

MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS

MOC-FV CSD

April

2017

Special points of interest:

- Parent-Teacher Conferences
- President's Education Awards
- Spring Party Night
- Scholastic Book Fair Thank You



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Parent-Teacher Conferences

I want to extend a "Thank You" to all of the parents and guardians that attended the Spring Parent-Teacher Conferences. Once again, we had a wonderful turnout with 98% of the students and parents attending our conferences. Hopefully you were able to receive and share valuable information about your student's progress this year. Parent support and involvement is essential for student success. We appreciate the work that you are doing to help your student!

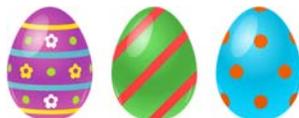
President's Education Awards

The MOC-Floyd Valley Middle School has recognized qualifying 8th graders with the President's Educational Excellence Award for the last 16 years. The award can only be given at grade levels where the students are going to the next level of education, which means from elementary to middle school, middle school to high school, and graduating from high school. The criteria for the award is:

*A 3.5 or higher grade point average for the 8th grade year
(Cumulative GPA through the 3rd Qtr)*

An 85 percent or higher in national norms on the Iowa Assessment test in either Math Total, Reading Comprehension, Reading Total or the Language Total.

Eighth grade students meeting the criteria will receive a Department of Education Certificate and a lapel pin award at the Middle School Awards Assembly on the last day of school. A list of students earning this award will be posted prior to the Assembly.



Spring Party Night

The Middle School Spring Dance/Fun Night will be held on Friday, April 7 from 7:00 -10:00pm at the Middle School. Activities will include a dance area in the Old Gym, board games in the Library, basketball/volleyball in the New Gym, and ping pong in the Fitness area. The expenses for this evening are paid for from the profits of the discount card fundraiser. The southwest entrance door to the building will not be opened prior to 7:00pm. Students need to be picked up promptly by 10:00pm. Student Senate members will assist with the cleanup after the event.

6th Grade Math

Page 2

By: Mr. Boersma (and Mr. Soodsma)

The sixth grade students are in the middle of a two chapter unit on Geometry. This chapter is being led by my student teacher, Mr. Chris Soodsma, from Dordt College. He will be with us until the end of April. Mr. Soodsma is originally from Alberta, Canada, so he takes a little teasing about his speech patterns and different vocabulary. The one thing the kids are having a hard time getting over is that he calls our letter “Z” by a different name. He calls it “zed” which totally throws our kids over the edge. But other than this, he is doing a really great job and he really cares about these students.

Geometry is a unique topic because it can be so visual. Some students, who traditionally struggle in math, can really enjoy geometry. Others, who traditionally do very well in math, may struggle a bit because it is very different than most of the other topics. The chapter that we are in at the moment deal with a lot of vocab. Lines, segments, points, planes, six different types of triangles, quadrilaterals and other polygons. There is a lot to learn and a lot to remember.

Our next chapter, still geometry, will be co-taught between him and I. It will deal with concepts like area, perimeter, volume, and surface area. I’m excited about the way that we are going to teach it. The students will be assigned a group, and within that group they will be more “self-paced”. Groups that can go faster are allowed to. Groups that need a little extra time can have that too. Each student will receive a document with links to different videos, assessments, discussion questions, and demonstrations. This will allow us to float from group to group helping and challenging the groups where they are needed.

As always, I appreciate all of the work that you do to help your child be successful. While it is very important for these young people to be independent, they still do need that support from time to time to be the best student that they can be. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call me or email me so that I can put your mind at ease. Thank you.



Read All About It . . . 6th Grade Reading

By: Mrs. TeGrotenhuis

The sixth graders have been busily preparing their book presentations about an award-winning book they read during 3rd quarter. This involved a small amount of research about the award the book won as well as information about the author. The students will use an online presentation to share about their book.

Shortly after our presentations, we will complete a short unit on articles from *Scholastic Scope* magazine. We will read from a variety of fiction and non-fiction articles as we continue to work on our reading skills. Many of the articles we read are quite interesting, thought-provoking, and a good challenge for the students’ comprehension skills. The articles we plan on reading include information on the “box” that changed America (television) as well as a debate on whether or not our school day should be longer.

