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Destination Imagination teams go to global finals

Five Grosse Pointe teams competed at the State Destination Imagination tournament, and two of them are going to Global finals the end of May. Pierce Middle School is the proud home of both those teams, one in Challenge B: Instinct Messaging and another in Challenge F: Project OUTREACH.

Success at economics programs

In the past year, the Grosse Pointe North Fed Challenge Team has participated in a number of economics programs, including:

- U.S. Treasury Financial Literacy Challenge - 111 participants, 34 in top 25%, Andrew Charnesky top 1% nationally.
- Federal Reserve Money Smart Ambassador Scholarship, 5 participants, 1 finalist (Jackie Shea, 1 of 5 from the tri-county area)
- Global Trade Mission by Automation Alley, 3 participants
- The Economics Challenge, 44 participants, four state finalists
- The Fed Challenge, 5 participants
- AskAsia.Org Scholarship (Globalization), All AP Macro students participating

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There are many ways to measure excellence



As MEAP scores were being released several middle school productions were being staged. Brownell students performed *The Wiz*. Pierce put on *Seussical the Musical*.



decreased slightly at the elementary level (tested in the fall of grade six) and remained stable for middle school (tested in ninth grade).

Last fall's Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) scores were recently released and show students' achievement levels remain high and stable.

The overall passing rate for English Language Arts (combined reading and writing scores) remains 92% or higher for all elementary grades and 91% for sixth and seventh grades. This is despite the extraordinary fact that not a single Grosse Pointe, Birmingham, Northville, Forest Hills, Lakeview, Okemos, Farmington or East Grand Rapids student received a score of "1 - exceeds state standards" on the writing portion of the MEAP exam. As such, the state has announced it will restructure the test and give a more meaningful measure in just two grades.

Mathematics scores increased or remained stable, with implementation of the new Everyday Math curriculum occurring at the same time as testing. Midyear local NWEA test data already shows impressive gains, so we look forward to next year's MEAP as another measure. Social Studies scored

Science scores remained high and stable with both fifth and eighth grade at 90% or better. While we celebrate these successes, it is important to remember these scores are only one measure of the educational experience.

In addition to the performing arts opportunities shown above, middle school students have wonderful opportunities within and after the school day to participate in fine arts, band, choir, and a number of inter and intraschool sports and clubs. Elementary students have vocal music and fine arts instruction from kindergarten on. Upper elementary students have foreign language instruction, and 90% choose to participate in instrumental offerings. When added to the strong core academic instruction measured by MEAP and other tests, we are proud of the mosaic of learning opportunities offered in our neighborhood schools.

- Dr. C. Suzanne Klein, Superintendent

BOARD BULLETIN

Why are there still budget cuts with the federal stimulus package?

Your Board of Education representatives and the Superintendent's budget council are working diligently to create a financial framework that will support the high academic and program expectations we have for our public schools. We take this responsibility very seriously. We understand the quality of our public school system protects our home values and helps draw families to Grosse Pointe to access the diverse educational opportunities we provide.

By June 30th, the Board of Education must approve a projected budget for the next school year that is balanced. The process must be transparent. And our thinking has to be long-term. As treasurer, I've worked with our administration to develop a series of new reports that are shared at televised monthly board meetings and posted on the website. These include benchmarking with similar districts – an important step in our budget development as we look for ways to reduce expenditures and increase revenue.

Like most districts, 85% of our budget is in salaries and benefits. We have made multimillion dollar cuts in the past several years, leaving no "easy" budget cuts at our disposal. The primary reasons for the shortfall include:

- decreasing enrollment, a trend seen across the state and nation
- increasing health care costs, up an estimated 5% from last year
- increasing retirement costs, up .5% from last year and the district is required to participate in the Michigan Public School Employee Retirement System (MPERS) program
- contractual salary increases for longevity and continuing education

Taken together, the health care, retirement, and contractual components will

average \$5,000 in increased compensation for each teacher next year.

We appreciate our dedicated and talented staff and are approaching the negotiations with all of our bargaining units in good faith that together we can develop shared solutions.

One of the short-term solutions is the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), also known as the federal stimulus package. For a district like ours, the impact of the federal stimulus is first seen in the elimination of the governor's proposed \$59/pupil cut. By eliminating that proposed cut, we were spared a half million dollars of additional cuts.

