

GMS Principal's Corner

Sarah Shannon



This week, May 4 - 8, marks 2020's [Teacher Appreciation Week](#). As the Principal of the Galvin, I want to publicly express my thanks and appreciation for the GMS Staff. Before March 13, I have had the opportunity to witness so many moments of awesomeness among the teachers. Since March 13, though, WOW! The ways in which the Galvin staff has wrapped their arms around students and families, ensuring everyone is well and figuring out how we can better support them has been incredible. In addition, they shifted their teaching, learned to connect with and teach student remotely, and make each day better than the last. I could not be more grateful to work with them each day. Thank you, Galvin staff, for everything you are doing!

This year, more than ever, my appreciation extends to you, the parents, aunts, uncles, grandparents and older siblings who have been teaching and supporting our students during this time of remote learning as well. We know that most of you did not sign up to be teachers and that even if you had, you wouldn't have had your own child in your class! All of us at GMS are so grateful for the support you are giving your child(ren) every day to help them while they are home. This week, we salute you as well!

***We are planning a special treat for our staff. Your child should have received an email about this from Mr. Spillane. Please check in with them to see what we have in store!*

Important Updates at GMS (PLEASE READ!)

As I shared last week, we have now moved into Phase 3 of our remote learning plan. Phase 3 will serve us well through the remainder of this school year. Given this final phase, we'd like to clarify two key components of our approach: curriculum and grading. I know that this post is long. I ask that you take the time to read it as it is important.

Curriculum

When we entered Phase 2, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) gave schools the ability to move from optional and enrichment work to incorporating new learning. With the introduction of Phase 3, DESE introduced "Prerequisite Standards". The goal of these being to standardize what students across the state are exposed to by the end of this school year. This week, our department coordinators reviewed the standards outlined by DESE and feel comfortable in the fact that many (85% - 100%, depending on the content area) of the prerequisite standards identified were taught to students before March 13. The standards that have not yet been taught were already identified as what needed to be taught during May and June. The Galvin teachers are working together to incorporate these remaining, as well as other, standards into the curriculum through June 23, 2020.

As shared in earlier newsletters, our (both the Galvin and the Canton Public Schools) goal during remote learning is to:

- Seek to slow the progress of the COVID-19 virus by practicing social distancing.
- Maintain connections and communicate with students and families to support their well-being and their sense of belonging to our school community
- Provide remote learning and support for our students to help them maintain their skills and knowledge and advance the curriculum, as appropriate.
- Maintain connections and communicate with students and families to help them access the materials, to offer support and encouragement, to clarify any questions they have and to provide feedback, as appropriate.

At the Galvin, we are seeking to meet these goals through a project-based learning approach. This approach was specifically identified in the Commissioner of Education's guidelines. A project based approach to learning is engaging and allows us to address socially relevant topics while clearly linking authentic learning to standards. For us, it also allows us to meet both the academic and the social-emotional needs of our students. In addition, an authentic interdisciplinary approach to learning that is aligned deepens learning because students see the interconnectedness of the standards being taught.

In this remote setting, learning is both synchronous and asynchronous. Teachers are finding more and more opportunities to provide some direct instruction as well as generalized support. Sometimes these opportunities are live (via Zoom, Google Meet and/or Google Classroom), others are pre-recorded or shared in other ways. While none of the opportunities

for synchronous learning require attendance, we've learned that students who attend the live sessions with teachers understand and complete the work with more ease than students who miss these sessions. It is also an opportunity for your child to connect with teachers and classmates.

Grades

Given the challenges and different situations that exist within each home, the Galvin will not be providing grades for terms 3 or 4 as outlined in Dr. Fischer-Mueller's communication regarding the FAQ's of school closure. We officially entered Phase 2 of remote learning for students on April 13, 2020. At that time, we started expecting students to do the work assigned and teachers started to keep track of what was turned in. As we enter Phase 3, we will continue that process.

As parents, we recognize that you are our co-teachers. To be effective, you need to know if your child is completing their schoolwork. During this time of remote learning, the Galvin will be reporting work completion in the following way:

- 0 if less than 49% of the week's work has been completed
- 1 if 50 - 69% of the week's work has been completed
- 2 if 70% or more of the week's work has been completed

It is important to note that these numbers indicate the amount of work completed, not a grade. As stated earlier, during this time of remote learning, we are not grading students' work. Teachers are, however, providing specific feedback to your child on work done via Google Classroom. In addition, this numerical representation will not result in either a Term 3 or Term 4 grade. Instead, we will use this system to communicate with you regarding the percent of work your child is completing.

