



GCVI School Council Press Spring 2009

Message From the Chairs - Ruth Jennison and Sharon Molyneaux

GCVI School Council has experienced an influx of amazing parents who dedicate themselves to supporting the School Council by faithfully attending the meetings. The information that is provided by our guest speakers has enriched our understanding of student life and how we as parents/guardians can support the school and our children.

In November Steve Weiler, GC Cafeteria CEO, discussed insights into our Cafeteria. Did you know that we have one of the few school run cafeterias? This is significant because the profits from the operation are going directly to the benefit of the student body.

The cafeteria staff tries very hard to provide a variety of nutritious food choices. A microwave oven is available to students who choose to bring their own lunch. Due to aging electrical circuitry in the building adding more microwave ovens is not possible at this time. There has been a request to investigate possible upgrades to the electrical system.

In December the School Council provided a Breakfast for staff on the PD day. It was a wonderful opportunity for the parents to thank our staff for their dedication and commitment to our students. If you are looking for an opportunity to be involved at GC, why not volunteer to help us in the June social for the staff either by donating food or serving? Leave a message at the office and we will give you more details, 519-824-9800 x 410.

In January Lori Lutes, the school Social Worker, was our guest speaker. Her topic was the role of the social worker in assisting students and parents with mental health issues by providing in-school counseling and referrals to community agencies that support families through difficult times.

Anxiety and depression are common ailments in students. She recommended that if there is suspicion of mental health issues to be proactive and seek medical help.

What are the signs and symptoms that you as parents/guardians need to be watching for? Any shift in behaviour such as withdrawal, mood swings, extreme changes in social interaction, a change in sleep patterns, eating, energy levels, lethargy, manic behaviour, stopping sports or clubs, prolonged sadness, suicidal thoughts or thoughts of self harm, skipping school, impaired thoughts, concentration or when irrational fears or feelings impede normal behaviour.

It is important to keep the lines of communications open with your son/daughter. If you have any concerns contact Lori and she can provide you with the needed resources.

On April 8, Jill Goodreau will be speaking on the topic of the Civics and Career course that is mandatory in Grade 10. On May 13, Joanne Ryan will be giving an update on the greening of the campus grounds.

Parents are welcome at any of the meetings, the second Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. in the cafeteria. Why not consider coming and meeting with other parents/ guardians and staff to learn what is really happening at GCVI!

The GCVI teaching community is working to improve student success.

Currently, GCVI teachers are focusing on implementing our new GCVI Assessment and Evaluation policy. These guidelines follow the Ministry of Education's document 'Growing Success' released in 2008.

For most students the biggest change will be greater use of 'Formative' assessments. Although the term formative assessment may be new, the idea behind it isn't. In the past, 'formatives' might have been called practice exercises or practice quizzes. The goal of formative assessments is to allow students to try out new knowledge or skills, and to give them opportunities to learn from their mistakes without losing marks. The use of formatives also allows the teacher to assess the progress of students and to give feedback to guide improvement. Feedback, usually specific comments, may also include some kind of mark or level; but this is for information purposes only. Formative work is normally not used to calculate the final grade, but is crucial preparation for the 'Summative'. Summatives are the tests or assignments given to evaluate a student's overall achievement at the end of a learning segment. This Formative/Summative process may tempt your student to say..."well, it's *only* formative, it doesn't really count"... and ignore or zip through a formative assignment or review for a formative quiz. Your child's teacher needs your help to reinforce the importance of these activities and to support this learning process at home. Students should realize that a missed formative is a lost opportunity, as these activities build toward the Summative evaluation (end of unit project, assignment or test). Formatives are part of class work. When students take full advantage of formative activities we are confident that they will be successful in their courses. Helping your student understand the value of formative work will help us improve their chances of success!

Wes Coffey, Principal

Neighbourhood Groups in the City of Guelph

For over 10 years, Neighbourhood Groups have been growing in Guelph and have become an integral part of the fabric of our city. These groups are composed of citizen volunteers who provide a wide variety of programs and services to their neighbourhoods.

What each group offers varies from one neighbourhood to another depending on the interests and needs in that area. For example some have Food Cupboards, Clothing Cupboards, run Homework Clubs or After School programs, Summer Camp, programs for immigrants, coffee hours, active gym programs, the Friday Night Teen Drop In at the West End Community Centre, etc. Many are able to provide opportunities for high school students to obtain their 40 hours of community volunteer work.

In the GCVI area there are several neighbourhood groups including: West Willow Woods, Exhibition Park, Parkwood Gardens, Onward Willow, and one developing in the Sunny Acres area. They are listed in the City's Community Guide and City website.