The rest of the federal stimulus funding our district will see impacts our three Title I elementary schools and the special education department. Those two years of funding come with strings attached and cannot be used to supplant existing district expenditures at our discretion. The funds have been earmarked by the federal government to be used primarily for training and technology and not to offset increased personnel costs.

After the federal stimulus package is accounted for, \$5.5 million in cuts remain. These will not be easy, and everyone has favorites they don't wish to see cut. The board will do everything it can to maintain our quality programs. The budget council has been meeting since December to analyze options and provide their professional opinion on what would be best for our district, using the budget development parameters provided by the board. The first draft of proposed cuts presented at the March BOE meeting are posted online and include returning to the 2006/07

teacher to student ratio which will mean laying off 74 teachers, reorganizing programs like community education, and reducing every budget area. To maintain our credit rating, we are committed to keeping our fund equity within the 15-20% range recommended by Michigan School Business Officials.

Your input is critical in this process. You are welcome to attend the upcoming budget work sessions and the budget hearing at 8 p.m., June 22 in North's library, watch the district website for updates, share ideas and questions at board meetings, and to call or email the administration and school board members with rumors we can clarify and ideas we can implement.

These are our neighborhood schools and despite the economic difficulties confronting all of us, we will maintain our tradition of excellence in a way that is fiscally responsible.

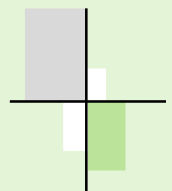
- Fred Minturn, BOE Treasurer

2008-09 Board of Education

Board meetings are typically the fourth Monday of the month at 8 p.m. January through June they are in North High School's Library, 707 Vernier. July through December they are held in South High School's Wicking Library, 11 Grosse Pointe Boulevard.

Agendas and meeting times are posted in the Administration Building at 389 St. Clair Avenue, and on the district website www.gpschools.org.

The Board of Education welcomes input through their email schoolboard@gpschools.org.



Learning never stops in Grosse Pointe

Elementary Summer School:

A number of fun new classes are being offered for elementary aged students.

Techno-Art Animations: Combine art and technology to create flip-books, hand-drawn animations, stop-motion animations, claymation and much more! Students will use traditional methods to write, draw and film their own animated movies. With instructor assistance, animations will be digitalized and put on the Internet to share with family and friends. Student will also receive a DVD.

Summer Science Camp: Students will perform a number of interesting and educational hands-on experiments that reinforce necessary skills and lessons in the Grosse Pointe science curriculum.

Math Made Easy (Grades 1-6):

Students will refine and build their basic math skills using the Everyday Math curriculum. This five (5) week course will include fun and educational hands on activities, as well as computer activities to help reinforce skills, along with real life connections to math.

Courses that were successful last year, and are being offered again by popular demand include the following:

F.A.S.T. Reading Courses: A clinical sequence of diagnosis, prescription and intervention will be followed for each individual child with a trained reading specialist using the F.A.S.T. Reading System. Each class is limited to six students per session.

Music Learning Experiences: This beginning, intermediate, and advanced music program is designed for students who want a head start or wish to experiment with different instruments to students who have between one and four years of experience on an instrument. Beginner class sizes are kept low to provide individual attention to the developing musician. Instrument rental is available.

The complete summer school course list is available on the district website www.gpschools.org. Fees range but typically run \$70 for 2 week courses, \$90 for 3 week courses, and \$120 for 5 week courses, with the exception of F.A.S.T. reading courses which cost \$240 due to the low teacher:pupil ratio. All music classes are \$100.

Middle Level Summer School:

Dates: July 7 - Aug. 12, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Times: Session 1: 8-10 a.m.

Session 2: 10:10 a.m.-12:10 p.m.

Location: Parcels Middle School

Price: \$160 per course

Deadline to register: After July 4th there will be a \$20 fee for late registrations.

New summer offerings: A new course in reading preparation will be offered as well as a computer course

Other highlighted courses: Step-up courses in writing, math and study skills. For 8th to 9th grade step-up courses, see the high school information.

