

# Scoop

MINERAL POINT MIDDLE SCHOOL

February 2015 🐾 Education... That's the Point.



Skylar Martin competed at the sectional spelling bee in Barneveld, representing Mineral Point Middle School. Other MPMS top spellers from the school bee this year included: Gage Garcia, Ian Keyes, Grant Lee, Nick DuBois, Laney Finkelmeyer, Flo Torres, Morgan Vondra, Simone Fitzsimons, Miranda Oellerich, Karen Wilbanks, and Katie Wilson.



If you see these middle school students, congratulate them! They met the criteria of attendance, citizenship, and academics to be qualified for the second quarter reward drawing and won gift cards.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

April 13, 14 & 16

April 27, 28 & 30

May 4, 5 & 7

BADGER EXAM TESTING DATES

Wednesday, March 4

Progress reports will be mailed today.

Friday, March 6

Early Release, 1:00 p.m.

Friday March 7

M.S. Solo-Ensemble @ Iowa-Grant

Friday, March 20

End of Term 3

Monday, March 23-27

Spring Break

Wednesday, April 1

MS-HS Parent/Teacher conferences, 4:00-7:30 p.m.

Friday, April 3

No classes for students and staff

Friday, April 10

Early Release, 1:00 p.m.

Grade 6-8 track to start following Spring Break. Date to be announced.

Tuesday, May 5

M.S. Spring concert, 7:00 p.m.

Monday, May 25

Memorial Day parade, 10:30 a.m.

Wednesday, June 3

M.S. Awards Program, 1:00 p.m.

Grade 8 Graduation to follow.

Thursday, June 4

M.S. field trips

Thursday, June 4

Last day of school

# Mineral Point Kitchen Project



Check out our future chefs! The first session of school nurse Julie Pompos' Mineral Point Kitchen Project was held recently, which will meet every Wednesday after school for the months of February-April.

## eMPathy Day at the Middle School

Middle school students participated in our first MeMPathy Day this past month. There were photographs taken and a video made with all the students in their eMPathy T-shirts. The video will be available on our website as soon as the editing is complete. Throughout the hallways of the middle school students were asked to put themselves in the shoes of others and try to recognize how others may be feeling.

At lunchtime the students participated in *Mix It Up At Lunch*. *Mix It Up* is an activity promoted by the *Teaching Tolerance Organization* and is something schools across the country are participating in. *Mix It Up* is an activity that encourages students to break down some of the barriers that exist between groups of students and individuals. Students are randomly assigned lunch seats where they may be eating lunch with other students outside their friendship groups, their socio-economic status, their abilities, activities and interest groups. The goal is to encourage a more unified and accepting student population. School needs to be a comfortable place for all students.

During *Mix It Up* the students were asked to work together and to solve a word search with empathy related words. They were also asked to repair some wrinkled and torn hearts with apologies and kind words written on band aids. The “hurts” on the torn hearts came from things the students have seen and heard in our middle school. One student commented that “all the buzz on bullying prevention is scaring us more than helping us.” Maybe teaching empathy is an more encompassing concept to teach and reinforce.

As it is with all activities, a one day event will not have a lasting impact, but if we focus on teaching, recognizing, reinforcing and encouraging displays of empathy, hopefully we will raise a generation of kind and compassionate people who care for the other people they share their world with. 🐾

*“Empathy Day is a great way to show that everybody belongs. Mix It Up is a great way for students to make new friends and get to know more about other students”*  
– Anonymous Student

*“It was nice to sit next to other people that I didn’t know.”*  
– Trysten Trace

*“It was fun because we got to make a cool video*  
– Anonymous Student



## eMPathy

Joelle Doye, Communications Director

Mineral Point Middle School students have been learning about MeMPathy and implementing it into their daily lives.

“Empathy and kindness are things we are focusing on to reduce the bullying and feelings of disrespect from classmates that the students are reporting on their learner surveys,” said guidance counselor Carla Rand.

Recently the middle school gathered in the gym to take an all-school photo wearing their neon orange eMPathy shirts. In addition, Kyle Carey's high school video students filmed the students and will be making an eMPathy video.

“Developmentally, it is a hard concept for very young children to understand, but by school age we should be able to recognize and anticipate the feelings of others,” added Rand.

