



GMS TIGER TIMES

FALL 2014

JULIE GREEN, EDITOR

A NOTE FROM SCOTT THOMPSON, PRINCIPAL

Parents have heard lots recently about the many changes in public education. Schools everywhere are taking a closer look at curriculum and assessment. As you may recall, we will no longer be using NECAP tests in New Hampshire to measure student achievement in math and reading; in this school year our third and fourth graders will instead use the Smarter Balanced Assessment. The Smarter Balanced Assessments will be aligned with the more rigorous standards that Litchfield adopted last year in our new Reading/ELA and Math curriculum guides.

Another very important part of New Hampshire's changing vision of what constitutes an excellent education is how we assess student understanding during and following the instructional process. The state has joined others in promoting the use of performance assessments at the local level – teacher created performance tasks that directly connect to the intended learning goals of an instructional unit. Furthermore, the state is providing opportunities for networking and sharing ideas and actual performance assessments between districts.

Litchfield schools are fortunate that we have been both allowed and encouraged to participate in the NH Performance Assessment network. Last year, a team of eight teachers and administrators from GMS went to Keene State College for a two-day orientation in August. Our team of eight learned the performance assessment process, we learned about developing cognitive rigor, and then we practiced creating performance assessments with the school-wide team and then grade level teams.

I am very happy to report that this week, we heard that one of our assessments – a fourth grade math assessment entitled “A Dog Park in Litchfield” has been accepted to the NH Task Bank, and it will be sent for consideration as part of a national pilot.

We are very proud of our team for their hard work and success. This year, teachers throughout the district are receiving training in instructional unit design, and we will be working on creating local units during many of the teacher workshop days. This is an exciting change in the way we will be doing things at GMS.

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DATES TO REMEMBER

2 Hour Delayed Opening
Wednesday, October 15

PTO Meeting- Cafe
Monday, October 20 @ 6:30

Halloween Bash
October 24, 6:00-8:00

No School- Teacher Workshop
Tuesday, November 4

Picture Retakes
Wednesday, November 5

No School- Veterans Day
Tuesday, November 11

No School- Parent Teacher Conferences
Friday, November 14

PTO Meeting- Cafe
Monday, November 17 @ 6:30

KINDERGARTEN TEAM

We are off to a great start in kindergarten. We are excited for our trip to Wilson's Farm Stand to learn about the life cycle of a pumpkin. Each child will get to pick their own pumpkin. We will also take a hayride through the pumpkin patch.

In reading, kindergarten classes are working hard to name letters and the sounds that correspond. We are also reading new popcorn words (high frequency words) each week. Be sure to review these words with your children.



October is the first month for kindergarten homework. This is a great opportunity to start good homework habits. Your child might like to have a special pencil box for home.

In math, we are working to identify and write numbers (0-20).

KINDERGARTEN CHALLENGE:

Mrs. Adamakos and Mrs. Sweetser are challenging the kindergarten class to bring back their completed calendar. Everyone who turns in a completed homework calendar will get a prize.

A NOTE FROM CONNIE FARO, ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

It is great to be back for another wonderful year watching and helping our students grow intellectually and emotionally. We have a great group of students at GMS who makes every day a pleasure.

This year, our fourth graders are very excited about our kickball tournament at recess. We had 67 students sign up to play kickball during one recess each week through October 17. Then we will have the playoffs among the 4 teams who have the highest combined scores from the previous 5 weeks. I have been reffing the games with help from Mr. Thompson and Mrs. Robinson on days I am unavailable. Mr. Haarlander was a great help with organizing our teams and setting up the rules. I am very impressed with the amazing sportsmanship our students have shown throughout our games. They are so respectful of each other - cheering on the newbies and helping them learn the rules. I commend all our parents for teaching their children that it isn't just winning that's important, but having fun and helping others also brings a smile to your face and makes you feel good inside!

Towards the middle of last year we changed the way parents who pick up their children after school leave the gym. After signing out your child with the teacher on duty, you and your child exit the gym through the side door. This has been a great help with reducing the congestion in the front lobby and has helped with dismissing students in a timelier manner. On days when we have afterschool clubs, parent pick up involves over 100 students! Since the busses are lined up in the driveway at this time we would prefer that parents who park in the parking lot near the building not walk between busses to get to the parking lot. Instead we are asking parents who exit the side door from the gym to use the crosswalk near the room 16/cafeteria door to get to the parking lot. We thank you in advance for your cooperation in this matter. We also thank you for sending in dismissal notes when you are picking up your child or they are attending an after school activity. Having these notes in advance help insure the safety of your child. There are sample dismissal notes on our website which inform you of the information you need in your dismissal note.

