

# JC McKenna Middle School

## Newsletter

January 2019

Families of JC McKenna,

Thank you for your support in passing the referendum! JC McKenna staff and students appreciate the community's yes votes and are excited to work on the plans for a new building to best fit our needs. The first design subcommittee was held on December 5. It was wonderful to have a variety of community members on board, as there are many different perspectives and many great ideas. I am confident that together we will build a school that will promote the middle school concept which meets social, emotional, and of course, academic needs. This is an exciting time for our community! Obviously, there is a ton of work to do ,but we have a committee that is ready to take it all on. The surveyors have already been on campus and are getting to work.

December has already been a busy month and it isn't going to slow down. The 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade band concert was on December 3, and they had a phenomenal performance. The PAC was completely packed, which is a good problem in my opinion. The music concert is scheduled for December 17 with all three grade levels performing. I am certain that their performance will not disappoint. We hope to see you there. Our performances are so well attended ,and even though your middle school students may not tell you so, I am certain that they appreciate everyone attending. It is equally amazing how many students choose to participate in band and/or choir. Winter sports have also begun starting with poms and boys basketball. Wrestling and Girls basketball will be starting soon. I've been happy to see so many students in the stands cheering on our teams. I hope that this continues throughout the girls basketball season, as well as into the wrestling season.

For those of you that have attended the sporting event,s you probably noticed that we have started to sell concessions at the games. Our hope is to raise funds to put into our student activity account. We chose not to sell magazines and candles this fall ,and we are trying to think of creative ways to fundraise. The concessions have been going well thus far. I apologize that most kids choose the Airheads and chocolate over the popcorn and water.

Speaking of fundraising, JC McKenna t-shirts have been delivered. Thank you for your order! We will probably do a second order after the holidays if you missed the first opportunity.

On December 10, several students were invited to attend the Milwaukee Bucks Student Leadership Day. This educational trip featured a keynote address from Milwaukee Bucks personnel, break-out sessions on leadership and followed up with a ticket to the game.

Earlier in December, Ms. Bessonny, Mrs. Madsen and I spend the day tie-dying shirts with all the sixth graders. The shirts turned out so well and hopefully your students remembered to "set" the shirts in salt water so the colors don't fade or run.

As always, thank you for sharing your student(s) with us each day. We appreciate your support and help in preparing our middle school students to learn and grow each day. Please never hesitate to reach out with a fun story, positive support or any concerns.

Kind regards,

Joanie Dobbs

JC McKenna Middle School Principal

## **Important Dates**

**January 3.....School resumes**  
**January 11.....Fun Night**  
**January 18.....End of 2nd Qtr, Early Release**  
**January 18.....Ski trip**  
**January 21.....Butter Braid Sale begins**  
**January 24.....8th grade parent/teach conf**  
**January 25.....8th grade visits High School**

## **Contacting JC McKenna Middle School**

### **Main Office Hours**

7:15am-3:45pm

### **Telephone Extensions:**

Principal, Mrs. Dobbs.....882-3302

Attendance Voicemail .882-3301

School Guidance Counselor:

Mrs. Holm.....882-3304

School Social Worker:

Mr. Mike Czerwonka...882- 3346

307 S. First Street

Evansville, WI 53536

**Fax:** 608-882-5744

**Website:** [jcm.ecsdnet.org](http://jcm.ecsdnet.org)

## **Mission Statement**

“Educating and engaging the whole student”

To create a stimulating, caring and socially responsible environment  
that encourages students  
to reach their individual potential

## **Nondiscrimination Statement**

The Evansville Community School District prohibits harassment or discrimination against any pupil in any program or activity on the basis of sex, race, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, physical, mental, emotional or learning disability, or any other basis protected by law.

## A note from student services...

Grit—perseverance—not giving up in the face of things that are hard is a great life skill for middle-schools students to develop. During this time of the school year, the curriculum may become more challenging, the expectations on tests and homework may become higher, and tolerance for excuses may become lower. This can lead to students wanting to give up. Teachers and others have noticed over the years that sometimes the default response for youth is to give up when things get hard. Sometimes, as well meaning adults, we even support this mindset. Think back to when your child was first learning to tie their shoes or get dressed. If we were in a hurry, we may have done those things for them thinking it would be faster (which it was!). These well intended actions can send a message that when things are hard, I won't have to do it myself. Someone will help, or sometimes even do it for me. In middle school we encourage a sense of ownership, self-reliance and independence. We encourage students to continue to try, even when the going gets tough. Accomplishing something challenging can develop confidence and an understanding of the benefits of perseverance.

Here is a little Q&A on Grit from "The Middle Years."

