



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: APRIL 17, 2015**

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## **CHARLOTTE MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS EXPERIENCE GAME CLUB**

Charlotte Middle School has many extracurricular and/or club offerings for students to enjoy during lunch and/or after school. CMS Game Club, which is supervised by Dennis Richardson, has a goal to provide a supervised environment where like-minded students are introduced to and learn how to play different types of light strategy games. Approximately 30 students bring their lunch to the game room three times a week.



The strategy games used by this club can teach essential social skills such as communicating, sharing, taking turns, waiting, and delayed gratification. All of these skills offer a perfect opportunity for students to spend time exploring strategy and tactics. The message inherent in all strategy games is: "Never give up." When you feel all hope is lost, you have to stay in the game because at any moment things can go your way.

Many of the games the CMS Game Club members enjoy are classics like Chess, Risk, and Monopoly. However, some of the games available to the members are newer like; ***The Settlers of Catan***, which is a multiplayer board game designed by Klaus Teuber and first published in 1995 or ***Ticket to Ride*** which is a railway-themed board game designed by Alan R. Moon and published in 2004, which provides players with intense strategic and tactical decisions every turn.

Study after study has shown that game play is important for everyone from toddlers to retirees. We know that middle school students can make substantial improvements in problem-solving ability--even general IQ--when they are taught general principles of critical thinking (Hernnstein et al 1986). In addition, social scientists have argued that

games teach lessons about getting along with others (Kamii and DeVries 1980; Zan and Hildebrandt 2005). Whatever your reason for being a part of CMS Game Club, we know that this experience with games allows our students to engage the mind and ignite the imagination, all while having a great time and building relationships.