



Currents

The Bi-monthly Newsletter of the Genesee Community Charter School
an Expeditionary Learning School

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The Wonderful World of Words!



The GCCS staff has been learning about the importance of an extensive vocabulary in developing reading proficiency. In writing about the teaching of vocabulary, Francie Alexander states “words are the currency of communication. A robust vocabulary improves all areas of communication — listening, speaking, reading and writing.” The more words students know, the more they recognize in print and the better they comprehend the text they are reading. Extensive word knowledge helps students achieve reading fluency, and also helps students derive the meaning of unknown words when they are encountered.

Research shows that the size of a child’s vocabulary in kindergarten predicts his ability to learn to read (Rowe, 2012). Unfortunately, all children do not enter kindergarten with the same size vocabularies. A 2003 study by Hart and Risely shows that students from more affluent families are exposed to as many as 30 million more words than their lower income peers within their first three years of life, which translates to the cumulative vocabulary children develop. Moats (2001) found that linguistically “poor” first graders knew about 5,000 words while linguistically “rich” first graders knew about 20,000 words. Students rarely catch up once they enter school, and continue to fall farther and farther behind. It’s another case of “the rich get richer while the poor get poorer.” Students with larger vocabularies find it easier to learn to read, so they read more. Reading more helps them develop even larger vocabularies. Consequently, the vocabulary gap between struggling readers and proficient readers grows larger each year.

Children need to learn 2,000-3,000 new words a year. But as Stahl and Stahl (2004) point out, “All words are not valued equally. Instead, what we want children to learn is the language of school. For many children, this is a foreign language.”

At GCCS and many other schools, we look at two types of words children need to learn: academic vocabulary and content vocabulary. Academic vocabulary words are those that are likely to appear in a variety of formal texts, regardless of the subject area. These are words like “comparison,” “various,” and “effect,” words that might not be used in children’s informal conversation, but are important to understanding the message of complex text. Content vocabulary (or domain-specific)

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Mark Your Calendars! Dismissal Time Change for Site Seminar – 11:30 a.m. Friday, December 4

GCCS is hosting a Site Seminar Thursday, December 3 and Friday, December 4. A site seminar is a two-day event in which educators from around the country observe the EL design principles and core practices in action. This year’s site seminar is being planned specifically for a network of independent Christian schools located across Ontario, Canada.

In order to provide time for teacher-led workshops for our participants, **we are changing the dismissal time for Friday, December 4 to 11:30 a.m.** All district transportation offices have been notified.

There will be no Community Circle on Wednesday, December 2. **Community Circle will be moved to Friday, December 4 at 10:45 a.m. with dismissal immediately after.**

Family Association Directory

Board of Trustees Representatives

Michelle Hannagan (750-3785, hannagan@rochester.rr.com)

Patrick Flanigan (737-0125, theflanclan4@aol.com)

Jeff Sciortino (802-7353, jjsciortino@frontiernet.net)

Officers

Co-Chairs: Sarah Hooper (766-2114, sarah.n.hooper@gmail.com),

Virginia Malone (880-1821, bonmalone@hotmail.com)

Secretary: Laura Ballou (330-3489, laura.ballou@rochester.edu)

Treasurer: Laura Hammond-Connor (703-1628,

lconn68@rochester.rr.com), Richele Henry (748-7646,

richele_henry@skillsoft.com)

Family Association Event Chairs

Family Service Fair:

Sarah Hooper (766-2114, sarah.n.hooper@gmail.com), Virginia

Malone (880-1821, bonmalone@hotmail.com)

Welcome Reception:

Sarah Hooper (766-2114, sarah.n.hooper@gmail.com), Virginia

Malone (880-1821, bonmalone@hotmail.com)

Saturday Cleaning Days:

Jessica Clinton (224-0295, sevenlunatics@hotmail.com), Jennifer

Whitney-Kivett (727-0641, buffalorising@icloud.com)

Busker Bonanza:

Sarah Hooper (766-2114, sarah.n.hooper@gmail.com), Virginia

Malone (880-1821, bonmalone@hotmail.com)

Family Association Auction:

Laura Hammond-Connor (703-1628, lconn68@rochester.rr.com),

Amy Fricon (705-8779, amy585email@gmail.com)

December Potluck: Volunteer Needed!

Your Name Here!

Family Game Night: Volunteer Needed!

Your Name Here!

Family Skating Party:

Mary Staropoli (461-0034, marystaropoli@yahoo.com)

Staff Appreciation Lunch:

Lora Benson (746-0144, loraann@loraannphotography.com)

Family Dance Party:

Carla Morris (794-1702, cmpasq@yahoo.com)

Logowear Sale:

Cynthia Popinko (764-0807, cjdanceballet@gmail.com), Leslie

Stern-Gastel (242-9649, sterngastel@yahoo.com)

End of Year Picnic:

Jennie Sutliff (315-491-4961, yayjennie@gmail.com)

Classroom Parent Volunteer Coordinators

Kindergarten: Joshua Lynd (500-9601, joshualynd@gmail.com)

First Grade: Erika Barone (406-8900, ejbarone@yahoo.com)

Second Grade: Cheryl Bertou (739-0155, bertouc@gmail.com)

Third Grade: Rebecca Gargan (729-0024,

bgargan@frontiernet.net)

Fourth Grade: Jessica Clinton (224-0295,

sevenlunatics@hotmail.com)

Fifth Grade: Sarah Clark259-8652, sarah.jack.sean@gmail.com

Sixth Grade: Juliana Karr (354-2123, jkarrslp@yahoo.com)