Q&A

### Learning to have grit

**Q** I've heard that kids need "grit" to be successful. What is it, and how can I teach it to my 12-year-old?

**A** Grit involves perseverance, courage, and resilience—basically sticking with tasks or goals until you see them through. Having passion will help your child to develop grit, enabling her to stay with something when the going gets tough and to overcome problems along the way.

You can foster grit in your middle grader by explaining it and pointing out examples, such as a coworker who learned to read as an adult. Or bring home library books about famous people who persevered. For instance, Dr. Seuss had his first book rejected by 27 publishers before it was accepted.

Setting up a family challenge can give everyone a chance to be "gritty." Have each person choose something they want to do that might be difficult but is possible. The key? No one is allowed to quit! 👍



Another Middle school focus for our students is helping others. One way we do this is by participating in a food drive. The students and staff collected over 1800 items to donate locally here in Evansville. Volunteering and helping others is another way students can develop some great skills. Here are some ways you and your son/daughter can pursue a volunteer opportunity.

## Serving our community

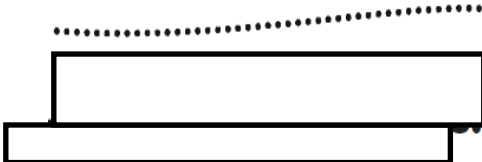
Volunteering as a family can teach your middle grader about empathy and helping others. Here's how to get started.

**1.** Have your tween research community service opportunities for families. He should list ideas that match the ages of family members, and also jot down the time involved for each job. He could visit websites such as [createthegood.org](http://createthegood.org) and [volunteer match.org](http://volunteermatch.org). He might also call or email community centers, shelters, and places of worship to ask if they need help.



**2.** Review your child's list together. Talk about possibilities that interest everyone, and pick one to sign up for. If your family loves animals, maybe you could feed and play with dogs and cats in a shelter. Or if you like to cook together, maybe you'll volunteer at a soup kitchen or a fire station's spaghetti dinner.

**3.** Talk about those you'll be helping, such as people who don't have enough to eat or animals who need attention and comfort. Considering how others feel will show your middle grader how important it is to help out—and make your volunteer experience more meaningful. 👍



# 6th Grade News

## 6th Grade Team

**Mr. Tom Bethke** 882 -3328

Math

bethket@evansville.k12.wi.us

**Miss. Sarah Bessonny** 882-3330

Social Studies

bessonnys@evansville.k12.wi.us

**Mr. Colin Langan** 882-3323

Reading/Language Arts

langanc@evansville.k12.wi.us

**Mrs. Renae Smith** 882 -3322

Reading/Language Arts

smithre@evansville.k12.wi.us

**Mr. Greg Vossekuil** 882-3329

Science

vossekuilg@evansville.k12.wi.us

**Ms. Erica Mitten** 882-3314

Special Education

mittene@evansville.k12.wi.us

**Mr. Dave Kopf**

STEM

kopfd@evansville.k12.wi.us

- Parents, please continue to check over your child's assignment notebook, even if the signature requirement has been lifted. This helps everyone stay informed about what is being assigned for homework as well as any upcoming tests or projects.
- The tie-dyeing of t-shirts for the 6th graders was a memorable experience. Look for pictures of this activity within this newsletter. A good time was had by all! Thanks to Mrs. Bessonny and Mrs. Dobbs for all of their help to make it work for all sixth grade students!
- We have another record year for Yahara Writers and Battle-of-the-Book's (BOB) participants. Students should continue to make progress on their book lists and writing pieces over break. Final, edited and formatted Yahara entries are due January 15, and BOB groups will begin meeting weekly at 1:00 in the LMC on January 8, 2019.

## Homework Help!

- 6th Grade Success Club meets every Wednesday from 3:15 to 4:15 pm. This club is staffed by 6th grade teachers. Students with late work will be asked to attend by Wednesday. Contact your child's Team Time teacher if you have any questions. We take pride in providing many opportunities for students to complete work or even skill work.

## Science

Happy cookie break to all!!

6<sup>th</sup> grade science is wrapping up their unit on elements and the Periodic Table. This seemed to be a very fun and interesting unit for all students. If you have a chance to read the book [The Disappearing Spoon](#), by Sam Kean, I highly recommend it. It talks about stories related to the elements and the creation of the periodic table. When we are back from break, we will continue with our next two chemistry units on compounds/mixtures and states of matter.

Some parents have expressed frustration with the online textbook. Unfortunately, we cannot give out hard copies of the book for we do not have enough to do so. A pdf form of each lesson can be given to each student that would prefer to go that route. Your student has to make sure to let me know that they will want a copy. I can also email a copy out upon request from the parent.

After break, we will also begin our Science Olympics! Students will pick teams, create a team name and compete in science related-competitions for the rest of the school year. This all happens with the goal of being one of the top eight teams in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade! The teams that make the top eight will compete in a one day final to see who is the best of the best in 6<sup>th</sup> grade science! Good luck to all teams!



