

December 2018



GMRSD Board Of Education

Home of the Jaguars

SUPERINTENDENT NEWS

Dear Hackettstown and Great Meadows Regional School community members,

There have been many happenings throughout the State of New Jersey that have directly impacted our districts. For the past several years, my office has publicly discussed how Hackettstown was severely underfunded in state aid, while Great Meadows was overfunded. In light of the recent changes to the S2 bill, Hackettstown will see a dramatic increase to state aid, while Great Meadows will suffer a dramatic decrease. Each district will now face its own set of both positive and negative financial impact and challenges.

In Hackettstown, the district has used some of the already provided state aid by way of hiring staff and the HVAC inspection at the Willow Grove School. The early estimate for HVAC completion prior to installation at Willow Grove School was one million dollars. Unfortunately, Central Office has found that early estimate to be only a preliminary estimate with other costs being added in for a more accurate final estimate. Moreover, going into the 2019-2020 budget development cycle, district administration will create a personnel/program prioritization list to be supplemented with future state aid.

In addition to gaining financial assistance from the state department, the Hackettstown Board of Education has determined the timing is appropriate to advocate for a ballot question to extend the district's debt service. In the future, Ms. Woicekowski, our district's Business Administrator, will engage the municipality and community, by hosting special meetings for cost analysis, and discussions that explore the strong need to renovate and upgrade district facilities, as this is where the appropriated funds will be utilized.

Unfortunately in Great Meadows, the drastic proposed cut of near 3.7 million dollars could potentially cause closure of one of our facilities. At the August 28th public Board of Education meeting, conversations began about this concern and potential of future loss. The Board of Education, along with Central Office, has begun the discovery process in looking to either "MOTHBALL" Central School or to "MOTHBALL" Liberty School.

If you recall, Liberty School was part of last year's Feasibility Study as a potential option due to the drastic decline in enrollment. Should the Board of Education determine a Liberty School closure is in the best interest of the district, then Central School would become a PK-3 facility and GMMS a 4-8 facility, which will include a separate wing for the 4th and 5th grades. If it's determined a Central School closure is in the best interest of the district, then Liberty School will become a PK-4 facility and Great Meadows

Middle School a 5-8 facility. As of today, no decision has been made, but rest assured more information will come forward following the New Year and the Governor's future State Aid allocations. This will not be an easy decision, nor an easy feat. We will be looking closely at options that will be the most beneficial to our district and students as a whole.

I am pleased to inform you that the Hackettstown School District will be implementing its first ever inclusive Pre-School program which will be located at the Hatchery Hill School. Please go to our district website to view Mrs. Gesumaria's November 14th presentation to the Board of Education and public and contact Mrs. Gesumaria's office directly should you have any questions or concerns. I also encourage you to schedule a site visit in the Great Meadows Central School with Principal, Mr. Mai, to observe the daily happenings of the Pre-School program which was created and implemented at the start of the 2016-2017 school year.

Wishing you all health and happiness for the upcoming Holiday Season and New Year.

Sincerely,
David C. Mango
Superintendent of Schools

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CENTRAL SCHOOL NEWS

It is been a very strong start to the school year at Central School, and it is hard to believe the holidays are upon us. Students and staff continue to soar to new heights as learners and citizens. Thank you, families, as always, for your support of our efforts to develop our children into the leaders of tomorrow.

One of the ways we hope to achieve this is through a focus on social-emotional learning. In addition to our Jaguar Stars positive behavior program, we have introduced aspects of the Jesse Lewis Choose Love Program. The program focuses on four pillars of social-emotional development: courage, gratitude, forgiveness and compassion in action. Each week, we present selected students with a "Golden Ticket" for exemplifying the four pillars. For more information, you may visit www.jesselewischooselove.org.

As we roll toward the end of 2018, there are a number of exciting events to look forward to at Central School. Students can shop for the holidays at our PTO Holiday Shoppe on November 28-30. Our Grade 1-2 Winter Concert AND Art Show will be Wednesday, December 5 at 7 p.m. in the Great Meadows Middle School auditorium.

We also welcome an exciting assembly, based on a book entitled "Beyond the Laces: Inspiring Children Through Kindness" on December 14, in which author/presenter Bob Salomon shares his book's message to inspire children through kindness and encourage them to never give up. The story focuses on a child and his family going through a hard time and looks at the impact the boy's favorite football player #87 has on his life. The Beyond the Laces message is being embraced by many throughout the country, especially those in the world of professional sports.

Lastly, we here at Central School want to wish you all a safe, peaceful, and fun holiday season. We are thankful for the support given to us by everyone in our community and will continue to work every day to inspire, educate, and care for the children in Great Meadows!

LIBERTY SCHOOL NEWS

Greetings from Liberty Elementary School! As the holidays approach, I would like to wish all Liberty School families a safe and happy season. And while you undoubtedly are preparing for fun and festivities at home, we are gearing up for our own celebrations (mixed- in with some learning, of course).

