

GKMS Gazette

SEPTEMBER 2010

ISSUE I

CALENDAR FOR SEPTEMBER

- 1 Sports Pictures
- 2 VB 8th Creekside/7th home
8th FB home vs Christian Life
- 6 Labor Day—NO SCHOOL
- 7 Fundraiser Ends
VB 8th home/7th N. Boone
- 9 VB 8th home/7th Hampshire
FB home vs Winnebago
- 10 Picture Day
- 11 VB 7/8 Tourney at Oregon
- 14 VB 8th Harvard/7th home
School Board Committee Meeting
- 15 Progress Reports sent out
- 16 Market day
VB 8th home/7th Kirkland
FB at Jr. Indians
- 21 Open House
VB 7th/8th at Elgin Westminster
- 22 Early Release at 1:45 pm

FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK—Mr. Lekkas

Quick Information:

Stay informed with Powerschool Daily Bulletin and Assignment Connection.

Go to: <https://gkschools.powerschool.com/public/> and login. To request parent or student login information, please contact the office.

You are also welcome to check in and leave feedback on Mr. Lekkas' Blog at <http://mrlekkas.blogspot.com/> My Blog is updated every few weeks and includes information about GKMS, programs, and school events.

Welcome to the New Year:

I am looking forward to the new school year. As I met with all our teachers and some families in the days leading up to the 2010-2011 year, the anticipation experienced by all reminded me yet again why GKMS is a great place for kids, teachers, and

families.

Whenever people ask me about our school, I always tell them about our great school climate. But, what makes a great school climate?

According to the National Association of School Psychologists, "a school with a positive school climate is a place where teachers, students, and parents feel welcomed and supported. It is a place where people come together not because they have to, but because they want to." I believe that describes us.

Our staff truly loves their work. They come with a positive attitude seeking to continue to improve and become the best educators possible. Each day, they build connections with students and work tirelessly to help them achieve academically and personally.

Our kids know this. It is our goal that every stu-

dent knows AT LEAST one adult in our building truly cares about them. Students who are connected learn and experience personal growth. They also have more fun.

Family involvement is also a key contributor to student success. Our parents participate by consistently communicating through conferences, emails, checking Powerschool, the Assignment Connection, chaperoning field trips, and playing a role in school improvement.

GKMS is a great place because of all the people who care about being here every day. Our students, families, staff, aides, cooks, custodians, and others make GKMS a place where kids enjoy life, grow, learn, and succeed.

I look forward to doing my best to fulfill my role in helping to make all these great things happen.

- 23 VB 8th home/7th Riley
FB 7th Northwood/8th home

- 28 VB 8th Prairie Grove/7th home
School Board Meeting

- 30 VB 8th N. Boone/7th home
FB home vs Jr. Titans



NEWS FROM THE ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL—Mr. McPherson

Where has the time gone? Here we are at the beginnings of yet another school year. It has been great seeing all of the smiling faces; the school year is off to a terrific start. As we stand facing this school year, we want to encourage our families to discuss school often at home. Research shows us that students perform much better

when support and interest in school is present at home. Please try to engage your students in conversations about school as often as possible. Asking specific questions is a great example of a conversation starter for you and your kids. This can be done by looking at the assignment connection to get a feel for what your son/daughter may

have done during the day. These explicit conversations can go a long way in the education of our young people in this community.

The staff here at GKMS is so very lucky to work with such outstanding students. We look forward to an outstanding year!

GKMS OPEN HOUSE

GKMS Open House Curriculum Night will be on September 21st

from 6:30 pm to 7:45 pm. Please come and join us.



SCHOOL PICTURES—September 10, 2010

Picture Day is September 10th. Flyers have been sent home explaining the many choices of packages. Pictures will be taken during your stu-

dent's PE class. Students will also be getting their new id that day. Any student wanting a yearbook must purchase a package. **Yearbooks will**

NOT be for sale at the end of the year.

VOLUNTEERS

GKMS is always looking for ways to involve parents and community members. If you are interested in

volunteering, please contact Mr. McPherson at 815-784-5222 or by e-mail at

bmcphers@gkschools.org.