Our last novel we will be reading this year is *Freak the Mighty* by Rodman Philbrick. We will do a combination of reading aloud, small group reading, and individual reading while we continue to work on specific reading skills. One strategy I would like to focus on is questioning. This is an active reading strategy that I have demonstrated often. In addition, we will continue to work on vocabulary skills and responding to our reading with support from the text.

Please continue to encourage your child to read daily. Students should be reading 30 minutes daily and strive to complete four books this quarter. Thanks for all you do to help!



Putting It All Together in 6th Grade English

By: Mrs. Jacobsma

Thanks to you and your student for the work you have put in this year. The students' writing has come so far, it amazes me. Take some time to read what they are writing—it might impress you, too.

Right now we are bouncing around in a writing unit focusing on ideas and content. We are talking about the development of writing packed full of details and description. The students have finished their research on a current issue and have begun the intense process of writing a persuasive essay. This will undoubtedly be the longest and most in depth piece of writing for the year. Following the drafting, we will look at how to make and give a sound oral presentation. The kids will create a final draft of this writing; in addition, they will present the persuasive essay in a speech to their peers. Intermittently, we will also discuss the last couple parts of speech as they apply to writing. We have learned about powerful verbs, ranges of nouns, and complex sentence structure. We will hit adjectives and adverbs next—which also add detail to their writing.

Be looking for the continuation of spelling. There will also be some more writing for parents to help revise and edit. Relish a little in the advancement of your student's writing. It is delightful.



“Our Corner of History”

By Ms. Van Wyk



In 6th grade World History, students are in the middle of their unit on Ancient Arabia. We have looked at the geography of the Arabian Peninsula and how it shaped people's lives. Trade and travel were difficult across the "Empty Quarter," which is the largest continuous body of sand in the entire world. More recently our time has been spent on Islam. What do Muslims believe? How does this compare to Christianity, which was another primary monotheistic religion at the time? This unit allows students to investigate a topic that is frequently discussed in the news but some have little experience with. I appreciate the engagement and effort I am seeing from everyone!

In 8th grade American History, students are learning about the start of American History post -Revolutionary War. Presidents such as Thomas Jefferson and James Monroe have significantly shaped the role and power of the United States government. Whether it's expanding out west through the Louisiana Purchase, boldly proclaiming Europe to stay out of the Western Hemisphere, or making compromises to put a band-aid over the issue of slavery, America is changing and growing drastically. As we continue forward for this final quarter, we will look at the issue of slavery and how it reaches a boiling point in American politics.



6th Grade Science

By: Mr. Frick

We have continued going over the different systems of the body. We have been trying to follow a pattern of working our way from the outside systems to the interior. We started with the Immune System to talk about how important that our bodies keep everything healthy so everything is working. This happened to match up with cold/flu season so there were lots of ways we could apply the information to every day concepts. After that, we moved on to the Nervous System to understand that one system controls all of the other systems. This was a fun topic because this system often gets passed over without much thought. Taking the time to observe how many of our actions result from the Nervous System was an eye-opening unit to see how amazing the human body is.

We have continued to work our way into the systems with the Muscular and Skeletal Systems. These two systems are fun to pair together because they play off of each other so well. It has been a great experience to see the connections that can be made between the material and real life. We are going to continue looking at systems of the body and how they affect the way we live.

7th Grade Math

By: Mr. Baker

The school year has gone extremely fast, and it's hard to believe that we are in the final quarter of the school year. In March the students had the opportunity to design a game that would have a theoretical probability of winning. We then were able to get everyone into the gym and play each other's games. This was not only fun for the students, but interesting to see if their experimental probability matched up with their theoretical probability. Be sure to ask your son or daughter about this experience as there were some very creative and fun games developed.

