

May 2016 Newsletter

MAY

- 5-4, 5-5 Select Choir Rehearsals
- 5-11, 5-12 Select Choir Rehearsals
- 5-18, 5-19 Select Choir Rehearsals

- 5-5 Last World Language Club Meeting

- 5-13 CMS Art Show at ECS 6:00 PM

- 5-18 Band Concert 7:00 PM

- 5-18 Deadline to turn in
Request for free sports physical
form

- 5-19 Select Choir/Jazz band Concert
7:00 PM

- 5-24 & 5-31 Jazz Band Rehearsal 7:00 AM

- 5-25 6th Grade Chorus Concert 6:15 PM

- 5-25 7th & 8th Grade Chorus Concert 7:30
PM

- 5-25 Sports Physicals

JUNE

- 6-3 Grade 8 Promotion Party
6-10 PM Town Hall

- 6-6 Grade 8 Outing to High Meadows

- 6-9 Promotion/Grade 8 Picnic

A Message from Ms. Cocchiola, Principal



The mild days of spring are starting to arrive as we enter the last stretch of our school year. The return from spring recess marks the beginning of the fourth marking period. Our last day of school is Friday, June 10th. Our schedule is filled with activities until the end of the year with music concerts, interscholastic games, field trips, and PTO events just to name a few.

While it's easy for our students to become distracted by the warm weather and activities, it's important that they maintain their focus on academics. The transition to the next grade will be much easier if students maintain the strong work habits that they started the year with through the last few months. As the school year progresses, the time and requirements of assignments increases. Projects become more in-depth and require greater attention to detail. This area of growth is part of the preparation process for students to move on to the next grade level.

With the various field trips, concerts, athletic and academic competitions, PTO events and

promotion activities, the opportunity for our school community to come together to celebrate achievements by the students is plentiful. I realize the many time commitments that are part of the modern day family and ask that you attend the events that are most important while balancing time spent with family.

The amount of growth and development during student's middle school years has been compared to the changes seen in the first three years of life. As you read through our newsletter you will see examples of things students are doing and have accomplished as we head into the final months of our school year.

I look forward seeing you at our spring functions as we enjoy the longer days and the warmer weather.



Mrs. Lynch - Assistant Principal

As we come to the end of the year our 8th grade students will have the opportunity to participate in many group activities, which will be memorable. All of our students are expected to maintain their academic focus and practice good citizenship and social behavior skills in order to participate and enjoy these activities.

Good citizenship and social skills are important because they remind us that we are all members of the Cromwell Middle School community. We demonstrate good citizenship when we do our share to make our school and our community a better place by taking responsibility for what goes on around us. As a school community our social skills shine when we see our students helping each other, demonstrating patience and understanding or social acceptance.

As students finish out the school year they may be assigned research papers. All of our teachers have discussed with their students plagiarism. As a reminder to our parents please note our school rule which is in the handbook. Academic honesty and personal integrity are essential to responsible citizenship. All work submitted by students must represent their own personal effort. Therefore, any act of cheating, including copying the class work or homework of others, using unauthorized notes on tests/quizzes, plagiarism, and similar behavior will result in academic and or disciplinary consequences. In such instances a grade of zero will be assigned.



OFFICE INFORMATION AND REMINDERS

Notice to Parents: for security purposes our SRO would like to remind you to ring the doorbell and announce yourself and the nature of your business prior to being buzzed into school. Please *do not* hold the door open for anyone trying to gain access to the building when you enter or leave, even if you know them. Students are advised not to open the door for visitors so please refrain from knocking on the door as well.

- OFFICE HOURS -The office hours for the Cromwell Middle School are 7:00 A.M. - 3:30 P.M. If you call before 7:00 A.M. or after 3:30 P.M. you will be able to leave a message on the voice mail.

- STARTING TIME OF SCHOOL DAY - The official start of our school day is 7:45 A.M., but students can arrive as early as 7:30 A.M. and wait in the cafeteria. Students who are not in their first period class at 7:45 A.M. are considered tardy.

- Under the State of Connecticut definition of excused absences, appropriate documentation (written note) must be submitted and on file to consider an absence excused.

