

## Letters from GGM

# GEORGE GRANT MASON SCHOOL

1 Tornado Drive, Tuxedo, NY 10987

Dr. Melissa Jean-Paul, Principal

Email: [melissa.jean-paul@tuxedoschools.org](mailto:melissa.jean-paul@tuxedoschools.org)

Website: [TuxedoUFSD.org](http://TuxedoUFSD.org)

Phone: (845) 351-4797



### A Message from Dr. Jean-Paul

Dear George Grant Mason Families,

As we bid farewell to winter and welcome the vibrant colors of spring, I'm excited to share the blossoming energy in our school community. Our students have been growing academically, socially, and emotionally as the year continues to move forward.

Get ready to gear up for an exciting GGM Spirit Week from March 4-8, celebrating Read Across America. Let's unite in Tornado pride—encourage your little ones to showcase their school spirit! See the attached flyer for more details.

On the horizon, we prepare for New York State Testing beginning in April for Grades 3, 4, and 5 in English Language Arts and Mathematics. Additionally, our Grade 5 students will take the NYS Science test. Please refer to the assessment information links below that provide additional information regarding the importance of testing.

#### [Parent University](#)

Mark your calendars for our forthcoming spring Parent-Teacher Conferences on March 21st. Students will be dismissed early at 11:25 am so that conferences can begin in the afternoon from 12:15 - 2:50 pm and 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm. It's an excellent opportunity for families to engage with our dedicated teachers, gaining valuable insights into your child's learning journey.

We hope to see all of our families at the GGM presentation of High School Musical, Jr. on March 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>. The students have been working hard for months preparing an entertaining and memorable performance. They are "Counting on You" for your support because "We're All in This Together!"

Wishing you all a season of growth and joy.

Warm regards,

Dr. Jean-Paul

Principal, GGM

## Upcoming Events

**March 1** 5-Week Marking Period for Quarter 3 ends for Grade 5 (progress reports)

**March 4** PTO Supply Drive ends

**March 4** GGM/GFB Reading Buddies

**March 4-8** Read Across America Spirit Week

**March 4-24** New York Boulders Reading Log

**March 8-9** GGM Spring Musical: High School Musical, Jr at 6:30pm (doors open at 6)

**March 12** Kindergarten Orientation at 1:45pm in the multipurpose room

**March 13** PTO Meeting 7pm

**March 20** Public Board of Education Meeting at 7pm

**March 21** GGM Parent-Teacher Conferences (half day for students) Dismissal at 11:25am/Conferences 12:15-2:50pm and 3-5pm

**March 22** Spirit Day: Favorite Book Character Day

**March 25-29** Spring Break – School closed (reopens April 2)

## Pre-K: Mrs. Braffett

Pre-k had a wet and wonderful February! We celebrated the 100th day of school by dressing up like 100-year-old people, it was really silly! We counted by tens up to one hundred using manipulatives from home and from the classroom. Pre-k had fun playing in our Valentine's sensory table filled with heart counters, pink rice and pretend chocolate boxes. We used our imaginations in the Flower and Sweet Shop we made in class. We categorized flowers by color and created beautiful flower arrangements in vases. We worked on our math skills when pretending to buy chocolates, too! Pre-k used their imaginations to make their very own love monsters out of clay and art materials after reading the story "Love Monster." We learned how important it is to love yourself and how great it feels to love and be loved by people we care about. Pre-k was introduced to our dress up center and everyone had so much fun dressing up as princesses, animals and community workers! We had fun wrapping up our hibernation theme by working on identifying animals that hibernate and counting out how many during a Smart Board activity. Pre-k is looking forward to the warm, spring weather, nature walks, and our new sensory table for the month of March!



## Kindergarten: Mrs. Rush

We are surrounded by things that are living and non-living. Kindergarten is continuing to learn and grow and understand our surroundings. We are diving deeper into understanding our surroundings by determining if the objects are living or non-living. Kindergarten has begun to look for living and non-living things around them at school and is determining what makes something a living thing or a non-living thing. Kindergarten is using their senses, reading, writing, math, and science skills to help them to identify, describe, compare and contrast living and non-living things.



## First Grade: Mrs. Matthies

Happy March, families! March will be filled with lots of fun activities such as Leprechaun traps and state research reports. We will be reading books about Leprechauns and how we can trap them! We will also be learning about the 50 states. In ELA and phonics, we will learning compound words and summarizing a story. We will work on our writing very hard during this time as well. When we summarize a story, we write about it with a least three sentences. This will aid in writing a complete paragraph. In math we will learn how to put together and take apart two digit numbers, such as  $10 + 5$ , (15). We continue to learn about shapes and how we can make two or four equal parts with each shape. In science we will learn about animals and how seasonal patterns help them to adapt to their surroundings. We will also read about insects and their insect parts! Yuck! In social studies we are reading about United States symbols such as The



Statue of Liberty and the American Flag. We will talk about what these symbols mean to America and why they are so important to America. We are also discussing why it is important for us to learn and appreciate these beautiful symbols of America.



