

August, 2015

Dear Families of GMS South,

Another summer has come and gone, and now it is time to get back to school. August is an exciting time for all of us as we gather school supplies and share our excitement about what the school year might bring. I am excited to meet our new 6<sup>th</sup> graders as well as getting to see how the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders have matured over the summer. The transformations that occur in middle school can be amazing.

This school year, we are fortunate enough to start the year with only minor adjustments to our systems that we implemented last year. Students and staff are now comfortable with MAP testing so this should be seen as just another way we try to monitor student success. There are new guidelines that we can share later regarding PARCC testing which should decrease the overall amount of time spent testing the students which we all appreciate. We are continuing the implementation of our Second Step social-emotional curriculum that we started last year. As we continue to work through this curriculum, it is our hope that our students will be in a better position to handle the non-academic challenges that will come their way. At the end of the year last year, we made an adjustment regarding our Home Access Center (HAC). We are now providing weekly updates on grades in HAC in addition to the ability to see live data when looking at individual assignments. Additionally, we will no longer mail home report cards, but instead will post report card information in HAC.

As I have repeatedly told new staff when they join us, we work in a great community with very supportive families. Students are successful at Geneva South because they come to us with an expectation that they will give us their best as students and we will give them our best as staff members. When all parties are invested in success, we see great accomplishments by the students.

Enjoy the rest of the summer as you prepare for the start of a wonderful and productive new school year.

Sincerely,

Terry Bleau  
Principal, GMS South

## **DON'T FORGET**

- Students are allowed to enter school at 8:20 am. The actual school day starts at 8:35 am and ends at 3:24 pm.
- **Please remember to check the balance of your student's lunch account before the first day of school.** If your student has a zero balance, they will not be able to make a purchase. This year we are switching over to a new system. Information will be sent directly to your home from the district regarding the new lunch account system.
- Some students have a very difficult time on the first day or two of lunch making a choice in the cafeteria line. If you think your child may also struggle with this choice, please pack a lunch for them that first day or two to reduce their stress. It would also be best to go on line and review the menu with your child the first week of school to help reduce stress about choices as well.
- Whenever possible please try to avoid pulling your student out of school on a school day. If you do have to pick up your child before the end of the school day and you send a note with them in the morning, they will be able to sign themselves out and walk to your car. This is very helpful during bad weather.
- The front bus circle is intended for bus use only. Please avoid picking up or dropping off your students in that area. The parent drop-off area is in the parking lot in front of the cafeteria. Please avoid stopping for an extended period of time in the drop off area in the morning. It is important to keep this drop off circle moving. Also, please be courteous to other parents in the drop off area.
- Last year, we changed Clean Sweep Mondays to be Clean Sweep Fridays. We will continue Clean Sweep Fridays this year. Those days when students are allowed in the building early to clean and organize their lockers will be listed in the first South Scoop.
- Don't forget to review the enclosed flyer detailing information regarding our locker set-up events. Those times are a wonderful opportunity to help get the students energized about school, and a great chance for parents to connect with each other as well.
- Finally, I hope I will see all of you on Back to School Night on Thursday, September 11<sup>th</sup>. Specific information for this event will come home when school starts.