High School Summer School

Dates: Monday through Thursdays

Semester 1: July 6-22

Semester 2: July 27-August 12

Times: 8 a.m. to 1:45 p.m. (Step-up courses are from 8-10 or 10:10-12:10)

Location: Parcels Middle School

Price: Step-up courses: \$200, Other Courses: \$275 for 1 semester (.5 credit) or \$500 for a full year (1.0 credit)

Deadline to register: After July 4th there will be a \$20 fee for late registrations.

New Summer Courses: Medical Investigations, Digital Seminar, Advanced Research Skills, Photo I and Step-up reading prep will all be new to the high school program of studies.

For information on secondary programs call Matt Outlaw at (313) 432-3211 email matt.outlaw@gpschools.org. For elementary, call Debra Duffey at (313) 432-5341 email debra.duffey@gpschools.org

GPPSS child care programs

Camp O'Fun is a summer childcare program that offers a number of fun choices in a safe, friendly neighborhood environment with weekly themes. Camp has a 5:1 student to staff ratio, and offers sports, arts and crafts, 17 interest centers, and swimming. Registration forms are available online. Rates are: \$210 resident/\$225 nonresident weekly, or \$50 daily, with a \$65 registration fee.

Kids Club is a before and after-school program offered in each elementary school during the school year. Middle school students can attend at the closest elementary school. You can enroll anytime, but must register yearly. Registration forms and rates for the 2009/10 school year will be available online by June. 2008/09 rates were \$5 for 7:15-8:30 a.m., \$10 for 3:30-6:30 p.m., plus a \$75 registration fee.

Both of these exceptional programs are licensed by the State. Questions? Call 432-3067 or email cheryl.dorman@gpschools.org.

Call for your Gold Card

Gold Cards offer the district's senior citizens the opportunity to attend various school events. Free admission to athletic functions and dramatic and musical productions is our way of thanking local senior citizens for the support they have provided the school system. To obtain a calendar or Gold Card, please call 313/432-3007.

Project Find

If your child age birth to six years is experiencing developmental delays, or you suspect your school-age child has a disability affecting their academic performance, "Don't worry, but don't wait." Call Student Services Co-directors Rose Mendola or Sue Banner at 313/432-3856.

District foundation hits million dollar mark

The Grosse Pointe Foundation for Public Education (GPFPE) just reached its first benchmarking goal of \$1,000,000.

The GPFPE was established in 2006 as a separate non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to providing private funding to support and enhance academic and enrichment programs and activities for students and staff of the Grosse Pointe Public School System. In the last two years, the Foundation has provided over \$500,000 in gifts to the schools to support fifteen programs across the district.

A key element in all of the grants funded is that they support the district's strategic plan. Special emphasis is placed on district-wide projects.

How did the foundation meet that lofty goal in this economic climate? There is a dedicated and growing group of volunteers that recognize the importance of this unique mechanism to directly support our neighborhood

schools. Some have made directed gifts for programs like F.A.S.T. reading or elementary foreign language that impact their children or grandchildren. Some have given gifts in honor of staff members that have touched their lives. Others have made unrestricted gifts or joined the annual Circle of Excellence campaign.

Board member Lisa Vreede said this about reaching the million dollar mark, "This is extraordinary, and humbling news. Thanks to all for your passion and commitment to 'our children, our schools and our future!'"

And true to form, outgoing GPFPE President Lorna G. Utley said to her fellow board members, "All of you are to be congratulated, and now on to the second million!"

For more information about the GPFPE, visit the foundation's new website www.gpfpe.org, call 313/432-3058 or email ourfuture@gpfpe.org.

Please register now for fall

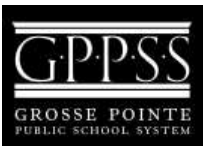
Since actual enrollment information is used to determine staffing, we encourage you to start the residency verification and enrollment process today if your child will be attending the Grosse Pointe Public School System next fall. All forms are on the district website under the enrollment dropdown. Call 313/432-3083 to make your appointment.

TV production students honored

The North and South TV production programs both had strong showings at the Michigan Student Film and Video competition sponsored by the Digital Arts Film and Television organization. The district's two Best of Show videos were displayed to the public at the Detroit Institute of Arts April 26. For more information on GPPSS student awards, please see the News section of the district website.

Ten Schools certified "Green"

This year, 10 GPPSS schools have been certified official Green Schools.



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