## Language Arts

The sixth graders are currently in the middle of their second reading unit,

“Tapping the Power of Nonfiction.” For the first bend, they read a nonfiction narrative chapter book in book clubs, in which they identified

and adjusted the central ideas of the story. They traced how ideas developed across a complex text and generated questions and ideas that sparked rich book club conversations.

For the second bend, the sixth graders formed new book clubs and began to investigate a topic by reading many shorter texts (articles, websites, short

nonfiction books). As they read new texts, the sixth graders synthesized new information. They considered how new information fits with, extends or contradicts what they have already read.

After Winter Break, we will finish up our nonfiction reading unit and begin our big research unit for Writer’s Workshop.

## Math

**Regular Math** classes are just beginning Chapter 5 of BIG IDEAS. Chapter 5 is the study of ratios and rates. Students will be working on ratio tables, rates, comparing ratios, and percent. Ask your child if they have done any math extra credit. Check out my YouTube lessons for extra practice or help on math skills. Calculators will be used in this chapter! Please make sure your child has a calculator at school.

**Advanced Math** students will be working with ratios and proportions in Chapter 5 of BIG IDEAS. Students will be working on ratios, rates, proportions and slope. Check out my YouTube lessons for extra practice or help on math skills. Calculators will be used in this chapter!

Please make sure your child has a calculator at school.

## Social Studies

In Social Studies we are now fully immersed in learning about our government. We have been 'translating' important primary sources like the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution in order to understand how it was initially set up and has adapted to modern needs. Students should now be able to explain the role of each of the three branches of government and describe what they do. When we return from winter break we will discuss the rights and responsibilities that citizens have and then wrap up the unit with a project!

Over break students have the opportunity to complete an extra credit assignment about family traditions through

google classroom. Talk to your student about any family traditions that you have (from game night, to camping, or perhaps a special recipe...) and encourage them to take advantage of this opportunity!



## Technology/STEM

In the Energy and the Environment Unit (EE), students are challenged to think big and look toward the future as they explore sustainable solutions to our energy needs and investigate the impact of energy on our lives and the world. They design and model alternative energy (windmills) sources and evaluate options for reducing energy consumption

In the Design and Molding Unit (DM) The activities in this lesson will introduce the students to several mechanisms that are used to change speed, torque, force, type of movement, and direction of movement. These mechanisms have been developed over time to address the need for changes in machine tools, robots, automobiles, airplanes, etc. Students will build different mechanisms and discover how they are used in the world today. They will be introduced to the VEX® building parts and the proper way to assemble them. It will be important for students to correctly assemble and disassemble the parts so that they are not damaged.





Tie-  
Eye





# 7th Grade News

## 7th Grade Team

**Mrs. Ann Alme** 882-3325  
Math  
almea@evansville.k12.wi.us

**Mr. Bruce Curtis** 882-3356  
Science  
curtisb@evansville.k12.wi.us

**Mrs. Carla Gomez** 882-3348  
Spanish  
gomezc@evansville.k12.wi.us

**Mrs. Beth Oswald** 882-3342  
Social Studies  
oswaldb@evansville.k12.wi.us

**Mrs. RuthAnn Yoerger** 882-3349  
Composition Literature  
yoergerr@evansville.k12.wi.us

**Mr. Trent Schmick** 882-3335  
Art  
Schmickt@evansville.k12.wi.us

**Mrs. Kelli Ours** 882-3324  
Special Ed  
oursk@evansville.k12.wi.us

**Ms. Mallory Isbel** 882-3336  
Special Ed  
Isbelm@evansville.k12.wi.us

### Math

Students will be working with inequalities. They will both need to write and graph inequalities. We will be solving them using the four basic operations. Students will be solving one and two-step inequalities.

### Science

We are currently finishing our unit on Bacteria and Viruses. Students completed a lab where they sampled the school. Be sure to ask them about their results! Our next unit will be the start of the human body systems: the skeleton.



We will begin reading various survival novels after Winter Break. Students will have the chance to select the survival novel that they feel best suits their reading interests and abilities. There are thirteen different novels from which to choose.

