

Currents

The Bimonthly Newsletter of the Genesee Community Charter School

February 2010

Volume 9 No. 4

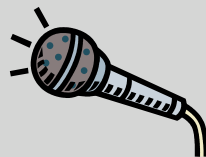
(Former) Sixth Graders Step Onto National Stage

The December issue of *Currents* described the impact our sixth graders have had as they tackle solutions to contemporary issues in Rochester. Representatives from our sixth grade class of 2005-2006 are now preparing to step onto a national stage.

Five students have been invited to speak at the Expeditionary Learning Schools National Conference, which will be held in Kansas City, Missouri at the end of February. Their presentation will be part of a keynote address delivered to about 700 conference participants on the topic of “good work.”

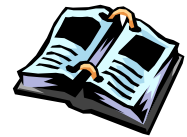
The students will share their experience evaluating the merits of the Grasso-Zimmer proposal to re-water the Erie Canal in Downtown Rochester. They will describe the research they conducted in four cities that have thriving downtown waterways, how they analyzed the data they collected, and the experience they had presenting their findings to Mayor Duffy and other city officials. They will also give an update on the progress of the Grasso-Zimmer plan, which, at least in part due to the work of this class, is moving forward and is on track to become a reality.

Even after they’ve moved onto middle and high school, our students’ sixth grade efforts continue to pay dividends for them and for our community.



Intent to Return Due March 17

The deadline for **INTENT TO RETURN** forms is **Wednesday, March 17 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 in mid-February. If you don’t receive a form, 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.

Parents Weigh in on Background Checks for Volunteers

The January Family Association meeting included a lively discussion about the State Education Department’s new mandate that charter schools conduct background checks on volunteers and others “who have regular access to the students enrolled in the school.” Parents provided input on what information should be solicited when performing background checks, how to define “regular access” and determine who should undergo checks, and how the information should be used by school staff.

- continued on p. 3

Family Association Directory

Board of Trustees Representatives

Diana Carter (473-1187, blueloon@rochester.rr.com)

LaShunda Echols-Smith (436-6219,
lashunda.smith@successfulpathways.com)

Dan Bell (544-0577, dbell@rochester.rr.com)

Officers

Co-Chairs: Nikki Hogan (621-8731, nhogan13@hotmail.com)
Elvis Reyes (338-9012, elvis.reyes@twcable.com)

Secretary: Rebecca Degro-Carbonel (266-8408,
becky273@hotmail.com)

Treasurer: Andre Spenard (820-6639,
hammerheadconsulting@earthlink.net)

Family Association Committee Chairs

Family Social Activities

Lynn Mazzeo & Vincent Graves
(298-5125, betecd@yahoo.com)

Fund-Raising

Maria Kast (288-8449, mariatkast@gmail.com)

Legislative Issues

Paul Hansen (698-5051, phansen14620@gmail.com)

Outreach

Kate Kressmann-Kehoe (442-6942, kressmann@frontiernet.net)

Program

Diana Carter (473-1187, blueloon@rochester.rr.com)

Classroom Parent Volunteer Coordinators

Wendy Walsh (244-4996, wendyphoto@hotmail.com)

Classroom Parent Volunteer Coordinators

Kindergarten

Nicole Meyer (482-2566, nicolem@rochesterymca.org)

First Grade

Karen Braden (615-5200, karen@mikaren.com)

Second Grade

Brenda Wonder (271-0294, wondelvecchio@hotmail.com)

Third Grade

Gale Lynch (454-3295, galelynch@frontiernet.net)

Fourth Grade

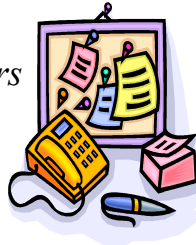
Denise Anderson (244-8202, tommya31323@frontiernet.net)

Fifth Grade

Pam Black-Colton (244-5097, pbcl4610@yahoo.com)

Sixth Grade

Eileen Wrona (734-1160, enchantedrosegarden@hotmail.com)



Upcoming Dates To Remember

To Do:

- Feb. 7: Family Ice Skating Party
10:00-11:30 a.m.
Manhattan Square Park
- Feb. 10: Board of Trustees Meeting
5:30 p.m. Cunningham House
- Feb. 13: Parents' Night Out
Babysitting Fundraiser
5:30-9:00 p.m.
- Feb. 15: President's Day
School is Closed
- Feb. 16-17: Professional Development Days
No School for Students
- Feb. 18-19: YES! School is Open for
Students!
- Feb. 18: Family Association Meeting
6:30-8:00 p.m.
- Feb. 27: Parents' Night Out
Babysitting Fundraiser
5:30-9:00 p.m.
- Mar. 11: Family Association Meeting
6:30-8:00 p.m.
- Mar. 17: Board of Trustees Meeting
5:30 p.m. Cunningham House
- Mar. 18-19: Professional Development Days
No School for Students
- Mar. 25: Parent Teacher Conferences
11:30 a.m. Dismissal
- Mar. 28: Family Talent Show
2:00 p.m. Eisenhart Auditorium
- Apr. 2: Professional Development Day
No School for Students
- Apr. 3: Dining for Dollars Fundraiser
- Apr. 10: Saturday Parent Work Day
9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
- Apr. 14: Board of Trustees Meeting
5:30 p.m. Cunningham House
- Apr. 15: Family Association Meeting
6:30-8:00 p.m.
- Apr. 19-23: Spring Recess
School is Closed