I look forward to a fun finish to the school year, and I thank you for your continued efforts in helping your child along with homework completion and for holding them accountable. This seventh grade class has been a fun group to work with. We will finish out the year learning about volume and surface area of three dimensional objects. It will entail a little memorization of formulas, but should be a fun last unit. We will then review everything we have learned so far this year and touch on a few topics from different chapters we have not gotten to.



7th Grade Science

By: Mrs. Vande Kieft

Spring is here, and the 7th graders have been busy exploring the various systems of the body. So far this year, they have studied the Nervous, Immune, Muscular, and Skeletal Systems and how each system is interconnected to the others. Next stop on our tour throughout the systems of the body, the students will examine the Circulatory, Respiratory, Digestive, and Excretory Systems. As part of the Circulatory and Respiratory System Units, we will discuss how both systems work together to provide the body with the oxygen that it needs.

To conclude our tour through the body systems, the final activity will include a hands on investigation. As an extension of the systems of the body, the 7th graders will examine different body structures and organization for both simplistic and complex organisms. In order to view these body systems first hand, each Team will dissect earthworms and fetal pigs in small groups to examine the similarities and differences between organisms with simple and complex organ systems. By investigating these organisms, the 7th graders will gain a greater understanding of the complexity and cooperation of the various body systems and compare them to their own.



Wiking's World

By: Mr. Wiking

The 7th graders are continuing our exploration of Europe. We've laid a good foundation of modern European History. We briefly review the Industrial Revolution, the rise of communism, World War I and the Cold War. As we continue our journey through Europe the students will engage in a research project about specific countries of Europe. I am especially excited to study the Cold War and the breakup of the Soviet Empire as much of what is happening today in Eastern Europe is closely related to this time in history.



We'll spend a little bit of time talking about each region of Europe and the countries that are included in the regions. My hope is that our students will develop an appreciation for cultures and lifestyles different from their own.

THANK YOU for supporting the Spring Scholastic Book Fair!

We reached our goal of 450 books! Way to go, Dutch!

During the book fair, students and staff were invited to take a wilderness picture to go along with the book fair's theme.



7th Grade English

By: Mrs. VR (Van Regenmorter)



The seventh grade English classes recently started “The Name Unit.” My curriculum requires a research unit, and this unit requires a more creative twist to your typical research unit. Students research their first, middle, and last names, and they find what each of their names mean, the countries and languages from which their names originated, and some historical background. At the time of writing this newsletter, students have just completed their research and will begin drafting their “name stories.” For the “Name Story” students develop a creative, fictional plot that incorporates the information they have researched about their names. They also choose the genre of the story they write. This can be challenging, so they need to be creative and use their imaginations. As they write these stories, they work through the steps of the writing process (prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, publishing), focus on the traits of good writing (voice, content, organization, conventions), and continue improving their writing skills. The writing process for the name story takes approximately four weeks from prewriting to publishing. When it’s time for the next newsletter, we hopefully will be finishing up this piece of writing and moving on to one of our last units of the school year.

Thank you for reading the Middle School newsletter and for staying informed about what your son or daughter is doing and learning in school. Your involvement and interest helps motivate and encourage your son or daughter. Reading this newsletter and having conversations with your child about school, sends a strong message about how much you value their education and what he or she is doing in school.



Niehus News

By: Mrs. Niehus

We have wrapped up our novel study of *The Giver* by comparing the book to the 2014 film version. The students were surprised at how different the book was when compared to the movie. Both have great messages, but the movie definitely added romance and action to sell tickets. It is very much a Hollywood version of the book.

We will move from this unit to a short unit on point of view, and look at how the voice of who tells a story can really change the story. From there we will go into our poetry unit. We will start by comparing the narrative poem “Charge of the Light Brigade” (a poem many students know from the movie, *The Blind Side*) with the actual historical event. Besides having some fun teaching across curriculum and covering some history, we talk about how author’s ideas and opinions come out in their writing, and thus readers need to be careful to assess author bias before accepting historical fiction as fact. (Yes, even poetry can have author bias.)