I want to conclude by personally thanking all our parents and staff for their continued support. Working together for our children results in us having a truly great school!

FIRST GRADE TEAM

What a wonderful start to first grade. All the boys and girls have been working extremely hard each and every day. We are so proud of them! For Science, we have been studying the life cycles of the monarch butterfly, apple trees and pumpkins. The children have also been brainstorming the many different things we like to do in the fall. Everyone has been enjoying the many classroom activities associated with our science units!

During our Social Studies lessons, the children have been learning about communities and holidays. We have read stories about and discussed the journey Christopher Columbus took many years ago. In the upcoming weeks, the children will be learning about the significance of Veteran's Day.

Our math classes are filled with excitement! We use many different ways to practice our addition math facts every day. We are also learning our subtraction math facts. We are using Cuisenaire rods as one of our strategies to help us during our math lessons. Keep practicing those math facts at home!

The children have been working very hard on their correct letter and number formation. Keep practicing your printing using the D'Nealian writing method. We have all seen a tremendous improvement since the children walked into first grade at the beginning of September! Keep up the wonderful work!

All of our first graders belong to the "Go-Pher" Reading Club! The motto for the GMS Reading Team is "The more we read for fun, the better readers we become". They have challenged all of our first graders to read for at least 10 minutes a night for at least 15 days a month. At the end of each month, the children bring in their calendar showing which days they read and the Gopher will give them a prize for their accomplishments. Let's continue to read, read, and read!

BOX TOPS



Last year we raised about \$4,000. This year we hope to raise about \$6,000 in Box Tops! Each Box Top is worth \$0.10 so that is a total of 60,000 Box Tops!! There will be a chart in the main entrance of the school to keep track of the Box Tops collected. Additionally, there will be monthly incentives for class rooms and/or individual students



October's incentive a student incentive. For every 25 Box Tops submitted, the student will be entered to win of one two Beanie Ballz. Box Tops for this incentive have to be submitted between now and Monday, October 27th.



Keep an eye out for monthly collection sheets being sent home as well as each month's incentives.

Thank you in advance for your support. If you have any comments or questions feel free to email me at jamiejutras@gmail.com

THIRD GRADE TEAM

The third grade classes have been very busy learning many new things. In reading we have been working on identifying the characters, setting, and plot of the story. The children have also been learning about character qualities and author's purpose. They have been practicing how to look up words in the dictionary and how some words can have multiple meanings. This is a skill you could help practice at home, when you come across a word your child does not know.

In math, we are finishing up our unit on using rounding to estimate the answer to a 3 digit addition or subtraction problem. In the next chapter, the children will then use this estimate to check the reasonableness of their actual answers.

The following topic will be multiplication. This is one of the most important foundational skills taught in third grade. Soon, it will be very important to begin working with your child to memorize the multiplication facts. Be on the lookout for more information from your child's teacher.

Science lessons are focusing on the water cycle and what causes changes in the weather. The students are learning about the three main clouds, different types of precipitation, and the instruments meteorologists use to forecast the weather. The students are using their inquiry skills while performing various experiments.

Our next social studies unit will be on the Jamestown Settlement, the

American Revolution, and the foundation of our new country's government. We are planning a field trip to the Concord Museum in Concord, MA just before Thanksgiving, where we will learn more about the relationships between the colonists and the Native Americans. We are very fortunate to live in an area so rich in American history.

The third grade team would like to thank the parents for all the help and guidance you give your children in completing their homework, studying for tests, and learning those math facts. Your partnership is very important to their success. It was great to meet many of you at our curriculum night.

GUIDANCE PERSPECTIVE

JOCELYN ROBINSON, SCHOOL COUNSELOR

TARI SELIG, SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST

JAMES PHILLIPS, SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST INTERN

The Guidance Department at GMS would like to extend a warm welcome to you, as the faculty and students fully settle into this new school year. We play an integral role in your child's education and are here to assure that every student has a safe and successful year at GMS.

For those who are not quite sure who we are and how we can help, we would like to take this opportunity to introduce ourselves. Ms. Jocelyn Robinson, our GMS school counselor, is in her second year at GMS having previously worked in other districts as a school counselor, assistant principal and special education coordinator. Elementary school counselors do not work in isolation; rather they are an integral part of the total educational program that helps to support the academic achievement of all students, as they prepare for the ever-changing world. This is accomplished through the design, development, implementation, and evaluation of a comprehensive and systematic school counseling program based upon The American School Counselors Association (ASCA) National Standards. The ASCA National Model: A Framework For School Counseling Programs (ASCA, 2002) is a data-driven, results-based focus, which serves as a guide for today's school counselor.

