Georgia Elementary & Middle School

2017 Report to the Community
Georgia Elementary & Middle School

GEMS is a child-centered educational community devoted to creating lifelong learners.
A Letter from the Superintendent, Ned Kirsch

The following information provides the community of Georgia with an overview of how Georgia Elementary & Middle School is progressing. The goal is to annually publish this report as a way of providing the public with an accounting of our successes and challenges. This document will provide the community with the ability to track our progress from one year to another.

The report card highlights areas that we feel may be of interest to most members of our community. The information includes financial, academic and social data that can help you better understand our district and community. We will continue to add and expand the information to help you get a good idea of how your tax dollars are supporting our schools.

Thank you for taking the time to review this information about our schools. We look forward to hearing from you regarding your thoughts and comments about this document. Thank you for your continued support.
Georgia Community Profile

**Community Relations Committee**

The Georgia Community Relations Committee collaborates with the Georgia Recreation Committee to celebrate our wonderful community with the annual Fall Fest. The Fall Fest is a family event that takes place at the Georgia Town Beach each September. Admission is non-perishable food for the Georgia Food Shelf. All activities are free of charge and include story time and crafts with the Georgia Public Library, coloring craft by Peoples Trust Bank, horse and wagon rides, Vermont National Guard climbing wall and soccer challenge, Bouncy castle and tent by McCracken Tent Rentals, demonstrations by the Georgia Fire Department, Carol Ann Jones and the Superchargers band, 97.5 Eagle Country radio station, and a Tae Kwon Do demonstration by Arrowhead Martial Arts and Fitness. Furthermore, the Georgia Lion’s Club has a concession for food and drinks and the Conservation Commission, Georgia Fire & Rescue, and the County Currier newspaper have tables. The events finale is fireworks made available by Jim Bayne's Celebration Fireworks of Vermont through town funds and local business donations. GEMS student council members volunteer as parking attendants at the event.

This committee also hosted a Senior Luncheon in December in the GEMS gym to celebrate the holidays. The Abbey catered the meal and the GEMS Student Council members were the greeters and servers. The GEMS band played holiday tunes for the seniors’ enjoyment. GEMS students made crafts in art classes to give as gifts to the seniors and the Abbey restaurant contributed an Abbey restaurant brunch as a door prize.

**Georgia School Library and Georgia Public Library Work Together**

The Georgia School Library and the Georgia Public Library have worked together for many years to support and encourage the town’s young residents in their literacy endeavors.

Throughout the year the town and school librarians frequently discuss and share ideas to promote reading and help children find the books they want to read.

Inter-library loan of material is practiced throughout the year including the summer months when school is not in session.

In the spring the school librarian meets with each elementary class to discuss and promote the town library’s summer programs. In addition, a copy of the public library’s summer program packet is sent home to each family as well as information about the public library’s summer hours.

The public and school libraries share the common goal of promoting and encouraging reading by our youngest residents.

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The estimated population of Georgia in 2013 was 4,570

The average price of primary residences sold in 2013 was $238,183

The Median Household Income in Georgia in 2012 was $79,806

The average annual employment in 2012 was 2,650

The average number unemployed in 2012 was 40

*Information taken from Vermont Indicators Online. A collaborative data centralization and clearinghouse project designed for easy access for statistical data on Vermont’s towns, villages and counties. To view this report go to:

http://www.uvm.edu/crs/?Page=Census/index.html
Georgia Elementary School

GEMS is a child-centered educational community devoted to creating life-long learners.

- Guiding all students’ learning in an environment that is physically and emotionally safe, respectful, nurturing, and challenging
- Encouraging all students to demonstrate curiosity, an appreciation for learning, high levels of achievement, and responsible behavior
- Motivating all students in their acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for success in the 21st century through inspiring, relevant and dynamic curriculum
- Supporting parents/guardians as they encourage their children to become life-long learners

In addition to curricula in literacy, math, science, and social studies, students receive instruction in art, health/guidance, library, music and physical education. Many of our students participate in after school soccer, basketball and baseball/softball programs through parent run programs. Girls on the Run is also an after school program for girls in the spring.