-To alleviate unnecessary classroom interruptions, students should bring early dismissal notes to the office when they arrive at school in the morning, your child will be given a pass and be ready for you in the office for the time indicated on your note.

- Dattco drivers are finding that more students are waiting inside their homes. This makes the busses run a little later in the a.m. for the arrival time at each school. Students need to be outside waiting for their bus in the a.m. not inside the door. Thank you for your cooperation!

- Calls from the office to classrooms for students to pick-up items that they forgot at home make for unneeded classroom interruption. Please help your child in remembering items they will need for school and sports in the morning prior to them leaving for school so that we do not have to interrupt a class for them to pick-up forgotten homework, lunch, sports items, instruments, etc.

- The CMS website is continually being updated. Make sure to visit the site at www.cromwell.k12.ct.us/cms

GRADE 6

After wrapping up our unit on text structures next week, Language Arts is flying into the land of Greek Mythology this month! Students are learning about Ancient Greece in their Social Studies classes, and now Language Arts is going to provide students with literature of Ancient Greeks. Students will be participating in small groups to read Greek myths and also have a couple projects to help them further understand the world for the Greeks. We will be reviewing fictional

text structures, theme, irony, and other important reading skills that we have learned this year. Also, we have booked a "one-man show" on Greek mythology in May. The actor will help bring some of the famous Greek myths to life! We look forward to a great month!

Sixth graders completed their SBAC tests in top form, using their skills and knowledge to unravel the math problems presented on the test. We are now returning to our regularly scheduled programming in algebraic reasoning, as well as data analysis and statistics. Students are learning how to represent mathematical amounts algebraically (such as 6 less than the product of b and 3) and then solve algebraic equations. They are also analyzing sets of data to determine patterns and trends, using terms such as "mean", "deviation", "variability" etc. We are looking forward to closing out the year on a high note!

Sixth grade science students have been studying the weather. They have explored how weather is created by the unequal heating of earth's surfaces and how wind is created. Students will be concluding this unit by exploring a severe weather phenomenon.

After examining some of the most important Egyptian pharaohs, the sixth grade is trading in the Nile River and crossing the Mediterranean Sea to explore ancient Greece. Students are using their knowledge of Egypt and Greece to practice argument writing. They have learned to state a claim and support their conclusion with evidence learned from the text and other sources. In Greece, students are exploring the isolating effects of the Greek geography on its civilization. Also, students are investigating and trying out various forms of government, from tyranny to monarchy to democracy. Unfortunately, war is on the horizon. Whose side will you take?

GRADE 7

Social Studies

Despite April being a short month, the social studies team 1 was hard at work per usual! Students began by investigating the controversial figure of Mao Zedong and his installation of communism in China. Students were immersed with primary sources of the era in order to better understand the situation many parents/children underwent during this tumultuous period.

Students then began investigating the positives and negatives of the one child policy. Students researched articles and videos on the topic to gain enough insight to make a claim about whether or not the policy should remain (even though the policy was just transformed into the two child policy!). After having a heated debate, the students began writing their argumentative essay to culminate the article.

We wrapped up the month by diving into the Middle East. Students played a game I invented called Map Tag in order to get a better understanding of the various factual data about the Middle East, while also getting some kinesthetic involved! Currently, our students are evaluating the Syrian civil war and determining what role the United States should play in the conflict. Next month starts our awesome EPCOT project!!!

Science 7-1

Students in science recently completed a month long research project. Students learned about diseases related to human body systems we have studied. Their information was shared in a variety of ways including video and radio announcements, Wikipedia mock pages, traditional research paper, brochure and through digital media such as Glogster and Emaze. Student's wowed in both presentation and knowledge gleaned. Currently students are concluding a mini unit studying how tectonic plates, earthquakes and volcanoes shape the world.

Language Arts 7-1

During the month of April, CMS Team 7-1 seventh grade language arts classes concluded their study of poetry. Working both independently and in small groups, students were engaged in analyzing a variety of poems in order to determine how the authors' use of sensory language, diction, symbolism and poem structure leads to an overall understanding of the prose including the author's message. Students demonstrated this knowledge by responding to a variety of critical stance questions and supporting the responses with evidence from the text with in-depth explanations.

