



# The Journey

A Newsletter of the Gilbertsville-Mt. Upton Central School District

*Mission Statement: The Gilbertsville-Mt. Upton Central School District is committed to an educational environment that assures equitable opportunity for individuals to become College and Career Ready and ultimately, responsible, productive members of society. We will encourage all individuals to do their personal best, that they may gain a lifelong enthusiasm for work and learning.*

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**It's the Quality of the Journey that Counts!**

## Superintendent's Message



We had a great opening to the 2017-2018 school year! Things have been busy here in the district as our capital project winds down. Hopefully you can make it to our School Open House on October 5 to meet teachers and to see the updates to our building and grounds. I want to again thank our capital project steering committee and our community for supporting this

project that has provided added safety features and much needed updates to our school.

Thank you to Mr. Digsby and his custodial staff for the incredible amount of work they did this summer to work around the contractors while meeting the needs of the district. We had lots of moving of furniture, room changes, and cleaning. The student workers also did great work as they painted, lugged furniture, cleaned, and worked along with the buildings and grounds staff. This summer work program has been available to students for many years and it provides students with an opportunity to not only make money but to gain valuable skills and experience that can help them in future jobs and care of their own homes. Thank you to this year's student workers: Makayla Lewis, Dustin Nesbitt, Brian Banks, Shane Vreugdenhil, Hunter Oliver, Madolin Lull, Vasiliki Drapaniotis, Tyler Scanlon, Nick Cammer, Jennifer Davis, and Karli Hinman.

Thank you to Mr. Joe Zaczek and our transportation staff for their safe transportation of our most precious cargo, your children. The drivers in our district are the first point of contact for students each morning and they do a great job of being there to make each students day start off great! Once in school, students can have a delicious breakfast prepared for them by our cafeteria staff. Our cafeteria staff provides students with delicious homemade meals with a smile. Each cafeteria staff member is student centered and works hard to provide many options for students and staff. Thank you to Mrs. Susan Sebeck and her dedicated kitchen crew!

Welcome to all of our new faculty, staff, students and their families, we are thrilled to welcome you into the GMU family! We have lost many staff members this year but I feel confident that we have hired some incredibly talented people. Making connections with students on the bus, in the halls, in the classroom, cafeteria, and on the fields and courts is so important to all of us!

Our faculty and staff, teach, guide, listen, and provide much needed support to our students. They tirelessly give of themselves each day and are truly present for our students. I would like to thank our teachers and staff for their dedication to our students and the GMU school community! Together, our teachers will be working on an improved literacy program and improvement of all instruction district wide. Our work together after students dismiss at 2:15 on Fridays, will allow teachers the time to collaborate together in teams across grade levels and subjects. These teams are called PLCs, or Professional Learning Communities. The work that teachers do in these teams will greatly enhance the instruction we provide to students here at GMU.

*Continued on next page*

### On Our Way to a School Based Health Clinic at GMU



**Come out and vote on  
October 5, 2017  
in the GMU Front Lobby**

Please see insert included for more information.

*Superintendent's Message, cont.*

Communication with our school and extended school community is important, so please don't forget to utilize this newsletter, and our district website along with other social media sites (Facebook and Instagram) to access the most up to date schedule of events here at school and to see what is going on with our students! Our web address is [www.gmucsd.org](http://www.gmucsd.org).

Our fall sports are in full swing with numerous soccer games and cross country meets taking place. Thank you to all the coaches who give of their personal time to provide lifelong lessons through sports. I firmly believe that as adults/spectators, we need to model appropriate behaviors that we want our students to adopt as adults. It is imperative that we are always demonstrating good sportsmanship at all contests. Watching a contest can be much more enjoyable for all involved if we are encouraging and making positive comments. Please support our students in our athletic contests and all extra-curricular programs that they participate in. Having supportive fans can provide a positive boost of energy for all involved!

Parents, students drivers, and community members, please remember that we want to keep all of our students as safe as possible, so on these foggy fall and slippery winter mornings, remember to take it slow and be aware as you cannot pass a school bus that has it's lights on. Also, during morning drop-offs and afternoon bus loading, the front circle is closed to all traffic except our busses. During these times it is best to use the parent drop-off and pick-up area adjacent to the playground. It is also prohibited to pass a bus in our front circle any time of day. Have a fantastic fall.

—Mrs. Annette D. Hammond, Superintendent

## School Board Recognition Week

The week of October 23rd is School Board Recognition Week in New York. School board members give their time and talents to serve our District and our students. If you see a GMU Board Member, be sure to tell them thanks!

Our GMU School Board consists of President, Jeremy Pain; Vice-President, Larry Smith; and members Patricia Dunham, Ethan Eberly, Barbara Hill, Mark Muller and Zachary Proskine.

