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Special Points of Interest:

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FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK

As you walk through the halls of Garfield Park Academy, a quiet kind of excitement prevails. All of the staff and students are preparing for the holidays and the smells of wonderful holiday parties and special dishes prepared by our budding chefs in the culinary arts program permeates the building. In horticulture, we have magnificent holiday wreaths and Christmas pots filled with cheerful floral designs. Individual classrooms are dealing with the mid-point in the school year, when student successes are building up to a positive report card for the remaining semester.

It is a rewarding time of year when students and teachers agree on goals for completing the school year successfully and how they are going to complete these goals. It is a time of the year to celebrate Garfield Park Academy for all of the positive things that have been accomplished. Thanks you students, teachers and staff for all that you have done.

Dr. Gladys Morse
Superintendent

RIF

We are about to complete our 6th successful year with Reading Is Fundamental. With the increase in allocations last year, we have been able to provide a great selection of books for the students to choose from. Some of the more popular books include: Harry Potter, the Bluford series, the Chicken Soup books, books on animals and sports, and interactive books and kits.

We are looking forward to the renewal of our funding at the end of January.

Activities Committee

The Activities Committee has planned quite a few things for this school year. With the holidays fast approaching, we are in the process of producing our Annual Multicultural Holiday Assembly. Students helped write and produce the three skits covering Chanukah, Kwanzaa, and Christmas. Students chose whether they wanted to act or help behind the scenes.

In February, we are planning another Door Decorating Contest for Black History Month. This year's theme will be Black History Around the World. February will also bring us our second annual Science Fair, which will be tied to Women's History Month.

April and May will once again put our Multicultural Program into action. Classes will choose their countries at the end of March, study their countries during April, and visits will take place during May.

Our Annual Talent Show will take place in June, as usual.

New additions: We are hoping to add an Earth Day event at the end of April, as well as something special for Space Day, May 4th.

As you can see, we have lots planned for this year.

AUTO SHOP NEWS

Since our last newsletter, many exciting things have happened in our auto shop. We now have an instructor in the service shop to help Mr. Pat. His name is Mr. Randall. With his guidance we have moved all the equipment from the classroom to the service shop.

We are now taking apart a complete car. We never knew how a car was put together. We are learning to use all kinds of hand tools. Mr. Randall is a great shop instructor. We are excited about the changes.



RETAIL TRADES HAPPENINGS

The Healthy Park Café, that's right!! The Park Café has gone sugarless. Beginning in September, the school store has adopted the State of New Jersey Nutritional Policy for schools which bans sodas, products with the first ingredient listed as sugar and products with more than 8 grams of total fat per serving.

After a few weeks of tests and samples the students of the Retail Trades classes are preparing more salads and have introduced fruit salads to the menu, along with yogurt and 100% fruit juices.

Watch for some new healthy items added to the menu and the return of home-made soup to The Park Café.

HORTICULTURE HAPPENINGS

The outside season is over. It was a very good year for the garden and we are looking forward to the spring. Right now however, we are getting ready for the Holiday season, Ho Ho Ho! We are learning how to make wreaths and door swags as well as how to make an arrangement look festive.

In other news, the new fish are doing fine in the Horticulture room pond. We are hoping to have more eggs hatch out this spring. Well, that's all for now. Everyone have a great holiday!

Art Therapy – Drawing From Within . . .

Although Art Therapy has been in existence since the 1950's, I think people are finally catching on to the healing and life-enhancing benefits of Art Therapy. Careerbuilders.com just listed Art Therapy as one of the top ten hottest jobs for 2007! Of course, GPA, always on the cutting edge, is way ahead of the rest of the world. As an Art Therapist at GPA since early 1995, I feel fortunate to have the opportunity to work with so many wonderful and creative children. By combining my knowledge of visual art and psychotherapy, students are guided toward managing emotional problems, developing interpersonal skills, reducing stress, and achieving self-awareness.

In an effort to harvest self-esteem and positive feelings of self-worth by contributing to the community, GPA will once again present an Art and Music Festival on May 10, 2007 at the Cherry Hill Library's art gallery. Under the direction of Graziella D'Amelio, Warren Oree and members of Arpeggio will again be our special guest performers. Our theme of the Harlem Renaissance will dovetail nicely with Arpeggio weaving in a history of jazz. Our popular fashion show will be an integral part of the festival. Just as the Harlem Renaissance was the catapult to artistic growth and cultural advancement in the United States, our Art and Music festival will propel the students to take on new, creative challenges. Hopefully, the festival will spark creative energy in the audience as well.

