



# The Gopher Communicator

November 22, 2013

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An International Baccalaureate  
World School

*A Century of Excellence*

## Parent Conference Schedule

The twelve-week mark of the first semester is here. In other words we are 2/3rds of the way through the first semester of the school year. At the high school level teachers are given stations in three locations: Cafeteria, the Main Gym, and the Auxiliary Gym. To locate your student's teachers, parents or guardians should first come to the cafeteria to get the 12 week progress report and then you can be directed to the teachers you wish to speak with.

### Conference Times

Tuesday, November 26

- 4:30 - 8:30 pm: Parent Conferences

Wednesday, November 27

- 7:15 - 10:30 am: Parent Conferences

### Other Services/Information Offered Through SUN at Conferences

- Flu Clinic
- Mt. Hood Community College Trio
- College Possible
- IRCO
- Catholic Charities
- Metropolitan Family Services: SUN Information

### Attention All Sophomore Students! Is ACE Academy in Your Future?

Are you interested in Architecture, Construction, or Engineering? The ACE Academy is hosting a FREE field trip on December 12th to their school. Students who attend will have the opportunity to participate in a fun activity while learning about the ACE Academy. ACE works in partnership with Gresham High School to provide Juniors and Seniors education and experience within one of the three areas of Architecture, Construction and Engineering within their school day. Please see Mrs. Blaser for more information.

### Attention All Sophomore Students! Is CAL in Your Future?

On December 17, the Center for Advanced Learning (CAL), located at 1484 NW Civic Drive in Gresham, is offering a Sophomore Shadow Day for students who are interested in knowing more about CAL's great programs! Students will participate in classes, receive a full tour,

meet teachers, and take part in a question and answer session with students, teachers, and the director of CAL. CAL Ambassadors will meet participants at the CAL bus at GHS. Upon arrival at CAL, GHS students will work alongside CAL Ambassadors during their time at the school. This is a great opportunity to have a direct experience of what CAL offers.

### SUN Homework Club

Does your student need extra help with their homework or class project? **FREE** drop-in tutoring is now available to students through the SUN Homework Club after school from 2:30pm – 4:15pm, Monday through Thursday. Tutoring is available on an as-needed basis. Students are welcomed to stop by with their homework questions or if they just need a quiet space to study. SUN provides participants a free meal through the Supper Program and transportation home after their SUN activity at 4:30pm. Participants must have a completed SUN registration form on-file to participate. Forms are available on the school's website listed under "SUN." For more information, contact the SUN Program at [\(503\) 674-5570](tel:5036745570).

### SnoBall

The annual **SnoBall Dance** is approaching quickly.

Theme: **December to Remember**

Date: **December 7, 2013**

Time: **8:00 pm to 11:00 pm**

Location: **GHS Auxiliary Gym**

Ticket Price: \$13 with ASB sticker, \$15 without. All tickets are pre-sold.

Tickets will be available for sale before school, at lunch, and after school in the Activities Hallway.

### Confidence and Freshman:

Self-efficacy can be defined as a person's believe in his or her ability to achieve a goal or desired outcome. Students with a strong sense of self-efficacy are more likely to take on challenges, are internally motivated, give extra effort to meet goals and commitments, and view setbacks or failures as within their control as opposed to the fault of someone else. Students with past and current challenges (poverty, anxiety, learning challenges, and abuse) likely have lower self-efficacy compared with peers that have not faced those challenges. However, self-efficacy for all students can be learned and improved.

### How can students gain self-efficacy?

There are four sources of self-efficacy—mastery experience, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and positive emotional states. Teachers and parents can use various methods and strategies to build self-efficacy. The four mentioned above were taken from the website <http://serc.carleton.edu/NAGTWorkshops/affective/efficacy.html>. and are well-established methods that can assist students to build their confidence and perseverance at school, home and work.

