

# George Grant Mason School

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## Terlecky Talk

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to the 2022-2023 school year. We had a smooth opening despite the rain, and the students and staff have settled in to a regular routine.

We look forward to many happy events now that COVID restrictions have eased. So far this year we have enjoyed sharing Peace Day, Back to School Night, and the Back to School Carnival together. Our thanks go to everyone who worked so hard to make these in-person events successful. It is great to be together with our families again. In October, we will welcome family and friends to watch our traditional Halloween Parade at Circle Field. That is always a treat!

If you have had the opportunity to visit the school during the school day, you have seen our new Raptor security system in action. The system enables our greeters to screen visitors, contractors, and volunteers in our school and provide us with a safer environment for all. The software reads a visitor's driver's license to screen and create a paper badge for the visitor to wear while in the school. When you stop in for your first visit to the school during school hours this year, please be sure to bring your driver's license.

I am very happy to announce that we will be adding Spanish to each student's schedule. This enrichment class is meant to introduce students to the fundamentals of reading, writing, and speaking in another language.

Each month during this school year, we will be focusing on a particular character trait with our students. During October, we will be focusing on respect: treating others as you would like to be treated. We kicked off the month with an assembly during which our Occupational Therapist, Mrs. Sorge, read Do Unto Others to the entire school and discussed how we can show respect to our teachers, friends, and family. The students participated enthusiastically!



## Upcoming Events

**October 3** Art Club

**October 4** Early dismissal drill  
at 2:30

**October 5** Yom Kippur –  
School closed

**October 10** Columbus Day –  
School closed

**October 13** Art Club

**October 17** Art Club

**October 18** Yearbook pictures  
(PK to 11<sup>th</sup> gr.)

**October 19** Board of Education  
Meeting at 7PM

**October 23-31** Red Ribbon  
Week

**October 24** Art Club

**October 31** Halloween Parade

**October 31** Half day for  
Superintendent's  
Conference



### **Pre-K: Ms. Braffett**

Pre-k is off to a super sweet start of the school year! We have been very busy getting to know each other and practicing our daily routine. We had fun reading books like "The Colors of Us" by Karen Katz and "I Like Myself" by Karen Beaumont. We also had an apple-tastic time learning about apples this month! We made apple crafts with tissue paper, we taste tested apples and used words like crunchy, sweet, sour and hard to describe the apples. We chose our favorite color apple and learned how to use a graph to find out which apple was the most popular in class. Pre-k had a sticky fun time making our very own cinnamon and clove scented apple play-dough! We used our imaginations to make apple pie and even made apple pizza! We all loved our apple pie making sensory table and had fun taking turns following a recipe and making our own unique apple pies. As we make our way into October we will be learning all about pumpkins. Pre-k is so excited to make pumpkin pie scented play dough and create special pumpkin crafts!

### **Kindergarten: Mrs. Rush**

Apples, apples, everywhere. Kindergarten has been learning all about apples. We have been learning about the life cycle of an apple, if apples sink or float, and how apples come in different shapes, colors, flavors, and sizes. In October, Kindergarten will continue to learn about apples – where and how they grow, what we do with apples once they are off the tree, and talk about all the delicious treats we can make with apples. Kindergarten will also visit an apple orchard in October where the students will get to pick their own apples to bring home and make their own delicious apple treats.

### **First Grade: Mrs. Matthies**

Greetings new first grade families! I can't believe it's been almost a month since school started! Time goes by quickly! ☺ We have been very busy trying to get into a smooth daily routine. Every morning we dive into reading and language arts. For the coming weeks we will be working on using graphic organizers to help us analyze a text. This helps us to ask questions about areas we don't understand. We go over vocabulary words to help us understand before we read. We also learn about picture walks to get an idea or understanding before we read the text. All these strategies will help us analyze a text using a graphic organizer for better understanding. In phonics we are reviewing

vowels sounds using CVC words. (consonant-vowel-consonant). We are tapping sounds out, to help us hear each individual sound to build words. In math we are learning how to add and subtract single digit numbers. We are learning how to add and subtract using counters and making models to tell a math story. It's a lot of fun and the friends are getting really good at it. ☺ In social studies we will learn about our communities. We will discuss the different communities and how families have different places to live, such as homes and apartments. We will draw maps of our communities. We are going to use cardinal directions (north, east, south, west), to map out our communities and our classroom. It will be fun! ☺ In science we will read about animals and different ways they survive in their environment.

### **Second Grade: Mrs. Blume**

Second graders have been busy settling into new routines and learning! The first weeks of school our focus is establishing routines which will create an environment where learning can effectively take place. We have also been getting to know each other and building community. While learning these routines and procedures we are still learning! We have begun a math place value unit, practicing reading strategies like making mind pictures and using our schema to understand what we read. We have also begun our walks to the Tuxedo Public Library to grow and support our love of reading!

### **Third Grade: Mrs. Rocklin**

Welcome back everyone to an exciting new school year. Our class is working hard to achieve their goals and I couldn't be prouder. In math we have been studying place value with addition and subtraction within 1,000. We are able to complete two step word problems in which we annotate the important information. We look forward to our next chapter in which we interpret data. In ELA we are focusing on comprehension questions with different literary works. We are restating our answers with detail and becoming great writers. In science we have started exploring the life cycle and will complete our project where we watch beans grow with different types of environments!

### **Fourth Grade: Mrs. Bock & Mrs. Rota**

We have gotten off to a great start in Fourth Grade. Heading into October, we will begin our first writing piece. The students will start drafting their personal narrative in October. We have been practicing

writing and building our stamina when writing so we can write for an extended period of time. The students have begun to explore Story Elements using a variety of different texts. We will continue with this and then start inference and theme. Our spelling and grammar work continue as well. We will focus on nouns, adjectives, and conjunctions in grammar. In spelling, our focus will shift to short and long vowels, and consonant blends. Everyone is doing a great job - they should be proud of themselves! For math, the students have been working so hard! We have already discussed place value and they did an amazing job on their first quiz. We are starting our next topic of study, which is multi-digit addition and subtraction. Keep up the great work!