Along with these units, students will continue reading log work. In order to earn an A for the quarter, students need to read 4 books and schedule a book talk with me for each one. This means they have to do a fair amount of reading outside of class, so look for your student to have a free reading book home with them each night. I am pushing hard for them to get their reading done early this quarter because once the weather turns nice it is tough to want to stay inside and read. Please encourage your student to get his/her books read early during fourth quarter.

Finally, we have returned to our bi-weekly vocabulary units. Many of the students like studying through a website called vocabulary.com, but there are other options for those who do not find success with this or who do not have access to a computer at home. A bit of time spent quizzing your student on vocabulary is also a great way for them to study for tests.

Thank you for all that you do to help your students be successful here at school. They are a great group, and I am thankful for them and their positive, upbeat attitudes each day.



8th Grade Science

By: Mrs. Hoogeveen

Oceanography is a study in Depth!!

The eighth graders are just finishing up their unit on oceanography. We spent the first few weeks learning about oceans in general. Areas covered were water composition, salinity, El Nino, tides, waves, and different types of currents. We spent several days exploring Density currents and how they affect the oceans in different areas. We will be keeping our eyes out over couple of months to see if a new, weak El Nino event will develop as predicted by several websites. Ask your son / daughter how this might affect Iowa as well as other areas around the world.

The second half of the oceanography unit was spent investigating the topography of the ocean floor, the diverse life that exists in the ocean, hydrothermal vents in the deep, ocean pollution, ocean exploration, and ocean resources.

We welcome Mr. Preston Hoebelheinrich, our student teacher from Northwestern, to our classroom! April is our meteorology month and Mr. Hoebelheinrich is "ready to take the class by storm". The 8th graders will spend time learning the basics of the layers of our atmosphere, ozone, wind belts and heat transfer in the atmosphere. We will investigate atmospheric pressure through a variety of demonstrations and discussions. The students will "swirl" into the Coriolis Effect and how it affects our wind patterns. The Coriolis Effect is the reason our weather systems in Iowa basically move west to east in the middle latitudes. This chapter will help us understand the basic principles which determine our local weather.



8th Grade Literature

By: Mr. Boone

Following the completion of our poetry unit, we will be entering a Black History unit. At the beginning of the unit, students will be selecting their own independent reading black history novel. While students read their book, they will be identifying signposts to aid in their comprehension of the book, writing a book response, and creating a book trailer video. Students will also be reading two texts, *Emancipation* by Russell Freedman and *Brown vs. Board of Education* by Walter Dean Myers. Throughout these texts they will identify the author's tone and evidence to support the author's purpose of the text. We will then conclude the unit by reading a variety of speeches on racial inequality, which include speeches from Frederick Douglass, Jackie Robinson, Martin Luther King, Jr., former President Barack Obama, Colin Powell, and many more. Students will complete the unit by studying their assigned speech and write a newspaper article as if they were the reporter live at the event. This unit will be a great way for students to discover racial inequality throughout the course of history and recognize the effects of stereotyping and racism.



8th Grade American History

By Mrs. Oolman, Mr. Boone, Mrs. Hoogeveen, Mr. Moww and Miss Van Wyk

8th graders recently completed a "traveling rotation" study. This means that the kids get to experience the teaching styles of each of the instructors by spending one day in each teacher's classroom. This is a fun, different approach that also lends itself well to some creative teaching techniques. This was completed for Chapter 11. Chapter 12 begins the study of westward expansion and industrialization.

Following this study of westward expansion, students will be approaching the study of the Civil War!

After the Civil War study, we'll take a look at reconstruction of the country.



8th Grade English

By: Mrs. Oolman

We will soon be finishing our poetry unit team-taught by Mr. Boone, Miss Montgomery (our student teacher from Northwestern College), and me. We've been reading and figuring out poems by authors such as Robert Frost, Emily Dickinson, and William Shakespeare. We've been discussing literary terms and trying to discern what the poet was saying and what these poems could mean to us, today, in our own world. Additionally, it's been fun watching the students write creatively! Thinking / writing / learning / growing! Impressive stuff! The unit concludes with a project (that students complete in pieces throughout the unit) and a test!