Another creative endeavor that capitalizes on the students' strengths while teaching new skills is the CAM-WERCS program at GPA directed by Rob Piekarski. CAMWERCS, a work readiness-training program that partnered with GPA, provides twelve weeks of didactic coursework in addition to job development training. The students are in the process of completing resumes and participating in mock interviews. Just as students are empowered by taking an active role in preparing for the work world, art therapy empowers students to actively participate through the process of creating.

CARPENTRY

In woodshop students have been creating a variety of things such as stools, chairs, guitars, plaques, etc. We have a new woodshop teacher, Mr. Gary. We welcomed him to our school at the beginning of this year. He's been teaching us a variety of new techniques and things that will prepare us for a career in the field of carpentry.

Mr. Gary has brought a new edge to this school by bringing in new tools and equipment to the shop .



CULINARY ARTS

THERES A NEW TASTE IN CULINARY ARTS CLASS!!! The students wanted to learn the cooking techniques of wild game animals such as rabbit, venison, and boar. Jimmy and David prepared sauteed rabbit loin with a strawberry and basil coulis. Taquita has been working with the venison, complementing it with different sauces and chutneys. So far we've been having a lot of fun in culinary class cooking many different types of food. Can't wait to see what's next.

Recently, Chef Joseph Poon, a celebrity chef from Philadelphia, came to GPA to perform a demonstration making seven dishes from one chicken. "He was funny, very talented, and extremely smart," my students told me. Chef Poon's dishes included General Joe chicken, Fried chicken drumettes, Mango chicken, Ginger chicken, Skewered chicken thighs with sweet and sour sauce, Chicken stir fry and Chicken soup. He finished his demonstration carving half a watermelon into a rose. UNBELIEVABLE!!!!!! Thanks Chef Joe! We hope that you can come back.

COSMETOLOGY

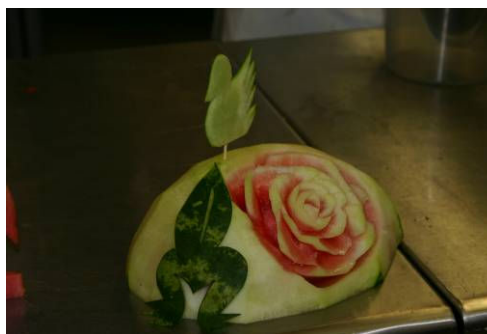
Cosmetology this year has been exciting but sometimes frustrating. Most of us take cosmo as an educational learning experience. This marking period we covered a lot of materials in practical and theory.

Some of the theory we covered was the History of Cosmetology, the Psychology of Success and our guidelines for success like building self-esteem, building on your strength and also keeping personal issues from work and school so we could be successful in the future and set goals for ourselves.

In the first marking period we learned finger waving and creative up-do's. We also did Halloween masks and creative up-do's for Halloween. All the girls created there own style. Jessica won first place. Blair was second place. Marjorie was third place. Also, we learned thermal curling . We all get frustrated and want to quit but Ms. Carmen comes around and keep's us up and going.

Room 17 NEWS

Room 17 is the newest addition to GPA. We have a few new students who recently joined our classroom. Our classroom had a wonderful Thanksgiving celebration. We decided to have a non-traditional Thanksgiving lunch-in. We dined on Chinese food and watched movies. We recently decided to have a student of the week. The student who earns student of the week can order a lunch of their choice on Monday. The winner for our first student of the week is Wykeen.



Physical Education

Physical Education is based upon the acquisition of knowledge and skills that are the foundation for engaging in physical activity. However, the mere acquisition of knowledge and skills is not enough. The mission of Physical Education is to **empower** all students to sustain regular, lifelong physical activity as a foundation for a healthy, productive and fulfilling life.

Physical Education is a sequential educational program. It is based on physical activities undertaken in an active, caring, supportive and nonthreatening atmosphere in which every student is challenged and successful. Students with disabilities are provided with a learning environment that is modified, when necessary, to allow for maximum participation.

As the result of a quality K-12 Physical Education experience, the National Standards for Physical Education state that students will:

- Demonstrate competency in many movement forms and proficiency in a few movement forms.
- Apply movement concepts and principles to the learning and development of motor skills.
- Exhibit a physically active lifestyle.
- Achieve and maintain a health-enhancing level of physical fitness.
- Demonstrate understanding and respect for differences among people in physical activity setting.
- Understand that physical activity provides opportunities for enjoyment, challenge, self-expression, and social interaction.

