



Currents

The Bimonthly Newsletter of the Genesee Community Charter School

February 2006

Volume 5 No. 4

Reaching Out in Service

An important part of the mission of the Genesee Community Charter School is to be of service to our colleagues and their students in other schools. We believe it is our responsibility to share our successes and struggles in order to improve teaching and learning for a much wider population of children than we are able to enroll. Small ripples that extend from GCCS may expand in ways that make a real difference for other schools and families. Our numerous visitors, Dissemination Project activities, student teachers, and ELOB Demonstration Site Seminars give us many opportunities to connect with other educators and share strategies and effective practices.

Expeditionary Learning has provided us another opportunity to reach out to others.

In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, only three New Orleans public schools re-opened this year. Most of the district's children have relocated to Houston, Dallas, Atlanta, and other cities in the U.S. With so many schools and neighborhoods devastated by the hurricane, the district is largely non-functioning. New Orleans school and community officials are taking time to thoughtfully consider how best to reconstruct what had been a seriously failing system. They

are working on a plan to reshape and rebuild public education for New Orleans' young people, which may include a whole host of new public charter schools.

New Orleans community leaders recently hosted "Making It Happen: A New Orleans Rebuilding Resource Festival." A group from Expeditionary Learning, including GCCS's School Leader, was invited to attend the festival and meet with community members to spur new ideas and provide support for the creation of new schools. We spoke to many educators who were eager to consider new options for public education. One promising idea came from a community leader who is interested in starting an arts-based school that would incorporate the study of New Orleans' rich history. GCCS will be a willing and able resource for him as he moves forward to make his dream a reality. Over the next few years, it is possible that several Expeditionary Learning schools will be ready to serve residents who return home to a rebuilt New Orleans.

Developing habits of service is central to the Expeditionary Learning philosophy. It is an honor to be able to demonstrate service at an institutional level in addition to the everyday practices in which we engage our students.



Intent to Return Due March 22

The deadline for **INTENT TO RETURN** forms is **Wednesday, March 22 by 3:00 p.m.** All current students who plan to attend GCCS next year must return a form to school in order to hold their spaces. Forms will be sent home in the mail at the end of February. If you don't receive a form by March 8, please call Maureen Milke at 271-4552 ext. 460.



We have many anxious families of children at all grade levels on our waiting list. Unreserved spaces will be offered to new families. Please note that in order to be fair to all our families and applicants, *we strictly observe deadlines.*

Don't lose your child's space! Be sure to send your **INTENT TO RETURN** form back to school before the deadline.

Family Association Directory

Board of Trustees Representatives

John Bernunzio (256-0722), Jemeul Johnson (719-8610),
Betsy Serapilio-Frank (654-5958)

Officers

Co-Chairs: Jim Carter (473-1187), Greg Cutt (339-9940),
Lorraine Schild (244-1161)

Secretary: Alice Carli (527-9632)

Treasurer: Julie Schnepf (256-0722)

Family Association Committee Chairs

Family Social Activities

John Quitter (787-0332)

Babysitting & Transportation

Mary Carol Taylor (458-9809)

Fund-Raising

Allison McGrath (482-0052)

Legislative Issues

Anne Lichtenstein (244-7373)

Outreach

Lorraine Schild (244-1161), Betsy Serapilio-Frank (654-5958)



Classroom Parent Volunteer Coordinators

Kindergarten

Denise Anderson (244-8202), Laura Brewer (241-3034),
Jennifer San Filippo (442-5420)

First Grade

Portia Chiarella (44-7048), Liz Conheady (44207048),
Kate Kressman-Kehoe (442-6942), John David Morgan
(461-4471), David & Mary Carol Taylor (458-9809),
Yvonne Villareale (473-9318), Amy Wulforst (654-5681)

Second Grade

Marcy Berger (271-3549), Blanche Fox (288-9313), Sekile
Nzinga-Johnson (328-9614), Karen Schneider (288-9313),
Margaret Velocci (647-0337), Nancy Weinstein (865-
7714), Eileen Wrona (288-3273)

