



Glanford Middle School Newsletter

November 30, 2011

Dear Parents & Guardians,



The end of November is here! Everyone is working hard at GMS and we are a few short weeks away from a well deserved Winter Break. Students have been actively engaged in their academic programs. Teachers and support staff are doing what they do best at GMS – provide a caring, engaging learning environment for our students to succeed. This week, school administration is required to send home a report card, as directed by the Ministry of Education. That being said, teachers in the province of British Columbia are engaged in level one job action, which precludes them from writing formal report cards. As teachers have always done, they continue to plan and assess student work, carefully keeping track of student progress. Teachers have been informing students of their progress, providing feedback to them in core subject areas. Parents have the right to contact their child's teacher(s) to discuss the progress of their child. When the report does come home this Friday, parents are asked to keep the inserts, and sign/return the report card envelope to the school office on Monday, December 5, 2011. Thank you for your understanding.

Me to We and Global Citizenship

Glanford Middle School was privileged to attend a provincial learning and sharing opportunity in Vancouver called **Me to We**. Since that session, **Mrs. Wooster, Mrs. Craig and Mr. Gerhardt** have been facilitating a group of grade 7 and 8 students with a variety of initiatives, including a food drive at Hallowe'en, One Hour of Silence to promote awareness of the millions of children in the world without a voice. Our next project will be collecting items to assist the homeless in Victoria by providing them with a sock filled with basic necessities. We would encourage all students to get involved and bring in items such as new winter socks, toothbrushes, paste, shampoo, soap, razors so that we can fill socks for Victoria's Street Link. These basic items should be small enough to fit into a sock—perhaps

you have some of these items from a recent stay in a hotel? Travel size shampoos, etc. are the ideal size. We thank you for your support of this school wide effort to help those less fortunate in our community.

Supporting the Local Community

Mrs. Rushton's class has initiated a school spirit event that will be supporting the St. Vincent de Paul Charity. This is taking the form of a Gingerbread Cookie sale. Funds collected will greatly assist children and families living in Victoria that may need a helping hand during the holiday season.

GMS PAC Hosts Annual Pancake Breakfast and Pajama Day



Every year, we are delighted to have the *Central Saanich Lions* visit GMS to prepare a WONDERFUL pancake breakfast. This year, the GMS PAC invited the Lions to come to our school on **Thursday, December 15th**. Students and staff are encouraged to wear their pajamas to school that day. Students and staff are asked to bring their own plate and cutlery for the pancake breakfast, as we are trying to eliminate the creation of unnecessary garbage. Be well planned, and have your plate and cutlery ready in advance! Plastic or non-breakable camping plates are best for this! Everyone is also encouraged to bring a non-perishable food item to our **annual pancake breakfast and pajama day**. These food donations will be donated to a wonderful local charity, *the St. Vincent de Paul Society*.



Digital Citizenship at GMS

The rate of change with respect to technology is extraordinary. At GMS, we have seen in our students an increase in the ownership of personal cell phones and hand held electronic devices. We have been educating our students around the subject of **Digital Citizenship**. With the privilege of having a cell phone, comes the responsibility of using it appropriately. Students that do have cell phones have been reminded to leave their phones **IN THEIR LOCKERS**. The exception to this is when, under the direction of a teacher, a class uses a hand held device for a classroom activity. Certainly, the future will likely see more examples of technology in and out of our classrooms at GMS. We respectfully ask that parents **not** text or call their child during instructional time, as we have directed students to keep their phones away in their lockers until the end of the school day. Thank you for your support.