Neighbourhood groups work together as part of the Neighbourhood Support Coalition and are partnered by the City of Guelph, Family and Children's Services, the Upper Grand District School Board, the United Way, Trillium Foundation and many others. We are always interested in helping our community and would love to have you and your family get involved in one of our programs or as a volunteer.

Michele Altermann
GCVI parent and Parkwood Gardens Neighbourhood Group Chair

School Dates to Remember - 2009

March	26	Parent-Teacher Interviews
	27	Desserts & Deals 6:30pm
April	1	Learning Teams 2:25 p.m. Dismissal
	2	OSSLT Grade 10 Literacy Test
	6	Staff Meeting 3:10pm
	8	Coffee House 6pm
	8	School Council 7pm
	10-13	Easter Weekend
	21	Mid Term Reports Distributed
May	4	Staff Meeting (3:10pm)
	7	Film Festival 6pm
	13	Learning Teams Early Dismissal 2:25 p.m.
	13	School Council 7pm
	14	Tubas & Tulips Concert 7:30pm
	18	Victoria Day
	26	Senate Assembly
	28	Awards Assemblies
	28	Music Banquet 4:30pm
	29	Prom
June	1	Staff Mtg. (3:10pm)
	9-11	EQAO Gr. 9 Math
	9	Athletic Banquet
	10	School Council 7pm
	16	Gr. 12 Study Day
17-23	Exams *	

**Parents – Did you know...
The GCVI Exam Schedule can be viewed on the school's website!**

24-26 PA Days



*Final exams **must** be written at the scheduled place and time. Students and parents are asked to keep ALL exam days free from other commitments (including work and vacations). Missed exams or summative evaluations may result in a mark of zero.



Music is alive and well at GCVI. As members of the Parents' Music Council we are happy to be able to support our excellent staff and students. Our previous years' fund-raising efforts paid off this year, as we have been able to purchase a new baritone saxophone as well as risers for our choirs.

The winter semester is always an exciting time for the Music Department. Currently the Symphonic Band and Jazz Band are getting ready to take part in MusicFest in London. Once that is over, all our ensembles, both instrumental and vocal, will be taking part in the Kiwanis Festival.

Between these two events is our annual Desserts and Deals fundraiser, being held on March 27th. Desserts & Deals is an evening that includes both live and silent auctions as well as performances by GCVI students as well as ensembles from our feeder elementary schools. It is always an enjoyable and entertaining evening. We have some excellent items in the auction this year, including two tickets to Stratford, Lego MindStorms, a year-long membership to the Guelph Museum, passes to the Ontario Science Centre, Mariposa Cruise, Guelph Jazz Festival and much, much more. Make sure you mark this evening on your calendar and be prepared to have some fun, help out the Music Department and get some great deals.

For more information about Desserts and Deals, or about the Parents' Music Council in general, please contact Mark Wallace at 519-824-7590, or via email at jmw@aisys.ca.





G.C.V.I.



FOOD FOR THOUGHT



BREAKFAST CLUB



Here's how YOU can help!

Your GCVI Parent Council is supporting a food drive for our school's Breakfast Club, called *Food for Thought*.

You will be supporting a valued element of our school! We need the following items:

- refrigerated cheese bars (not spreadable cheese or sliced)
- tetra juice boxes (please only donate those that are 100% juice) or large cans of pure fruit juice, such as apple, orange, or grape) or apple cider
- boxed cereals such as instant oatmeal (individual serving kind), honeycomb, corn pops,
- mini-wheats, and oatmeal crisp
- microwaveable bacon, the pre-cooked kind
- bread, either loaves, especially raisin, or English muffins (not bagels, as these are regularly donated)

Thanking you in advance for your generosity and for helping out our students and those who serve them!

STUDENTS: You can find our Breakfast Club at: St James Anglican Church on Paisley Rd from 7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. Monday through Friday

LOOK FOR OUR DISPLAY NEAR THE AUDITORIUM ENTRANCE

Important information for parents about the 2009-2010 School Year Calendar

Questions and answers about the 2009-2010 School Year Calendar have been posted on the Board's website: www.ugdsb.on.ca. These provide reasons why the School Year Calendar Committee is recommending an early start to the school year. While we have not yet set the date for the start of school, it will be during the first week of September. The School Year Calendar Committee Board will bring the recommended school year calendar forward to the Board for approval on March 31. The final 2009-2010 school year calendar will be communicated to you immediately after its approval. Please consider adjusting your vacation and childcare plans accordingly.

Martha Rogers
Director of Education

Bob Borden
Chair of the Board