2016-2017 School Facts

- **92%**
  average student daily attendance

- **16**
  average class size, with a range between 14-21 students in grades PreK-4

- **120+**
  minutes of daily literacy instruction for students in grades K-4

- **60+**
  minutes of daily math instruction for students in grades K-4
Our Georgia Elementary School staff has immersed themselves and dedicated their work towards a “Whole Child” approach based on the following principles:

- Each child enters school healthy and learns and practices a healthy life style.
- Each child learns in an environment that is physically and emotionally safe for students and adults.
- Each child is actively engaged in learning and is connected to the school and broader community.
- Each student has access to personalized learning and is supported by qualified, caring adults.

Implementation and Practices

Through monthly professional development opportunities and working exclusively with a licensed psychologist and trauma specialist, our focus on children of traumatized backgrounds has allowed us to implement best practices and assure a safe sense of belonging for ALL students.

Through weekly data meetings and student growth conversations, children have been at the focal point of curriculum exploration and implementation of current best practice and methodologies.

Through the development of a teacher evaluation system and evidence based electronic portfolio accountability has been centered on:

- The Classroom Learning Culture
- Skillful Instructional Practices
- Student Engagement
- Family and Community Outreach
- Teacher Professional Responsibilities

“Play is essential to development because it contributes to the cognitive, physical, social, and emotional well-being of children and youth.”

The Georgia PreK program currently serves 74 participants; our maximum capacity.

Through the engineering design process students Imagine, Plan, Create, Improve, and Ask questions to solve problems through inquiry based activities. STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) Education attempts to transform the typical teacher-centered classroom by encouraging a curriculum that is driven by problem-solving, discovery, exploratory learning, and requires students to actively engage a situation in order to find its solution. Georgia’s STEM room is called “The Light Bulb Lab,” because one of our goals is to stimulate the creation of great ideas.

Advancements in technology through the years has made it possible to communicate more efficiently and effectively among colleagues, parents, and children. At Georgia Elementary School, teachers have started to link their daily routine and specific learning opportunities to the outside world through individual classroom blogs. Posts are generated by both teachers and students and often are meant to share the learning that is occurring throughout each day.
Georgia Elementary School  
By the Numbers:  

Class sizes as of June, 2017  

PreK: 74 students, 3 teachers (5 sessions)  
Kindergarten: 49 students, 4 teachers  
Grade 1: 62 students, 4 teachers  
Grade 2: 72 students, 4 teachers  
Grade 3: 59 students, 3 teachers  
Grade 4: 59 students, 3 teachers  

Student Services  
- 10.9% of elementary students are eligible for free lunch  
- In the elementary & middle schools, an average of 98 students eat breakfast, and 322 eat lunch each day  
- 71 students receive Special Education services  
- 37 students were supported through 504 or EST plans  
- 15 students per day on an average visited the school nurse  
- All 32 of our teachers are considered “highly qualified” (HQT)
GEMS Middle School Mission

Our purpose as a school community is to develop confident, respectful, healthy individuals who connect learning and self knowledge to understand their potential and make the most of future opportunities.

Our school values relationships and learning as the foundation for competence, growth and achievement.

Meaningful relationships depend on:

- Valuing individual differences
- Open and honest communication
- A universal sense of belonging

Learning depends on:

- Questioning, investigation and reflection
  - Relevance to the learner
- Participation and ownership in the process

At Georgia Middle School we strive to create a culture of learning guided by the needs of our students.
A Message from Frank Calano, Middle School Principal

The Middle School Theme for the school year 2016-2017 was in line with our school wide implementation of Positive Behavior Intervention & Supports (PBIS). The theme for PBIS at GEMS is “Be Responsible, Be Respectful, Be Safe.” PBIS is a way to way to encourage positive behavior as a support system for all students. The Middle School also re-introduced Advisory Groups for our 7th & 8th graders to promote student success in school and provide a nurturing experience for each student in these grades by providing a teacher advisor who advocates for his/her AG students.

This year’s sixth grade students were introduced to the “Best Year Ever Challenge.” Given the challenge of creating the best year ever, students learned how to create and maintain an ideal community at school by implementing the “Seven Habits of Highly Effective People” in their individual lives with the intention of enhancing their own communities by investigating communities (groups of people) and what makes them desirable. Students interviewed community members and engaged with guest speakers and literature.

