



## **FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK—Mr. Lekkas**

### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Promotion**

8<sup>th</sup> grade promotion will take place Monday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> at 7:00 pm in Hennigan Gymnasium at GKMS. Our keynote speaker is Mr. Burgess.

### **GKMS Newsletter**

The March school wide Bully Free GKMS lesson focused on the Bystander. The Bystander is often the most powerful role in any bullying situation. Student participated in various activities teaching that bystanders have the options such as telling an adult, writing a note, speaking up, speaking with the victim, and others strategies. Students contributed additional strategies and discussed the topic in class.

Working together, students can help make GKMS a Bully Free school.

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## **NEWS FROM THE ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL—Mr. McPherson**

As we near spring, it seems like a good time to remind parents of the student–incentive programs we have in place here at Genoa-Kingston Middle School. Cogs Cards are a form of positive reinforcement used by our staff for kids. Students may receive a Cogs Card for a variety of reasons, but many times they obtain a Cogs Card through good deeds. These cards are an excellent form of reinforcement for CHARACTER COUNTS! as well. All of the Cogs Cards are submitted for monthly drawings that take place in lunch. Selected students win gift cards, t-shirts and other prizes. Great News postcards are yet another example of opportunities for staff to let parents know about their student engaging in a positive experience. These postcards are filled out by staff and sent home. Additionally, we have begun an award called the Extra-Degree Award to go along with a district theme called “The Extra Degree.” Students are chosen by staff for this award based on one of three criteria:

1. Improvement in Academics, Behavior or Attendance
2. Showing Good Character
3. Outstanding Academic Achievement

This award is done monthly and winners are posted in the display case as you come into the Middle School. Please feel free to discuss these student-incentive programs with your kids.

## STUDENTS OF THE MONTH—MARCH

Congratulations to our MARCH

Students of the Month:

6th grade—HEIDI SCACCIANOCE

7th grade—ELIZABETH HANSON

8th grade—KRISTEN PACEY



## 8TH GRADE DANCE—May 13, 2011

The GKMS Student Council is sponsoring a dance for all GKMS 8th grade students on Friday, May 13th from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. ONLY students that attend GKMS and are currently in 8th grade are allowed to attend. The cost will be \$5.00 and tickets must be purchased in advance. Doors will not open until 7:00 p.m. and students must be picked up promptly at 9:00 p.m. Any parent is welcome to attend with their student.

## FROM THE NURSE'S OFFICE—9th grade physical reminder

All students entering ninth grade are required by the state of Illinois to have a physical exam and provide proof of a tetanus booster within the last 10 years. State of Illinois physical forms can be obtained through your family physician or by downloading the form from the GK website. [[http://gkschools.org/pages/uploaded\\_files/physicalform.pdf](http://gkschools.org/pages/uploaded_files/physicalform.pdf)]

Scheduling school physicals early is recommended as appointments fill up during the summer months leading up to the first day of school. If you have questions or need assistance, please contact the district nurse at 815-784-5222.

## DRAMA! DRAMA! DRAMA!

DRAMA - COMING SOON! Much Ado About Coconuts is a hilarious comedy about a tropical island, a dependent government employee, a mob boss and his special suitcase, a long lost love now found, THE grumpy Mrs. Hammond, with a little Shakespeare thrown in for good measure. Come ready for lots of laughs! Performances will be here at GKMS, April 29 & 30 at 7:00 pm both evenings. Admission is \$3.

## **KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION FOR 2011-2012**

If you have not registered your child for kindergarten next school year, please do so at your earliest convenience. School hours are 7:30 to 4:00 Monday thru Friday. If this time is not convenient for you, please contact Davenport School at 815-784-2448. Our district needs this enrollment information so that we can plan for classes and staff. **Fees are not due at this time.** If you know of someone with a future kindergarten student please encourage them to register.

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## **FROM THE 6TH GRADE TEAM**

### **Reading/Language Arts**

The end of the year is the time to put all learned comprehension strategies into use. Students will apply all strategies while reading a variety of genres, fiction and nonfiction. We will also be forming book groups to study a couple of novels. While working in the groups, the students will be analyzing, making connections, summarizing, and inferring. The students will also have the opportunity to read medieval materials, both fiction and non-fiction, to maintain that connection of reading with the current social studies topic. Students will develop an understanding of how to read functional texts and the importance of functional text in the world around us. In Language Arts, we are continuing to improve our writing skills, concentrating on word choice, sentence fluency and presentation. Many students will complete expository writing assignment in the form of a report.

### **Math**

Over the next month we will be completing our unit on integers and their operations. We will then be starting our units on multiplying and dividing fractions and mixed numbers. It will bring back many of the concepts that we used earlier in the year when working with fractions and their uses. This will then lead us into our unit that involves the building of catapults. There will be a list of supplies that will come out near the end of the month for the construction. Any donations would be welcome.