GMS Website

If you have not already done so, please visit our school's amazing website, which you can easily locate by going to: www.sd61.bc.ca/school/glanford You can find the following on the school web page:

- Information about the staff
- The three teams at GMS: The Hippy Hooplas, The Geckos, and the Rocking Rookies
- Teacher web pages showing homework as well as pertinent information to each class
- A calendar for the year and upcoming events
- Resources for parents and students
- GMS PAC and GMPA information
- Student photos and videos that capture the numerous events that occur at GMS

The school has once again invested in the World Book Online as a resource for our students. It is an invaluable resource for students when they require information and need to do research. You can find this from the GMS link listed below. To access World Book Online, you need to:

go to www.sd61.bc.ca/school/glanford

go to the library button

go to "Reference Sites"

go to World Book Online and click

for log in ID, use sd61student

for password, use athome

Remember NOT to leave spaces for the login ID or the password, and to use lower case letters. We have the required license to use this resource at home this year, and you are encouraged to try it out!

GMS is a Happening Place!

The reality of running a busy middle school has set in here at GMS. The school is buzzing with activity – academic, athletic, and social! The young adolescent learner is an interesting one – there is never a dull moment! At any time at GMS, you can feel the energy and see the activity in the building. Academics are a priority for our students, as are a variety of learning opportunities. Through student leadership activities – including Studio 85 and assemblies, dance, athletics, the computer lab and library, band, as well as other fascinating activities and clubs, student opportunities to explore new, exciting things are definitely here! Being well organized at home with established homework routines and good communication with parents all helps our students enjoy an enriching middle school experience while being the best they can be academically. A big THANK YOU goes out to our GMS PAC for their generous financial support shown for our mini-exploratory blocks – round one is now complete, and the students have gained wonderful experiences. Thanks also to all of our parents for continuing to support the work we do at GMS.

Safety Around the School

Safety is a concern for us at GMS. We are concerned about the vehicle traffic around the school, particularly in the morning, and then again after school. We hope that students can walk or cycle to school. If parents must drive their child to school, we ask you to strongly consider car pooling with other GMS families. If families must drive, we ask that parents remember to use Judah Street as the main access point for drop off and picking up their child. The "school side" of Judah Street is acceptable for parking, NOT the residential side of the street. We must also avoid having vehicles "park" in the drop off and pick up zone on the Glanford side of the building. We ask that special care and attention happen at the crosswalk on Glanford Avenue as we have had some recent concerns there for student safety. Of course, bicycles and skateboards may not be used when on the school property, and safety helmets are a must. Students riding bicycles **MUST FOLLOW THE RULES OF THE ROAD** when riding to and from school. Safety is a huge priority! Thanks for reinforcing this with your child!



The Music Program and Athletics @ GMS



Everyone is invited to this year's winter **music concert**. The concert will be performed on Tuesday, December 6th, at 1:30 PM and again at 7 PM in our gym. Families are encouraged to come out to listen to the beautiful music of our young students!

With **athletics**, we have had many, many students participating in recreational as well as competitive **basketball** this year – playing, and score / time keeping! The kids are having lots of fun and learning so much about the game of basketball!

Currently, we also have a very active group of students enjoying drop in **floor hockey**! This group meets weekly. We are having a wonderful time while being active and everyone is welcome to drop in.

Great job, Mavericks!!

Upcoming Important Dates at GMS

- Friday, December 2nd – First Term Report Cards come home
- Tuesday, December 6th – Music Holiday Concerts, 1:30 PM & 7 PM
- Wednesday, December 7th - GMS PAC meeting, 7 PM; all parents welcome and encouraged to attend
- Friday, December 9th - Retro Assembly, 1:15 PM Parents Welcome to attend!
- Thursday, December 15th – GMS PAC sponsored Pancake Breakfast and Pajama Day always lots of fun!
- Friday, December 16th – last day of classes prior to Winter Break
- Tuesday, January 3rd, 2012 – school reopens

See you in and around GMS!

Louie Scigliano, Principal &
Elaine Wooster, Vice Principal

We are now approaching the season when inclement weather may affect the safety and welfare of students. In particular, snowy weather has the potential to cause classes to be postponed or some School District 61 services to be suspended.