Third Grade

Gina Dodd (426-3356), Annette Ramos (244-1378), Marisa
Stike (473-9318), Yvonne Villareale (473-9318)

Fourth Grade

Skip Bruzda (473-9736), Joanne DeMarle (328-5982),
Jeanne Eckl (377-8957), Kathryn Goldfeder (381-5083),
Kathy Grove (328-2621)

Fifth Grade

Teresa Gerchman (458-1845), Faye Henri (244-1831), Sue
Lederer (473-3929), Anne Lichtenstein (244-7373), Anne
Spaulding (256-1444)

Sixth Grade

Alicia Ainsworth (262-5482), Cheryl Marshall (671-2961)

Upcoming Dates To Remember



- Feb. 13: Board of Trustees Meeting
5:30 p.m. Cunningham House
- Feb. 20: President's Day
School is Closed
- Feb. 21-22: Professional Development Days
No School for Students
- Feb. 28: Family Association Meeting
6:30-8 p.m. Eisenhart Ballroom
- Mar. 7-10: NYS Math Exam Grades 3-5
- Mar. 14-17: NYS Math Exam Grade 6
- Mar. 14: Exhibition Night Grade 2
- Mar. 16: Exhibition Night Grades K, 6
- Mar. 20: Exhibition Night Grades 4, 5
- Mar. 21: Exhibition Night Grades 1, 3
- Mar. 31: John McCutcheon Concert
- Apr. 13-14: Professional Development Days
No School for Students
- Apr. 17-21: Spring Recess
School is Closed
- Apr. 25: Family Association Meeting
6:30-8 p.m. 4th Grade Classrm
- May 7: Family Talent Show
3-5 p.m. Eisenhart Auditorium
- May 9: Board of Trustees Meeting
5:30 p.m. Cunningham House

EARLY PEOPLE/ WOODLAND PEOPLES EXHIBITIONS

- Tues., March 14: 2nd Grade
- Thurs., March 16: Kdg, 6th Grade
- Mon., March 20: 4th and 5th Grades
- Tues., March 21: 1st and 3rd Grades



Specific Times and Locations
To Be Announced

*All students are
required to attend.*

Families – Come Strut Your Stuff!

The Family Association is planning our **First Annual Family Talent Show** – the perfect opportunity to dust off those tap shoes, feather boas, or drumsticks. Put together a family act and share your talent on the Eisenhart stage with our GCCS community. Or just save the date and enjoy an afternoon of great home-grown entertainment. The show will be held **Sunday, May 7, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.** with a rehearsal on



Wednesday, May 3 or Thursday, May 4 at 6:30 p.m. For more information or to volunteer to help organize the event, please call Tonya Johnson at 719-8610.

After School Activities Interest

Two parents have expressed interest in beginning some after school “clubs” for students. Odyssey of the Mind and needle-work handicrafts have been suggested as possibilities.

Extra-curricular activities are a terrific way for students to strengthen social relationships and learn new skills. However, they require a great deal of commitment from parents to lead and assist. Please watch for a survey in backpack mail to gauge your interest in participating and helping out. We’ll also discuss the idea at an upcoming Family Association meeting.

Basement Renovations Well Underway

Paint is being scraped, carpet ripped up, ceiling tiles torn down – the Eisenhart Basement is undergoing a dramatic transformation! The current plan calls for moisture abatement and new paint, lighting, hvac, flooring, and ceiling. There will also be two small break-out rooms constructed to allow for small group work for our students.

Many thanks to the GCCS Family Association for turning its fund-raising efforts to the support of this project. The Eisenhart Basement promises to be a valuable and pleasant space for P.E., small groups, special services, and the occasional Community Circle.



Don't Miss an Unforgettable Evening of Entertainment with world-renowned Singer, Songwriter, Storyteller



John McCutcheon

Friday, March 31, 2006, 7:30 p.m.

Eisenhart Auditorium

Tickets \$15 in advance, \$17 at the door

Support Our Family Association's Efforts to Renovate the Eisenhart Basement

Tickets available at RMSC reception desk



*The Fund-raising Committee needs help organizing this event!
Please call 473-1187 to volunteer.*