**THANK YOU  
BOARD MEMBERS!**

## Memo from the Health Office

Many things influence a child's progress and success in school—one of the most important is their health. Children must be healthy to learn. Children with cavities are not healthy. Cavities are preventable, but they affect more children than any other chronic disease (as per California's Dental Health Association).

Baby teeth are very important, they are not just teeth that will fall out. Children need their teeth to eat properly, talk, smile and feel good about themselves. Children with cavities have difficulties in some or all of these areas. They may also have problems paying attention and learning at school. Tooth decay is an infection that does not heal and can be painful if left without treatment. If left untreated, adult teeth may be permanently damaged.

Here is important advice to help your child stay healthy:

- Visit dentist twice a year (or as suggested by your dentist)
- Choose healthy foods for the entire family
- Brush at least twice a day (use fluoride if suggested by MD)
- Limit soda and candy. These contain a lot of sugar which causes cavities and contributes to weight problems.

I hope this information is helpful to you in ensuring good dental health for your child/children.

—Carol Angelone, RN  
School Nurse

## Class of 2018



*Be sure to order your Krispy Kremes from a friendly GMU Senior this fall!*

Fundraising efforts are to defray costs of graduation and Senior Trip.

**Thank You for your Support of the Class of 20-Greateen!**

**No Pets Allowed On  
School Grounds**



## New Faces at GMU



**Duane Bliss**

Hello, my name is Duane Bliss. I am excited to be working back at GMU as school bus monitor. My wife and I have lived in the Gilbertsville-Mt. Upton community for a number of years and I am very eager to be back working with the students and staff at GMU.



**Alethea Keuhn**

Hi, my name is Alethea Keuhn. I am the new Support Aide for First Grade. I live in Gilbertsville with my husband and three children. My children attend GMU and are in Kindergarten, 6th and 7th grade. I enjoy walking, camping and flower gardening. I am also the GMU Youth Soccer Coordinator and love to watch my children play sports. I am excited to be working with the first graders at GMU!



**Tegan Fairbairn**

My name is Tegan Fairbairn and I will be working with the Middle and High School Resource Rooms as a Teacher's Aide. I graduated from Unatego Central School and attended college at SUNY Cobleskill for Early Childhood Education. I have over fifteen years of experience working with children. I previously worked at GMU as the High School Secretary. I decided to leave to raise my children, Tristan and Tenley. I am beyond excited to be back and have the opportunity to work with the students as well as the staff at GMU!



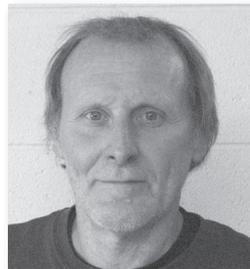
**Amanda Musson**

Hello, my name is Amanda Musson and I am one of the Pre-K aides this year. I've lived in Gilbertsville since 1986, attended Gilbertsville School and graduated from Gilbertsville-Mt Upton Central School. I live in Gilbertsville with my husband, and have three grown children that also graduated from Gilbertsville-Mt Upton. You may know me from the Butternut Youth Summer Recreation Program where I've been the director since 2010. For the last 10 years I have been a teacher assistant for a daycare in Otego. I'm looking forward to this new change and a GREAT school year.



**Nicole Gardepe**

My name is Nicole Gardepe and I am the new 12:1:1 Special Education teacher here at GMU. I am a 2008 graduate of Bainbridge-Guilford Central School. I received my Bachelor's degree in Childhood Education from SUNY Oneonta in 2013 and my Master's degree in Special Education in 2014. In my free time, I love to be outdoors with my husband and dog. I am thrilled to be joining the GMU team this year!



**Dave Newell**

Hi, I'm Dave Newell. I'm a 1981 graduate of Gilbertsville Central School. At age 14 I started working on a farm and have been a farmhand until 2017. Now that I'm working on the maintenance team at Gilbertsville-Mt. Upton, I hope to do my best for the school and I'm excited to be a part of the GMU family. Thank you for the opportunity.



**Ashley Hughes**

My name is Ashley Hughes and I am the new elementary and middle school art teacher. I was born and raised in Gilbertsville, and graduated from GMU in 2007. I studied Environmental Science at Cornell University and Art Education at Buffalo State. I'm looking forward to creating lots of masterpieces with our talented and creative artists, and I am beyond thrilled to be back as part of the GMU family once again!



**Katie Parsons**

Hello GMU families! My name is Katie Parsons and I am the new 7-12 School Counselor. I graduated from SUNY Oneonta with my Master's in School Counseling and am currently working on completing my Certificate of Advanced Studies. I enjoy spending time with family and friends, reading and exercising. I am looking forward to meeting each and every student to help them become successful throughout their lives. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns. I'm looking forward to a great year! Go Raiders!