Our bridge from poetry to our Black history unit will be to compare and contrast a historical piece (Martin Luther King, Jr.'s, "I have a dream" speech), with a piece of literature (Langston Hughes's poem "Dream Deferred"). Another activity we will do to get ready for our unit on Black History is to read and discuss 5 topics from the time period of Civil Rights. The five topics included the following: Martin Luther King, Jr., Langston Hughes, Brown vs. Board of Education, Medgar Evers, and Jim Crow Laws.

Next, we will view the movie *The Help*. Following the movie viewing, students will do some additional writing and presenting about four themes of this story from the 1960's. Students will be able to choose one of four themes ~ racism, family expectations, social expectations, or ambition vs. fear. To learn more about these themes, students will read excerpts from the novel, *The Help*. Following this reading, students will write an analytical essay based on a chosen theme. Finally, students will write a personal essay on a theme of his or her choice.



Note to Parents of Middle School String Students

By: MOC-Floyd Valley Orchestra

Mrs. Haverdink and Mrs. Hallberg

On **Thursday, April 20**, the students will present their spring recital in the middle school cafeteria. There will be three separate programs on that day (4:00, 5:00, and 7:00 p.m.). Choose the program time that fits the best into your schedule. Please plan to stay for the entire program that you choose. Each program will last approximately 30-40 minutes.

Since the turn around time from our last performance is a bit shorter, I have given the students the chance to choose what to perform. They may choose to perform their song from the solo night and keep polishing it, or play a new song if it's one that they can learn quickly, or they can join up with a friend or two and play in a group. Some students are preparing movie music, classical music, or Disney tunes. Even though it's a busy time of the year, it's important that they have a goal to aim for so that they don't "coast" to the end of the year.

Students need to dress up for this event and arrive 15 minutes early to have their instrument tuned.

Eighth grade students are asked to bring 2 dozen cookies or bars to share as refreshments. I will bring cold drink, paper goods, etc. Eighth grade students will be asked to serve as hosts/ hostesses at the recital that they perform.



No School April 14 ~ Good Friday

1:15pm Early Dismissals:

April 7 ~ Professional Development

April 28 ~ JR./SR. Prom

April 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6 7am My Choice	7 Qtr. 4 3 Week Grade Checks 1:15pm Early Dismissal MS Party Night @ Middle School	8 Jazz Band Dance @ HS Old Gym
9	10	11 9:00am-1:30pm Blood Drive @ HS	12	13 7am My Choice End Cycle 6 Exploratory	14 No School Good Friday	15
16 Easter	17 Start Cycle 7 Exploratory	18 4:30pm MS Track (H) 6:15pm MS Honor Choir	19	20 7am My Choice MS String Recitals @ Middle School	21 Plus Carnival @ Hospers Elementary	22 Earth Day
23	24	25 4:15pm MS Track @ Sheldon	26	27 7am My Choice 4:15pm MS Track @ Sioux Center	28 6 Week Grade Checks Arbor Day 1:15pm Early Dismissal Jr./Sr. Prom	29
Makerspace						
30						

May 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 4:30pm TR: MS @Central Lyon High School 7:00pm Awards Concert @ HS	3	4 4:00pm TR: MS @Le Mars Community High School	5 4:30pm TR: MS @Sioux Center	6
7	8 Plan B MS Baseball & Softball Begin	9 Plan B 7:00pm MS Concert	10	11 Plan B	12	13
14	15 Plan B 9:00am Senior Awards Celebration @ HS 7:00pm Baccalaureate	16 Plan B 6 th Grade Field Trip	17 Plan B	18 11:15am Early Dismissal Bump Up Day	19 No School	20
				Tulip Festival		
21 2:00pm Commencement @ HS	22 8 th Grade Field Trip	23 7 th Grade Field Trip	24 End of 4th Qtr 1:15pm Early Dismissal	25 Professional Development	26	27
				Summer Break		
28	29 Memorial Day	30 9:30am BSB: MS @Alton Swimming Pool Park	31	July 1	2	3
Summer Break						