On December 5th, 6th and 7th we will be having our Holiday Shop which is run by the PTO. Students will have the opportunity to purchase gifts for family members and friends, which is always a huge hit! The Band and Chorus will be performing their holiday show on December 19th at 7pm at the Middle School. Please come out and support the students who have worked so hard by coming in extra early to school to practice. Finally, there will be a school-wide Winter Sing-a-Long on December 21st which will coincide with class parties to kick-off the winter break from school.

Another exciting addition to Liberty Elementary School is our Choose Love Program. In correlation with both Central and Middle Schools, Liberty has adopted this program as our Character Education initiative. Within the parameters of this program, students and faculty will celebrate, explore and demonstrate the four pillars of the Choose Love Program which include: Courage, Gratitude, Forgiveness and Compassion. We will be hosting an assembly on December 14th called "Beyond the Laces" which will coincide with Choose Love. This inspiring assembly is based on the children's book of the same title addressing perseverance and kindness even through tough times.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who made our Parent/Teacher Conferences such a success. Our goal at Liberty is to provide the best quality education for all our students. It is only through the tireless efforts of parents/ guardians and educators that this is possible.

Jessica McDonagh



GMRSD Board Of Education

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MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS

GMMS Parents/Guardians,

The weather outside is frightful but things are warming up at GMMS. We recently had our annual Veterans Day Program hosted by the GMMS Student Council and Student Leadership Corps. Over 22 area veterans ate breakfast, participated in a veterans appreciation ceremony, spoke to our students and enjoyed lunch. We are forever grateful for our service men and women and area vets. Thank you for your service. In addition, the middle school Social Studies Department organized a Halloween candy fundraiser where 17 copy paper boxes filled with candy will be shipped to active service personnel and veterans both at home and overseas.

Our winter clubs are in full swing with Step Ahead, Homework Club, Coding Club, NASA Build It!, Design Squad, Performing Arts Club, Football Statistics Analysis and Saturday Tutoring running and very well attended. In addition, please keep an eye on the Weightlifting Club which is set to run in December and January. Boys and Girls Volleyball also starts soon so please keep an eye out for those permission slips. As always, all club forms can be found on the middle school website under middle school clubs and athletics.

On Monday, November 19th, the middle school held its first Student Recognition Program and honored a few students for work and attitudes above and beyond what is expected. Those students were- Academic Achievement: Sophia Costanzo, Sophia Maksymiv, Levi Castner and Sophia Smith, for Most Improved: Kaelyn McCrimlisk and Logan Bell. Finally, students who received recognition for Citizenship were: Dylan Griglak, Kiara Koeller and Gianna French. Congratulations to all those students.

We wish you a wonderful holiday season – Middle School Staff and Administration

CURRICULUM CORNER

Curriculum Corner

Director of Curriculum and Instruction

Debra Grigoletti

I would like to take this opportunity to extend thanks to the parents, teachers and administrators who attended the Title I Parent Involvement Meeting in October. The Parent Involvement meeting is an important part of the grant process and it also provides an opportunity to hear direct feedback on the programs that we are able to offer with our Federal Grant funding.

The curriculum for Media and Guidance will be revised during the course of this year. It is perfect timing for the Guidance curriculum with the need to implement a new Character program district wide. All three schools have been working together to put together a program that is vertically and horizontally aligned.

We are currently focusing on this year's benchmark assessments. The principals will be presenting the first round of results in the beginning of the new year to the Great Meadows BOE Education Committee.

The High School has begun developing semester-based classes to afford our students a larger variety of course offerings from which to choose. The course proposals were reviewed by the Hackettstown Board of Education Curriculum Committee in November and will be brought to the full Board for approval in December. If all goes as planned, please look for the course offerings in the 2019-2020 Course Catalog.

I would like to wish everyone a safe and happy holiday and to remember that the true meaning of the holiday season is about health, happiness, being kind and thinking of those who we hold dear. I wish that for all of you and your families.

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Dates To Remember

12/04/18 - Liberty/Central 1 st trimester ends	01/18/19 - GMMS Benchmark 2 Window Closes
12/05/18 - Liberty/Central 2 nd trimester begins	01/18/19 - GMMS 6 th -8 th Grade Get Together
12/07/18 - Early Dismissal (Teacher PD Day)	01/21/19 - School Closed (Teacher PD Day)
12/11/18 - Liberty/Central Report Cards Issued	01/24/19-01/25/19- GMMS Performing Arts Show
12/12/18 - GMMS Winter Concert	01/25/19 - GMMS MP2 Ends
12/18/18 - BOE Meeting	01/26/19 - GMMS MP3 Begins
12/19/18 - Liberty 4-5 Band & Chorus Concert at GMMS	01/31/19 - GMMS Principal Forum
12/21/18 - Early Dismissal Winter Break	02/01/19 - GMMS Report Cards Sent Home
12/24/18-1/01/19 - School Closed	02/15/19-02/18/19- School Closed President's Day
01/07/19 - GMMS Benchmark 2 Window Opens	02/20/19-02/21/19 - Kindergarten Registration
01/16/19 - PK-5 Principal Forum at Central school	03/07/19 - GMMS Spring Pictures
01/16/19 - PTO Meeting at GMMS	03/08/19 - Early Dismissal (Teacher PD Day)