Upcoming Dates To Remember



- Oct. 8: School Pictures Make-up Day
Curriculum Night
- Oct. 9: Professional Development Day
No School for Students
- Oct. 12: Columbus Day
School is Closed
- Oct. 14: Board of Trustees Meeting
5:30 p.m. Cunningham House
- Oct. 17: Saturday Cleaning Day
9 a.m.-1 p.m.
- Oct. 21: Lunch with Lisa
11:30 a.m. Eisenhart Ballroom
- Oct. 29: Family Association Meeting
6:30 – 8:00 p.m. Sixth Grade
Classroom
- Nov. 7: Family Association Auction
6:00 p.m. Rochester Academy of
Medicine
- Nov. 11: Professional Development Day
No School for Students
Board of Trustees Meeting
5:30 p.m. Cunningham House
- Nov. 18: Lunch with Lisa
11:30 a.m. Eisenhart Ballroom
- Nov. 23-24: Professional Development Days
No School for Students
- Nov. 25-27: Thanksgiving Recess
School is Closed
- Dec. 3: Site Seminar
- Dec. 4: Site Seminar
11:30 a.m. Dismissal
- Dec. 9: Board of Trustees Meeting
5:30 p.m. Cunningham House
- Dec. 10: Parent-Teacher Conferences
11:30 a.m. Dismissal
- Dec. 21-22: Professional Development Days
No School for Students

Family Association Meeting
Thursday, October 29
6:30 – 8:00 p.m.
In the Sixth Grade Classroom

Vocabulary (continued from p. 1)

words are those that are used in different subjects, like “erosion,” “metamorphosis,” and “capitalism.”

We’re working to flood students with new vocabulary words throughout the day, and to spark students’ interest in the weird and wonderful vocabulary of the English language. As students become more curious about new words, they will be captivated by word origins, word parts, and the shades of meaning words can communicate. Children will be fascinated by reading, writing, and speaking sophisticated words that convey the intended meaning with precision.

Parents can help flood their children with new words too! Here’s how:

- **Read to your children**, even your fourth-sixth graders, every day. Reading old favorites as well as new texts on unfamiliar subjects – works they may not be able to read comfortably themselves – exposes children to hundreds of new words. The more you read to them, the more new words they will absorb.
- **Talk to your children** about a wide range of subjects while you are doing chores, eating meals, shopping, driving in the car, waiting in line, etc. Use proper and precise terms for objects, try out fancier verbs and adjectives, point out new words in print on road signs, advertisements, cereal boxes, recipes, and directions.
- **Show an interest in words yourself.** Demonstrate delight when you encounter an unusual word and talk with your children about what it means.
- **Play word games with your children.** Bananagrams, Scrabble, Apples to Apples, and other such games are great for stretching vocabulary. It’s also fun to make up games using the dictionary (Google “dictionary games” and you’ll find a host of ideas).
- **Encourage your children to read at home.** Create time and space for children to read every day on their own. Ask them about the new words they find while they’re reading.

Let us know if you find new ways to create a deluge of words at your home and we’ll print your ideas in an upcoming issue of *Currents*.

Upcoming Lunch with Lisa Topics:

Pack a bag lunch and join the School Leader before Community Circle for a conversation about current school initiatives. We’ll gather in the Computer Lab from 11:30 a.m. – 12:10 p.m. on the fourth (or so) Wednesday of each month. Upcoming topics for discussion include:

October 21: *How are GCCS Field Studies Funded?* What is the source of funding for day fieldwork and overnights? Where do the proceeds of fundraising go?

November 18: *The Benefits of Diverse Schools.* What does the research show about integrated schools? How can we make the most of our diverse population?



Send in Extra Clothes for Your Chid!



Spills, muddy fieldwork, bloody noses and other accidents happen at all grade levels, and children sail right through the when they have a fresh change of clothing close at hand. Please send in a shirt, pants, socks, and underwear in a zip top bag labeled with your child’s name as soon as possible.

Help Wanted Substitutes Needed

GCCS needs substitutes for teachers, teaching assistants, and office positions. Teacher certification is NOT required.

Please e-mail Maureen Milke at mmilke@GCCSchool.org if you are interested in being added to our substitute list. Maureen will provide you with information about the application and fingerprinting process.

In addition, please tell your family, friends, and college-age students that GCCS is a great place to work and encourage them to apply to substitute soon.

Come to Curriculum Night! Thursday, October 8



5:30-7:00 p.m. – Grades K, 1, 5
7:15-8:45 p.m. – Grades 2, 3, 4

- ✓ How does your child spend his day?
- ✓ What are the social and academic expectations for your child's new grade level?
- ✓ What will this year's expeditions be?

Babysitting provided by the Family Association
(suggested donation \$2.00 per child)

Saturday Parent Work Day

Saturday, October 17
9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

**COME HELP get OUR SCHOOL
Ready FOR Site Seminar!**



**Please BRING Buckets
AND
Rags if you have them
(Babysitting PROVIDED)**

Donate! Bid High!

Family Association Auction



Saturday, November 7th
6:00 – 9:00 p.m.



This is our major fundraising event for the year

New Location!

Rochester Academy of Medicine, 1441 East Avenue

Invite your family and friends and
enjoy an evening of hors d'oeuvres, sweets, coffee, and fun!

Donate or bid on a service or product:

Salon Services	Landscaping Maintenance	Photographic Services	Lessons
Cooking or Baking	Cleaning Services	Computer Consultation	Home Repair
Workplace Tours	Cottage Rentals	Interior Design Services	Babysitting
Hotel Stays	Guided Nature Adventures	Thematic Gift Baskets	Crafts

An Adults Only Event, Babysitting Provided at GCCS
(Details to Follow)