- **Create Mastery experiences** - Successful experiences boost self-efficacy, while failures erode it. This is the most robust source of self-efficacy. Find a way to build on successes, even small ones. (**Set up success early.**)
- **Vicarious experiences** – Observing others, especially peers, succeed at a task not only provides a model for success it can strengthen a student’s believe in his/her own abilities.
- **Verbal persuasion** - Teachers and parents can boost self-efficacy with credible information, communication, and feedback designed to guide children through tasks and motivate them to give their best effort.
- **Emotional state** -Positive demeanor can boost a person’s beliefs in self-efficacy, while anxiety can undermine it. A certain level of emotional stimulation can create an energizing feeling that can contribute to strong performances. Teachers and parents can help by reducing stressful situations and lowering anxiety surrounding events like exams, presentations, or big family events.  
[\[Margolis and McCabe, 2006\]](#) and [\(Bandura\)](#)

This year we are studying self-efficacy in our freshman class. We are trying to determine their level of confidence in themselves and their academic skills and behaviors. Support and encouragement will be provided accordingly. To establish a baseline for this study we administered a baseline survey in October. The results of all 470 surveys had to be hand entered and are almost completed.

In that survey we asked the students to rate themselves on their ability to take notes, manage their time, organize their assignments, and confidence in various subjects. Over time we will evaluate our efforts to see if there has been improvement or regression so that we can continue our professional growth as a staff. In future newsletters I will share some of the initial survey results and describe efforts we are undertaking to help all students increase their self-confidence. In the end our goal is to help all students realize that, through perseverance and goal setting, each can be and will be successful.

### **Credit Recovery: Things Parents Should Know**

**AS YOU READ THIS INFORMATION, KEEP IN MIND THAT CREDIT RECOVERY CLASSES START RIGHT AFTER THANKSGIVING. STUDENTS THAT ARE CREDIT DEFICIENT SHOULD NOT WAIT. GRADUATION FOR ALL STUDENTS COMES VERY QUICKLY AND WAITING CAN CAUSE A DELAY.**

Unfortunately each year there are always students that find themselves in need of credit recovery services. This article contains information about options for students. As you read through it, keep in mind that your student’s counselor must approve all credit retrieval courses. Below are some of the most frequently asked questions and their answers.

- 1. What options are approved for credit recovery?**  
Classes taken through approved colleges such as Mt. Hood Community College (MHCC), Portland State University (PSU), Brigham Young University (BYU), and Gresham High School approved programs such as the SUN program and Gresham Summer School.
- 2. Where can I sign up for these programs:**
  - PSU: [www.pdx.edu/independent-study](http://www.pdx.edu/independent-study)
  - MHCC: 503-491-7421
  - SUN/Gresham Summer School: Pick up forms in your School Counselor’s office.
  - BYU information is also in the school counseling office.
- 3. Approximately how much does credit recovery cost?** The cost varies between programs and starts at \$50 or more per 0.5 credit class. Some organizations offer a discount if you qualify for free or reduced lunch program.
- 4. Who does a student see for information about credit recovery classes?** Students must set an appointment with his or her school counselor.
- 5. What is the first step a student must complete before signing up for credit?** Speak with your School Counselor
- 6. How soon after failing a class should you do credit recovery?** Before you start classes in the next year
- 7. How many credit recovery classes can you take in a year?** As many classes as you need but speak with your School Counselor regarding what they recommend.
- 8. What should a student do if they fail a credit recovery class?** Don’t give up! Talk with your School Counselor and sign up again.

9. **Which classes qualify for credit recovery?** The only classes that qualify are the ones a student has failed.

**New Facebook Tool for Bullying**

Facebook has introduced a tool to address online harassment that some digital safety advocates are calling beneficial. The social network now has released a "[bullying prevention hub](#)". This hub is an online resource center with suggestions for teens, parents and educators on how to address bullying — both online and off — and take action. This site also has options for teens to report when posts bully or are making them uncomfortable. Based on past rollouts of similar options Facebook believes that this tool can be very helpful. We are sharing it with parents so that they can actively take steps to mitigate problematic on-line behavior.

**Foreign Language Credit Opportunity:**

Students who are fluent in a language other than English, may qualify to take the Foreign Language Assessment Test and have a chance to earn up to 2 full credits. If you know of any qualifiers, please make sure they are aware that registration is open until December 9th. Test will be given on January 7th. Students can sign up through the GHS website or pay the bookkeeper. Cost \$50.