



# Currents

The Bi-monthly Newsletter of the Genesee Community Charter School

October 2008

Volume 8 No. 2

## Final Products Set the Stage for Learning



Over the years, GCCS students have produced beautiful, high-quality books, performances, magazines, newspapers, displays, presentations, and other products. But is the time and effort it takes to pull off a polished end product worth it? Does the end justify the means?

We believe it does, if the final product is thoughtfully designed and carefully executed. At GCCS, the final product for each class's twelve-week expedition plays a very important role. As teachers plan their expeditions, they consider a variety of ways for children to synthesize learning and apply their knowledge and skills. Here are some guidelines GCCS teachers adhere to:

- ***Final products should reflect children's accomplishment of most of the expedition learning targets.*** When teachers write expedition plans, they use the New York State Learning Standards and other sources to define goals for reading, writing, social studies, science, character, and sometimes math. Then they design a final product that will require that students master the social studies/science content and further develop their ability to read, write, reason, speak, and collaborate. For example, last year's third grade student docent project compelled students to learn about Native Peoples around North America and polish their speaking skills in order to be able to teach others. The accompanying poetry they wrote also developed their skills in writing.
- ***Final products should seem a little impossible.*** The Outward Bound foundations of our school encourage us to help children take risks and stretch toward seemingly unreachable goals. Students should feel a little overwhelmed by the magnitude of the final project, and should build confidence as their skills and knowledge grow and as they learn to reach out for the support of their teachers and peers. This year, the sixth graders will create a presentation for city officials and for ArtWalk II planners to provide recommendations for future public arts initiatives in Rochester. This class must stretch academically, work well together, and polish its presentation skills in order to accomplish this task, and with hard work, perseverance, and support, they will succeed.

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## GCCS Board of Trustees

Election of New Parent Representative  
at the Family Association Meeting  
Tuesday, October 28

If interested, please attend the meeting  
prepared to make a brief statement.  
Elections will be held immediately following  
candidate presentations.

## Introducing Our Special Education Staff

Special education services are provided to students who have been identified with disabilities that may range from speech or language impairment, sensory integration disorder, learning or emotional disabilities, and autism. Highly qualified individuals from the Rochester City School District and Clinical Associates of the Fingerlakes (CAFL) provide these services in accordance with children's IEP's.

This year, we have two full-time special education teachers who are employed by the RCSD and are placed at GCCS. Mariann Kuter returns for her second year. Dr. Kuter has taught special education for 24 years. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Speech Pathology from Nazareth College, a Master's Degree in Speech Pathology and Special Education from Nazareth College and SUNY Geneseo, and a Ph.D. from the Union Institute in Special Education. Lynda Robinson has taught pre-school and special education for 18 years. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology and Elementary Education and a Master's Degree in Special Education from Nazareth College.

We also have an Autism Specialist who visits from RCSD. Gayle Harrison has worked as a School Psychologist, Special Education Consultant, and Adjunct Professor. She has a

## Family Association Directory

### *Board of Trustees Representatives*

Diana Carter (473-1187, [blueloon@rochester.rr.com](mailto:blueloon@rochester.rr.com)), Wendy Quarles (647-1667, [wquarles@buffalo.edu](mailto:wquarles@buffalo.edu)),  
New Representative to be Elected at October Family Association Meeting

### *Officers*

**Co-Chairs:** Jamine Wilson (256-1566, [jgwilson30@hotmail.com](mailto:jgwilson30@hotmail.com)), Bill Gargan (461-0855, [wgargan@monroecounty.gov](mailto:wgargan@monroecounty.gov))

**Secretary:** Volunteer Needed!

**Treasurer:** Andre Spenard (820-6639, [hammerheadconsulting@earthlink.net](mailto:hammerheadconsulting@earthlink.net))

### *Family Association Committee Chairs*

#### **Family Social Activities**

Nikki Hogan (621-8731, [hoganshideaway@hotmail.com](mailto:hoganshideaway@hotmail.com))

#### **Fund-Raising**

Maria Kast (288-8449, [maria.t.kast@hotmail.com](mailto:maria.t.kast@hotmail.com))

#### **Legislative Issues**

Eric Anderson (436-5136)

#### **Outreach**

Kate Kressman-Kehoe (442-6942, [kressmann@frontiernet.net](mailto:kressmann@frontiernet.net))

#### **Program**

Diana Carter (473-1187, [blueloon@rochester.rr.com](mailto:blueloon@rochester.rr.com))

