

Glenn LaBossiere
Principal

Louis Zubek
Assistant Principal



Griswold Middle School
Educating for Excellence

211 Slater Avenue
Griswold, CT 06351
Phone 860 376-7630 / Fax 860 376-7631
www.griswoldpublicschools.org

Karen Scholl
School Counselor

John Howe
Psychologist

Rebecca Brigner
Psychologist

August 26, 2020

Dear Griswold Middle School Families;

On behalf of the GMS faculty and staff, I am eager to welcome you to the 2020-2021 school year. This year will definitely look different than years in the past. In order for our children to be successful in school, I'm inviting each of you to create a partnership with us because students will need support from home and school. Our partnership will allow students to reach new milestones and enjoy their middle school experience. We are looking forward to a wonderful year full of new experiences and personal/academic growth. I wish to extend a special hello to the newest members of our GMS community, our fifth grade families. We are committed to creating a positive transition for our fifth graders and will work collaboratively to ensure that happens.

Please welcome the following teachers/staff members new to GMS:

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| • <i>Shae Crosby</i> | <i>Grade 5 Language Arts</i> |
| • <i>Marina Skevofilax</i> | <i>Grade 5 Language Arts</i> |
| • <i>Alexander Smola</i> | <i>Grade 6 Math</i> |
| • <i>Cheryl Chapados</i> | <i>Paraeducator</i> |
| • <i>Drew Johndrow</i> | <i>Sacred Heart University Intern</i> |

The GMS team focuses on providing each member of our school community a safe and positive learning environment where continued growth is at our core. We are a school committed to educating for excellence by empowering our students to become compassionate, confident, kind, creative and resourceful members of society.

All students have been scheduled into their classes and a copy of their schedule is enclosed. Students will remain in their Cohorts throughout the day.

I want to remind our families that school begins with three half days beginning on Wednesday, September 2, 2020. In person learning on this day will be for Cohort A (A-K). Cohort B (L-Z) will not be required to attend school virtually on this day. Students participating in full distance learning (*parents have signed and returned the GPS Distance Learning form*) will not be required to attend classes virtually on Wednesday.

On Thursday, September 3, 2020 in person learning will be for Cohort B (L-Z). Cohort A (A-K) will not be required to attend virtually on this day. Students participating in full distance learning (we have received the GPS Distance Learning form) will be required to attend classes virtually on Thursday.

If your student still has school books at home from last year, please return them on the first few days of school. There will be a return bin in the main lobby. Students will need to have their name attached to the book to ease record keeping. Please attach a post it note or place a piece of paper inside the front cover.

Please remember that parent drop off and pickup is on the side of the building facing Slater Avenue. Students will not be allowed to enter GMS until 7:15. Students are expected to be in their homeroom by 7:30 a.m. on

that day and every day. Thank you for making every effort to have your child *arrive on time* each day of school. Also enclosed is important information regarding our attendance policy. One important reminder: It is vital that parents notify GMS when students are absent including virtual days. Parents can email the main office by 8:00 a.m. at gmsattendance@griswoldpublicschools.org Please recognize that once a student reaches 10 absences **documentation is required** in order for an absence to be excused. Detailed information regarding excused absences and protocols are outlined in the policy. If you have any questions, please be sure to contact us.

Our talented and committed staff works to make certain that learning is relevant and dynamic. An important part of this work involves the key relationships with our parents and community. We value and rely upon these alliances as they are paramount to the success of all of our students. I hope you'll consider joining our Parent Teacher Organization and becoming more involved in our school community. Please look for more information from our PTO.

You'll notice the **Census Verification Report** is included with this letter. The verification form includes your household information and emergency contact information. Please review the data printed to ensure accuracy. If there are any errors or additions, please correct this information so that we can update our database. It is essential that we have this information in the event of an emergency. In addition, it is also important that we have your current email address. *Please return this form on the **first day of school even if there are no changes.***

As we partner together this year, communication is key. Therefore, our *Wednesday Folder* is posted on our website. Families are asked to go to the GMS page and click on Wednesday folder each week in order to access the latest information. The folder is filled with current information for parents. We will post the Wednesday Folder on the first day of school however your student will also receive a folder with materials. Included in this first packet will be insurance forms, the Board of Education policies, the Record of Parent Annual Notice and school lunch forms. The documents will require your attention and some will require your signature. **Please make sure to look for the first *Wednesday Folder*** of the year on the first day of school.

A second important communication tool is the **GMS Parent/Student Handbook**. The 2020-2021 copy has been posted electronically on the GMS website (www.griswold.k12.ct.us/gms). The handbook is loaded with key information and will answer many parent questions about GMS. Please be sure to read the handbook with your student and sign the form that acknowledges that you have received and read this important material. We ask that your student return the signed form to their homeroom teacher by Friday, September 4.

The opening of a school each year is exhilarating and busy. There is much to share with the students and many details to work through. We understand that having an opportunity to meet your child's teachers is important at the start of each school year. We will send more information regarding our virtual Open House soon.

When school begins, I ask that you please take some time to ask your child about their day, read the materials in the 1st day folder, and begin a yearlong discussion about learning and school. This level of communication will help to make the year successful for all. Please visit our school website (www.griswold.k12.ct.us) for up-to-date information, teachers' email addresses, calendars, lunch menus, and the Griswold Public School Reopening Plan. GMS will do our best to consistently update and add important information throughout the school year. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or concerns. Together, we can make this year great for all of our students.

Sincerely yours,

Glenn LaBossiere
GMS Principal