*Hatchet* by Gary Paulson

*Snow Bound* by Harry Mazer

*Gregor the Overlander* by Suzanne Collins

*Island of the Blue Dolphin* by Scott O'Dell

*Z for Zachariah* by Robert C. O'Brien

*Touching Spirit Bear* by Ben Mikaelson

*Peak* by Roland Smith

*The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins

*Homecoming* by Cynthia Voight

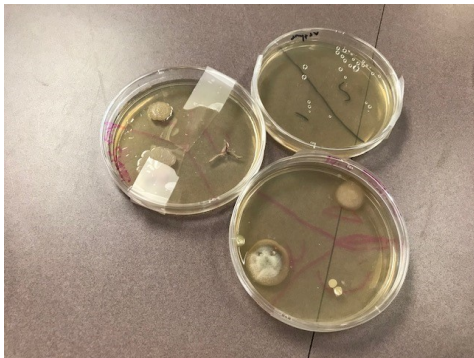
*Cold River* by William Judson

*The Hobbit* by J.R.R. Tolkien

*Watership Down* by Richard Adams

## World History:

The Brick Challenge is done! Did your seventh grader's brick break, or were they a Brick Master? We have been studying the concept of "culture" in preparation for work with National Geographic Explorer Losang Rabgey, and will start learning about Egypt later this month.



Students in 7th grade Spanish are reading the novel *The Red Umbrella*, a historical fiction novel based on a young girl growing up in Cuba during the 1960s. After break, students will be working on a Spanish interview about one of their classes. We will also be learning how to conjugate regular -AR verbs in Spanish.

## Art

The 7th grade students are currently exploring a unit on Ceramics. The student learning objective is to create a balanced meal sculpture using clay. Our goal is to make the ceramic sculpture as realistic as possible by using hand-building techniques and ceramic glazes.



# 8th Grade News

## Composition/Literature

Students are in the middle of a literary nonfiction reading unit and learning strategies to deeply understand nonfiction. They have been learning the importance of using narrative and information strategies within the text to name a central idea. After this unit, students will begin a new writing unit that focuses on finding and supporting theme in a novel.

## Science

After Winter Break we will be shifting to Plate Tectonics, the study of earth's crustal movements and mountain building processes. Be sure to re-supply your 8th grader with school supplies like pencils, pens, erasers and a new binder or folder (many have already been destroyed).

## Spanish

Students in 8th grade Spanish will be finishing up our unit on clothing and colors. Ask them about the color game we plan in class! Soon, we'll be starting a Writer's Workshop unit on finding the theme of what they are reading. We will get back into Work Within the Word at that time.

## World Geography

8th graders will wrap up the USA in December with a USA Road Trip project and then go off studying Canada, Mexico, Latin America in January.

## Math 8

We begin the new year with graphing and writing linear equations. This will include finding and using slope and graphing proportional relationships. Students will be using slope-intercept form ( $y=mx+b$ ) and standard form of linear relationships.

## Algebra

Now that students have worked extensively with solving equations and inequalities, they will extend that knowledge to begin the year solving systems of linear equations and inequalities.

## Computer Literacy

8th grade got a jump start on Career Cruising to prepare them for their high school registration process in January. Mrs. Holm, our guidance counselor, visited and students saved three careers to their plan after researching education, wages, and job description. Students then used this information to create a flyer of their favorite occupation. Parents ask your student to show you their career account!

## 8th Grade Team

**Mrs. Katelyn Demrow** 882-3351  
**Composition/Literature**  
demrowk@evansville.k12.wi.us

**Mr. Rich Fanning** 882-3358  
**Science**  
fanning@evansville.k12.wi.us

**Ms. Kelly Fanta** 882-3350  
**Spanish**  
fantak@evansville.k12.wi.us

**Mr. John Hanson** 882-3340  
**Social Studies**  
hansonj@evansville.k12.wi.us

**Mrs. Gretchen Kopf** 882-3343  
**Math**  
kopfg@evansville.k12.wi.us

**Mrs. Jo Ann Mumm** -3339  
**Computer Literacy**  
mummj@evansville.k12.wi.us

**Mrs. Brittany Deaver** -3315  
**Special Education**  
deaverb@evansville.k12.wi.us

# JC McKenna Food Drive



The annual food drive collection was a huge success. Here are some photos of students delivering the items to the Care Closet. 1800 items were collected which translated into 1180 pounds worth of items donated this year. Excellent work from our students and staff.





## ANNUAL MUSIC FUNDRAISER!

We will begin selling delicious Butter Braid pastries on January 21st! Students will be given an order form in their music class. Orders are due to Mrs. Sperry in the main office by February 6th and pick up will be after school on February 12th in the cafeteria. These pastries come in a variety of flavors and they are super tasty! Who will be our building's top 3 sellers and earn a cash prize?



Did your student attend the 6th grade field trip to Overture Center or the 8th grade trip to see Elf at The Fireside? Is your student a 7th grader who is looking forward to the music field trip next school year? Is your student in Band or Chorus? All of our students benefit from this fundraiser, whether it's in the form of new music, instruments for Band or General Music, band instrument supplies, new and updated technology, or reduced/free field trip costs. If you'd rather skip the fundraising and simply give a donation, please contact Mrs. Proper. She will happily accept and give you any information you need.

For more information about Butter Braids, visit: <https://butterbraid.com/products>

