



GPA Newsletter

Jan/Feb 2013

Leadership Update

Happy New Year!

It is hard to believe that 2013 is already here. At Gardner Pilot Academy we have been working hard to prepare all of your children to show ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE and display their core values of Caring, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility in all areas of the school. In the next few months we will be giving many state tests to assess your child's progress towards state standards, also referred to as the Common Core. In January all English Language Learners will take a test called the Access Test which is designed to test every ELL students reading, writing and speaking skills in the English language. In January we will also be administering school based tests to assess every students reading level, fluency level, math computation and math concepts. We are very proud that at our September administration of these tests our largest area of improvement was having students read

well above level for their grade. This data speaks to our school commitment to ACADEMIC CHALLENGE. The Gardner believes strongly that all students should be supported to improve academically all levels including those students who are way above benchmark. In order to do this our teachers at GPA have been using the new Common Core to raise the level of RIGOR in classroom instruction. Every grade level is reading more complex texts during read alouds, independent reading and classroom guided instruction. Every grade level is also integrating more text based questions into all of our instruction. Both of these strategies have been named as key components of the common core in reading. Additionally we are providing more targeted small group instruction to students on all levels during our success block. This year we implemented a 45 minute block Monday through Thursday called the success block. During this time teachers are pulling

groups of students based on need with two of these groups focused on students above grade level. While groups are meeting all other students are engaged in Sustained Silent Independent Reading. We are very encouraged by our preliminary data that suggest that kids are improving across all levels. Each newsletter we will be sharing and highlighting specific examples of ACADEMIC CHALLENGE at GPA.

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Governing Board Minutes (11/14/12)

Principal Evaluation:

Need to form a subcommittee composed of a parent, teacher and Mr. Irwin Blumer to evaluate Ms. Herman. The subcommittee and Mr. Irwin will be responsible for Erica's progress towards her professional goals. Mr. Blumer has gone to a training for evaluation process.

NAEYC Accreditation for Early Childhood:

We are going through NAEYC Accreditation for early childhood. The due date is Jan 2013. We need this status to make this school a highly chosen school.

Principal for the Day:

We had a Senior VP from The Comcast NE Division visit us as principal for the day.

Run for Laptops:

Liz Byron 6th grade learning specialist will be running through the Sahara in April to raise 50,000 for a laptop for every 6th grade student.

Faculty Report:

School announcements started his week.

We have added a new 4th grade class (Rm 18). Ms. Tildsley is coaching the teacher in this class.

Parent Report:

Arts and Community Celebration is taking place on Dec 19th from 5:30-

7:30pm. Invitation (flyer) will go home to families.

Buttons:

Board members can wear these to encourage people to inquire about the board. Will order in English and Spanish.

Hispanic Coffee Hour (HCH) and PC

Families expressed they were not happy with the current vendor for the school pictures. We are looking into Lifetouch as a possible new vendor. Parent Council and HCH meets once a month from 5:30-7:00. Contact Elba Mendez for more information.

District Plan:

What would be the impact on Gardner with the different proposals? The goals to have somebody to propose to school community by end of December, to be voted on in January to begin school year 2014-15.

Board Priorities/District Priorities:

Academic Rigor, Using Data, Engagement, Prof Growth and Eval.

What do we need to focus on to move forward in our vision?

Members broke into groups and discussed. Suggestion were: share more information with families about student progress. Have parents see specific student



achievement see where they are gaining/losing points.

We should develop an inclusion/ELL model

Facilities: Need facilities updated. New science lab and lunchroom.

Budget: Received 50,000 from state for being a demonstration site for Afterschool (grant will not carry through summer)

Have applied for Harvard Allston Partnership Grant. If we get this grant the projected gap for afterschool will be 5,500. If we don't the gap will be 15,000.

Received 2,000 grant from Target for Friday Arts

Last year events (zumbathon, walkathon, friendship feast) raised 17,000 for playworks.

Erica explained how the budget is developed.

Decembers mtg: talk about enrollment and budget.

Adult Education



This semester in English class we have been learning a lot and having a blast. For the last couple of weeks we have been working on vocabulary needed for doctor visits. All the students worked really hard to write and then perform skits about doctors and patients.

