could benefit from! We look forward to a fantastic February at the Middle School!

Blessings,
Mr. Yaw



February 17

No School~Teacher Professional Day

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 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.



READ ALL ABOUT IT . . . 6TH GRADE LITERATURE

By: Mrs. TeGrotenhuis

The sixth graders are nearly finished with a lengthy research project over a cultural hero. After learning about heroes of Greek mythology and comparing those heroes to our cultural heroes, the students began exploring the heroic traits of a cultural hero of their choosing. The end-product is a research paper which involved several stages: researching, note-taking, paraphrasing, organizing into different categories, drafting, editing, revising, publishing, and developing a works-cited page. Whew! It was a lot, but Mrs. DeZeeuw, our media specialist, helped prepare the students by showing them available resources and guiding them while researching. I always look forward to reading about the students' heroes!

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 different Padlet pages created by their peers. I enjoyed the many creative styles of our students and have added a few books to my "must read" list!

I also ask for your help with 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 World History

By: Mr. Nonnemacher

Our sixth graders are just finishing up our 3-week look into the religion of Judaism! We discussed the fact that religions don't have borders, and there are Jewish people all over the world. We talked about men such as Abraham, Moses, David, and Solomon. We competed in a trivia competition as well as a Jeopardy review game! With our Judaism unit behind us and the cold weather all around us, we are going to take the next few weeks to immerse ourselves in the warmth of the Mediterranean region while we study Ancient Greece! We will be discussing how the Ancient Olympics came to be, as well as comparing the mighty city-states of Athens and Sparta.

We have the absolute joy of having a student-teacher this semester! Mr. Sandbulte has joined the sixth grade Social Studies classroom from Northwestern College, and the students have been thoroughly enjoying the opportunity to get to know him. Mr. Sandbulte has been stepping in from time to time throughout the Judaism unit but will be teaching full-time during some of our Ancient Greece unit. We are lucky to have him in our building and in our classroom for these few weeks!

6th Grade Math with Mr. Boersma

Page 3

By: Mr. Boersma

The sixth graders have been working on a really difficult unit, Dividing Fractions. What I find kind of ironic is that teaching kids how to solve 3527 really isn't a difficult skill. Getting them to understand what is going on in that problem is very difficult. When most of us were taught division of fractions we were taught to use a reciprocal and multiply. But very few of us were taught why or how multiplying by reciprocals work. That's what the first half of unit four is all about. In the second half of the unit, we will be attempting to nail down the procedure.

Thanks for all of your help and encouragement for your son/daughter. With our current curriculum we don't have an excess of quizzes/tests, so the ones that we do have are highly impactful on the students' grades. Helping them to study is greatly appreciated. Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may be having. Thank you!



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.

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 Science

By: 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 along with Ms. Noonan, our student teacher from Northwestern, 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.



7th Grade English

By: Mrs. VR (Van Regenmorter)

Welcome to another edition of the middle school newsletter, and thank you for taking the time to read it. 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!

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 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, the seventh graders continued working to revise their personal narratives by adding transitions and dialogue to their stories. Next it was time to edit. 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!



7th Grade Math

By: Mr. Baker

In seventh grade math we have 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.



8th Grade Science

By: Mrs. Hughes

A required eighth grade science standard is evolution. We are only scratching the surface of this topic until students get to high school. We have been defining evolution as changes occurring over time in different species. Our essential question with this unit has been, "How do animal characteristics change over time? How do we track these changes?" The students have been participating in many online simulations that highlight these changes happening: peppered moths, pocket mice, keeping bunnies alive in various environments, etc.

We just completed our Evolution assessment, where students had to explain why some animals survive in certain environments and some don't, and the different adaptations that develop over time in a species in order to survive in their environments as the world changes around them.

In the coming weeks, we will be comparing and contrasting the genetic makeup and anatomy of various kinds of species to answer the questions of what evidence supports their common characteristics and what evidence refutes these characteristics.

8th Grade Literature

Page 5

By: Mrs. Hoppe

Happy New Year! After returning from break and settling back into our regular routine, we are gearing up for the second semester. We have some exciting things planned for this month.

After spending some time building background, the eighth 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.

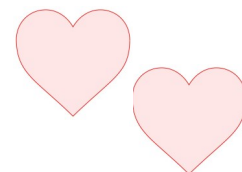
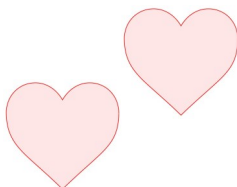
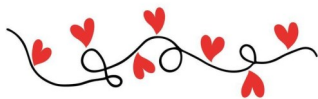


Our Corner of History~8th Grade History

By: Mrs. Phelen

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!



