



# GMRSD Board Of Education

## Home of the Jaguars

### SUPERINTENDENT NEWS

#### STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

Last Fall, many community members participated in the district's Strategic Planning process. At our December 16<sup>th</sup> public meeting, I, along with Ms. Inskeep, will be conducting a focused presentation regarding the now implemented Strategic Plan. This coincides with both the district and board of education goals relative to the future of our district. Main points of focus will surround the areas of instructional technology, facility upgrades and student achievement. If you were not an active participant in the initial process, I encourage you to visit our district website under the Strategic Plan link for further perspective and insight.

#### BUDGET DEVELOPMENT

At this time every school year, a new budget development cycle is created. This results in a streamline effect on efficiency for not only our school district, but the members of both Independence and Liberty Townships. Throughout this process, our finance committee along with central office and the district-wide administrative team, develop an overview with particular areas of focus relative to both district and staff needs. As we move forward, the district will continue to implement instructional technology where applicable, as well as, look to upgrade facilities in the areas of instructional space/reorganization, professional development and security. In short, the district's goal will remain consistent in providing our students with the most conducive learning environment while honoring our fiduciary responsibilities to our communities.

#### HAPPY TRAILS

At this time the district would like to thank Ms. Julie Mumaw for her outstanding performance over the last eight and a half years. This coming December, Ms. Mumaw will be retiring from her professional role and leaving the district. We commend her for her service and wish her all the best.

David C. Mango

### CURRICULUM CORNER

Nadia Inskeep

Director of Curriculum and Instruction

At the October 21 Board of Education meeting the NJ ASK scores from Great Meadows Middle School and Liberty School and the High School Proficiency Assessment and End of Course Biology scores from Hackettstown High School were presented to the public. You can find a PDF of the presentation on our website at <http://www.gmrtd.com/domain/177>.

As we transition to Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), it is important that we develop our own grade level benchmark assessments. Scores from the new assessments that our students will take in the spring will be released next fall. In the mean time, our teachers and principals are working very hard to develop quality assessments that will guide instruction for all of our students. The State is closing the chapter on NJ ASK and we will not be able to compare PARCC and ASK scores as they are different assessments. Using our own assessments to monitor student progress will provide teachers and parents with an indicator of student achievement. It will also assist in bridging the gap in the standardized assessment data during this transitional time.



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### CENTRAL SCHOOL NEWS

There is a lot to be excited about at Central School. The students and staff are hard at work each day, discovering new things and creating memories that will last a lifetime. From Picture Day to Harvest Day, from butterfly projects to blended classrooms, the students of Central School are happily making the most of every experience that comes their way. Below are just a few of the many things to look forward to at Central.

Thanks to our Title I funding, we have the opportunity to create a new after-school learning opportunity here at Central. Coming in November, **Skill Builders** is a program that will give students in grades one and two the opportunity for more instruction and reinforcement. Our goal is for the students to enjoy a fun and entertaining learning experience which will allow them to reach a proficient level of knowledge at their grade level in Math and Language Arts. Having these added skills and strategies will help them not only this year, but to be successful throughout their educational career. Students will be recommended by teachers for participation.

I am very excited about **Central School's Monthly Newsletter**. First, I need to thank all of the teachers for their efforts and submissions. Special thanks to Ms. Washburn, who brought the idea to me and has put all the pieces together for you. Communication is a very important part of the home-school connection, and this Newsletter is one more way to keep you informed about the latest and greatest happenings here at Central.

Central School has a population of over 200 students, all of whom are growing rapidly into the leaders of the future. We want to build in them the knowledge that exemplary behavior, strong effort, kindness, and respect to others are skills that will reward them throughout their lives. To do so, we have decided to highlight students each month that demonstrate these skills. Each month, our Professional Learning Communities (kindergarten, grade one, grade two, and specials) will select one boy and one girl as their **Students of the Month**. These students' names will be listed in our Monthly Newsletter and displayed on the bulletin board outside the main office. They will also receive a certificate in honor of their selection.

### LIBERTY SCHOOL NEWS

#### Implementation of Journeys

We are pleased to announce that the implementation of Journeys is progressing very well at Liberty School! The teachers are continuing to acclimate themselves to the program and all of its varied resources. The students have reported to teachers that they love the stories and appreciate all of the fun, new uses for technology that it brings to their classrooms. The students are able to access all of their resources from home by logging into [www.thinkcentral.com](http://www.thinkcentral.com).