Students are reading and annotating a variety of nonfiction articles keeping an "eye out" for "signposts" and other information in order to assist them in comprehending the text. Individual, small group and whole group activities are being utilized to enhance collaboration and instructional variety within the classroom.

Lastly, all seventh grade students completed the SBAC testing over a week's duration.

7th Grade Math

Students are currently simplifying expressions and equations by combining like terms and applying the distributive property. Then they progress towards solving examples with one, two, and multi-step equations. In our next unit, students will investigate the probability of possible outcomes by simulating trials and collecting data.

Team 7-2

Math

Students are currently simplifying expressions and equations by combining like terms and applying

the distributive property. Then they progress towards solving examples with one, two, and multi-step equations. In our next unit, students will investigate the probability of possible outcomes by simulating trials and collecting data.

Social Studies

As always, we've been keeping busy in room 220! We concluded our study of China by writing a formal, 5 paragraph argumentative essay where students either supported or opposed the One Child Policy using a variety of resources from class. Formulating a strong claim that was supported by sound, relevant textual evidence was a major requirement along with the integration of an effective and thoughtful counterclaim. As an enrichment-based activity, we wrote back to our pen pals from the city of Rajkot, in the state of Gujarat, India, following our China unit. Students have actively immersed themselves in many cultures this year which has been both eye-opening and exciting for many! We have since begun our mini-unit of the Middle East, and students are in the process of learning the locations of the nations on the political map. Additionally, students are crafting speeches that summarize a variety of aspects of the region's culture, geography, etc.

Language Arts

ELA is preparing for a debate on video games. We are building on our traditional annotating and writing skills to produce a lively debate next week.

Science

Students in science recently completed a month long research project. Students learned about diseases related to human body systems we have studied. Their information was shared in a variety of ways including video and radio announcements, Wikipedia mock pages, traditional research paper, brochure and through digital media such as Glogster and Emaze. Students wowed in both presentation and knowledge gleaned. Currently students are concluding a mini unit studying how tectonic plates, earthquakes and volcanoes shape the world.

GRADE 8

Math

Pre-algebra students dove right into *Geometry*! They learned about angles formed when parallel lines are cut by a transversal, and used vocabulary words like "transversal" and "parallel lines". These special angles included vertical angles, linear pairs, corresponding angles, alternate interior and exterior angles, and consecutive angles. They also mastered finding missing angles in a triangle using the triangle sum theorem, the exterior angle theorem and vertical/linear angles.

Coming soon...scientific notation and the Laws of Exponents! Algebra students have been getting very acquainted with quadratics. They have solved the equations using a variety of methods, derived the quadratic formula and used that, graphed the equations from various forms, and are now applying all of that knowledge in order to solve real-world problems. Our next unit will be focused on systems of equations, both solving and graphing them.

Science

In Science, students are exploring the question: How does the position of Earth in the solar system affect conditions on our planet? To answer this question, students explore how the motion of the earth and moon relative to the sun causes daily, monthly, and yearly cycles on earth. The final unit of the year explores the question: What processes are responsible for life's unity and diversity?

Language arts

In language arts, students have completed the first draft of their narratives and have embarked upon the study of Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream." Students have met this task with enthusiasm, volunteering to act out scenes and read the challenging language aloud. The Waterbury base acting company, *Shakesperience*, introduced our classes to iambic pentameter, malapropisms, tableaux, and stage directions by helping students to act out a variety of scenes from the play. Thank you to the CMS PTO for helping to bring this valuable learning experience to our students.

Social Studies

In Social Studies, students learned the motives, hardships, and legacies of both the pioneers and settlers who traveled west in the 1800s. Students were put into small groups to research a topic. Then students had class time to prepare a presentation using visual images to support their research. Students have also learned the differences between the northern and southern states. This information is the foundation for the beginnings of the Civil War.



Upcoming scenes from the Specials....

During the month of May your children will be taking part in the following....