#### **Classroom Parent Volunteer Coordinators**

Yvonne Villareale (473-9318, [yvonne.villareale@frontiernet.net](mailto:yvonne.villareale@frontiernet.net)),

Wendy Walsh (244-4996, [wendyphoto@hotmail.com](mailto:wendyphoto@hotmail.com))

### *Classroom Parent Volunteer Coordinators*

#### *Lead Parents*

##### **Kindergarten**

Karen Braden (615-5200, [karen@mikaren.com](mailto:karen@mikaren.com))

##### **First Grade**

Kate Kressman-Kehoe (442-6942, [kressmann@frontiernet.net](mailto:kressmann@frontiernet.net))

##### **Second Grade**

Rebecca Degro-Carbonel (266-8408, [rdcarbonel22@frontiernet.net](mailto:rdcarbonel22@frontiernet.net))

##### **Third Grade**

Nikki Hogan (621-8731, [hoganshideaway@hotmail.com](mailto:hoganshideaway@hotmail.com))

##### **Fourth Grade**

Liz Conheady (442-7048, [econheady@msn.com](mailto:econheady@msn.com))

##### **Fifth Grade**

Denise Anderson (244-8202, [tommya31323@frontiernet.net](mailto:tommya31323@frontiernet.net))

##### **Sixth Grade**

Yvonne Villareale (473-9318, [yvonne.villareale@frontiernet.net](mailto:yvonne.villareale@frontiernet.net))

Volunteer needed for **Family Association Secretary!**

Please call or e-mail one of the co-chairs listed above if you can take on this position.



## Upcoming Dates To Remember



- Oct. 8: Board of Trustees Meeting  
5:30 p.m. Cunningham House
- Oct. 9: Curriculum Night
- Oct. 10: Professional Development Day  
No School for Students
- Oct. 13: Columbus Day  
School is Closed
- Oct. 18: Saturday Parent Work Day  
9:00a.m.-1:00 p.m.
- Oct. 23: Site Seminar
- Oct. 23: Site Seminar Wine & Cheese  
Reception 5:30-7:30 p.m.  
Arts & Cultural Council
- Oct. 24: Site Seminar, 1:00 Dismissal
- Oct. 28: Family Association Meeting  
6:30-8 p.m. Eisenhart Ballroom
- Nov. 11: Professional Development Day  
No School for Students
- Nov. 12: Board of Trustees Meeting  
5:30 p.m. Cunningham House
- Nov. 12-13: NYS Social Studies Test  
Grade 5
- Nov. 24-25: Professional Development Days  
No School for Students
- Nov. 26-28: Thanksgiving Recess  
School is Closed
- Dec. 10: Board of Trustees Meeting  
5:30 p.m. Cunningham House

## Village To City Exhibition Dates

(note date changes)

**Mon., Nov. 10: 4<sup>th</sup> Grade**

**Thurs., Nov. 13: K, 1<sup>st</sup> Grade**

**Mon., Nov. 17: 6<sup>th</sup> Grade**

**Tues., Nov. 18: 2<sup>nd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade**

**Tues., Dec. 2: 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade**

## Final Products (cont'd from p. 1)

- **Final products, when possible, should be of service or for an audience beyond the classroom.** Students are particularly driven to produce quality work when the stakes are high and when their efforts benefit others. Previous sixth graders' work on rewatering the Erie Canal in downtown Rochester is a good example.
- **Final products should integrate the arts when appropriate.** Most student-produced books and magazines include visual arts, and most performances include music and dance. Integrating the arts helps students deepen their understanding of the material and their expression of what they have learned. The *Lorax* play staged by our current third grade when they were in first grade is a great example, as is the *First Comes the Egg* picture book written by a third grade class.
- **Over students' years in the school, final products should engage children in a range of modes of expression.** All students should have the opportunity at some point to participate in a play, write a book, publish a magazine, serve as a student docent at RMSC, and produce other types of final products. These may not take place at the same

grade level for every class, but will happen at some point during their tenure at GCCS.

- **Final products should be polished at a developmentally level.** We want our final products to be of the highest quality without teachers doing the work for children. A little adult support and technical skill can often help show off student work with style. Last year's Kindergarten presentation of its Ice Age Mammals book is a good example.



GCCS teachers agree that there must be a healthy balance between instruction and product emphasis. Final products can't just be about "show." They must be worthwhile endeavors that require student learning in order to complete, and then represent well what students have accomplished. In addition to reflecting content knowledge, final products should engage students in learning new media and new forms of expression.