### **Social Studies**

6<sup>th</sup> grade students are learning about ancient Rome and its impact on the United States. Areas of study being covered are the geography of Rome, Roman Republic, Roman Empire, the Decline of Rome and Christianity. We have been comparing and contrasting the Roman Republic with our own republic. Also being covered are famous individuals like Scipio, Julius Caesar, Hannibal, Augustus, Cleopatra and Jesus. Our test will take place on or around April 6<sup>th</sup>.

### **Science**

The students are finishing up the chapter on weathering and erosion. After Spring Break we will begin the unit on Astronomy and Space Science. There will be several activities and projects that should help the students have a better understanding of our Universe. This unit will probably take us through most of 4<sup>th</sup> quarter.

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## FROM THE 7TH GRADE TEAM

### **Reading**

Students will be reading novels and Making Meaning texts. With these materials we will be reviewing reading strategies we have worked on all year.

### **Language Art**

Students will be working our narrative writing skills. The students will be writing stories to go along with wordless picture books and movies. They will also be surveying children's picture books in preparation for writing their own picture books.

### **Math**

After returning from break, we will begin a long unit focused primarily on geometric properties and their applications. Students will determine angle measures, apply angle properties, and classify triangles by their side lengths and/or angle measures. They are also going to combine their application of angle properties with applications of writing and solving linear equations. These concepts and applications can be difficult for students, but overall students generally enjoy this unit (Chapter 8) and become engaged in the challenges these problems provide.

### **Social Studies**

We are now beginning our unit of the Middle East and Africa. We begin by trying to understand these people's cultures by attempting to understand the religion that shapes many of the lives of the people that live in the Middle East – especially Iran whose very government is dictated by the Qur'an. We will analyze individual countries and the issues people are facing there. We will also determine how the arbitrary borders of countries of the Middle East and Africa have negatively affected the lives of people throughout these regions.

Check out some of our class discussions that we are extending in our class blog at: <http://www.mccunegeography.blogspot.com>. Students can comment on the blog. And if their comments are of sufficient quality they can receive extra credit once a week.

### **Science**

The coral reef project was amazing! There were fabulous posters, PowerPoints, dioramas, and even a few videos! We learned about many of the creatures that inhabit the reef, pollution and human impact on the reef, how the changes in the reef affect the human environment, and other current issues related to the coral reef biome. Last year I was a part of a group of Science teachers that traveled with some professors from NIU to Mexico to study these topics and I was able to share my experiences with the students as well. Next we will be moving into the study of more animals including insects, reptiles, amphibians, birds and mammals. Students will have more opportunities to utilize their research and reporting skills.

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## FROM THE 8TH GRADE TEAM

### Reading/Language Arts

We have been continuing to work on the same materials in both reading and language arts classes, and we love the fact that we can continue our studies into the next class to expand our knowledge on the subjects that much more. This month we decided to combine our knowledge of different parts of speech and children's books. We have comprehensively covered nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs and are going to express our knowledge of these subjects through the creation of children's books. We have been successfully working in small groups on this project. Each group is creating a children's book that has a fun, child-like story to it, but at the same time teaches the rules to different parts of speech. All pages must also have an example and pictures to follow the story line.

The stories are turning out very charming and will be shared with the other elementary schools in the district when completed. We are continuing to work with word study on a weekly basis which has really helped use and understand word origins, spelling and definitions and their function in a sentence. Word study has helped open our eyes to new words which will not only help our writing, but also our communication skills with others. We will begin the process of a research paper in Languages Arts soon, so keep a look out for information that will be coming home with your student.

### Social Studies

Eighth grade social studies students are beginning their Civics (Constitution) Unit. Passing the Constitution Test in eighth grade is a requirement for promotion into high school. We will spend about five weeks covering the following topics:

- Constitutional Convention
- Bill of Rights
- The Three Branches of Government
- Citizenship
- State Government

To help students study and remember all this information, they will be creating note cards that they will use as flashcards. These flashcards contain the questions and answers for students' weekly quizzes. The questions and answers, in turn, become flashcards for the actual Constitution Test.

Students need index cards (100) plus 10 zip lock bags (they must be able to zip shut.)

It will be a very full five-week unit, but students will be given many tools to use to help them learn and study for this very important test. Please feel free to contact your child's social studies teacher with any questions.

As of now, the Constitution Test is scheduled for 1st and 2nd hours on April 27th. If this changes, a notice will be sent home with each student as well as being posted on Assignment Connection.

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**FROM THE 8TH GRADE TEAM . . . continued****Science**

As our students begin the fourth and final quarter of their Middle School career, we will focus on the skills that will make them successful as High School Freshmen. They have grown in many ways and improved in their academic abilities during their time at the Middle School. And we are proud to send them ahead knowing they have the skills to be great High School students.

We are currently finishing our unit on magnetism and electricity, where the students demonstrated understanding of the relationship between electric current and magnetism.

We made visible the magnetic field that surrounds all magnets and learned how motors and generators convert electrical energy into mechanical energy and vice versa.