Art

It's finally time for the Art Show, which will be a district wide event this year, taking place at two different schools (WIS and ECS). While WIS will be hosting artwork from the High School as well as their own student work, Cromwell Middle School will be displaying our art at ECS along with the Elementary School students there. All of this will be taking place on May 13th! The famous Japanese artist, Hokusai, will serve as the inspiration for all student work at CMS and ECS. *

Other than our Hokusai inspired work, we will be using materials from colored pencils to oil pastels to create as many interesting projects as we can as the school year begins to wind down!

We hope to see you at the Art Show in May!

*Due to the timing of the Art Show, only students from Art Marking periods 3 and 4 will have work displayed. We apologize for this inconvenience.

CMS Bands

Well this year is certainly flying by and now that we're in the home stretch it always seems like it's accelerating. Our three concert bands continue to prepare their material for our last concert on Wednesday, May 18th at 7:00. The CMS Jazz band will once again join with the Select Choir to perform the next evening, May 19th. We would love to see you in the audience at one or both of those shows.

In the hope that it will be all "fun and games" the students keep asking me what we're going to do when the concerts are over. With the exception of the last week of school (June 6-10) the lesson groups will continue to meet and hand in Practice Records. We will be testing on their instruments, both from their lesson books and with selected excerpts from the recently played concert material. I will also be giving a written test on music vocabulary and symbols. They took this test earlier in the year with somewhat mixed results so my goal is to see a significant improvement in their ability to decode these important terms/symbols. All 7th and 8th graders got back corrected copies of the pretest and a corresponding study guide to help them see where they fell short and improve upon their results. FYI- most of the information in that study guide came right

out of the glossaries included in the back of their Standard of Excellence books. Speaking of which, parents of current 7th graders should look into purchasing the SoE green book 3 as we are about to finish the blue book in the next weeks.

Sal d'Alessandro
CMS Bands Director

General Music & Chorus:

6th Grade

General music students are starting their BIG project on creating a musical! Our class has started turning the plot of the story they created into something magical on the stage. They have completed learning all of the vocabulary words they needed to put on a great show. Each student has an important role in the production, which will help them appreciate all that goes on behind the scenes and on the stage during a musical!

6th Chorus Concert is Wednesday, May 25th at 6:15 PM. Students should report to the gym for attendance and a warm up by 5:45 PM. Students will have the same dress code as the winter concert (black dress bottoms, black shoes, and white collared shirts or blouses). I can't wait for you to see their four polished pieces of music with a variety of vocal tones!

7th Grade

General music students are wrapping up their jazz unit by learning about famous/important jazz musicians, composers, and arrangers. Some of these include Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, Dizzie Gillespie, Ella Fitzgerald, Thelonius Monk, and Billie Holiday.

7th and 8th Grade Chorus Concert is Wednesday, May 25th at 7:30 PM. Students should report to the gym for attendance and a warm up by 7:00 PM. Students will have the same dress code as the winter concert (black dress bottoms, black shoes, and white collared shirts or blouses). 7th grade chorus members are expected to stay in the gym after they are done singing until the 8th grade finishes their portion of the concert. You will be very impressed with the challenging pieces that both of these choirs have to offer!

8th Grade

General music students are continuing their study of the ukulele. They are now working on finger picking patterns instead of simply strumming chords. We are using songs such as

"Happy Birthday" and "My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean," to introduce the finger picking method.

STEM - Coding

Students in STEM Coding began basic computer coding using a language called JavaScript. At the beginning of the term, students used code to place basic shapes onto the screen. From there they manipulated shapes and colors to create various drawings.

In May students will create interactive programs. Using what are known as variables and draw loops, students will create programs where objects move across the screen. This basic animation is similar to what professional computer programmers use to create video games and even CGI movies!

Toward the end of the quarter, students will learn basic web design. Using HTML, students will create web pages that they can share with friends and family.

Finally be sure to check out CMS Student News! It airs every Friday!

Health Education

In May, all health students will learn to identify the physical, mental, emotional, and social changes that occur during adolescence and how to be substance free.

S.T.E.M.

All 6th Grade STEM students will begin building their second robot. This robot is called "The Protobot". This robot contains multiple simple machines as well as the use of gears to control a mobile robotic arm. All students will have a chance to compete against another group in a group challenge.