There were also “other's shoes” taped on the hallway floors asking how students would feel for many different scenarios. Additionally, there is an eMPathy wall full of quotes regarding kindness and empathy.

A “Mix It Up” lunch was held where students were randomly assigned a table to sit at with the goal being to break down barriers between groups of students and have them interact with others outside of their friend and comfort zones.

Wrinkled and torn hearts were on the cafeteria walls and, during the lunch, students filled out band aids with kind words to put on the broken hearts. Classroom teachers also played a short YouTube video that emphasized kindness or empathy.

Rand is planning to continue with the eMPathy days and involve students in Random Acts of Kindness and Pay it Forward initiatives.

A similar plan is in place at the elementary for eMPathy days coming in the near future. 🐾

# Tooting Their Horns



Congratulations to National Band Association-Wisconsin Chapter All-State Band participants Brady Palzkill and Owen Stephenson.

## Pioneering Your Future in STEM

On Thursday, March 12 girls in grades 5-8 will have an opportunity to explore careers in the science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields. The girls will have the opportunity to problem solve and experiment taking things apart and putting them back together. They will also have the chance to interact with other girls their age that are interested in the STEM fields. This opportunity is again sponsored by UW-Platteville and has a cost of \$25 per student or \$20/student for groups of five or more.

Visit their website [www.uwplatt.edu/ems-success/pioneering-your-future](http://www.uwplatt.edu/ems-success/pioneering-your-future) for session descriptions and registration. You may also e-mail at [pyf@uwplatt.edu](mailto:pyf@uwplatt.edu) or call at 608-342-7137. 🐾

## Teach Q&A: Mr. McGraw

By Tessa Hanson

What is your favorite color? Blue

What is your favorite animal? Elephant

Where did you attend college? UW-Madison and UW-Platteville

When did you graduate High School? 2000, from Mineral Point

What is your favorite dessert? Strawberry cheesecake

What is your favorite place you have traveled to? California

Where would you like to travel to? I would like to visit England and France for historical reason like battle fields

Why did you enter the field of education? I always enjoyed school growing up and I thought this was a place where I could help and make a difference

When is your birthday? October 24th

# From the Desk of Ms. Dahl, Middle School Principal

## Badger Exam Information

The Badger Exam is Wisconsin's Smarter Balanced Assessment. This assessment replaces the WKCE assessment in English and Language Arts (ELA) and Math. This is a summative assessment administered during the last 12 weeks of the school year (measuring students' cumulative progress from the past school year). Here are the assessment dates for 6-8 students:

April 13, 14 and 16

April 27, 28 and 30

May 4, 5 and 7

Testing will take place during periods 2-5 on the above dates. It is important to make sure your child is in attendance.

You can access more information on the Badger Exam at <http://oea.dpi.wi.gov/assessment/smarter/sampleitems> 🐾

### Just for fun:

Q: What do you call an anxious dinosaur?

A: A nervous Rex

### Worth quoting:

"The secret of getting ahead is getting started." – Mark Twain

## LEARNING OPPORTUNITY

### "ALIVE" – Teen Conference

By Carla Rand, School Counselor

This year's Teen Conference, held at Southwest Tech in Fennimore, is a Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Fair. Students will have the opportunity to explore many aspects of mental health. They will see a brain exhibit and view two award-winning documentaries; "A Reason to Live" and the "Bullied Documentary." They will participate in Graffiti Art Therapy, Post Your Own Secret Activity, learn some stress management techniques and receive information on the resources available for mental health and suicide prevention. Although the topic seems heavy, the day promises to be fun and worthwhile for all participants.

This year's teen conference is available to our middle school students for only \$10 due to a mental health grant that our CESA 3 received. If the fee presents a financial challenge please let us know and arrangements can be made. We don't want any student who wishes to participate be denied the opportunity due to finances.

The conference is in the Lenz Center at Southwest Tech on Tuesday, March 10. We will be taking a bus or van, depending on numbers. Mrs. Rand will be chaperoning. Please let me know as soon as possible if you are interested so we can register our students. You can contact me directly at [carla.rand@mp.k12.wi.us](mailto:carla.rand@mp.k12.wi.us) or 987-0710, ext. 115 or you may contact the middle school office and leave a message.

I hope to have many students interested in this opportunity. 🐾