We will now begin our next unit on atoms, elements and substances of all kinds. During this 8 week unit we will understand the differences in solids, liquids and gases, as well as describe the structure of atoms. We will investigate the different categories of substances and how those substances change as they interact. We will analyze the Periodic Table of Elements and learn what each number and symbol has to tell us.

I would also like to again encourage all parents to ask their students about the things we are doing in school, to keep checking assignment books and grades on Powerschool. As you know middle school students are not fully independent and need support from home studying for tests, completing projects and finding purpose in the lessons they are taught.

Thank you for your support and your fantastic kids!

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## **ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS—Mrs. Sorensen**

### **THINK:**

**Sew** seeds indoors beginning in March and April, outdoors, after frost.

**Plant** native species or heirloom seeds.

**Renew** your commitment to a clean, healthy environment.

**Initiate** family activities that “green-up” living spaces.

**Nutrient-** rich plant food is in gathered rainwater. Rain barrel - it!

**Go** green with the following fuel and energy-saving ideas:

- Use re-useable water bottles
- Use re-useable shopping bags
- Carpool and consolidate trips
- Compost plant and vegetable waste
- Purchase or create a rainwater catcher or dig a rain garden

Remove extra seats and roof racks from cars to lighten it up and save fuel when the snow and ice is gone for the season!

***Most of all – ENJOY the special light of spring and have fun!***

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## **GKMS ART CLUB—Mrs. Sorensen**

The first meetings of GKMS Art Club were held in February. Several students signed up for this alternative, extra-curricular activity group.

Students will meet with Mrs. Sorensen most Thursdays after school from about 3:00 to 4:00 in the Art Room.

Each participant has input as to the activities of the group and our club products will be displayed for the entire student body to enjoy.

Some of the ideas already discussed and/or created include: paper murals, 3 D forms, paintings and theme image creation.

Look for GKMS ART CLUB-generated art around the school in addition to curricular products to enhance our learned, cultural surroundings.

ENJOY!

## **ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS—Mrs. Sorensen**

The GKMS Visual Arts daily curriculum is packed full of activity and diversity. Each grade level: 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> incorporates cross-curricular information as well with new ideas and exposure to various mediums, information and methods.

Sixth grade visual art students will hear math terms: angles, shapes, orientation, fractions, etc. during any given art project. A sixth grade art student will often be exposed to science terms as well while creating their products. Terms and concepts like symmetry, friction, radiation, prismatic, atmospheric, etc. are incorporated. In social studies connection to visual arts learning is an apparent one, especially in sixth grade when we discuss artist masters and the periods in which they worked. Even Language Arts plays a role as we learn to discuss, critique and describe our work as we create it and view it. Physical education meets the sixth graders as well with several lessons that incorporate kinesthetic learning during shape, and perspective units.

In Seventh grade, cross-curricular effects come largely from historical background given about each lesson. Students in seventh grade visual arts will also hear much historical information about the variety of mediums explored at this level. From ancient Hebrew and Celtic manuscripts to American folk portraiture to multicultural mask-making, social studies connections abound in seventh grade visual arts here at GKMS. Math terms seventh grade art students will hear regard balance and repetition and time which compliments science terms and concepts like movement and proportion, for example. When working on incorporating words to enhance design meaning, the seventh grade is reminded of adjectives, adverbs and metaphor while creating a visual piece.

In Eighth grade, students balance their previous two years of GKMS Art study with new concept information and advanced terminology. From their research and incorporation of American artists in their quilt drawing to their exposure to a variety of sculpture media, eighth grade visual arts students understand the social, historical nature of art. Constructing sculptures provides science and engineering experience for eighth graders. Terms like: support structure, cantilever, are, architectural integrity and viability are all within these lessons at this level of art training. Tessellation is a design method founded in mathematics. The eighth grade creates tessellations that examine interlocking repetition and parts-to-whole pattern building. Many eighth graders also enjoy providing a written articulation of what they have drawn for their weekly journal sketchbooks. This good practice affords them a way to put word meaning to images and to clarify the intended message of a visual image to their audience.

I love teaching visual art because it brings all subjects into play as new visual expressions are created.

## CALENDAR FOR APRIL

7	Track Pictures	26	School Board Meeting
11	Encore 5 ends Track @ home	27	8th grade to Beloit Snappers game
12	School Board Committee Meeting	28	Track @ home
13	Track @ home	29	Drama—Much Ado About Coconuts at 7:00 pm
15	FPS State Bowl	30	Track @ Hinckley Drama—Much Ado About Coconuts at 7:00 pm
16	Community Jazz Dance Concert at 7:00 pm Track @ Winnebago FPS State Bowl		
19	Progress reports sent home Track @ Stillman Valley		
20	Early Release at 1:45 pm Track @ home		
21	Market day pick up 6th grade COGS day		
22	NO SCHOOL—Not in Attendance		
25	NO SCHOOL—Not in Attendance		