We are finalizing a system for you to be able to see this information on a regular basis and will share this process with you soon. Teachers, team leaders and guidance counselors will continue to reach out via email if your child is not completing work on a regular basis to support you and to learn what the barriers to learning are and how we can help. We are also beginning to implement systems to recognize students who are doing most or all of their assigned work.

To help you and your child have a clear guideline of what will constitute if work is complete or not, please refer to the rubric pictured below.

Since work became expected, we have been very pleased with the number of students who are engaging in learning with their teachers. We know that this is a different approach to school, however it is critical that our students continue to do the work assigned and to learn in this remote environment. ***Remote learning allows students access to curriculum they should have, builds work ethic and good habits, strengthens the independent learner muscles, promotes independence and resourcefulness, builds community and connections, and prepares students for next year.***

Grades from terms 1 and 2 will stand as reported earlier in the year. If your child's Term 1 or Term 2 report card indicated an "Incomplete", that work can be made up. Please contact your

child's teacher to make arrangements for that to happen.

As I wrap up, I have been reminding the Galvin staff that this is new for all of us: teachers, students and caregivers. We are all learning how to work in this new world. We will get some things right, we will get some things wrong, and we will keep getting better. Everyone in the GMS community is working their hardest to adjust to this new way of being and we are committed to our own growth and continuous improvement. We know that is the same for each of you and your children. It is in that spirit that we created and sent our family survey. We appreciate your feedback to help us continue to learn during this time. We appreciate that over 300 families took the time to complete our survey. Thank you.

Finally, please rest assured that we know that when we return for school next year, that we need to plan for the students who we will be receiving. We know that the last third of this year is different than what all of us had planned. Will there be some gaps? Yes. Will there be unexpected gains we might not have seen if we were in our building? Again, yes. We will be ready and adjust for both of those things. We've got your kids - and you - now and in September!

Stay well,
Sarah

Not Complete	Complete
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No work or a blank documents turned in• Work turned in does not match the assigned instructions• The majority (more than 75%) of the task is incomplete• Student submits someone else's work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Submitted work meets the objectives• Work is complete or mostly complete• Student submits own work

2020 – 2021 Scheduling Letters

Though we are still experiencing remote learning, we have moved forward with the scheduling process for next year. Scheduling letters for students entering grade 7 and grade 8 were emailed to families last Wednesday. If you didn't see yours, you can access them below. We ask that you please complete the course selection Google Form at the end of each letter by Wednesday, May 6th so we can move forward with this process. Thank you.

[Entering Grade 7 Scheduling Letter](#)

[Entering Grade 8 Scheduling Letter](#)

GMS Team Resources: One Stop Shopping

In an effort to streamline information for families, each team has created a one-stop shopping type of resource for you. In some cases this is a Google Site and in others it's a comprehensive email sent at the start of each week; some teams are providing both. This one location is where you and your child can access all the information needed about projects,

assignments, schedules and specials. We hope that this list will help make accessing the information easier for you and support your efforts to help your child. Please email your team leader or your child's teacher with questions about specific assignments.

[Galaxy](#)

[Meteorites](#)

[Supernova](#)

[Grizzlies](#)

[Macaw](#)