MEALTIME

GKMS will once again be using Mealtime for payment of lunches. Here are a few reminders about Mealtime here at GKMS:

- Students must have either their id# (provided on the first day) or their ID cards in the lunch

line.

- Any balance from last year was carried over to this school year.
- GKMS is a cash free lunch line. No cash can be accepted in the cafeteria.

- Students may submit cash or check payments in the morning in the gym or in the office by the end of 2nd hour at 9:22 am.
- Parents may also submit payments on-line.

GKMS FUNDRAISER

Beginning Wednesday, August 25, 2010, the Genoa-Kingston Middle School will start a fund-raising drive to raise money for sixth, seventh and eighth grade field trips and learning opportunities. The sixth grade will be raising money to defray the cost of their trip to Lorado Taft. The amount raised by the seventh and eighth grades will determine what field trips will be planned.

The students will be taking orders for assorted candy and seasonal selections. Please remember:

Money will be collected when the order is placed.

All checks should be made out to Genoa-Kingston

Middle School

All orders should be turned in by September 7, 2010

We will compile our order and the merchandise will be delivered the week of October 4, 2010. At that time, the students will deliver their products.

Please do the following to help:

Provide your child with a list of relatives, neighbors, and friends.

Parents may help by taking an order form to work and by calling family and friends.

WEB SERVICE: Customers can order on-line via our website at:

www.allamericanfr.com

IMPORTANT POWERSCHOOL INFORMATION

Did you know?

- * Parents can view their students' daily classroom activities, as well as things they should be working on?
- * Parents can view their students' grades?
- * Parents can view their students'

attendance?

- * Parents can see announcements about school activities daily?
- All of this can be done through accessing Powerschool. Each student has an access ID. 6th graders and new students will receive this in-

formation during the first few weeks of school. Returning 7th and 8th graders have the same login information as previous years. If misplaced, parents may request the information in writing from the GKMS office.

The GKMS office has COGS umbrellas for sale for \$15.00. If interested please contact the office at 815-784-5222.



FROM THE 6TH GRADE TEAM

Reading/Language Arts

We are off to a great start in reading and Language Arts classes. The students seem to be adjusting quickly. In Language Arts, the classes will be reviewing basic grammar including nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, proofreading marks, and basic capitalization rules. In writing, we will be generating narrative pieces using more descriptive language. We will be utilizing more specific nouns and vivid verbs. In addition, we will discuss and apply sensory images in our writing.

In reading, students will identify characters, setting, plot, theme, conflict, resolution, and author's purpose in our stories. We will also make text-to-self connections, use the context of a sentence to figure out unfamiliar words, identify genres, and work on our speaking and listening skills. Towards the end of September we will identify expository text features and generate inferences while reading. Please encourage your kids to keep up with the reading of their AR books and check the agenda daily.

Social Studies

Students will start their year learning how to read and identify different types of maps. Political, historical, and physical maps are just a few of the maps that students will be using. We will then learn about different cultures, customs and re-

gions of the world. Our first test should be around September 9.

Math

EnVisions- The students are starting the year by identifying different numbers and operations. We will cover everything from place values, comparing and ordering numbers, and decimals to multiplying and dividing with powers of 10 and exponents. Students will be asked to read and write numbers correctly in multiple forms making communicating in math more effective.

Science

This will be an exciting year for science. Students will be using the new science series (CPO). This curriculum is inquiry based which will hopefully increase our students knowledge about science and the world around them. Currently, we are studying Chapter 1 which is an introduction to science. Our first full unit will be about water and weather.

LORADO TAFT

The sixth grade field trip to Lorado Taft is scheduled for November 17-19, 2010 and November 22-24, 2010. This field trip is an important part of the sixth grade curriculum and covers various areas of the state standards of education. A packet of information was sent home on Thursday, August 26, 2010. Included in the packet is in-

formation about Lorado Taft, the classes and activities that the students will be participating in, a supply list, health form, and a permission slip. Please fill out the health form and permission slip and return them to your child's 1st period teacher by October 1, 2010. The \$55.00 fee is due by November 1, 2010. Also, parents are needed to help chaperone during each of the sessions. That information is included on the permission slip. This is a wonderful educational experience for all students and expands learning outside of the classroom. Please participate in our fundraiser since it pays for a large portion of the field trip. If you have any questions please call Lynn Hanssen at 815-784-5222.