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

Since March is known for being the windy month, second graders will learn about wind! They will listen to the story, "The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind" by William Kamkwamba and learn how a boy built a windmill for his small village in Malawi and brought change to better the lives of those around him. He created electricity where there was none. This story will begin our exploration of wind, students will explore the forces of wind and weather and their many applications in engineering. The students will then follow the steps of the Engineering Design Process to imagine, plan, create, and improve their own windmill blades.



### **Third Grade: Mrs. Bock**

Third Grade has been hard at work and is excited that Spring is just around the corner! In math we have been studying the concept for Area. We have practiced various strategies to solve the area of rectangles, squares, and composite shapes! After our area unit, we will start our next unit of fractions. In ELA we are focusing on applying our literary knowledge and writing skills to answer written responses with the RACE (Restate, Answer, Cite, Explain) strategy. In science we will be starting a new unit about ecosystems. We will discuss the various elements that make up an ecosystem as well as the various ways we gain information about them. In social studies we will be ending our unit on Ancient Egypt and will start a new unit on the study of Ancient Rome. Please remind your student to study their multiplication facts and read each night!



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

It's hard to believe that it is already March - the days are just flying by! The students have been working very hard, they should be proud of themselves. This month we are continuing our exploration of fractions - over the course of the next few weeks we will learn to add, subtract, and multiply fractions. This is a key standard in fourth grade and we will be doing a variety of activities to help us strengthen our knowledge. In ELA/social studies we are learning about the colonies and the history of New York. Using our social studies texts, we are also expanding our knowledge of non-fiction and informational texts. Students are also continuing to practice additional skills in ELA. We have begun to explore inferences and will work on identifying themes. We have also been working on strengthening our writing and

continue to review and practice spelling. In science, we are learning about the different types of circuits. As you can see, we are quite busy in fourth grade.



### **Fifth Grade: Ms. Stack**

Exciting updates from our vibrant 5th-grade class! Our young mathematicians are diving into the world of division, conquering whole numbers and decimals with enthusiasm and perseverance. In science, we're exploring the wonders of Earth's systems, from the intricate dance of weather patterns to the marvels of ecosystems. Meanwhile, in ELA, our budding scholars are sharpening their critical thinking skills by dissecting authors' arguments, uncovering the clever claims nestled within. And as spring gently tiptoes in, our classroom is abuzz with anticipation for blooming flowers, chirping birds, and the promise of new beginnings. Stay tuned for more adventures as we continue to flourish and grow together!



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

Grade 5 has been hard at work continuing to learn and discover new things!

We have moved on to multiplying fractions in math and will soon be dividing fractions as well. In science we are diving into the details of how Earth's

spheres work together and how humans impact the environment.

We have been combining ELA and social studies as we are wrapping up our unit on European explorers. We have been working on analyzing information text as we go. We are busy finding main ideas, drawing inferences and pinpointing causes and effects within our unit. As always, the conversations surrounding our social emotional learning continue in our classroom on a daily basis. Lately we have been discussing how to "bring each other up" when some of us are feeling down. We continue to look forward with positivity in grade 5 and are patiently awaiting spring!



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

In March, our Kindergarten students will embark on a hands-on approach to learning programming with Ozobots. These small, programmable robots introduce students to the basics of coding in a fun and interactive manner. Utilizing colorful markers and simple commands, the students will navigate their Ozobots through various mazes and challenges. During these activities, students will draw lines on paper for the robots to follow and create coding commands using different colored markers. This process not only allows the students to understand the fundamentals of coding, but also encourages problem-solving skills as they troubleshoot any "bugs" in their programs. The students will have the opportunity to share their



coding creations for their classmates to try out once they have completed their mazes.

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

Hello, parents! I hope you're ready for March! We've got our big GGM musical performances on both Friday, March 8th, and Saturday March 9th. Doors open at 6pm, and I hope to see many of you there. Please bring anyone that you would like to because this show is going to be great! In music class, we're still chugging along with our Spring Concert Music. The kids are getting excited to show you what they've got! We've also started soundscapes in Kindergarten, and 2nd grade is going to start learning about how to make our music faster and slower! Grades 3-5 are continuing with recorder and ukulele, but their skills are getting stronger every class. If you want any more information about what we're doing, please visit my website! Have a great March!