## New Faces at GMU



**Deanna Perkosky**

Hello! My name is Deanna Perkosky and I am the new Junior, Senior and Ladies Chorus Director! I am also teaching at Unatego this year, teaching K-2 general music as well as K-5 chorus. Last year I taught K-3 general music, Junior High Jazz Band and was the percussion instructor for the Sayre Area School District in Pennsylvania. I received my Music Education degree from Mansfield University and I am currently working on my Masters in Conducting at Messiah College. I am excited for this year and the exciting and challenging opportunities that are ahead of me! I am looking forward to working with everyone and hope that we have a great year!



**Aimee Piedmonte**

Hi! I am Aimee Piedmonte, MS/HS English teacher. I am back in the classroom after a six-year hiatus—dreams really do come true! Teaching brings me joy. This will be my ninth year teaching; I previously taught in NJ, PA and VA. I am the mother of two GMU students: Lucas and Samuel. My husband, Mark, is pastor to two local churches. We also have two cats and a big puppy named Jersey.

When I am not embarrassingly singing to my students or making their hands cramp up with writing, one can find me riding my bike (slowly) around Gilbertsville, sitting on my porch in the summer, or hibernating in the winter. I love to read, shop at TJ Maxx, graze Pinterest, and cheer on the GMU Raiders!



**Melissa VanVorce**

My name is Melissa VanVorce and I am the new Elementary Special Education teacher, here at GMU. I enjoy working with children and helping them reach for their dreams through their education. Prior to coming to GMU, I taught students with disabilities for 18 years in multiple settings and grade levels. I attended the State University of Cortland and earned a Bachelor of Science as well as completing two Masters Degrees, Literacy and Special Education.

My husband and I have a beautiful family of three daughters, one son and two four legged children. During the summer I enjoy golfing, gardening and spending time with my family.

I am thrilled to have the opportunity to work with your children and look forward to many rewarding days here at GMU.



**Lauren Weidman**

My name is Lauren Weidman and I am the new Reading Specialist here at GMU. I live in New Berlin with my husband, son, and our two energetic labs. I earned my B.A. degree in Elementary/Special Education and Psychology from Marist College. I also earned my M.S. Ed. degree in Literacy Education from SUCO. I previously taught 2nd grade at Charlotte Valley CSD from 2010-2017. I decided to make the move to GMU because I have a passion for literacy, and also because my husband and I recently welcomed our first child, Henry. He is now 4 months old, and I am very happy to be much closer to home. I am also thrilled to be a part of the GMU team! There are lots of new and exciting things happening with our literacy program, and we can't wait to start implementing all of the components with the students!



**Holly Wilkinson**

My name is Holly Wilkinson. I grew up in Mt. Upton, which means I'm GMU alumni. I received my Secondary English Education 7-12 degree from SUNY Oneonta. I teach 9th and 10th grade English. This is my first year teaching, and I'm very excited to have my own classroom. It's going to be a great year!

## Important Information from the Health Office

The District's School Health Services program supports your student's academic success by promoting health in the school setting. One way that we provide care for your student is by performing the health screenings as mandated by the State of New York.

During this school year, the following screenings will be required or completed at school:

### Vision

- Distance acuity for all newly entering students (including Pre K) and students in Kindergarten, Grades 1, 2, 3, 5, 7 and 10.
- Near vision acuity, hyperopia and color perception screening for all newly entering students (including PK).

### Hearing

- Hearing screening for all newly entering students (including PK) and students in Kindergarten, Grades 1, 3, 5, 7 and 10.

### Scoliosis

- Scoliosis (spinal curvature) screening for all students in Grades 5-9.

### Health Appraisals

- A physical examination including Body Mass Index and Weight Status Category Information is required for all newly entering students and students in PK or Kindergarten, Grades 2, 4, 7 and 10 (this may be done by your private Health Care Professional or done here by Karen Adams, FNP starting in September). Please notify the Health Office if you prefer to have your student's physical done at school. If we do not receive notification of a private physical being completed or a current one is not on file, the student will be automatically placed on the appointment list for a school physical. You will be notified of the time and date.

### Dental Certificates

- A dental certificate is *requested* for all newly entering students (including PK) and students in Kindergarten, Grades 2, 3, 4, 7 and 10.
- A letter will be sent home if there are any findings on the screening done at school that would cause concern or need medical follow-up. Please call the school's Health Office if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you,  
Carol Angelone, RN  
School Nurse

## No Child Left Behind

Our Student Support Services Department, following the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, continues to provide academic, remedial, and social/emotional support to ALL students. This support is directly linked to our Academic Intervention Services (AIS) and Response to Intervention (RTI) which includes extra in-class help provided by teachers and/or aides, learning centers, after-school programs, scheduled AIS or RTI, counseling and intensive individualized instruction. In addition, Student Support Services provides special education and 504 interventions as needed and required.

