



February 2015

# GMRSD Board Of Education

## Home of the Jaguars

### SUPERINTENDENT NEWS

Dear Community Members of Independence and Liberty Townships,  
At this time each school year, our district has begun the task of budget development which involves the time and diligence of our Business Administrator. I would like to welcome, Mr. Tim Havlusch, our new Business administrator to our school district. Mr. Havlusch comes to GMRSD with an extensive background in business and many years of experience serving as a Business Administrator in Bergen and Hudson counties. Working in conjunction with the business office, the district continues to collaborate with our newly formed Operations Committee to ensure a quality fiscal responsibility to our community members.

In our previous newsletters, we touched upon our ROD Grant projects. During the month of February, with the assistance of district personnel and Independence Chief of Police, Chief Riley, we will begin our process for the placement and installation of surveillance cameras. My district office will keep you abreast throughout as this process unfolds.

At our January 28<sup>th</sup> public meeting, representatives from Honeywell Inc and Energy Savings Improvement Program (ESIP), presented an Energy Conservation plan. Phases of the ESIP project are set to begin this upcoming spring. We have been working on ensuring Elizabethtown Gas for the expansion of gas lines/availability as not only a part of our ESIP project that will benefit Central School and Great Meadows Middle School but will also benefit the residents of Independence Township. Our office has been meeting with Mayor Giordano and council members to discuss possible residential and community opportunities as a result of access to the gas lines.

I would like to thank Mr. Ron Marinelli, our district's Facilities Supervisor, for his efforts in ensuring Elizabethtown Gas as the provider, and I would also like to thank Mayor Giordano for his time and efforts in this matter.

In closing, the district would like to thank members of both the Independence and Liberty communities for their continued support in all district initiatives.

Sincerely,  
David C. Mango

### CURRICULUM CORNER

Nadia Inskeep, Director of Curriculum and Instruction

I am currently working with the building principals and staff to expand our new academic support programs at Central, Liberty and the Middle School. In the coming weeks we will be posting a Title I parent involvement survey on the District's website. I sincerely hope that you take the time to answer the short survey. Your input will assist us in planning academic support services for the upcoming school year and expand our offerings for your children.

I am also working with the Board of Education and the administrative team to update our curriculum revision cycle. This will allow our teachers the opportunity to review and revise curriculum so that the curricular documents can be updated to align with the new resources the District has purchased and stay up to date with the Next Generation Science Standards.



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### CENTRAL SCHOOL NEWS

Happy 2015 from Central School! Now that the holiday season is behind us, we are focused on making the second half of the school year as positive and productive as the first.

#### JOURNEYS

Teachers and students are hard at work improving reading skills using our new Journeys program. Teachers have said that the program allows them the ability to address all student needs by differentiating their instruction and utilizing technology in every lesson. Students find the stories engaging and informative, and parents have expressed amazement at how fast their children are progressing with reading fluency and comprehension. At the January 21st Principal's Forum, our grade level PLC Leaders presented "A Journey through Journeys," which demonstrated the program's various resources and components. A copy of the evening's Powerpoint is available on our school's website.

#### JUMP ROPE FOR HEART

On January 20th, students gathered in the gym for a Jump Rope for Heart assembly. A representative from the American Heart Association discussed the event and the various prizes students can receive by collecting donations for this worthy cause. The official Jump Rope for Heart event at Central School will take place on Friday, February 6th, with Ms. Sullivan leading students through what promises to be a fun-filled day of exercise to raise money for the American Heart Association.

#### EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR

Central School is extremely proud to announce that Mr. Carroll has been voted our 2014-15 Governor's Educator of the Year. Mr. Carroll is tremendously dedicated to the students, parents, and staff at Central School and throughout the Great Meadows Regional School District. He is quick to identify his students' strengths and areas of interest, and uses them to create lessons that bring out the best in everyone. Mr. Carroll demonstrates a high level of professionalism in all that he does. He collaborates with staff on building initiatives. He serves as Grade 1 PLC Leader, acting as a liaison between teachers and administration. He also communicates regularly with parents on their child's progress, stressing the importance of the home-school connection. Congratulations Mr. Carroll on this well-deserved honor.