### **Spanish: Ms. Brusseler**

¡Feliz Marzo! February flew by as always, but we still grew our Spanish vocabulary! Fifth graders learned how to say different places in our community such as the library and school in Spanish! They did a really nice job with the vocabulary. We are now moving onto counting from 1-50! Our third and fourth graders continued to describe the seasons and weather in Spanish! We are looking forward to what March brings!

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

Our Tuxedo Tornadoes are celebrating Read Across America Week beginning March 4-8! Put your Tuxedo pride on display by participating in our Spirit Week! In our classrooms and across special areas, students will be engaging in activities and reading books that align with the National

Education Association's Read Across America themes.

### **GGM Read Across America Spirit Week**

3/4 - Cozy Up with a Book: Wear your pajamas and bring a picture book to read with a GFB student

3/5 - Reading Takes Us Places: Wear vacation attire, a college shirt, or dress like your dream occupation

3/6 - Reading Makes Us Bright: Wear sunglasses or bright colors

3/7 - Read My Shirt: Show off your favorite shirt with words

3/8 - Get in the Spirit of Reading: Tuxedo spirit wear or our school colors: black, red, and white



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

Pop-Its are all the rage right now with students. They are great as a fidget but can also be helpful in learning activities. One way I use Pop-its in my classroom is with Orthographic Mapping, which focuses on making connections between phonemes in oral words and the letters in written words. Here is how my students work on spelling using Pop-Its:

- Say it: Students will look at the picture and say the word.
- Pop it: Students pop the sounds that they hear in each word using their Pop-Its
- Graph it: Students write the letter(s) for each sound to spell the word.

My students enjoy the multi-sensory "pops" and it helps with spelling at the same time!

### **Math Specialist: Mrs. Rocklin**

Happy St. Patrick's Day! The groups have been doing such a great job this year and watching their progress is amazing! In the lower grades we have been working on subtracting from 1 all the way to 20! Counting back is tricky at times but the groups are using their strategies well. The 1st grade has been using partitioning to develop their

understanding of equal groups which is the beginning of understanding fractions. 2nd grade is working on adding large numbers with several strategies such as breaking numbers apart and making a ten to add. We will also work on regrouping! In the upper grades the classes have been working on area and perimeter as well as division of larger numbers, being able to divide with decimals and working with fractions, adding, subtracting and multiplying. We have converted mixed numbers from improper fractions too! We have 4 months to go and the progress we have made is incredible!

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

Spring will soon be here, and we are reading about signs that the season is changing. We will read about planting and animals coming out of hibernation. Students in 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades are continuing to prepare for our state tests. We are using the "ACE" model to answer our questions. A-stands for Answer, C-stands for Citing our text evidence, and E- stands for Explaining our answer. This allows students to be thorough in answering each question.

### **Physical Education: Mr. Bilozorov**

As we gear up for the activities lined up in March, one standout event is the continuation of our indoor soccer sessions, promising thrilling games and skillful plays in the gymnasium. Moreover, March marks another milestone as we celebrate the successful commencement of our intramural program tailored specifically for 3rd to 5th graders. This initiative not only fosters a sense of camaraderie among participants but also cultivates essential teamwork and sportsmanship values, laying a strong foundation for their athletic journey ahead.

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

One of the projects that pre-K worked on was making finger puppets. After seeing what a puppet show looked like, they took their artworks and performed for each other. Kindergarten and 1st grade learned about Wayne Thiebaud and created ice cream cones with their favorite scoops. They practiced tracing stencils, cutting, and using a ruler to create straight lines.

Second and third grade learned about Henry Matisse and started a project by drawing an interior space with repeated patterns. They will be

creating a fishbowl, concentrating on drawing ovals, and layering it into the artwork. While we were out for a snow day on the Tuesday the 13th, GGM students created cards on Monday and Wednesday for Valentine's Day!

4th and 5th grades learned about Gustav Klimt. They then created an artwork showing a portrait in a Klimt inspired sleeping bag. Celebrating all the effort they put into creating their own ceramic mugs, the 4th and 5th grade gathered for hot chocolate parties! Usually the art class is fun, but some said, "This was the best day ever!" This was a good day not because it just involved hot chocolate, but because the students made their first physically, useful, utilitarian piece of art!



### **PTO on the Go**

The PTO was proud to assist with organizing PARP this year! Thank you to all of our guest readers. Thank you to everyone who contributed to our Supply Drive, too. This provided many needed snacks and goodies to support upcoming PTO events this year. Even though the drive officially ends on March 4, donations are always needed and appreciated. Reach out to us by email if you would like to donate an item from our wish list. We look forward to seeing you at our next meeting on March 13 at 7PM. Signups for our March/April programs and events are happening now. Refer to our Facebook page for links to sign up.