As outlined in the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Gilbertsville-Mount Upton Central School is committed to providing our students with highly qualified educators. We appreciate and applaud initiatives aimed at recruiting and maintaining trained professionals and we continue to seek out the best teachers and support personnel to serve your children. If you are interested in learning more about our District's excellent staff, we welcome your inquiries.

You may request the following information via the District Office about your child's teacher and/or paraprofessional:

- whether the teacher has met State qualifications and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
- whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualifications or licensing criteria have been waived;
- the Baccalaureate Degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field or discipline of the certification or degree; and
- whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

If you have any questions about our programs, feel free to call Heather Wilcox, Acting PK-12 Principal, at 783-2207 any time or for more information. Thank you for your continued interest and support.



## BOE Meeting Summaries

### June 13 BOE Meeting

The board convened in executive session to discuss personnel and student issues.

- Acknowledgement of a thank you note from Tom Connell, for his honor and recognition as 2017 Teacher of the Year.

#### Positive Highlights:

- Today was the last day of school for high school and middle schoolers.
- Congratulations to our wonderful music department for all of their many successes: NYSSMA Solo Festival, Solo Ensemble Concert, Sherburne Pageant of Bands, Choral Concert. Bravo!
- Our first Festival of Excellence went well.
- Our retirement dinner on June 9 was nice.
- Welcome to new BOE member, Patricia Dunham in audience.
- Safety Patrol Trip went well.
- Thank you to BOE President Jerry Theis, for his many years of commitment.
- Girls' Varsity Track won Tri-Valley League Champions for the second year in a row.
- Eight out of ten GMU sports teams were scholar athletes this year.

#### Reports:

- Capital Project Update and Results of the Budget Vote

#### Discussion:

- School Based Health Clinic Funding
- Graduation Invitation, June 24, 10:30 a.m.

The board convened in executive session to discuss personnel and student issues.

- Approved minutes from the May 9, 2017 meeting.
- Adopted the proposed June 13 regular meeting consent agenda.
- Approved CSE/CPSE Consent Agenda
- Approved CSE/CPSE recommendations from the following meetings: April 20, 27; May 04, 10, 17, 19, 25, 30; June 1, 2, 9, 2017.
- Approved the Financial Consent Agenda
- Accepted financial reports for May 2017 and student account reports for April 2017.
- Year-end Fund Balance Transfers were approved.
- Approved the Personnel Consent Agenda
- Approved a one year leave of absence for the School Counselor.
- Approved a summer help monitor, summer student workers, and a sabbatical leave.
- Accepted an aide resignation and appointed a clerk.
- Approved advisors for the 2017-18 school year.
- Appointed a Reading Teacher, 0.5 Art Teacher, Full-time Art Teacher, 12:1:1 Special Education Teacher, 7-12 School Counselor for the one year leave and approved a substitute

for the 2017-18 school year.

- Approved the New Items Consent Agenda
- Approved the 2017-18 calendar.
- Approved the OLAS Cross Contract as well a TC3 Articulation Agreement.
- Approved two Summer Transportation requests for the Guilford-Mt. Upton Summer Program and the Butternut Summer Program.
- Approved bus #46, #48, and #49 as surplus and placed them on Ebay to be sold.
- Approved a transportation contract with DCMO BOCES for the 2017-18 school year.
- Approved a change order.
- Approved a Capital Project Bidding Award for Cabling Construction (Blanding Electric).

The board convened in executive session to discuss student issues.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

### July 11 Re-organization and Regular Meeting

Appointments and designations were made for the 2017-18 school year.

#### Positive Highlights:

- June state tests have been completed. The District has started receiving some of the science results. The science testing is what the APPR scores were calculated from.
- The Pk-2, 3-6, and 7-12 Award Ceremonies took place at the end of June. All were well attended.
- The Senior Trip was at Copes Corners Park this year. More students were able to attend because of keeping it local.
- Baccalaureate went well and was well attended.
- G-MU had a 91.67% graduation rate this year.
- Yearbooks were out before the end of the school year giving the students opportunity to sign friend's yearbooks.
- Teacher training has started for the new Literacy Program that the District is using. Tanya Schnable is conducting the training.
- The Superintendent and Acting Pk-12 Principal attended a Rural Schools meeting that was very beneficial. They were able to meet with and listen to the Commissioner of Education speak.
- The Superintendent and Acting Pk-12 Principal attended a Rural Schools meeting that was very beneficial. They were able to meet with and listen to the Commissioner of Education speak.
- The Superintendent and Community Member Leigh Eckmair, transported the schools artifacts collection to the archeology department at SUNY Oneonta where they will stay for one year while they get cleaned and labeled as to what type of artifacts each are.