FROM THE 7TH GRADE TEAM

The 7th grade team would like to welcome the students back for a great year.

Reading/Language Arts

Students will be starting the Making Meaning Curriculum by focusing on students' reading life and building a positive reading community. Strategies we will be working on include turn to your partner and think pair share. To support the Making Meaning strategies of each week, students will be independently reading an additional story each week with a culminating activity for the story every Friday. All students should be reading at least 30 minutes a night. 7th grade Language Arts grammar curriculum will be focusing on reviewing subject and predicates, capitalization, punctuation, nouns, and verbs. Our writing curriculum will be focusing on organization of writing a five paragraph essay and a narrative essay.

Math

As seventh graders our students are beginning a new math series titled College Preparatory Mathematics (CPM). In 7th grade we are teaching the "Foundations for Algebra" section of the program. This math series sets the bar very high for each student. They are expected to work well in a group setting while maintaining their own personal knowledge. Students are also expected to become problem solvers and rely less on the teacher and more on their peers. So far, we are seeing lots of success and

are happy with the results in the classrooms. Students are impressive with their ability to collaborate with others in a small group environment. During the month of September, 7th grade math students will learn about integers and operations and begin a unit on solving equations.

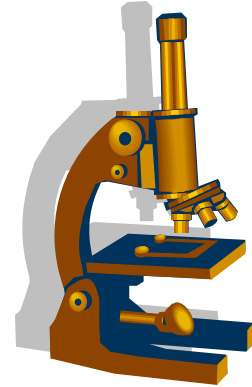
We have fielded several questions from parents asking how they can help their students at home. CPM provides parents several resources on their website. There is a parent guide available online that explains concepts and objectives from each chapter. There are also "Skill Builders" available which are series of problems from each unit that you may use with your student(s) to review topics from class.

Parent Guide: www.cpm.org/parents/resources

Skill Builders: www.cpm.org/parentsskillBuilders

Social Studies

Welcome back to a great year to GKMS! Seventh grade social studies is World Geography. This year we will begin learning about how geographers categorize the world into different regions, meridians, parallels and time zones to make understanding our large planet and its people easier. Later this year we will consider each region: U.S. & Canada, Latin America, Europe, Middle East, Africa, Asia and Australia.



Science

This year we will be studying life science. Some of the main topics we will cover include: scientific method, classification, cells, genetics, viruses, bacteria, fungus, plants, animals, and human body systems. Students will need a science notebook and the textbook everyday. I have many exciting activities and experiments planned to make science come alive!

FROM THE 8TH GRADE TEAM

Reading/Language Arts

The purpose of 8th grade Language Arts class is to prepare the 8th grade students for high school English. This will be their last intensive study of grammar, spelling, and writing. Students will be expected to possess these skills when they enter the 9th grade, so it is important that they master a basic knowledge of these skills now. Grammar, spelling, and writing are the basic framework of Language Arts. A good background in these skills will prepare them for the intensive study of English in high school and beyond.

We will be continuing the new reading program this year called Making Meaning in reading class. In this program, the students will be studying mystery, humor, adventure, fantasy, terror, and drama, as well as learn how to express themselves through writing, poetry, and research. The Making Meaning program is a reading comprehension curriculum that teaches comprehension strategies such as: retelling, making connections, visualizing, wondering/questioning, making inferences, determining important ideas, understanding text structure, summarizing, and synthesizing. We will be using these strategies through read-alouds, collaborative structures, and reflective partner work.

The Making Meaning program not only infuses nonfiction and fiction read-aloud books to teach students nine different comprehension strategies, but also helps develop

their social values to create a supportive community of readers. We will work using many different cooperative activities such as: think, pair, share; group brainstorming; heads together; think, pair, write; and turn to your partner. These cooperative learning activities help students develop a caring and respectful relationship and also helps create a safe environment for sharing their thinking.