Current information will be updated continuously on the Greater Victoria School District 61 website at <http://www.sd61.bc.ca>

Within the Greater Victoria School District, the Superintendent of Schools will provide media outlets with information about the status of our facilities and transportation services by 6:30 a.m. if there is a concern.

Local media outlets have indicated that they will provide constant information.



Middle Years

Working together for school success

Short Stops

The art of compromise



The next time your middle schooler disagrees with a friend, use the opportunity to help her learn about compromise. Encourage her to think of solutions that are acceptable to everyone. For example, she might say, "So you pick the movie this week, and I'll choose one next week."

Attention, please

Help your child get the most out of class time. How? Share the SLANT method with him: Sit up straight and near the front, Lean forward, Ask questions, Nod to show you understand, Track the teacher with your eyes.

Curbing foul language

Middle graders might think swear words make them sound cool or grown-up. But explain to your youngster that cursing gives others a bad impression of her and is not acceptable. To help stop it, consider creating a "swear jar"—it will cost a quarter each time a family member uses bad language. At the end of each month, donate the money to a charity.

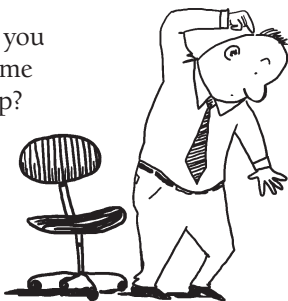
Worth quoting

"Gratitude consists of being more aware of what you have than what you don't." *Anonymous*

Just for fun

Q: What do you lose every time you stand up?

A: Your lap.



Discipline that works

Your usually pleasant middle grader kicked his brother when he got frustrated. Or he invited friends over when he was home alone. You know you need to discipline him, but what's the most effective way at this age? The right consequences can be a useful tool to help your child improve his behavior. Here's how.



Make it fit

Decide on consequences before you need them. That way, you can choose them carefully. If you wait until your child breaks a rule to announce what will happen, you're more likely to overreact and come up with something that's difficult to enforce. ("You're not going anywhere for a month!") Be sure to tell your tween about the consequences up front so he knows what to expect.

Make it matter

Tie the results of your middle grader's behavior to his actions (say, not being able to go out next weekend if he lied

about where he was last weekend). And choose consequences that matter to your child so he cares about their impact. For example, if he texts at the dinner table, he's likely to be more upset about losing cell phone privileges than being sent to his room.

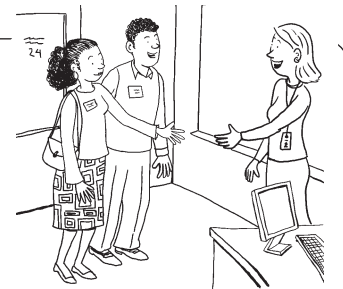
Make it right

Let your tween know that he must make up for bad behavior. If he throws and breaks the controller after losing a video game, he will have to replace it with his own money. Having to correct the situation will help him stop and think before he does the same thing again. 👍

Teaming with teachers

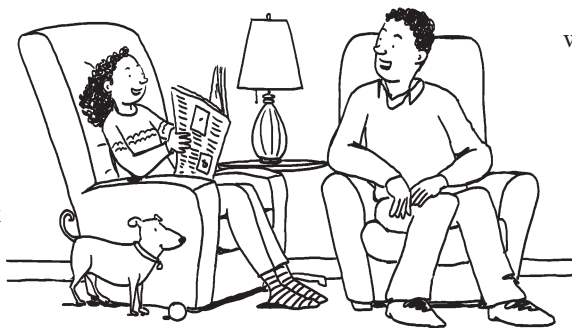
To support your child's education, put parent-teacher conferences high on your to-do list. Here are some tips:

- Review your middle grader's schoolwork and interim reports before the conference. If you see areas where she's falling short, ask her teachers for suggestions.
- Let teachers know about things that might be affecting your child (divorce, parent out of work, deployed family member). This can help teachers understand your child and offer support when necessary.
- If you need a translator at the conference, request one in advance. Or arrange to take along a friend or family member who can help. 👍



Good thinking!