### **Fifth Grade: Ms. Valastro**

We have been very busy in Grade 5 this year so far! We started our year in math learning about place value and decimals numbers. We are currently putting our best foot forward to learn strategies for solving word problems! In ELA, we have enjoyed playing sparkle to learn our spelling words and have enjoyed playing popcorn when we close read aloud in our reading groups. Science has been keeping us on our toes as we explore the world of matter and mass. We are looking forward to delving into social studies later this month!

### **Library: Mrs. Mui**

Welcome to Digital Literacy! Digital Literacy combines what we traditionally think of the library special with technology and media. Our goals across all grades is for students to be able to use technology to locate, evaluate, use, and create information. Using the framework of the Empire State Information Fluency Continuum, students beginning in Pre-K will engage in inquiry and design thinking, use multiple literacies to read, write, and create in multiple formats, demonstrate civic responsibility (including collaborating and being respectful digital citizens), and pursue their own reading interests to foster their natural curiosity. We look forward to a wonderful year of reading, writing, exploring, researching, and designing!

### **STEM: Ms. Klimowich**

Fourth Grade STEM students started out the school year with an introduction to robotics with the use of Sphero Mini robots! The Sphero Mini is a tiny robot about the size of a golf ball. We will continue to use the robots in the month of October by reviewing block coding and the Engineering Design Process to

code our robots through small obstacle courses designed by the students. Block coding uses a drag-and-drop method to place together pieces of code instruction. Students will have to drag-and-drop coding commands to their robot to have the robot perform at the correct speed, angle and distance accurately through the obstacle course that they design.

### **Physical Education: Ms. Dowling & Mr. Brunner**

So far this year in Physical Education classes, our students in Pre-K to 2nd grade have been working on improving their locomotor skills (skipping, galloping, hopping, sliding, etc.) through a variety of games and activities. In 3rd to 5th grade, our students have been perfecting these skills while also being challenged through several relay and cooperative style games in order to emphasize teamwork, strengthen relationships among students, as well as to challenge students to work on strategy development. Coming up, students in Pre-K to 2nd grade will begin to work on underhand/overhand throwing and catching while students in 3rd to 5th grade will begin a Soccer Unit where they will work on passing, shooting, dribbling, and trapping.

### **Multi-Subject: Mrs. Donnelly**

This month, with the Kindergarten/1st grade group, we will be working on developing their phonemic awareness skills. Phonemic awareness is the ability to manipulate individual sounds in our language. Phonemic awareness and letter-sound recognition are the two biggest indicators of future reading success. When we teach students to "play" with sounds, we build a strong foundation for reading skills. We started in September with developing rhyming skills – recognizing whether words rhyme or not and then generating our own rhyming words. At home, you can read rhyming books to your child and have your child help you find the rhymes. It is a great way to start building that reading foundation!

### **Music: Ms. Cienki**

Hello, everyone! I wanted to thank everyone for the warm welcome that I've had over the beginning of the year. It's been so great to learn everyone's names and get to know their personalities.

In Pre-K through 5th grade, we've been using classroom instruments such as jingle bells, rhythm sticks and boomwhackers to name a few. We've also been working on playing and reading rhythms.



4th and 5th grade students are going to be starting band very shortly, and I cannot be more excited! More information on that will come out soon.

Again, thank you all for the welcome and I am very excited for the rest of the year!

### **Reading Specialist: Mrs. Sayles**

Cooler weather may be here, but we are staying cozy by cuddling up with a good book in the Reading Room. Students are practicing letters and sounds. We are also learning and reviewing sight words. In our small groups, we build confidence by dictating sentences, and checking our work with a sentence checklist. We are using witchy fingers to remind us to track our words. Soon, we will begin to check out books at our "just right" reading level from Mrs. Sayles' leveled library. We can't wait to practice our reading with all our families at home!

### **Math Specialist: Ms. Stack**

GGM students have had quite a fun start to the school year in the Math Room. From dancing and singing along to our Jack Hartmann math songs to rounding and place value to exponents, we have been very busy! We have our affirmation station to remind us we are capable and awesome. Going into October, we continue to explore the wonderful world of math and incorporate a little autumn into our lessons.

### **Art: Mr. Stankiewicz**

In the studio art room, students have created both group and individual projects. Using the elements and principles of art, students made a creative project using similar materials to come up with original ideas.

The kindergarten through fifth grade designed and built their "Pinwheels for Peace". Recently, Pre-K, K, and 1st grade have been concentrating on shapes. 4th and 5th have been concentrating on texture. Second and third started a pinch pot ceramics project creating pumpkins or jack-o'-lanterns.

Moving forward, the 2nd and 3rd grade will glaze their projects in time for the end of October. On October 20, students from the 3rd through 5th grade will be going on a trip to Storm King Art Center to experience large scale sculptures!

## **PTO on the Go!**

It was a busy month for the PTO as we helped welcome students and staff back to school. Thank

you to everyone who volunteered for the Boohoo Breakfast, the Pre-K picnic and of course the Back to School Carnival, which was a huge success. The PTO was also honored to be able to help fund the welcome back lunch for teachers, as well as the first PACE event for GFB. Earlier this month we began hosting Chat and Chews once again with the teachers at both schools as a way to open a dialogue between the PTO and staff. We are looking forward to a fun and productive year! If you are interested in volunteering for our events (or making a monetary donation), please email us at [tuxedopto@gmail.com](mailto:tuxedopto@gmail.com).

