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**Information for Members:**

- The District Clerk handed out information for new board members to attend a mandated fiscal oversight training and school board governance training.
- Friday Bulletins
- NY44 Insurance Update
- Early Dismissal on Fridays
- Consent Agenda Process

**Reports:**

- C & S Companies, Benn DeRocker updated the Board and Administration on what has been completed thus far on the current capital project that is taking place this year.
- Acting PK-12 Principal, Heather Wilcox, reported on the June 2017 Regents Results.

**Board Discussion:**

- School Based Health Clinic and Music Share with Unatego.
- Approved minutes from the June 13, 2017 meeting.
- Adopted the proposed July 11 re-organizational and regular meeting consent agenda.
- Approved the CSE/CPSE Consent Agenda.
- Approved CSE/CPSE recommendations from the following meetings: June 14, 21 and 22, 2017.
- Approved the Financial Consent Agenda
- Approved Nelcorp Electrical Contracting Corporation's bid proposal for Boiler Room Lighting Replacement.
- Approved the Personnel Consent Agenda
- Approved a maternity leave and a FMLA.
- Rescinded a sabbatical and re-approved the sabbatical for a 20 week leave.
- Approved substitutes for the 2017-18 school year.
- Approved coaches for the 2017-18 school year.
- Approved the establishment of an elementary classroom teaching position and a reassignment of tenure area for a teacher.
- Appointed a Literacy Instructional Leader.
- Tenure appointment approval.
- Appointed a long-term substitute and musical director for the 2017-18 school year.
- Appointed Kindergarten Bridging Program Staff as well as Pre-K Meet and Greet Staff.
- Appointed an Athletic Director for the 2017-18 school year.
- Appointed a Special Education Teacher and mentors for the 2017-18 school year.
- Approved the New Items Consent Agenda
- Approved change orders and a standard form of agreement between school and contractor.
  - Approved sports mergers for the 2017-18 school year.

The board convened in executive session to discuss references on a past employee and non-resident students.

The meeting adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

**Reminder from the Health Office**

- Illness absence for more than 3 days, doctor's note is needed upon return.
- Call attendance clerk at 783-2207 to report absence and follow up with a note.
- If child is ill, fever, vomiting/diarrhea, keep them home until symptom-free for 24 hours.
- If student is injured or ill and cannot participate in gym, *note from doctor stating "no gym" is needed for specific amount of time. Doctor must also write clearance note for return to gym.*
- If child becomes ill during school hours, he/she is released by the School Nurse who will make the appropriate contact with the parent/guardian.
- The parent/guardian or emergency contact person of a student must sign the student out at the front desk. Students cannot be released to anyone other than those listed on The Student Information Form. For students who drive themselves to school and become ill, at the discretion of the School Nurse, a parent/guardian will be contacted to obtain permission for this student to drive self home.
- If injured in school or at a school-sponsored activity and medical treatment is necessary, contact the School Nurse immediately, submit claims to your own Health Insurance provider, and then submit proof of payment of claim or denial to the Business Office. The school only covers the cost not covered by your own insurance.

Thank you for your cooperation in these health matters.

—Carol Angelone, RN

**Confidential Toll-Free Line**

Troop C of the New York State Police reminds people of the creation of the toll-free line for the confidential reporting of potentially dangerous situations in the 16 school districts of the DCMO BOCES. This system, housed at Troop C Headquarters, is answered by a machine which is regularly checked by police officials.

This system is not designated for callers reporting an immediate threat; such calls should be reported to "911" or other appropriate emergency service providers. The phone number is available on posters placed in the school districts and also through school district publications.

## Main Office News

On the first day of school your child came home with a Student Information Form, be sure this has been returned to the school for use in case of an emergency. The Student/Parent Handbook was also sent home and it is important that you also read through the handbook with your child(ren) and be aware of the any changes.