Can your middle grader come up with more than one solution for a problem? Determine whether something she reads is valid? Draw conclusions based on what she reads? These are all critical-thinking skills—and your child needs them to thrive in middle school and beyond.



when she has a problem to solve, encourage her to think of several ways to handle it.

Evaluating information

Have your middle grader read an editorial in the newspaper. Ask questions to help her analyze what she has read. *Examples:* What are the writer's credentials? Does he use facts

Solving problems

Share issues that you're trying to address ("I need to save money on gasoline"). Let your youngster hear you brainstorm solutions: "I could carpool with a coworker, combine errands, or drive the smaller car that gets better gas mileage." Then,

and statistics to back up his views? Are they logical? She'll need to distinguish between facts and opinions and may have to do some research to answer those questions.

Drawing conclusions

Let your child choose a paragraph from a mystery and read it out loud. What does she think is going on? Suggest that she use what she has read to draw conclusions. For instance, if it says, "His hands shaking, Mark turned the key," she can conclude that Mark is scared or nervous. 👍

Clever cards

Here's a study technique that can help your middle grader remember facts and formulas.

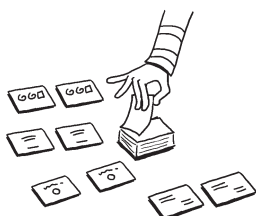


Sequencing

Sometimes information needs to be remembered in a certain sequence, such as steps in a scientific process or events in history. Suggest that your child write each step or event on a separate index card (without numbering the cards). To study, he can shuffle and reshuffle the cards, putting them back in order until he consistently gets it right.

Matching

Your youngster can also use cards to study facts. Have him write each term and its



matching fact on separate cards. *Examples:* vocabulary words and definitions, countries and their capitals. Then, he can shuffle the cards, spread them out facedown, and try to match up pairs.

Idea: Suggest that he make studying into a game by playing with a classmate or family member. Each person could create a set of cards for the other one to put in order or match. 👍

Q & A

Help for ADHD

Q My son was just diagnosed with ADHD. How can I help him be successful in middle school?

A If your child doesn't already have an IEP (Individualized Education Plan) or a Section 504 plan, ask the school to create one. The plan should spell out what he needs academically (extra copies of textbooks at home, more time to complete tests, less homework).

Also, it's more important than ever for your son to be organized. Having a daily planner or to-do list can be helpful. He should also sort through his backpack and locker on a weekly basis.

At this age, your child needs to be involved in managing his ADHD. Together, discuss strategies he can use to help himself. For instance, he might call a friend to double-check on assignments each evening or take a homework break every 20 minutes. Suggest that he experiment with ideas and see what works best for him. 👍



Parent to Parent

Cooking up healthy meals

Our family had a habit of grabbing fast food because it was convenient. After reading several articles that said home-cooked meals are healthier than most fast food, I decided to make a change.

I started with a goal of three home-cooked dinners a week. I made a list of the items I needed for each meal and went shopping.

One night, I made a tossed salad and salmon and added a loaf of hot, crusty

bread. For another meal, I put chuck roast, potatoes, carrots, and onions in a slow cooker before I went to work, and dinner was ready when I got home.

We still get takeout sometimes, but we're making healthier choices. Last week, we ordered a thin-crust pizza with light cheese and vegetables.

Eating at home is a lot easier than I expected. And my family is eating foods that are more nutritious. 👍



OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ideas that promote school success, parent involvement, and more effective parenting.

Resources for Educators,
a division of CCH Incorporated
128 N. Royal Avenue • Front Royal, VA 22630
540-636-4280 • rfeustomer@wolterskluwer.com
www.rfeonline.com
ISSN 1540-5540