



*Mrs. Dooley with her ROC Crew group*

### A Note from the Leadership Crew

Each month, you will receive a digital and hard copy of this school newsletter. In each issue, you will find information that will answer many questions you may have wondered and provide updates on different school happenings. Please read and keep it as reference for event dates, times, and contact information.

The front page will always have a small "table of contents" to let you know where to find this information.

- Please reach out if you have any questions.
- Elizabeth Mascitti-Miller, Interim Executive Director
  - Kemouy Bhalai, School Director - RMSC Campus
  - Christine Farrell, School Director - FC Campus
  - Chris Dolgos, Director of Curriculum & Instruction
  - Maureen Milke, Director of Operations

This issue of Currents is focused on socio-emotional practices at our school. You will learn about some of the programs we are using in our school and the importance of restorative practices to support the whole child.

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-  [GCCS WEBSITE](#)
-  [GCCS FACEBOOK](#)
-  [GCCS TWITTER](#)



## A Note from the School Director

Dear GCCS Families,

As I reflect on our October focus on the 'habit of character' of **RESPONSIBILITY**, I ask myself how did I model this character trait for myself, for my family and for the stakeholders of our school community. Being reflective is an important aspect of growth and making informed changes.

In October, we tightened up some of our systems and structures, especially dismissal routines, which can be chaotic. Thank you all for playing your part in ensuring that students and their families are kept safe. A special shout out to Mr. Weeks, a parent of a 5th grade student, who ensures that the pick up area is blocked daily to keep cars from coming into that area. Caregivers, you are an essential part of our CREW, so thank you for all that you do.

We also want to thank the Family Association and the 4th - 6th grade classrooms for spearheading fundraising efforts this month with the pie sale and GCCS swag fundraiser. The raised funds will offset the costs of field studies.

And a quick reminder as we are entering the season of holidays. Our school **DOES NOT** celebrate holidays. Our community is comprised of a diverse group of people, so we acknowledge and learn about different traditions, but will not center one over the other.

Thank you for your continued collaborative efforts and support.

I can be reached at [kbhalai@gccschool.org](mailto:kbhalai@gccschool.org) if you have any questions or concerns.

Kind Regards,

Ms. Kemouy Bhalai  
[kbhalai@gccschool.org](mailto:kbhalai@gccschool.org)  
(585) 697.1960

## School Targets - What are OUR FOCI?!

### Target #1- Mastery of Knowledge & Skills (MKS)



- Students engage in reflection, self-assessment, goal setting and progress monitoring
- Students will score proficiently on the NYS assessments in 3rd-6th grade
- Supporting diverse learners through MTSS (multi-tiered system of supports)

### Target #2 - Character

- Facilitating a culture of Crew
- Restorative Approach to address discipline and repair harm
- Focus on character traits and goal setting
- Use of MTSS to support SEL needs of students

### Target #3 - High Quality Work (HQW)

- Design of purposeful learning experiences
- Continued focus on Arts Integration
- Incorporation of evidence based writing into each expedition

### OUR MISSION

The *Genesee Community Charter School* provides a rich educational experience that values intellectual rigor, respect for diversity, and community responsibility. Our local history-based and globally-connected program immerses our diverse population of children in investigation and discovery, extensively using the cultural and natural resources of our community. We nurture children's natural abilities to be reflective questioners, articulate communicators, critical thinkers, and skilled problem solvers, enabling them to reach exemplary standards.



# Family Association

The purpose of the Family Association (FA) is to promote community and connections among the GCCS families and to provide support and assistance to the school and school Director. All caregivers of children currently enrolled in GCCS are members of the FA. The FA Officers work closely with the school to meet these goals and recruit additional caregivers to assist in important roles like room helpers, event planning, and fundraising

**This year, we have new FA Officers shared between both campuses; their information is below.**

## Family Association Directory

### GCCS Board of Trustees Representatives

- ❖ GCCS Family Representatives
  - Kiersten Blankley (kshinrock@gmail.com)
  - Benjamin Clarke (benjaminhclarke@yahoo.com)
- ❖ Alumni Family Representatives
  - Tasha Stevens (tashaystevens@gmail.com)

### Family Association Officers

- ❖ **Co-Chairs:** Blake Crowley (blake.crowley@gmail.com) & Carolyn Anderson (carolynhdanderson@gmail.com)
- ❖ **Secretary:** Karla Carey (karlarae5@gmail.com)
- ❖ **Treasurer:** Isha Torres (iyt6977@gmail.com)

We will be reaching out soon for caregivers who want to serve as classroom volunteers.