We look forward to a productive year with the 8th grade students. Reading and language arts will be challenging and a great opportunity for the 8th grade students to learn life-long valuable skills.

Science

I would like to welcome to all students and parents to 8th Grade Science for the 2010 – 2011 school year. All 8th grade students will be studying Physical Science (basic Physics and Chemistry concepts) taught by Mr. Harrington or Miss Roberson. We are looking forward to making physical science challenging but fun.

Our current Physical Science textbook, Glencoe Physical Science 2002, has been used for eighth grade science for many years. However, this text still has a very useful feature; it can be accessed on the Internet at no cost. This is very handy when students forget to bring home their book or when a student is absent and wants to get

started on the make-up work. In either case, your student can log on to www.science.glencoe.com and view all pages of the student text, as well as practice quizzes, and resource information. Just select "Online Student Edition - Full Version", and type in the user name: PHYSICAL and the Password: qarefu9ube where they are required and you should gain access. *You will, however, need to have Adobe Acrobat Reader v4.05 or later on your computer or you can download it FREE at www.adobe.com.*

We are beginning this year with the topic of the Scientific Method which is the basis for solving problems. We will be working together in small groups to complete projects and activities in class. We will also review metric measurement and learn how to graph data in a clear and effective way. I hope your student finds that this is a fun and interesting way to begin the year.

VISUAL ARTS—Mrs. Sorensen

Happy, creative, new school year to you! I am particularly glad to be back after a long absence last spring. This year's students have welcomed me back with positive attitudes and good work.

There will be a few quiet changes to my "tried and true" curriculum this year, but we are well underway with the traditional portfolio assignments and foundation lessons under our belts.

The lessons from which to expect products from your student are listed below, in brief, for this semester. Remember that your student has each Encore class (Art, Computer, and Study Skills) for 6 weeks EACH semester.

SIXTH GRADE FIRST SEMESTER LESSONS:

- Portfolio Illustration, "Where is Art?"
- "Rule Art", Uniqueness drawing
- Unit on LINE, 2 projects
- Unit on SHAPE, "The Shape I'm In" drawing
- Unit on COLOR: Color Wheel, "Cut Color Compliments" Three, weekly "Artist-of-the-week" lessons/quizzes

SEVENTH GRADE FIRST SEMESTER LESSONS:

- Portfolio Illustration, Show self as an artist or a work of art
- Hand Grid drawing
- Name "Initial Illumination" drawing
- Metamorphosis Drawing, "Metamorphic Me"
- Flip Book animation drawing

EIGHTH GRADE FIRST SEMESTER LESSONS:

- Art Journal Cover Design
- Portfolio Design from "ART" word-play themes
- 2 Week long Quilt Drawing incorporating Art History
- Environmental Sculpture Unit, 2 parts
- Paper boxes, time permitting

The students are enjoying the variety of hands-on lessons they receive in ART here at GKMS. They are discovering how satisfying creating and designing can be from the physical materials as inspired by a rich history of human creativity. **It just feels good to express ones self in the ARTS!**

Have a fantastic and expressive school year.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS—Mrs. Sorensen

You CAN teach new habits!

This teacher learned that "Mylar" plastic is now accepted with other plastics for recycling in this community. More and more brands such as "Sunchips" are using recycle-friendly packaging.

Next time you buy something, check the packaging materials. Avoid purchasing products that are over packaged or that use toxic, wasteful materials.

While we all use the wrong materials sometimes, we CAN learn to be better at avoiding them, using them and recycling them.

Many of us fall victim to wastefulness or generate materials that may not be recyclable in certain situations like for medicine or survival.

However, when we have choice and are in good health, we can be much better environmental caretakers.

- Think before you purchase
 - Support products that care for the planet long-term
 - Recycle what you can
 - Don't waste one resource to save another, especially WATER
- Develop the above suggestions as GOOD HABITS

ENJOY THE WORLD YOU MADE BETTER!