### Some reminders for parents at the start of the school year

- Please look at what your children are wearing before leaving the house for school, so that you can make sure their choice in clothing meets dress code expectations. These expectations are outlined specifically in the handbook.
- Send your child to school with a note if they arrive late, are leaving early, or have been absent. Having a note will ensure that your child has an accurate attendance record. These notes must be written and signed by a parent/ guardian and must have a reason for why they are late, leaving early, or were absent. If a reason is not included in the note, students will be marked with an illegal absence. Students also need a note if they are not taking the bus, or if they are riding the bus with a different student or if they are being picked up by someone other than their parent.
- Bus note change: No changes to busing may be made after 10:00 a.m. each day. If you need to make changes to your child's busing after 10:00 a.m., you must arrange the change on your own based on the child's scheduled drop off location. Note that your child's note can only be written either for the week, or sent in daily. We cannot allow changes after this time because it has become a safety issue in the past and keeping all of our students safe is our priority. Thank you for your understanding with this. You may drop off a note at the front desk, fax a note (607-783-2254), or email changes to [busnotes@gmucsd.org](mailto:busnotes@gmucsd.org) before 10:00 a.m. the day of the change. Preferably bus note changes should be brought to school with your child no later than the morning of the change. Please make sure your bus note includes the following information: the child's full name, regular bus number (or animal), the full name of the person whose house they are going to (i.e. Jane Doe; not Aunt Jane) and that bus number or animal and the street address.
- Start the school year off right—Set up a quiet time and place for your child(ren) to do homework and set a bedtime for your child(ren) that allows them to get at least eight hours of sleep a night. Get a routine set up that includes asking your child(ren) about their school day, looking at their agenda/homework folder/Friday folder

for homework assignments and notes and other information from the school or your child's teacher. And please, don't hesitate to call the teacher with any questions.

- Parent/Teacher communication is important for the success of your child. I encourage you to please contact your child's teacher if you have any questions or concerns.
- Please recognize that when you pull your child out of school for vacation it is an illegal absence. Know that even if you request work for your child, there is nothing that can replace the direct instruction received from a teacher by being in class. If you choose to take a vacation during the school year, you can expect that your child may miss some free time or recess to make up the direct instruction lost during their absence.
- Please remember that if you are sending in money or a check with your child please put it in an envelope with your child's name, teacher's name and reason for the money (i.e. lunch, book fair, etc.). We would also like you to go through your child's backpack each night to check for communications from the school. Students in grade PK-6 should be bringing home a homework folder with information and/ or homework assignments that need to be checked by you. Students in grades 3-6 have an agenda book that should be coming home every evening and you should be reviewing this and signing off in it. Please ask your child about these and review the information every evening. Be sure your child packs their folder with the agenda book in their bag, signed by you or their care provider every day. Please do not send in candy or soda with your child for lunch or snack. If you pack your child's lunch consider adding at least one fruit and vegetable each day to keep their lunch balanced and healthy.
- Late Bus: In an effort to accommodate increasing transportation needs for our students, the District has extended the late bus departure time. Monday through Thursday the late bus will leave the school at 4:30. Students staying after school for any program, including sports, need to sign up during their lunch to take the late bus each day.

### 4th-12th Grade After School Program

We are again offering an After School Program that will take place each Monday through Thursday. Students can stay after school to get homework help by a teacher/aide or just use the location as a quiet place to get school work done. The After School Program will be held in the library and will begin at 3:05 p.m. and end at 4:25 p.m. I hope that students take advantage of the extra help they can get in the After School Program.

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### October dates to remember

- 5 Elementary Open House - Grades PK-6, 4:30-6:00 p.m.  
MS/HS Open House - Grades 7-12, 5:30-7:00 p.m.
- 6 No School – Staff Development
- 9 No School - Observance of Columbus Day
- 13 Morning Raiders, 8:25 a.m.
- 18 BOE Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
- 19 Early Dismissal Drill, 2:45 p.m.
- 20 Morning Raiders, 8:25 a.m.
- 27 PK-3 Awards – 8:25 a.m. – Auditorium  
PK-6 Parade of Good Books, 1:30 p.m.  
Junior Carnival, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

The teachers, support staff and I look forward to working closely with you throughout the year. Together, we will share the rewarding venture of providing your child(ren) with a quality and exciting educational program. I hope your child enjoys the upcoming school year and meets it with a great deal of success!

I would like to strongly encourage communication between parents and the school; your child's success and

### November dates to remember

- 8 Veteran's Breakfast
- 9 **No School—Parent/Teacher Conferences, 11:45 a.m.-7:00 p.m.**
- 10 **No School—Veterans Day Observed**
- 22-24 **No School—Thanksgiving Recess**
- 29 Award Ceremonies  
Grades 9-12, 8:15 a.m.  
Grades 7-8, 9:15 a.m.  
Grades 4-6, 10:15 a.m.

attitude toward school improves with the increase in communication between parents and teachers.

Thank you so much for sharing your children with us and please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns. The teachers and I look forward to seeing you at Open House!

I am looking forward to a great year of partnering with parents and community members.