GCCS Logogear: <https://gccs-fa.square.site>

To Contact the GCCS Family Association,  
Email: [GCCS\\_FA@GCCSchool.org](mailto:GCCS_FA@GCCSchool.org)

## MARK THE DATES...

### NOVEMBER:

- Nov 5:** NO SCHOOL - Election Day
- Nov 11:** NO SCHOOL - Veterans' Day
- Nov 15: Fundraiser Pie Pick Up
- Nov 20: Board of Trustees Meeting
- Nov 25 -:** NO SCHOOL - FALL RECESS
- Nov 29**

*Exhibition Night Schedule is on page 6; please review.*

### DECEMBER:

- Dec 6:** Family Conferences - Early Dismissal
- Dec 18: Board of Trustees Meeting
- Dec 23 -:** NO SCHOOL - WINTER BREAK
- Jan 3

### Community Circle Highlights:

- **Wednesday, November 6<sup>th</sup>:** Color Parade
- **Wednesday, November 13<sup>th</sup>:** Fire Safety Presentation
- **Wednesday, November 20<sup>th</sup>:** ROC Crews (*students only*)
- **Wednesday, December 4<sup>th</sup>:** Exhibition Highlights
- **Wednesday, December 11<sup>th</sup>:** Capoeira Presentation
- **Wednesday, December 18<sup>th</sup>:** ROC Crews (*students only*)

**Please note that November 20<sup>th</sup> and December 18<sup>th</sup> are only for students; caregivers should not attend Community Circle on those days.**

# SCHOOL CALENDAR EVENTS



## CHARACTER FOCUS

October's character focus was **RESPONSIBILITY**. Students discussed what it means to be responsible at home, at school and in the community. Through our Crew structure, students are making connections throughout the day about their demonstration of the different habits of character.

For the month of November, the character focus is **INITIATIVE**. Please have conversations with your child(ren) at home about how they can take initiative.

At our school, we explore seven habits of character: **responsibility, initiative, compassion, courage, gratitude, perseverance and collaboration**. Monthly, we will have a focus on one specific habit of character where we discuss how we model that habit and also set goals. Not only do we want our students to gain academic skills, we want them to reflect on themselves as ethical people and to identify how they can

be agents of change in their life, community and the world.



## OCTOBER SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS

This month was filled with science experiments, the 4th and 5th grade performance of the Kuku, Curriculum Night, school photos, field studies and of course, lots of learning.

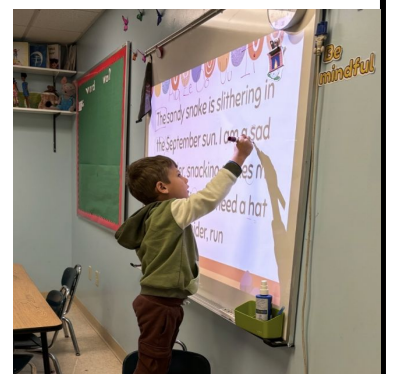
3rd grade students explored the Erie Canal lock system with their field study on the Sam Patch. With their studying of the Erie Canal, they learned about Sam Patch and why the canal has locks.



4th graders have entered the world of fractions in math. They are learning how to identify the proper fraction given a diagram, and how to use a number line to model fractions. While fractions can be daunting, our students are persevering!

6th graders had a field study to the Memorial Art Gallery where they learned about artifacts. This field study connects to students' case study where they are investigating artifacts from history that show how humans resolved conflicts and found peace.

Kindergarteners are learning their letters, sounds, vowels and consonants. They are also focused on developing their number sense to achieve fluency in counting from 1 to 10 and comparing groups of up to 10. Students represent quantities by writing the correct number.



*“Everything you do is based on the choices you make. It’s not your parents, your past relationships, your job, the economy, the weather, an argument or your age that is to blame. You and only you are responsible for every decision and choice you make.”*

## Vocabulary Development

Vocabulary is an important part of helping students improve their comprehension skills. Studies show that kids with a strong vocabulary also become better at speaking and writing. To support your child’s vocabulary growth at home, here are some fun and engaging strategies for the whole family:

1. **Word of the Day:** Start a "Word of the Day" tradition at home. Choose a new word each day, discuss its meaning, and use it in sentences. Encourage your child to come up with their own sentences or draw pictures.
2. **Reading Together:** Spend time reading books together. Choose a variety of genres and pause to discuss unfamiliar words. Encourage your child to ask questions about the text, which can lead to discovering new vocabulary in context.
3. **Incorporate Words into Daily Life:** Use new vocabulary in everyday conversations. For example, if your child learns the word “enormous,” encourage them to describe an object around the house using that word.
4. **Encourage Writing:** Motivate your child to write stories or journal entries using their newly learned vocabulary. Tap into their creativity and have them write about an adventure or create a character.
5. **Visit the Library:** Make regular trips to the library to explore new books together. Let your child choose topics that interest them, and help them find books that introduce new vocabulary.
6. **Connect with Technology:** Utilize educational apps and websites. Choose one thing to do and share with classroom teachers using Seesaw with the hashtag # **GeneseeReads**.

