

Principal's Newsletter

Principal John R. Koch

Here at school the beginning of the second semester has come and gone and most of the students have started off very well. However, Gopherpalooza on February 14th and the end of the winter sports season have also kept us very busy. The reality of attending or working in a high school is that the pace of activities never slows down!

Believe it or not, we are also heavily into planning for the 2013-2014 school year. Soon counselors and other school personnel will be meeting with all the students to forecast classes for next year. It is always hard for me to believe that we have to start this process so early, but it is absolutely necessary for us to be able to build a school master schedule. Please make sure to stay posted on the website or through your students about forecasting and the applicable deadlines associated with it.

There have been many, many activities this winter that could not have been accomplished had it not been for the huge number of volunteers that continually attend, support, and volunteer at our events. Some noteworthy groups to mention are the ever present Spirit Club Parents, the dedicated Fine Arts supporters, and all of the cheer and dance team supporters. This short list does not come close to covering all of the wonderful people that come to GHS to help but I want you to know that you are all very appreciated and on behalf of the staff we thank you.

Tips for Teens and Parents

Sometimes you would not believe the volume of information that crosses an educator's desk on a given day. It can be overwhelming. Every so often though, something comes across that because of its simplicity and clarity needs to be shared. Below is a list of five tips parents can share with teens. They were taken from the Gurian Institute's January 23, 2013 edition of the *Gender and Education News*.

1. **You are never as abnormal as you think.** "I'm not tall enough, strong enough, mature enough, smart enough, talented enough." These are very common thoughts in the mind of a teen. Let them know that they are not alone, but are enough just as they are.
2. **Mistakes do not define you.** It's what you do with them that creates who you are. Identify them, face them, and correct them. Correcting mistakes builds your character.
3. **Those who give you the most grief, usually care the most about you.** A coach said, "Do you know why I am on you so much? It's because I love you. If I really didn't care about you, I would just ignore you." Notice who is giving you grief...and why.
4. **Control what you can control.** It is unrealistic to solve everything, though one can have empathy for others. Focus on what can be controlled and control it—look at what can be solved, not who is at fault or how dire the situation seems to be. Your ability to control your attitude will get you the best results.
5. **You are always someone's role model.** Many of us think that because we are not famous it doesn't matter what we say or do. The reality is that we are all role models.

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Tips for Teens and Parents Continued

Sometimes parents struggle finding a good time to talk about these concepts. In my experience the best opportunity is at the dinner table with family or friends. In fact, a national survey conducted in 2006 by the University of Michigan found that ..."family meals are a better predictor of higher achievement scores and fewer behavioral problems for children." The family dinner was even a better predictor than the amount of time spent studying!



Those that are not attending at a 90% rate are considered chronic non-attenders

Earn Foreign language Credit by Taking the SLIP Test**Huge Opportunity for Students:**

If you have a student that has already achieved competence reading, writing and speaking a second language other than English there is an efficient, inexpensive way for him or her to earn high school credit for that proficiency. Centennial High School is offering the SLIP exam to students who believe their skills meet the standard. Below is a list of details.

- Registration forms must be returned to the GHS Main Office by March 16, 2013
- The exam will be administered at Centennial High School on Saturday, April 13, 2013.
- The cost is \$35.00 and you pay on site the day of the test.
- There is an oral and written portion to the test. The oral portion is recorded for evaluation purposes.
- Any language can be assessed as long as 10 or more students have signed up in advance.
- Depending on test performance, students can earn up to two credits.
- On the day of the exam student must have their student ID or valid driver's license.
- The Oregon University System accepts credits earned through this exam.

***Students who plan to earn IB credit as juniors and seniors should see Mr. Smith (GHS IB Coordinator) or their counselor prior to taking the exam.**

Essential Skill Graduation Requirements

This year the State of Oregon requires students to demonstrate proficiency in the Essential Skill areas of Reading and Writing in order to graduate. Even if a student has earned enough credits and completed an academic portfolio, that student cannot graduate without demonstrating he or she is proficient in these areas of Reading and Writing.

Students can demonstrate this proficiency in a variety of ways. The two most common ways for students to demonstrate these skills are either through the OAKS tests or through local performance assessments completed under test-like conditions in their classes at Gresham High School. In order for a student to pass the OAKS reading test, that student must score 236 or higher. A student must earn a score of 40 or higher on the state writing test to meet the requirement for that Essential Skill. Students who have not achieved passing scores on the state tests must pass at least two reading local performance assessments in order to meet the Essential Skill requirement for Reading. Likewise, students must pass two writing local performance assessments in order to meet the Essential Skill for Writing. Senior teachers are working with students who have not passed the state tests to make sure that they have opportunities to demonstrate proficiency through work samples.

Now is a good time to check in with your 12th grader to make sure that he or she has met this graduation requirement. If he or she hasn't, make sure that you are talking with your student about completing the necessary local performance assessment opportunities.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the school.

Also, parents of students who will graduate after this year should be aware that students graduating after 2013 will also have to demonstrate proficiency in the Essential Skill area of Math. We encourage you to talk to your student about their success on OAKS tests in the three areas, and if they did not receive a passing score, about the importance of increasing their skills so they can demonstrate proficiency via a local performance assessment in class.

8th Grade Forecasting Fair

8th Grade Forecasting Fair is March 13th. It begins at 6:00 PM and we are hoping for a strong turnout of parents. Like last year's event, we are offering many door prizes that include waivers for athletic and activity participation and other door prizes. The evening will also give parents and guardians information about graduation requirements. Presentations from content area teachers about expectations and courses, as well as information for athletics, activities, and after school program offerings. High schools are much more complex now than when most parents were in school. This evening event is a parent's first opportunity to become familiar with what is required of our students and gain an understanding in how to support students through the next four, very important, years of their lives. We are looking forward to the opportunity to meet everyone and start building the needed relationships that enable all of our students to succeed.

GBSD on Facebook and Twitter

Did you know the Gresham-Barlow School District is on Facebook and Twitter? "Like" GBSD on Facebook to learn about the great things happening in our schools. "Follow" us on Twitter to get the latest news about what's happening in the school district!

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We're on the Web!
See us at:
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