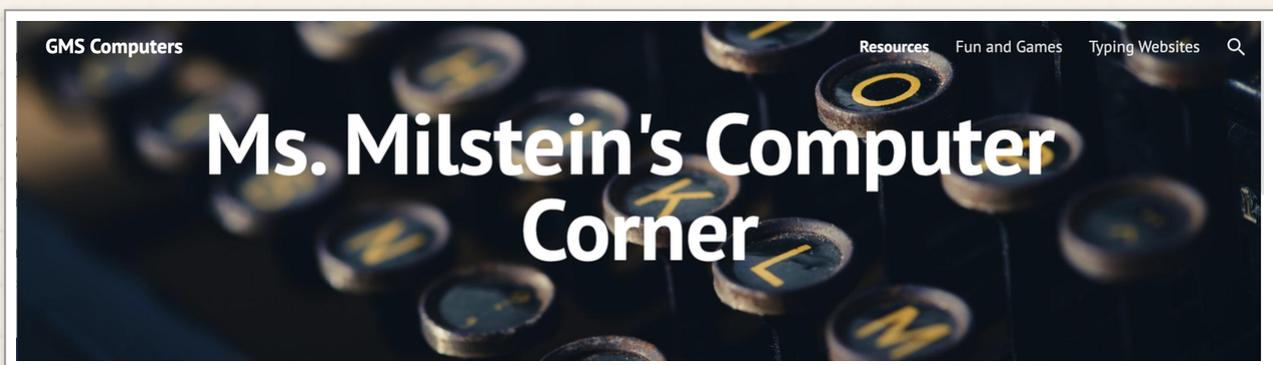
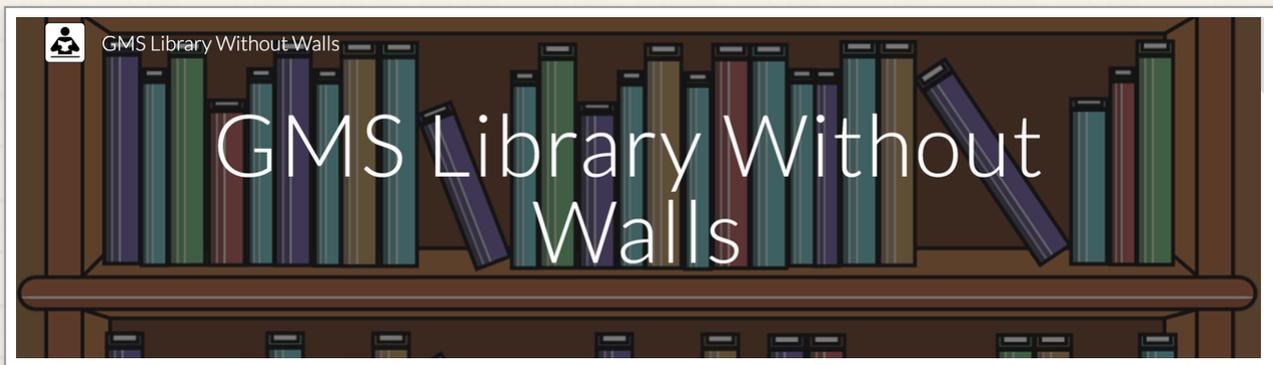
[Sharks](#)

[Green](#)

[Silver](#)

Spread the Word: 2-1-1

The state of Massachusetts would like to remind people that they can call 2-1-1 for help in a number of areas, particularly now when many people are feeling stressed, anxious or depressed. Please, if you need help right now, reach out. There are people ready to help you.



FRESH INK SUBMISSIONS

Fresh Ink is tradition at the Galvin. Each year students submit original works of writing and art to create a literary journal. The students' pieces are curated and published in the Fresh Ink journal and then the authors and artists present their work one evening in the spring at Barnes and Noble. This year, we won't be able to present at Barnes and Noble but hope to host a

virtual event for our students and families. So, encourage your child(ren) to use their time creatively and submit their work to Ms. Canavan or Ms. Johnston and participate in this year's Fresh Ink. Click on the image below for more details.

 *Fresh Ink* 
is looking for your...

short
stories



artwork

POETRY

GMS & CHS Norms and Expectations for Online Learning

The Galvin Middle School and Canton High School hold four, shared core values:

- Academic Excellence and Rigor
- Inclusive Community
- Respectful and Responsible Relationships
- Continuous Improvement

These core values guide how we work and act as a community, whether in person or online.

It is important for all students to remember that on-line learning is still a classroom, and certain behaviors are expected when communicating with teachers and classmates as outlined in our Core Values, the [GMS](#) and [CHS](#) student/family handbooks and the [Canton Public Schools Responsible Use Policy](#). Students should conduct themselves according to the following norms during video conferences:

- ***Don't audio record, video record, or take pictures/screenshots while in a videoconference; MA law requires consent from all parties before doing any of these things.***
- Find a quiet place to join and stay there. Don't walk around.
- School rules apply: Be respectful. Dress appropriately. Be kind.
- Be focused on learning. Don't play games, watch videos or surf the web.
- Mute your microphone unless you are speaking.
- Follow your teacher's instructions for speaking, asking questions, and turning your camera and microphone on or off.

Thank you for your cooperation in following these expectations.

FREE Internet Access: Comcast's Internet Essential Program

If you need internet access: Please use the following links for information regarding Comcast's Internet Essential Program for any families in need of internet access.

<https://www.internetessentials.com/>

<https://corporate.comcast.com/covid-19>