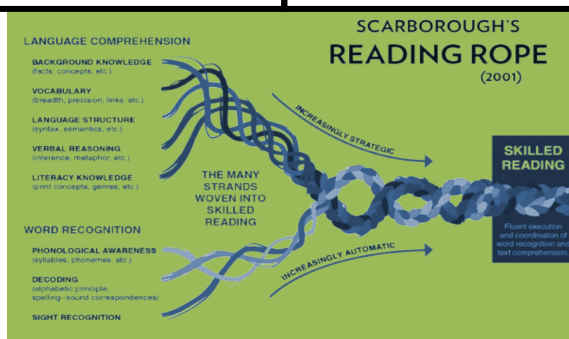
## Claim, Evidence and Reason

Supporting all students to be authentic communicators is part of our school's mission ARCS, and one instructional initiative the school is implementing is Claim, Evidence and Reason. The **Claim, Evidence, Reasoning (CER)** strategy is a structured approach used to encourage critical thinking and effective communication of ideas, especially in writing. The purpose of this strategy is to help students develop their skill of communicating through writing and speaking across all content areas.

Here's a breakdown of each component:

1. **Claim:** This is a statement or assertion that answers a question or addresses a topic. It should be clear and specific.  
*Example:* "Exercising regularly helps improve focus in school."
2. **Evidence:** This consists of data, facts, or examples that support the claim. Evidence can come from research studies, expert opinions, or personal experiences.  
*Example:* "A study found that students who exercise for at least 30 minutes a day perform better on tests and pay more attention in class."
3. **Reasoning:** This explains how the evidence supports the claim. It connects the dots between the claim and the evidence, showing why the evidence is relevant.  
*Example:* "This shows that when students exercise, their brains get more oxygen and become more alert, which helps them concentrate better on their schoolwork."

During professional learning, teachers will be engaged in the explicit instruction of writing using the CER strategy and the Writing Revolution. This will support students' ability to construct more persuasive arguments, strengthen their analytical skills, and create high-quality products.





### EXHIBITION NIGHTS!!

It's that time of year again... Exhibition Nights are quickly approaching. Please review the schedule and reach out to your child(ren)'s teachers with any questions.

Come out and celebrate your child(ren) as they demonstrate their learning. And a sweet treat after is always a good way to cap the evening.

Future Exhibition Nights for the school year will take place in March and June.

Fall 2024 Exhibition Nights		
Date	Grades	Times
Tuesday, 11/12	2nd Grade	5:45 - 6:45 pm
Thursday, 11/14	Kindergarten	5:45 - 6:45 pm
	5th Grade	7:00 - 8:00 pm
Monday, 11/18	1st Grade	5:45 - 6:45 pm
Tuesday, 11/19	3rd Grade	5:45 - 6:45 pm
	4th Grade	7:00 - 8:00 pm
Wednesday, 11/20	6th Grade	7:00 - 8:00 pm

### At Home with Caregivers

Some resources for families to explore at home include:

**PBS for Parents:**

<https://www.pbs.org/parents>

**Reading is Fundamental:**

<https://www.rif.org/literacy-central/families>

**Scholastic Resources:**

<https://www.scholastic.com/parents/books-and-reading/reading-resources.html>



**Reading Channel:**

<https://storylineonline.net/>

<https://www.youtube.com/BrightlyStorytime/> featured

**If you have questions about literacy resources, contact: Keri Gonzalez, Literacy Coordinator**

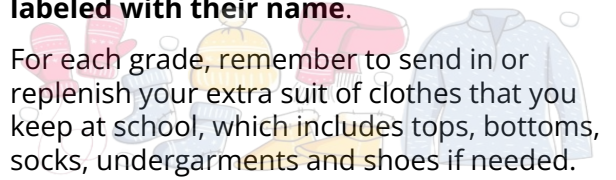
### LOOKING AHEAD

Our school will be participating in this year's [ROC the Day](#) taking place on December 3rd. We will share additional information as the day gets closer. We are aiming to raise funds to support our educational programming.



Please send extra mittens, hats, snow-pants, and boots for your child to keep at school - **labeled with their name.**

For each grade, remember to send in or replenish your extra suit of clothes that you keep at school, which includes tops, bottoms, socks, undergarments and shoes if needed.



### Fundraising for Field Studies

We are continuing to fundraise for field studies to offset the increased costs of buses and event costs. We are grateful for any and all contributions to support this program. If interested in making a donation, please contact Chris Dolgos, [cdolgos@gccschool.org](mailto:cdolgos@gccschool.org) OR visit the website: <https://gccschool.org/donate/>.