8th Grade English

By: Mrs. Oolman

Ask your son or daughter about their personal goals? Their academic goals? Their “WORD” of the year on their locker! Upon our return from winter break, we spent some time reviewing our growth mindset and setting goals. We will continue to check back on “ourselves” with our goals and our “word” for the year to see how we are doing!

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 Frankfurt, Germany with her family in hopes of finding safety in Amsterdam, Holland.

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, eighth 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?**
- 3. What risks do we take as bystanders who do OR do not get involved in conflicts?**

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. 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 / analysis 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, 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.

A permission slip for the movie viewing will be coming home with your student. It looks like this.

Continued on the next page



Dear Parents / Guardians:

Our eighth graders will be taking the opportunity to watch *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl* during school. The movie that will be viewed is for educational purposes (see more information in this month's newsletter) and was produced by Disney Educational Productions. The rating is TV14. Disney Educational Productions recommends that educators preview the program, which all five of the eighth grade teachers have done. The film contains scenes that depict human suffering and loss of life. Additionally, this is a coming of age story, so we watch Anne and the others mature while living in the Annex. Finally, in order to show what happened after being captured, there is one brief scene where a small amount of nudity (a backside) is shown. This is done to humiliate and dehumanize the Jewish people. I am requesting that a permission slip be signed by the parent / guardian. Please complete the form and return to school with your son or daughter.

_____ I give permission to watch *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl*

_____ I do not grant permission to view *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl*

Student Name (please print): _____

Parent/ guardian Signature _____

DUE: Feb. 5, 2025



Leader in Me

In January and February, the Middle School moved into **Habit 4: Think Win-Win** centered on "Have an Everyone-Can-Win Attitude." The lessons in Habit 4 concentrated on recognizing that everyone has unique talents and abilities, and that we must be open-minded when working collaboratively with others. Students worked to hone life skills such as being nonjudgemental, considering the viewpoints of others, and being flexible in peer interactions. **Habit 4: Think Win-Win** focused on key concepts such as:

- Understanding Mutual Benefit
- Having a Win-Win Attitude
- Using Courage & Consideration with others
- Managing Conflict
- Understanding a Relationship Bank Account



PBIS Update

PBIS Student Leadership opportunities has been the theme of PBIS in January. 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!

The PBIS Team is also excited to be providing students with a volunteer opportunity to serve at Hope Haven and help to assemble wheelchair parts to be distributed all over the world. In December eight students and volunteer staff had the opportunity to work for 2.5 hours during the school day. Students cut vinyl for the wheelchair pads, stuffed wheelchair pads with foam padding, stapled the vinyl to finish the pad, drilled holes for the parts to be attached to the wheelchair, and packed the wheelchair pads to be shipped for final assembly. Another group of eight students along with staff volunteers worked together at Hope Haven once again at the end of January. MOC-FV Middle School looks forward to continually partnering with Hope Haven!



February 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3 4:15pm GBB vs. Spirit Lake 8 th (H) 7 th (A) 4:15pm MS Boys Wrestling @ West Lyon	4	5 8am-4pm Morningside Jazz Festival	6 4:15pm MS Boys Wrestling @ MOC-fV MS	7 1:15pm Early Dismissal Qrt. 3 3wk Gr. Ch.k	8
9	10 4:15pm GBB vs Rock Valley 8 th (A) 7 th (H) 4:15pm MS Boys Wrestling @ Sioux Center	11 8am-3pm MS Jazz Festival @ HS	12	13 8 th Gr. Roller Skating 4:15pm GBB vs Sergeant Bluff-Luton 7 th (H) 8 th (A) @ 4:00pm	14 1:15pm Early Dismissal	15
Makerspace						
16	17 Presidents Day No School 4:15pm GBB vs Sheldon 8 th (H)	18	19	20 7 th Gr. Roller Skating 4:15pm GBB vs Sioux Center 7 th (A) 8 th (H)	21 1:15pm Early Dismissal	22
23	24 MS Solo Performance Night	25 4:15pm GBB vs Cherokee 7 th (A) 8 th (H)	26	27 4:15pm GBB vs LeMars 7 th (A) 8 th (H)	28 1:15pm Early Dismissal	

March 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3 7:00-9:00pm 7-12 All Jazz Band @ HS	4	5	6	7 1:15pm Early Dismissal	8
9	10	11 7:00-8:30pm Middle School Concert	12	13	14 1:15pm Early Dismissal	15
16	17	18 4:00-8:00pm Parent/Teacher Conferences	19	20 4:00-8:00pm Parent/Teacher Conferences	21 No School ~ Teacher Comp Day End 3 rd Qrt.	22 Morningside Middle School Jazz Festival
23	24	25	26	27	28 1:15pm Early Dismissal	29
30	31					