—Mrs. Wilcox, PK-12 Acting Principal



## Elementary Counselor Corner

Welcome back GMU students and families! I hope that everyone had a relaxing and joyful summer. Now that school is back in session students need to get back into the routine of things. Attendance is very important here at GMU and September is National Attendance Awareness Month. Please make sure that your child arrives on time for school and is ready to start their day. Some ways in which you can help foster responsibility with your child is having them pack their lunch the night before, get their homework done and checked the night before and picking out their clothes the night before. There are many more things that you can do to help your child be on time and ready to learn! With that being said, we also want our students to develop independence, resiliency and be good problem solvers. Here are some tips to help your child develop these essential skills:

### **Helping your child become an Independent, Resilient, Problem Solver**

#### **Building Independence**

Children need to help out and feel needed. When we expect and appreciate their contributions, we help them see themselves as capable. Here are some ways to help foster independence:

- Carry their own belongings
- Jump in to lend a hand when someone has a lot to carry
- Lay out their own clothes and dress themselves
- Pick up their own toys
- Take their dishes to the sink
- Pack up their homework and place it by the door after completing it

#### **Building Resiliency**

I know that it is hard to see our children be unhappy, but we need to avoid removing the bumps in the road of life if we want to develop children who believe they are capable of solving their own problems.

As a parent we often want to swoop in and rescue instead of having our children experience the situation and the consequences that come with it. When we don't jump in, we allow them to make their mistakes and face the consequences. We also send the message that we believe they are capable of handling it and learning from it.

We must teach children that mistakes are all about learning! Everyone makes mistakes in life and that's okay.

### **Teaching Children How to Problem Solve**

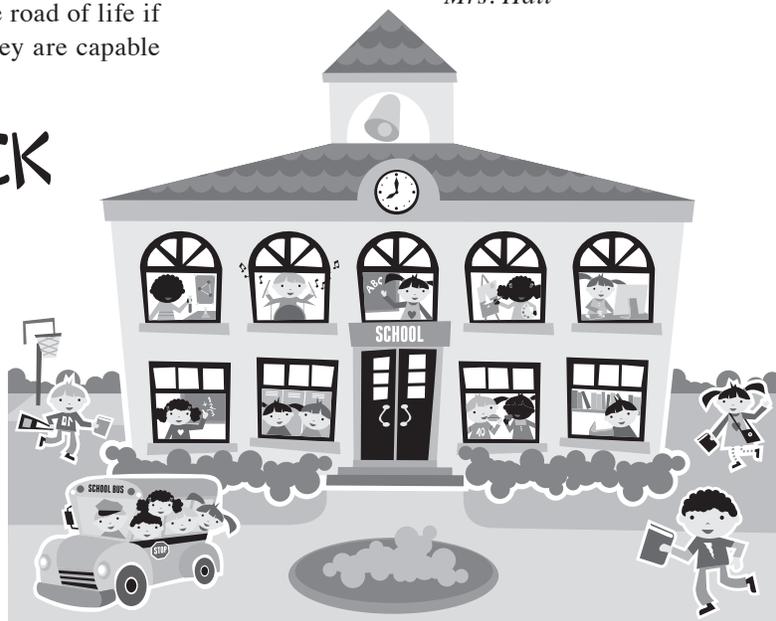
As a parent we can often want to step in to tell our children how to solve a problem rather than help them learn how to look at the what, the why and the how. If we teach them the following steps, it will help them learn the process of working through a problem.

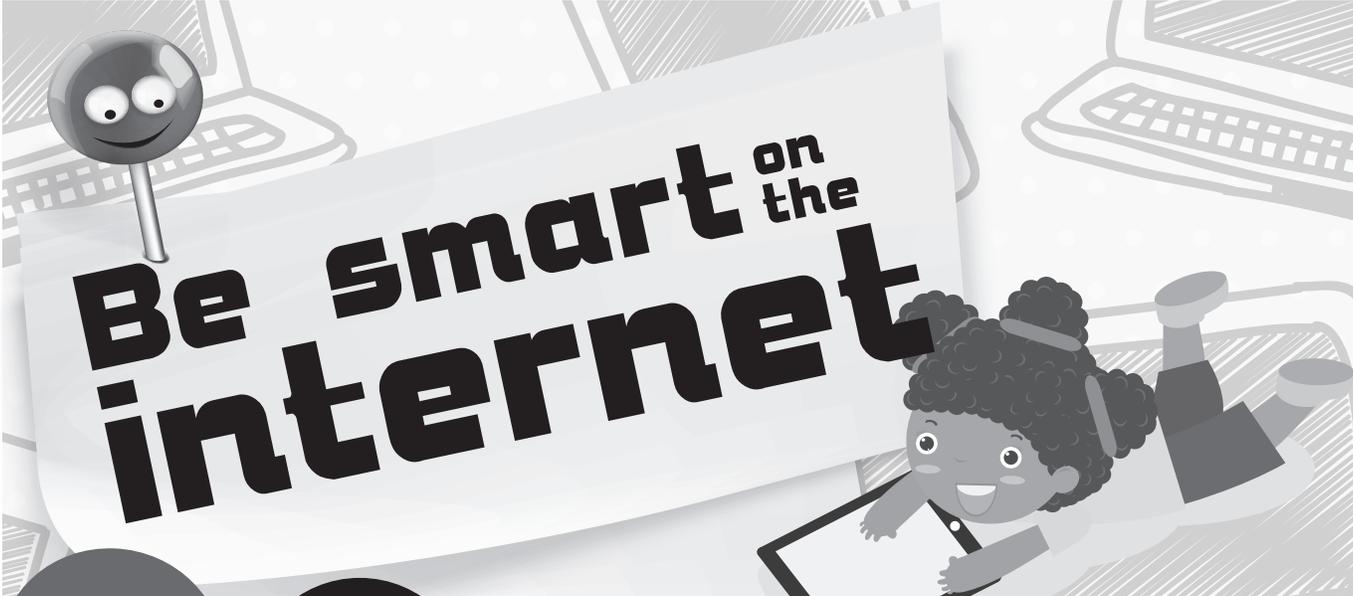
- First, listen to what happened and acknowledge their feelings.
- Then ask why do you think that happened or why do you think they have that rule or why do you think he/she did that?
- How can you handle it differently next time?
- If they can't come up with an idea ask them if they would like you to help brainstorm some solutions. You might even say, "I know with your great brain and mine working together we can come up with a solution".
- Send them off and say, "Let me know how it goes". This lets your child know that you believe they are capable of managing the situation.