#### Week of Respect

During the first week of October Liberty School observed the state mandated Week of Respect to heighten our understanding and awareness of the importance of preserving a positive climate and culture within our school. Mrs. Ackerman delivered a respect based lesson to each homeroom where the students participated in class wide discussions regarding appropriate behavior toward classmates and adults, as well as maintaining a high level of respect for oneself. As a culminating activity, the students signed a pledge and created a poster depicting various ways to show respect in our everyday actions.

#### Liberty Cares 2014

Our third graders have been collecting non-perishable items for care packages to send to our troops in Afghanistan through the "Troop Collection" program of the Third Chapter of Rolling Thunder in New Jersey. Under the direction of our Music teacher, Mrs. Long, and with the help of our Art teacher, Maria Levenstein, our Physical Education teacher, Ms. Baatz, and our Technology teacher, Mr. D'Agostino, we are also creating a video to send as a hyperlink to accompany our care packages.



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### MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS

The first quarter of school has been filled with many new and exciting things. We are now immersed in the world of Google and Gagggle. The teachers have been busy setting up their Google Classrooms and teaching the students how to navigate Google Drive. The students were given their Gmail accounts at the end of October and we are now gagging over Google. They have also been introduced to the world of Gagggle, an added layer of security to protect our students.

Our students participated in two very successful fundraisers in the past two months. The first one, Cram the Cruiser, benefited the local food bank. We also organized an ALS fundraiser. Overall, the students' raised \$150 for ALS, over \$100 for Rachel's Challenge and donated over 1600 items to the local food bank

After school clubs are in full swing. The Tutoring Club is held on Mondays and Wednesdays. The Homework Club will begin on November 4<sup>th</sup> and will be held on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Lastly, the Step A Head Program will start on November 12 and run on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Please call the main office if your child is interested in any of these clubs.

### Child Study Team

The CST has settled into their new buildings nicely and have been making rounds speaking with students and staff about the goings-on of the new year.

At Central they have been working on updating the Intervention and Referral Service Process with teachers to give added support and definition to how the process can be implemented more seamlessly into the school day. At Liberty, the team worked diligently with Mrs. Gesumaria to create an additional classroom space for a 3rd grade resource room. In the Middle School, the team has been collaborating with teachers on clasdojo and other exciting Google and internet based classroom resources.

In October, the team attended Dyslexia training and will be turnkeying the information to teachers over the next month. Dyslexia affects many students and adults and is gaining attention worldwide. Our team will be evaluating students to ensure proper supports are put into place for struggling students.

The CST will be looking to hold its first Parent Advisory Committee in December so keep an eye out for upcoming information.

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## Dates To Remember

11/19/14-11/21/14 – Early Dismissal – Parent Teacher Conferences	01/19/15 – Closed for students (Professional Development Day for Teachers)
11/26/14 – Early Dismissal	01/21/15 – Central School Principal’s Forum
11/27/14 – 11/28/14 – Closed Thanksgiving Break	01/26/15 – GMMS Only 2 <sup>nd</sup> Marking Period Ends
12/02/14 – End Of 1 <sup>st</sup> Trimester Grades K-5	02/03/15 – GMMS Only Report Cards Sent Home
12/09/14 – Report Cards Sent Home Grades K-5	02/13/15-02/16/15 – Closed Presidents Weekend
12/12/14 – Early Dismissal Students (Teacher Professional Development Day)	03/03/15 – 03/27/15 – PARCC Testing PBA Grades 3-8
12/23/14 – Early Dismissal	03/11/15 – End 2 <sup>nd</sup> Trimester Grades K-5
12/24/14 – 01/02/05 – Closed Winter Break	03/12/15 – Liberty and Middles School Picture Day
01/05/15 – School Reopens	03/18/15 – Report Cards Sent Home Grades K-5
01/13/15 – Liberty School Principal’s Forum	03/20/15 – Early Dismissal Students (Teacher Professional Development Day)
01/15/15 – GMMS Principal’s Forum	03/23/15 – Central School Picture Day