Ms. Tari Selig, school psychologist, is in her 7th year working in the Litchfield School District. She has



worked at Campbell High School, Litchfield Middle School and Griffin Memorial School. While she primarily works with students at Griffin Memorial School, Tari is a district employee and continues to do some work in the other schools. Tari has been a president of the New Hampshire Association of School Psychologists and is currently the NH Delegate to the National Association of School Psychologists. James Phillips is the school psychologist intern this year, and is currently fulfilling his program requirements through Brooklyn College, CUNY. He will be working at Griffin Memorial School as well as Campbell High School.

School psychologists are involved members of the school team who support students' ability to learn and teachers' ability to teach. The primary goal is to help students succeed academically, socially, behaviorally, and emotionally. Direct support services and interventions, such as learning assessments, academic and behavioral interventions, counseling, and social

skills training are provided. School psychologists consult with teachers, families, administrators, and other educators to develop and improve school-wide practices and policies, as well as successful support strategies.

The elementary years are an exciting time when students begin to develop their academic self-concept and their feelings of competence and confidence as learners. They are beginning to develop decision-making, communication and life skills, as well as character values. It is also a critical time when students develop and acquire attitudes toward school, self, peers, social groups and family. Comprehensive developmental school counseling programs provide education, prevention, and intervention services, which are integrated into all aspects of children's lives. Early identification and intervention of children's academic and personal/social needs is essential in removing barriers to learning and promoting academic achievement. The knowledge, attitudes, and skills that students

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GUIDANCE PERSPECTIVE CONTINUED

acquire in the areas of academic, career and personal/social development during these elementary years serve as the foundation for future success.

Our ongoing theme for this school year is: Strive. Grow. Thrive!
This theme reflects the work we do of helping our children thrive in school, at home, and in life and the goal of promoting competence, achievement, and resiliency. This includes ensuring safety and well-being, helping students build positive relationships, providing opportunities to gain new knowledge and skills, and encouraging them to take on challenges and persevere when things get tough. If you have not already noticed, every GMS student recently made a handprint to reflect the theme, and these are being proudly displayed on our school's front window.

Together, we can help foster resilience, respect, hopefulness, and feeling valued!



HELPFUL HINTS FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS:

- Help your child to set goals and to map out a plan for achieving them.
- Praise attempts and focus on effort, reassuring that it will lead to more success.
- Emphasize that learning and growing require trying new things and that success comes from taking small steps to reach a goal. Provide examples of tasks that have already been accomplished, as a reminder that he/she can do it!
- Demonstrate through your own behaviors how to try new challenging activities in sports, the arts, or school subjects. Allow your child to explore and try new activities, with an emphasis on enjoying the learning process.
- Encourage your child to internalize a sense that he/she can achieve, by continually reinforcing the skills he/she has already developed and encouraging him/her to try new challenges.
- Read about a variety of topics with your children and let them know that you, too, are learning new things.
- Help him/her work through setbacks or lack of self-confidence by helping him/her identify negative thoughts that may suggest concerns about his/her ability to be successful.
- Discuss and model perseverance and problem solving when faced with challenges or difficulties.
- Help your child develop positive relationships with peers and adults by modeling respectful, caring behaviors with others.

CHS BOOSTER CLUB

WILL BE HOSTING THE HARLEM WIZARD VS. LITCHFIELD LONGSHOTS

The Litchfield Longshots is a team made up of Litchfield teachers, first responders, and rec coaches.

Join us for an evening to support our school and community along with having lots of fun!

Thursday, November 6, 2014.
Game starts at 7pm, doors open at 6:15.

Tickets \$12 advance sale,
\$15 at door.

Please call Kathy Dyer at 759-0857 if you have any questions. Info on this event will be going home soon.

SECOND GRADE TEAM

The second grade classes have had a wonderful start to their new school year. Everyone has adjusted well to the second grade routines and expectations.

All of our students know that in order to become better readers they need to practice reading every day. We read each day in school. Please make every effort to read with your child and practice the weekly vocabulary words. This will make your child a more fluent reader.

Memorizing our addition and subtraction facts to 20 is another important part of Grade 2. At home, we encourage you to practice math flash cards or play math board games. Using your computer and accessing web sites that practice facts can be fun too. If you have a smart phone or a tablet, there are now several apps that you can download to practice facts as well.

In Science this quarter, we are learning about Animal Classifications.

Ask your child which animal family Frog and Toad, the main characters from one of our stories, belong to! We are currently learning about "Communities" in Social Studies. As you drive through our town of Litchfield, point out things that are important to our community like the fire department, the farms and the library.