All 7th Grade STEM students are currently testing their balsa wood bridges to see whose bridge is most efficient! Their next project is to design a search and rescue robot using wireless cameras!

All 8th Grade STEM students will finish up their last robot at CMS! Each design is unique, creative, and functional. It is amazing to see how far students have come since 6th grade! Next, the 8th grade will design and build a "mousetrap vehicle." This vehicle uses the energy from a spring-loaded mousetrap to propel the vehicle forward. We will compete to see whose goes the farthest!

Physical Education

- ❖ In May we will wrap up our Racquet Sports unit (which included Pickleball, Ping Pong, and Badminton). We will retest the mile run portion of the fitness test, and compare scores from the fall. We will end the month with a lawn games unit, playing Bocce, Ladder Ball, and Bean Bag Toss.
- ❖ Please remind your child to bring their gym clothes and to wear sneakers.

❖ Just a reminder that excuse notes, unless from a doctor, are not an excuse from gym class.

- Check out the CMS Athletics website for updates, cancellations, and important information: <http://cmsathletics.wikispaces.com/>

LIBRARY & MEDIA CENTER

In April, we celebrated National Poetry Month in the library. Books of poetry were quite popular choices for many of our students. We have over 150 to choose from Chaucer and Lansky and Poe and Silverstein...there is something for everyone!

Also in April, we continued our focus on critical stance. We read the debate article, *Are Video Games Bad for You?* "Most people agree that gaming affects children - the question is how?" The lesson reinforced the literacy skill through the use of the formal parts of an argument... claim, reasons, evidence, and counterclaim. And you can be sure there were many strong reactions to this controversial issue.

Please take good care of all our library books and magazines!

Please try to return your books on time - or, you can always renew your books if you need more reading time.

Happy reading!

Mrs. Stearns, LMS



NOTES FROM THE NURSE

Debby Pember, RN BSN Phone: 860.632.4861 or email : dpember@cromwell.k12.ct.us

- **FREE SPORTS PHYSICALS** will be offered by our School Medical Advisor, Dr. Belin, on Wednesday May 25th at 7:45 am. **Please note: This will be the final sport physical offered by Dr. Belin. No sport physicals will be offered in 2016/17 or thereafter.** Any athlete having a sport physical done on May 25th, must pick up a physical form in the nurse's office, have the front portion completed, signed by parent/guardian and themselves by **May 18th**. Also, athletes must report to the nurse's office during the week of May 18th to have their height, weight, blood pressure and pulse taken and recorded by the school nurse.
- Medication Pick -Up Day is the last day of school, Friday, June 10th. Parents/guardians, please pick up your child's medication at the nurses office from 7:45 am-11:45 am. **If medications are not picked up by the end of school (11:45 am) on June 10th, they will be destroyed.**
- 6th Grade Parents - Now is the time to schedule the 7th Grade physical if it hasn't been done yet. Most doctor's offices have a wait for physicals and the closer to summer you call the fewer appointments will be available. **The State Health Assessment {Blue Form} has to be in my office BEFORE the first day of 7th Grade in order for your child to start on time.**
- All forms are available online at the CPS website under heading Parents Links & Health Services.

Milk served: chocolate & strawberry flavored fat free and 1% low fat white.

Students have the opportunity to choose one or two fruit choices and a low fat or fat free milk to complete their meal.

Students who qualify for free lunch also receive free breakfast.

Pre-pay your child's breakfast at www.MyPaymentsPlus.com

Fresh or canned fruit available daily. MENU SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Monday