Background Checks (continued from p. 1)

Opinions differed widely about how to determine who should be required to undergo background checks. The group agreed that overnight chaperones and those volunteering more than 30 hours per year in classrooms should receive clearance. Some felt that all parents who interact with children should have a background check, while other felt that this was an unnecessarily broad requirement. There seemed to be consensus that the school would limit the information we requested to instances involving crimes against children – sexual offenders, child abuse, maltreatment, neglect, etc. More discussion is needed about how frequently checks will be completed, how the information will be used by school staff, and the logistics of conducting background checks. A small committee of parents is researching other schools' policies and procedures so that we can learn from their practices.



Please join us on **Thursday, February 18 at 6:30 p.m.** in the sixth grade classroom to continue the discussion. Parents' recommendations will be presented to the Board of Trustees at its March meeting. The Board will adopt a policy before the end of the school year, and it will become effective for 2010-2011.

Parents' Night Out Fundraiser for Sixth Grade Fieldwork

Enjoy a night out while your children have a great time in! Watch backpack mail for sign-up forms for babysitting on the following dates:

Saturday, February 13, 5:30 - 9:00 p.m.

Saturday, February 27, 5:30 - 9:00 p.m.



All sixth grade babysitters have completed Red Cross babysitting training and will be supervised by an adult.

Giving a Gift Card as a Birthday, Graduation, or Wedding Gift? Eating Out, Buying Groceries, or Purchasing Gifts?

Send a portion of your expenditures GCCS's way!

It's easy! Just purchase gift cards through SCRIP and 2-12% of your purchase is donated back to the Family Association!



Get Details on our website www.GCCSchool.org or e-mail Karen Braden at Karen@mikaren.com.

Parent Information Sessions Scheduled for New Applicants

Know any families interested in sending their children to GCCS? Please encourage them to attend one of our Parent Information Sessions so that they may learn the details of our school's program and philosophy, and determine if GCCS is a good fit for their child. These sessions will be held in the Eisenhart Auditorium on:

Saturday, March 27, 9-11 a.m. or 1-3 p.m.

Wednesday, March 31, 7-9 p.m.

Applications for enrollment will be available at these sessions. The enrollment lottery will be conducted Thursday, April 1 at 9:00 a.m. in the Computer Lab.



TIME FOR WINTER FUN!

Family Skating Party



Sunday, February 7
10:00 – 11:30 a.m.

Manhattan Square Park

Warm up in the adjacent cabin
Bagels, coffee, and hot chocolate provided
Skate rental \$3.00
(limited sizes available)



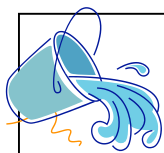
**Don't Miss
This Year's**

**Performance
Extravaganza!**

The Family Talent Show

Sunday, March 28, 2:00 p.m.
Eisenhart Auditorium

Please bring a canned good
to donate to a local food bank



Saturday Parent Work Day

Saturday, April 10
9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Bring buckets, rags,
and elbow grease,
and come make your
child's classroom sparkle!

Free babysitting provided by
the sixth graders

EARLY PEOPLE/WOODLAND PEOPLES EXHIBITION DATES

THURSDAY, FEB 11 – 6TH GRADE

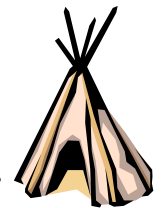
THURSDAY, MARCH 4 – 4TH GRADE

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 10 – 3RD GRADE

THURSDAY, MARCH 11 – 2ND GRADE

MONDAY, MARCH 15 – K, 1ST GRADE

TUESDAY, MARCH 16 – 5TH GRADE



Do you have a talent for **COOKING GOOD FOOD**, or do you just enjoy **EATING GOOD FOOD**?
Do you like sharing **DESSERT, LIVE MUSIC, AND DANCING** with friends and family?



Mark your calendars for the "Dining for Dollars" Family Association Fund-Raiser Saturday April 3rd



How It Works: Host a Dinner Party for Other GCCS Parents OR Make a Donation and Attend One of the Dinner Parties Being Hosted. Then Meet Back at School for Dessert, Music, and Dancing!

Watch Backpack Mail for More Information