Meeting in the Middle
by Kyley W. Cumbow, Principal

The book Middle School Makeover by Icard includes a statement that is perfect for the parent of an adolescent child. “Middle school is a parenting game changer. It requires us to guide decision-making rather than control it. We need to embrace a job demotion, from manager to assistant manager. This paradigm shift is among the most difficult things that parents of adolescents face. Your child is going through social, academic, and developmental changes, and it can be confusing to know how much independence to give them. You cannot do everything for them, but you cannot let them drown either. Finding the balance is key.” In an article that discusses the book, advice is given to parents on how to help their child through the adolescent years. The first suggestion is to provide support to help your child succeed socially. Parents cannot make friends for their child or guarantee that they are included in certain social groups. Parents, however, can support their child to make new friends and be part of different groups. A second piece of advice is to give your child some social capital. Allow your child a cell phone or social media, but do not hesitate to impose limits that work for your family. A last suggestion is to make sure to praise persistence and not performance. Do not talk about grades or how smart your child is. Let your child know that making mistakes is an essential part of the learning process and that you are okay with the occasional failure, as long as they learn something from the failure. The article also shares six important “not to dos” for parents of middle schoolers. Check it out at http://yourteenmap.com/teenager-school/teenager-middle-school/parenting-through-middle-school.

Our Student Led Conference format in February allows our students to take more ownership in their learning and performance. Time is given for each student to share their goals, reflect on goal attainment, discuss academic performance and responsibilities, and determine second semester goals with their parents and their SLC teacher.

We are proud of our students as they continue their support of our two adults and one student that have cancer. There have been remarkable acts of selflessness. Our continued thoughts are with these individuals; it is during these times that we remember what the most important things in life are.

First semester went by so quickly. We wish each of our GMMS students and families the very best this second semester.
Counselors’ Corner

The counselors at GMMS have continued to emphasize character building activities this year. Starting in August, a pillar of good character has been selected for each month. 6th graders helped out by creating posters of good character traits: Respect (August), Responsibility (September), Courage (October), Citizenship (November), Caring (December), Fairness (January), Honesty (February), Diligence (March), Cooperation (April), and Gratitude (May). These posters will be posted each month as a reminder to students. Any conversation parents can have with students about these traits and their importance would help to further stress the significance of developing good character.

The counselors at GMMS commend our students and staff for their efforts to help make Pierre such a great place to live. Service is one way to help improve perspective and build self-esteem. We encourage parents to keep their students involved in activities that will help them to build good character and give back to this great place we call home.

Library

GMMS LIBRARY LINE-UP

“Keep warm and read a good book.” Now is the perfect time for it, and we have recently added about 100 new titles to our GMMS library collection, both fiction, and nonfiction (informational text), so stop by and check it out!

The GMMS Teen Advisory Board has been busy with activities in the last couple of months. We had about 125 attendees for our 2nd Annual Fall Family Festival in October, and everyone went home with a prize—it was a blast! Thank you to all groups and individuals who donated prizes or funds to purchase materials to make that event a success. In December, TAB had a Christmas party and decorated the library for the holiday season. We also hosted our 2nd Annual Book and Toy Drive for Oahe Head Start. Thanks to those who donated the items to fill 2 boxes with books and toys for preschoolers in need. TAB meets once a month at 3:05 PM in the GMMS library, and students can join at any time.

Our Breakfast Book Club read the realistic fiction title, Walk Two Moons, by Sharon Creech, for the second quarter, and we had great discussions about love and loss in the process. We look forward to reading nonfiction (informational text) in 3rd quarter, and will be reading The Boys Who Challenged Hitler, by Philip M. Hoose. We meet 3 Fridays per quarter, at 7:30 AM in the GMMS Library, and anyone can join at any time.

As we move into second semester, we are busy preparing for our GMMS Scholastic Book Fair, which is scheduled for February 4-11, 2017. You can order items online, 24 hours a day, beginning on 2/4/17, at http://www.scholastic.com/bf/georgiamors emiddleschool1 . We are also looking for parent volunteers to help out with our 2017 fair, and you can sign up to help at https://volunteer.scholastic.com/#/signup/S6JSWLviA . Also, if you want to see what’s coming to our fair, watch the preview video http://www.scholastic.com/bookfairs/sprin g-ms-video . Our staff preview event will be held on Friday, February 3, from 3:30-4:30 PM in the library, and the entire book fair will be open to the public in the GMMS cafeteria on Monday, February 6, from 4-7:30 PM, and again on Thursday, February 9, from 4-7:30 PM during student-led (parent-teacher) conferences. Please help us meet our 2017 goal of getting 750 books into the hands of our kids!

Don’t hesitate to contact me if you have any questions, comments or concerns at Renae.Lehman@k12.sd.us , or 773-7330.

Nurse

The Dakota Smiles Mobile Dental Program is Coming to Pierre Your child’s teeth are important. Dental disease (cavities) can threaten a child’s health, well-being and achievement. Children with oral health problems can have difficulty eating, sleeping and paying attention in school.

The Dakota Smiles dental bus is a fully equipped dental offices on wheels. By participating in this program, your child can receive quality oral health services, including cleanings, preventative services, fillings and oral health education.

The dental appointments will be made during the school day throughout the week of January 30th – February 3rd. The bus will be parked at Jefferson Elementary. Volunteers will transport your child from their home school to Jefferson and back to their home school for their appointment. If you are interested contact your student’s school nurse for more details.

NA Ed. Program

Anpetu Waste (Good Day)! Parent-Teacher Conferences are coming up! Parents/Guardians of Native American Students please visit The Native American Education Program Table for a brochure! Ms. Granados would like to meet you and tell you about the program during the Parent-Teacher Conferences. Mabel Granados, new staff member with GMMS and the Native American Education Program. Ms. Granados works with our Native American students throughout the school day and is available for parent questions or concerns. Please do not hesitate to email her at Mabel.Granados@k12.sd.us or call the school at 773.7330.