I am looking forward to another great and successful year! As always if you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me at any time.

Your Elementary School Counselor,  
*Mrs. Hall*

# WELCOME BACK TO SCHOOL!





# Be smart <sup>on</sup> the internet



**S**

**SAFE**

Keep safe by being careful not to give out personal information when chatting or posting online. Personal information includes your email address, phone number and password.



**m**

**MEETING**

Meeting someone you have only been in touch with online can be dangerous. Only do so with your parents' or carers' permission and even then only when they can be present. Remember online friends are still strangers even if you have been talking to them a long time.

**a**

**ACCEPTING**

Accepting emails, IM messages, or opening files, pictures or texts from people you don't know or trust can lead to problems—they may contain viruses or nasty messages!



**r**

**RELIABLE**

Someone online might lie about who they are, and information on the internet may not be true. Always check information with other websites, books or someone who knows.

**t**

**TELL**

Tell your parent, carer or a trusted adult if someone or something makes you feel uncomfortable or worried, or if you or someone you know is being bullied online.

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**CURRENT RESIDENT OR**

**ECRWSS  
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**Senior of the Month**

**September**



Congratulations to September's Senior of the Month, **Lucas Piedmonte!** As many of you know, Lucas has been a leader at GMU since his arrival, in fact very presidential. He is currently the President of the Student Council, of which he has also served as Secretary and Vice-President. He has been and is President of his class, as well as SADD. Lucas is a member of NHS, Mock Trial, Spanish Club and Leadership Club. He participates in Symphonic, Marching, and Jazz Band, where upon he plays tuba, sousaphone (and drum major), and bass guitar in that order respectively. Lucas has been seen on stage in chorus, musicals and dramas.

This *man for all seasons* has also participated in HOBY and in RYLA this past June. He has been a member of the soccer team on the field for GMU; off the field is a member of the Grange and has been on several mission trips for his church. Presently Lucas is enrolled in AP U.S. Government and Politics (no surprise there!), TC3 Pre-calculus, Computer Applications, College English, U.S. History through Music and Culture, Band, Jazz Band, and College Success Seminar.

We thank Lucas for his dedication to GMU and wish him well as he plans to pursue a degree in political science in college! As John F. Kennedy stated, "Let us not seek the Republican answer or the Democratic answer, but the right answer. Let us not seek to fix the blame for the past. Let us accept our own responsibility for the future."

—HS Student Council

**October**



Congratulations to **Savana Conrade**, October's Senior of the Month! Savana attended Empire Girl's State this past summer and is currently on the soccer team. Savana is a hard-working young lady with a big heart. She is an active member of her class, NHS, and Leadership Club which mentors younger students. Savana is also involved in Mock Trial, Spanish Club, and has been a past officer for Student Council. She was the president for Symphonic and Marching Band (clarinet player) and Jazz Band (trombonist).

Currently Savana is enrolled in TC3 College Success Seminar, Chemistry, College English, Economics, and, of course, Symphonic and Jazz Band. At present, Savana is moving toward an interest in business, as she prepares to apply to colleges. As Confucius said, "Wherever you go, go with all your heart." We wish her much success and happiness in her future endeavors!

—HS Student Council

**CONGRATULATIONS  
LUCAS AND SAVANA!**