Our heartfelt thanks go out to all the families that have generously donated classroom supplies to us. It is very much appreciated! As the cold weather approaches, please label your child's jackets and sweatshirts they wear to school. We don't want them to get lost. Lastly, if your child does not know how to tie their own shoes or zip their own jackets, this is a great skill to be working on. As boot and winter coat season approaches, it will be important for them to change their shoes and dress independently.

Have a Wonderful Fall Season!

FOURTH GRADE TEAM

The fourth graders at GMS are off to a fantastic start! We've been busy here in our classrooms and have a lot to look forward to this upcoming year.

Thank you for the PTO, who sponsored a wonderful enrichment activity to go along with our science unit. Mr. Jon Nute, a New Hampshire forester, led us on a mini field trip around the grounds here at GMS. We learned how to tell the age of a tree, that New Hampshire has 73 species of trees, and that 83% of New Hampshire is covered by forests!

Tournament of Readers, a fourth grade only reading club, is off to a great start. We have approximately 45 students participating this year! We are looking forward to

two exciting activities coming up in the next months. A guest from the New Hampshire Historical Society will be visiting us to give a presentation about New Hampshire's Native Americans, the Abenaki.

We look forward to seeing images and handling artifacts from the Abenaki tribe. We also cannot wait for the annual Scarecrow Jamboree, being held on Friday, October 31st. What creative scarecrows will we see this year?

In fourth grade we have been busy working on our curriculum! In reading, we've been exploring narrative elements and characteristics of non-fiction. In math, we've been working on multiplication and division concepts, patterns, and

place value. In science, we've learned about plant and animal life cycles. Did you know that your dimples, freckles, or ability to roll your tongue are traits that came from your family members?

Lastly, the fourth grade team would like to thank the parents for all their help and for getting the students off to a great start. We appreciate all the classroom donations and the time you spent attending your child's Parent Information Night.

REMINDER: Report cards will be given November 12th. Parent Teacher Conferences will be held on November 13th and 14th.

Nurse Notes

Hello GMS Parents,

I would like to begin the school newsletter by thanking you for allowing me to care for your children.

We are already beginning Hand Washing/Cough, Sneeze Cover refresher classes with the students. I am sure they will show you what excellent "Germ Busters" they have become at school.

Unfortunately Flu season has quickly appeared in New England.

I have enclosed an attachment from the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services. Please read this information letter carefully.

If your child has Asthma or respiratory compromise, I urge you to call your practitioner during this Flu season.

I professionally need to stress the importance of keeping your students home when they are sick. Unfortunately I am required to send children home from school if they return too quickly.

"Children should stay at home until they are without fever for

at least 24 hours without fever medications and until they feel better." Please refer to the GMS Nurse's Notes on our Website for more information about school health guidelines.



On the brighter side, Vision Screening should be starting in Mid-November with the Litchfield Lion's Club volunteers. I personally review and refer and vision issues. Hearing screening will start in January for the first and third grades. If you have concerns regarding your student's vision or hearing prior to these times, please feel free to contact me.

Lastly, I would like to remind parents to assure their children are dressed appropriately for the daily weather. Our students go out to recess almost daily and our playground gets very windy. Please remind your children to dress according to the forecast for their recess times. Appropriate foot wear for playground equipment is very important for your children's safety.

Please call me at GMS with any questions or concerns @ 603 424 5931 prompt #3 for the nurse.

SUSAN G SEABROOK, RNBS
GMS SCHOOL NURSE



New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Public Health Services



Enterovirus-D68 Information for Parents

October 1, 2014

Enteroviruses are very common viruses, and fall is a common time for enterovirus to cause respiratory illness. Enterovirus D68 infections are less common than infections with other enteroviruses. Seven cases of enterovirus D68 have been identified in New Hampshire so far, but there are cases in most U.S. states.

Infants, children, and teenagers are more likely than adults to get infected with enteroviruses and become sick. Symptoms can include a runny nose, sore throat, cough, wheezing, rash and fever.

Preventing the Spread of Enteroviruses in Schools and Daycare Centers

- There are no vaccines for preventing enterovirus D68 infections.
- You can help protect yourself from respiratory illnesses by following these steps:
 - Wash hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds.
 - Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth.
 - Avoid kissing and hugging people who are sick
 - Avoid sharing cups or eating utensils with others.
 - Use standard disinfection procedures for surfaces, such as toys and doorknobs.
- **Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are not effective against enteroviruses, which is why hand washing is so important.**
- The enterovirus D68 does not live long outside the body. Once a surface is dry, it likely does not contain live virus.