Room 26

Room 26 is still coming together. We have many new faces in our room. Some of the students have moved up levels. Ivonna moved up to level 4 and is the role model of our classroom. Antoine and Nate both are new to the school and have moved up to level 3. Other students are working really hard to move up to the next level. Some of the students are participating in the school's basketball team. The class earned a Thanksgiving party and we had a great time.

Room 28

Down in Room 28 we're all looking forward to a nice long holiday break. We're putting a large Winnie the Pooh poster on our back bulletin board to help get us all in the spirit. Pooh Bear, Eeyore, Tigger, and Piglet are all frolicking on the ice in a wintry scene sure to make everyone wistful for a snowy yuletide. We have a couple of new students too.

Homeroom teacher Mr. McGill says he got the idea because L.G., a student, said she wanted to have a Winnie the Pooh theme nursery for when the baby comes. "I 'Googled' for Christmas images and found this," said Mr. McGill. "First I made it the wallpaper on my computer at home, then at school, and then decided to print a poster. Besides, I was getting tired of that Eagles poster anyway, and we can have a contest (like an essay contest) to see who gets to take the Pooh poster home after we take it down in January."

Switching seasons, in English class we're reading "A Midsummer Night's Dream" by William Shakespeare and following up by watching the 1999 film version starring Kevin Kline (as Nick Bottom) and Michelle Pfeiffer (as Titania). It's been marginally successful. That is, not all the students love this play, or Shakespeare in general, but everyone's been tolerant and willing to take turns reading.

Operationally, we're trying a couple new things in classroom management. One is the use of a new motivator: the good job ticket. This is intended to cut down on the flow of right choice tickets to students who simply ask for them, eg. "I'm *hungry!* Can I have a right choice ticket?" Now if a student performs positively they're rewarded with a good job ticket. Four good job tickets earns one right choice ticket. It's still too soon to tell how this is working out, however. Another thing we're experimenting with is a student-of-the-week award. Staff selects a student based on point totals (earned in room 28 only). The winning student earns a take out lunch from a nearby restaurant or deli. By all accounts this procedure has been a resounding success.

ROOM 20 NEWS

Greetings to you from the students and staff of room 20. It has been a busy couple of months getting to know each other as classmates and learning to work together. We have been working on many projects together to learn new things and to apply them to the world outside of school. Early in our year, Mike B. and Marissa N. were elected to be our representatives to our Student Council. Marissa was also elected president of the student council for the entire high school. We elected class officers: President - Tim H., Vice President – Marissa N., Secretary – Lateefa D., Sergeant At Arms – Mike B. These are the people who have accepted the responsibility to lead our class meetings and to advocate for the students in our class. During this period, two students, Jeremy A. and Marissa N. worked hard and made it to Level 4 on our level system. We have celebrated birthdays for Jeremy A., Mike B., Marjorie C., as well as Mr. Jeff and Ms. Donna. We added several students and staff to our room including Tim H., Dan B., Anthony S., and Ms. Ramona came to join our staff.

Jeremy was our Student of the Month for September and Kevin H was our Student of the Month for October. Every student has been Student of the Day at least once during the past several months. Jim B. and Antoine P. attended a presentation in Culinary put on by a famous chef from Philadelphia. Carlos B. and Amanda D. have shown their talents in their Horticulture class designing and creating flower arrangements. Leila D. has had perfect attendance for the period, in addition to working hard in her Retail class to learn about the business world.

Our class has taken part in many activities both at school and in the community. In October, we went on a trip to the local Shop Rite store where we had a store tour followed by a scavenger hunt and finally scanned our groceries on the store cash register. In November, we had a pizza party to celebrate our class efforts working together to create our door decorations for Halloween. For Thanksgiving, our class enjoyed a complete meal cooked by the staff to celebrate the holiday. We were able to discuss many of the things we were thankful for and to spend time together as a class. In December, we went to the Chinese Buffet as a reward for our good behavior during the marking period.

Room 19

How We Differ and Come Together As a Class

By Amber S. and Anthony R.

Our class is very different. Some people choose to be lazy; other people choose to do their work and be quiet. Some people choose to act out, earning negative points. Room 19 is made up of many different attitudes and traits. For instance, some of our students are funny, while others are more serious. Some have crazy personalities and some are just laid back. We have a student who loves doing her hair frequently and we also have students who could be great friends to talk to. We have dancers and listeners, too. But no matter how different we may all be, everyday we come together as a class and work hard!