You'll see many fine examples of final products at November's exhibition nights and throughout the year.



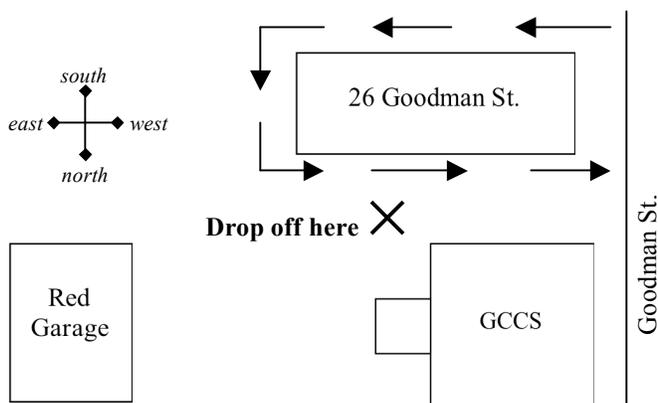
## Announcing New Drop-Off Procedures

If you drop off your children in the morning, there is a new option that will eliminate the need for you to park and get out of your car. If you'd like to stay in your car, we have developed an alternate route so as to avoid parking lot congestion and interference with the school buses.

From Goodman St., parents may pull into the driveway of 26 Goodman St., which is the office/spa building just south of the school. Drive along the left side of the driveway, and turn left just beyond the building. This will bring you out onto the museum campus at the south side of the school. You may stop the car, let your children out, and keep going through the Goodman St. exit.

If you wish to accompany your child into school, please park in one of the RMSC lots. No cars may be parked in front of the school, in the drop-off loop, or in the parking lot of 26 Goodman St.

Hope this makes your mornings run more smoothly!



## Family Association Meeting Tuesday, October 28 6:30-8 p.m.

- 6:30 p.m.: Business Meeting, Election of New Parent Board Representative
- 7:00 p.m.: Presentations by local organizations – see backpack mail for details

## Don't Forget Curriculum Night!

Thursday, October 9

5:30 – 7:00 p.m.

Kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> Grades

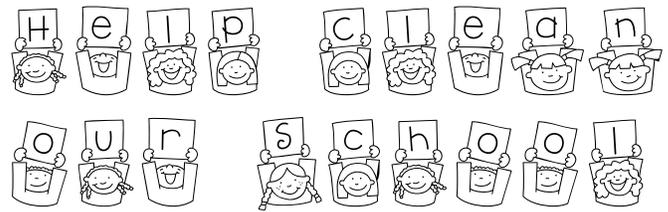
7:15 – 8:45 p.m.

2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> Grades



Learn about your child's educational program and daily schedule and routines with a special focus on the new edition of the Investigations Math Program

Babysitting Available in the Eisenhart Basement, \$2.00 per child



### Saturday Parent Work Days:

 October 18

 January 31

 April 4

9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.



Bring buckets and rags and help make our school sparkle!

Babysitting Available at no charge

*cooking*



*lessons*

## What Service can you Offer?

Plan ahead FOR the

### GCCS Service Auction

Tuesday, December 18

At the Family Pot Luck Social

*child care*

*photography*

*cleaning*

*etc.!*

*household repairs*

### Special Education Staff (cont'd from p. 1)

Bachelor's Degree in Psychology from Brown University, a Master's Degree in Clinical Psychology from Clark University, and a Ph.D. in Developmental/Educational Psychology from Boston College.

Our Speech-Language Therapy services are being provided by Renee Hall until November, when Kristie Sholly returns from maternity leave. Emily Meyer provides Occupational Therapy services, and Jackie Becker provides Counseling services.

Shannon Copper joins us as a one-to-one aide in kindergarten. Mrs. Copper has worked as a breastfeeding peer counselor, a teacher assistant and lead preschool teacher. She holds CDA credentials and NAEYC accreditation.

Marla Kleinman is a new member of the GCCS staff this year. Ms. Kleinman is working part-time as a special education coordinator. She will facilitate all referrals for special education evaluations, and will monitor special education service delivery to ensure compliance with IEP's and with state and federal regulations.

If you have any questions for our special education service providers, feel free to call them at 271-4552 ext. 460. You may also leave a message for Ms. Kleinman at that number, or e-mail her at [mkleinman@GCCSchool.org](mailto:mkleinman@GCCSchool.org). She will pass along your message to the appropriate individual and will make sure you receive a prompt response.