We have also been practicing forming and answering questions. Last week the students did a project in pairs in the computer lab. All groups had to find questions on the internet, copy and paste them into a word docu-

ment, and then write answers to those questions. It was an amazing moment in which the students could combine a lot of different skills and vocabulary that they have learned in the last few months. Soon we will celebrate all of our hard work with a Christmas party! It's been so great and we are all really looking forward to English class in 2013.



Please be sure to "like" us on facebook by going to the Gardner Pilot Academy page on facebook and clicking "like".

Academic Challenge

Two groups of fourth graders have each been meeting twice a week during success block. These students have been working on current events. Students have been reading articles, listening to speeches, engaging in class discussions and writing sessions on issues and events like the recent election and global warming's effect on animals. These students are working on synthesizing main ideas and communicating their thinking to each other and the world through Twitter. Students' ideas and thoughts can be read on Twitter and we welcome more followers at @GPA4th.





Parent Teacher Conferences

As a school we have a goal of having EVERY parent meet with their child's teacher during the month of January. Teachers will be sending home notices for parent teacher conferences. We need 100% participation. Please contact Elba Mendez if you need support with translation.

Afterschool Update

The GPA/YMCA Program has open seats in all grades and is looking for more GPA students to join our high-quality, and top ranked by the state after school program. We offer reduced weekly fees for families in need of financial assistance. Please call Arielle Fleisher at the school for more information.

Nurses Corner

Our Health and Wellness Team has several exciting events planned for this year. These include:

- Zumbathon on Friday, January 25
- Walkathon on Wednesday, April 10 (Rain date April 11)
- Health Week: May 20-24

GPA Wellness Champions this year are 2nd grade teacher Sarah Howard and school nurse Sarah Khoury. We will be working together with classroom teachers and school administration to integrate more movement breaks into the school day. This will include a "Jammin' Minute" during morning announcements and various other very quick activities that give a chance for kids to move their bodies and become more invigorated to learn.

Finally, an important reminder about the Joseph Smith Community Health Center location at GPA: The Joseph Smith Clinic at GPA has medical appointments with Dr. Nicole Badie (family physician) available on Mondays and Tuesdays 1:30-5pm. This is a very convenient way for families and staff to be seen for healthy check-ups or sick visits right at GPA!



January 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Schedule of Events

- * Jan 1st—New Years Day—No School
- * Jan 2nd—No School
- * Jan 3rd—student return from vacation
- * Jan 7th—whole school field trip to the aquarium. Parent volunteer opportunities are limited due to space on the buses.
- * Jan 9th @ 5:30pm —Hispanic Coffee Hour for Spanish speaking families (Rm 11)
- * Jan 9th @ 6pm—Parent Council (room 11)
- * Jan 9th @3pm—Wellness Team
- * Jan 10th @ 8:30am—Hispanic Coffee Hour for Spanish speaking families (Parent Center)
- * Jan 14th @ 12:15pm—FCOC (Family & Community Outreach Committee) (Rm 21)
- * Jan 16th @ 7:30am—Governing Board (basement art room)
- * Jan 16th @ 6pm—Parent Information Session for the Steppingstone College Success Academy for 4th, 5th and 6th grade families. More info will be sent home.
- * Jan 21st—M L King Jr Day—no School
- * Jan 25th—zumbathon. Pledge forms will be sent home when we return from December break.
- * Adult Ed—Tuesday’s and Thursday from 6-8:30pm

Schedule of Events

- * Feb 6th—Whole school field trip to the Boston University for an indoor field day. Parent volunteer opportunities are limited due to space on the buses.
- * Feb 6th @ 3—Wellness Team
- * Feb 13th @ 5:30pm—Hispanic Coffee Hour for Spanish speaking families (Rm 11)
- * Feb 13th @ 6pm—Parent Council (Rm 11)
- * Feb 14th @ 8:30am—Hispanic Coffee Hour for Spanish speaking families (Parent Center)
- * Feb 18th—Presiden’ts Day—No School
- * Feb 19-22—February Vacation
- * Feb 25th @ 12:15— FCOC (Family and Community Outreach Committee) (Rm 21)
- * Feb 27th @ 7:30am — Governing Board (basement art room)

February 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28		