A seventh and eighth grade Spanish class performed plays entirely in Spanish. They used plays from a book by Pati Lozano called “Skinny Skits Short and Simple Funny Skits for Beginning Spanish Speakers.” It was a challenge to memorize their parts in Spanish and to stay speaking Spanish during the English version of the play. These students worked hard and their teacher was extremely proud of them for overcoming their challenges.

At GEMS we continued to participate in many contents that bring the community together. One of our yearly projects in the middle school was to collect and dispense food to the Georgia Food Shelf and we held a Walkathon to benefit the Georgia Food Shelf. Fifth and sixth grade teams of students organized the food collection throughout the school, and all of the middle school students participated in the Walkathon. Student Council members voted and agreed to spend $75 to buy food for the food drive. Before they went shopping students collected coupons from various sources and were able to purchase $165 worth of food with their $75.

An Empty Bowls Project was a new middle school opportunity which benefited our local food shelf. Students in grades 5-8 were encouraged to design and product soup bowls, showing off their creative sides with bowls formed in many shapes and really cool colors and designs. Georgia residents were invited to an evening of sharing a warm bowl of soup in one of these student made ceramic bowls. Participants either purchased one of the student made bowls for $5 or reserved a special bowl in advance which they picked up at the event. Soup and bread were donated by the Abbey, Center Market, Georgia Market, student council, Daisy Troop #51777, FWSU and local families. This event raised almost $600 for the Georgia Food Shelf.

Another wonderful opportunity to give came through our “Sewing for a Cause.” During this choice class students learned basic sewing using sewing machines, rotary cutters and hand stitching. In the beginning of the class their hand stitching started out by them repairing their own clothing to sewing intricate patterns for quilts. Besides learning the skills of sewing, students were introduced to a number of “Sewing for Causes” benefits that previous students had decided on producing articles for. Using fabric and tools of the trade, students then decided on a cause that they wanted to sew for. Articles of clothing and other sewn projects were produced to benefit:

- Chemo hats for UVM Medical Center
- Pillow cases for COTS
- Quilts and stuffed animals for COTS
- Stuffed animals and quilts for Ronald McDonald House

At GEMS we continue the pursuit of excellence in academic courses, and social and emotional growth for all of our students. Every staff member at GEMS encourages, teaches and communicates high expectations.
There are many staff members in the middle school who help us maintain a safe, healthy school for everyone.

The GUIDANCE COUNSELOR works with classrooms each week; with small groups to teach about friendship, organization, anger and stress management and changing families; and with individuals who need support for a variety of issues/concerns.

Our BEHAVIOR SPECIALIST team works together with students, teachers, support staff and parents. Their goal is to help students enter and remain in the classroom prepared for success, both academically and socially.

The MIDDLE SCHOOL NURSE assesses students’ health concerns daily. The Health Office Mission statement is:

- Guide the well being and academic success of students
- Encourage health and safety in a healthy school environment
- Manage students with actual or potential health problems
- Support parents/guardians when further health services are needed

Our SPECIAL EDUCATORS provide academic support to students with an identified disability through individual and small group instruction. Students are also supported within the classroom as instruction is provided by the classroom teacher. Special Educators are part of a team along with classroom teachers, guidance and other professional staff who develop an individualized educational plan for students.
Georgia Middle School by the Numbers

- 8.1% of the middle school students receive free lunch and breakfast
- 27 students per day on average visited the school nurse
- 27 students were eligible for special education services
- 18 students received support through 504 or EST plans

Keeping Healthy at Georgia Middle School
(the numbers below reflect the school run sports program; they do not reflect parent run programs)

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<th>5th-8th Grade</th>
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For schools operating PreKindergarten programs enrollment for Early Essential Education is reported under the grade level PreKindergarten. Missing data indicates the data were suppressed to protect student privacy or the indicator is not available for the school or at the time of posting the information.
STAR Math

Median Percentile Rank by Grade

George Elementary/Middle School
Spring
- Month -

Median Percentile Rank by Season

George Elementary/Middle School
- Assessment Grade -
- Month -

STAR Reading

Median Percentile Rank by Grade

George Elementary/Middle School
Spring

Median Percentile Rank by Season

George Elementary/Middle School
- Assessment Grade -
- Month -
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