### LIBERTY SCHOOL NEWS

#### Community Service

Liberty School staff and students came together this holiday season to make a huge donation to the Vienna United Methodist Church food bank! The Girls on the Run team organized a week of "Penny Wars", which donated \$1,802.74 to those in need. The Liberty School Student Council hosted and movie night and sold carnations at the Winter Concert to raise an additional \$500, making our grand total donation \$2,302.74. Thank you to everyone for your help in such a wonderful act of kindness and generosity!

#### PARCC Preparation

Our students are working hard to prepare for the PARCC Performance Based Assessment (PBA) in March as well as the End of Year (EOY) assessment in May. It is important to understand that with the Journeys and Everyday Math programs we do not need to "teach to the test" because we are already covering the depth of the Common Core State Standards in our normal instructional practice. That being said, since the students are testing online for the first time, we feel the need to prepare them specifically for that portion of the test. Mr. D'Agostino is taking each class through a tutorial of the features that they will access during the test so that they will be familiar with navigating the testing site. Each classroom teacher is dedicating a portion of their lesson time each week to take the practice tests that are available so that the students are familiar with the question types and answer formats. I encourage parents to access this PARCC website for the latest news regarding the test at [www.parcconline.org](http://www.parcconline.org). If you were not able to attend the January Principal's Forum, which focused on PARCC, please be aware that all of those handouts and materials can be found on the Liberty website.



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### MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS

With the school year past the half-way point, GMMS is keeping it rolling and preparing for numerous activities. PARCC testing is quickly approaching. Please see the middle school website for our testing schedule. Teachers have been preparing our students through on-line practice exams on [www.parcconline.org](http://www.parcconline.org). A parent workshop was also held in February to allow parents a glance at sample items our students may be exposed to.

Our students completed the second round of benchmark tests in core subject areas and are showing tremendous growth from the first round. The last round of benchmarks will be held during the 4<sup>th</sup> marking period.

The next middle school Principal Forum will be held on Thursday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> at 7 pm to discuss Blended Learning and technology use at the middle school.

Finally, the middle school will be hosting a Talent Show/Lip Sync on March 27<sup>th</sup>. We would love to see you there. As always be safe and have a great remainder of the year.

### Child Study Team

Happy New Year! Annual Review season is quickly approaching and we are excited to begin working closely with the team of teachers, students and parents to create the best possible supports for our students. Annual Reviews are set up each year to look at specific course programming and related services provided for each student (Individualized Educational Program). This is an opportunity to discuss strengths as well as areas that may need more work. It is important that parents and guardians attend these meetings in order to provide relevant information into your child's IEP.

In January we shared with the Board of Education our idea to create an LLD (Learning and Language Disabled) classroom in Central School to add yet another layer of support to our youngest students. The addition of this classroom will help to create a continuum of services in all three buildings throughout our district.

Our first Parent Advisory Meeting will be held in the Middle School Media Center this February. We are planning to host this meeting during the day. The topic this quarter will be "How to handle behaviorally challenged students at home."

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## Dates To Remember

03/03/15 – 03/27/15 – PARCC Testing PBA Grades 3-8

03/10/15 – GMR PTO Meeting

03/11/15 – End 2<sup>nd</sup> Trimester Grades K-5

03/12/15 – Liberty and Middles School Picture Day

03/18/15 – Report Cards Sent Home Grades K-5

03/20/15 – Early Dismissal Students (Teacher  
Professional Development Day)

03/23/15 – Central School Picture Day

03/25/15 – Liberty Spring Concert @ Liberty School

03/27/15 – GMMS Talent Show (7pm)

04/01/15 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Marking Period Ends GMMS

04/02/15 – Early Dismissal

04/03/15 -04/10/15 – District Closed Spring Break

04/14/15 – GMR PTO Meeting

04/15/15 – Battle of the Books Grades 7 & 8

04/17/15 – Report Cards Sent Home Grades 6-8

04/17/15 – PTO Spring Get Together Grades 5-8

04/21/15 – Battle of the Books Grades 5-6

04/22/15 – GMMS Spring Concert

04/23/15 – GMMS Principal's Forum

04/27/15 – 05/22/15 – PARCC Testing EOY Grades 3-8

04/29/15 – Central Spring Concert

04/30/15 – Liberty School Principal's Forum

05/05/15 – Central School Principal's Forum