Variety of whole grain cold cereal **2**
Yogurt
Fruit juice
Milk

Variety of whole grain cold cereal **9**
Yogurt
Fruit juice
Milk

Variety of whole grain cold cereal **16**
Yogurt
Fruit juice
Milk

Variety of whole grain cold cereal **23**
Yogurt
Fruit juice
Milk



30

Tuesday

WG chocolate chip muffin **3**
String cheese
Juice or fruit choice
Milk

Whole grain banana bread **10**
String cheese
Juice or pineapple cup
Milk

WG mini French toast **17**
String cheese
Juice or fruit choice
Milk

WG apple frudel **24**
String cheese
Juice or fruit choice
Milk

WG chocolate chip muffin **31**
String cheese
Juice or fruit choice
Milk

Wednesday

WG breakfast bun **4**
Yogurt
Fruit juice
Milk

WG breakfast bun **11**
Yogurt
Fruit juice
Milk

WG breakfast bun **18**
Yogurt
Fruit juice
Milk

WG breakfast bun **25**
Yogurt
Fruit juice
Milk



Thursday

WG mini pancakes with turkey sausage **5**
Juice or peaches
Milk

Whole grain bagel with cream cheese or butter **12**
String cheese
Cup of pears
Milk

Whole grain chocolate chip muffin **19**
String cheese
Cup of pears
Milk

Bagel w/ egg & cheese **26**
String cheese
Fruit choice
Milk

Friday

Variety of whole grain cold cereal or pop tarts **6**
Yogurt
Fruit juice
Milk

Variety of whole grain cold cereal or pop tarts **13**
Yogurt
Fruit juice
Milk

Variety of whole grain cold cereal or pop tarts **20**
Yogurt
Fruit juice
Milk

Early Dismissal – Whole grain cereal
Whole grain crackers
Juice
Milk **27**



May 2016

Cromwell Middle School

LUNCH

Choice of milk served with each meal: chocolate & strawberry fat free, or 1% low fat white.

MENU SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Prepay your child's lunch at: www.MyPaymentsPlus.com

Alternate lunches available: assorted sandwiches or salad with protein.

Students have the opportunity to choose one or two fruit choices, one or two vegetable choices, and a low fat or fat free milk to complete their meal.

Monday

WG chicken patty on a WG roll **2**
Oven fries
Steamed corn
Fruit choice

Tuesday

Breakfast for Lunch **3**
WG French toast sticks
Turkey sausage
Hash brown patty
Juice or fruit choice

Wednesday

WG pasta with meat sauce **4**
Crisp romaine salad
Steamed green beans
WG roll Fruit choice

Thursday

Cheeseburger on a WG roll **5**
Oven potatoes
Steamed peas
Fruit choice

Friday

WG cheese pizza **6**
Veggie cup w/ hummus or lite ranch dressing
Raisins or fruit choice

Toasted cheese sandwich on WG bread **9**
Romaine salad
Tomato soup
Fruit choice

Breakfast for Lunch **10**
WG mini pancakes w/ syrup
Turkey sausage
Hash brown patty
Juice or fruit choice

WG pasta with meat sauce **11**
Crisp romaine salad
Steamed broccoli
WG breadstick Fruit choice

WG chicken nuggets **12**
Oven potatoes
Steamed carrots
Whole grain roll
Fruit choice

WG cheese pizza **13**
Veggie cup w/ hummus or lite ranch dressing
Black olives
Raisins or fruit choice

WG chicken & cheese quesadilla pizza **16**
WG rice corn
Salsa Sour cream
Fruit choice

WG popcorn chicken **17**
Oven potatoes
Steamed peas
Whole grain roll
Fruit choice

WG cheese calzone w/ marinara sauce **18**
WG noodles Romaine salad
Steamed green beans
Fruit choice

Breakfast for Lunch **19**
Scrambled egg, cheese, and turkey bacon pizza
Hash brown patty
Juice or fruit choice

WG cheese pizza **20**
Veggie cup w/ hummus or lite ranch dressing
Raisins or fruit choice

Toasted cheese sandwich on WG bread **23**
Romaine salad
Tomato soup
Fruit choice

Hot dog on WG roll **24**
Smile fries
Baked beans
Fruit choice

WG mozzarella sticks w/ marinara sauce **25**
Romaine salad
Steamed green beans
Fruit choice

WG cheese pizza **26**
Veggie cup w/ hummus or lite ranch dressing
Raisins or fruit choice

Early Dismissal **27**
No Lunch Served

Memorial Day **30**


WG chicken tenders **31**
Brown rice
Steamed corn
Whole grain bread
Fruit choice