Staying Home When Sick

- As always, parents should keep children home when they are sick.
- Children should stay home until they are without fever for at least 24 hours without anti-fever medications and until they feel better. Once they return to school, they should continue covering their coughs and sneezes with a tissue or their elbow and disposing of the tissue and frequently washing their hands.



Resources

CDC Cover Your Cough and Clean Hands Poster

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/covercough.htm>

CDC Everyday Preventive Actions that Can Help Fight Germs, Like Flu

http://www.cdc.gov/flu/pdf/freeresources/updated/everyday_preventive.pdf

CDC Hand Washing Posters

<http://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/posters.html>

LIBRARY NEWS

Once the children started back to school, they either reviewed or learned where and how to find materials in the library. The kindergarten through grade three students have been enjoying the 2014 NH Ladybug Picture Book Award Nominees as they have been read to them. After each person votes for his/her favorite book, the votes will be tallied up throughout the state of New Hampshire, and the award-winning book will be announced by the end of this year. Fourth graders will be hearing book talks about the New Hampshire Great Stone Face Awards. Since these are chapter books, the students are encouraged to read these nominees on their own. If they choose to participate in this optional program, they will be able to vote for their favorite in April. The link to the list is found on the library page of the school website. Some of them can be found in audio or ebook formats on the free New Hampshire downloadable book website <http://nh.lib.overdrive.com> as long as you have a NH public library card. The fourth graders have also been reviewing how the fiction section of the library is organized and practicing finding books in that section.

You can find more information on the library page of the school web site at <http://gms.litchfieldsd.org/>. You can access the catalog from that page, and assist your children in making good book selection choices during library class!

Information about the book fair running November 7th-14th will be forthcoming in paper form and on the library web page.

Thanks,

MELINA PREVEL-TURMEL
LIBRARY MEDIA SPECIALIST

PTO NEWS

Please join us for our monthly meetings, our next one is October 20 at 6:30pm in the School Cafeteria. We have lots of exciting things planned including the upcoming Halloween Bash on October 24th from 6-8pm.

If you are interested in volunteering for one of our events, please stop by the PTO bulletin board at the entrance of the school, to sign up and see what exciting things we have planned for the year.

Fundraising is in full swing. Thank you to all who participated in the Meadow Farms fundraiser. Scrip Gift Cards are also available to purchase, a portion of the purchase price comes back to the school at no extra cost to you. Keep this in mind as you start buying holiday gifts. These fundraisers help raise money to assist activities for the children such as field trips, cultural arts activities, Fun Family nights, and teacher appreciation.

A new project this year will be the Courtyard project. The goal is to return the courtyard into a usable garden space for the classes to use and learn about growing plants. The hope is to have the beds prepared for the spring to start planting and growing our schools garden.

Be on the look out for Destination Imagination info coming home soon!

GMS MUSIC DEPARTMENT CALENDAR, 2014-15

- **VETERAN'S DAY ASSEMBLY**
Mon. Nov. 10, 1:45 p.m.
- **HOLIDAY CONCERT:**
SCHOOL ASSEMBLY –
Mon. Dec. 8, 1:45 p.m.
EVENING CONCERT –
Tues. Dec. 9, 7:00 p.m.
Chorus & Volunteer Recorders
SNOW DATE –
Wed. Dec. 10, 7:00 pm
- **PTO FAMILY NIGHT AND
GMS CHORUS TO SING
NATIONAL ANTHEM AT
MONARCH'S GAME**
Friday, February 20, 2015 at
7:00 pm at Verizon Center
- **DISTRICT FINE ARTS FESTIVAL:**
DRESS REHEARSAL –
Tues. Mar. 17
during school day – TBA –
Chorus & Volunteer Recorders
BAND CONCERT –
Tues. Mar. 17, 6:30pm
- **DISTRICT FINE ARTS FESTIVAL:**
CHORUS CONCERT –
Thurs. Mar. 19, 6:30pm
All at Campbell High School
- **TENTATIVE SPRING ARTS:**
GRADES 2 –
Wed. April 22, 9:30 am
GRADE 3 –
Thurs. April 23, 9:30 am
Grade 1 –
Thurs. April 23, 1:00 pm
- **SPECIAL FRIENDS DAY
(GRADE 1 ONLY)**
Fri. April 24, 9:30 am
**NOTE: MAY CHANGE DUE TO
TESTING SCHEDULE**
- **GREAT EAST MUSIC FESTIVAL**
Fri. May 29, 2015
All day – Chorus only – TBA
- **4TH GRADE RECOGNITION DAY**
JUNE, TBA
*All 4th Grade play recorders and
sing – part of afternoon ceremony*