Halloween in Room 19

By Juan C. and Shannon T.

For Halloween this year, our staff dressed up and acted like the students. Mr. Carlos turned into a break-dancing student, wearing a white shirt, white shoes, and blue jeans. Ms. Rebecca was a skater/BMX boy, wearing her jeans, a shirt, and her Vans. Ms. Leslie was a fashionable student with her pink beaded jewelry. Ms. Andrea dressed in big baggy jeans and even had her hair braided.

We also celebrated the holiday by watching “The Addams Family”. We enjoyed that movie because our class had won the Halloween Door Decorating Contest with The Addams Family theme.

Thanksgiving in Room 27

On November 22nd this year, Miss Wright's classroom, known as Room 27, gathered together as a family for a Thanksgiving Dinner.

I would describe my class as a very loving and caring classroom because there are times that we just sit around and laugh and hang out like more than just peers but like relatives. Celebrating our Thanksgiving Dinner brought our class a little closer because we all brought in food and drinks to show our holiday spirit. Sitting together at the brown table like you do at Grandma's house was a great experience for the room and the staff.

By Jessica A.

Room 25

Room 25 is the science class. We are working on the human body and get to dissect things. The class has its good, bad, ups and downs. Most of the time we listen to each other and all get along. Our teacher helps us when we need it. Most of the time we follow the class rules and are better than most other classes.

Today's News in Room 2

Happy belated birthday wishes to Nadia, Mr. Larry, Toya and Tee-Tee. In Social Studies, we are studying about growing up in other countries compared to the US. It is neat to see the differences. Some of us are participating in the basketball and drill teams. In our class meeting we are learning how to work together and can share ideas with our classmates and the staff. In the first marking period, we changed pre-vocational elective twice. We like the electives because we learn how to make different things and it's good career building. Even though we didn't win the Halloween Door Decorating Contest - we had fun making it and wish the winners CONGRATULATIONS!!!

Room 24

Room 24 has had a great start to this school year. In English we did a unit on poetry. We wrote many different types of poems. We concluded with a study of Haiku. In Biology II, we are studying the human body. Each student made a model of the human heart using balloons for the chambers of the heart. We labeled the bones of the human body on a life-size skeleton. In our Daily Living study of nutrition, we made collages showing examples of carbohydrates. Some students are doing independent research on topics of their choice such as Black Studies. Our students are doing a great job mastering new social skills. Several students are about to move up to a new behavioral level.

School-to-Career

Right now in Night School, there are three students. They call our program, S.T.C. or School to Career. The schedule lets the student get a job in the morning and we focus on choosing a career. We are here from 2:00-6:40pm which is shorter than the day school, but you get the same opportunities as day school, including gym and electives. Since there are only 3 students right now, we get to personalize our schedule a little bit. Staff and teachers are a little more relaxed because it is a little less stressful than day.

We have been working on a bunch of different activities, like our upcoming field trip and our multicultural day. On the field trip we are going to ShopRite. We are going to cook our own food for the multicultural day.

Room 13

A lot has been going on in Room 13. The first big thing that happened is that Miss Mac got married and now her name is Mrs. Bauer. We are learning to call her by her new name. It is hard for us to remember.

This year we have some new students. Their names are Alrick, Darnell, and Victor. We also have some new staff. Their names are Ms. Maia and Miss Jillian. We also have our class pet iguanas named Jack and Jill. We are glad they are all a part of our classroom.

Here are some fun things we have been doing in Room 13. We went on a field trip to Johnson's Farm to pick pumpkins. We earned a pajama party. We had a Halloween party. We won the Halloween Door Decorating contest and got a pizza party. We had a Thanksgiving Dinner. We had our own field day. We had a few popcorn parties. Many of these activities we earned by filling our marble jar.

Finally, we have already decorated our classroom Christmas tree. We are all ready for a fun holiday season. We hope you have a wonderful Hanukkah, Christmas, or Kwanza. See you in 2007!!

Room 15

As for the start of a new school year, Room 15 has accomplished a lot of fun activities! Our class earned a Chinese Food Party for earning 500,000 positive points. Room 15 also earned a marble jar party for successful counseling groups each day. Currently, we are learning about erosion and weathering for science. Our favorite part of Science has been the lab experiments we get to do in our groups. Not only do we have a "Student of the Day," but we also just started having a "Student of the Week" in Room 15. "Student of the Week" earns an award certificate and a gift card to McDonalds. Finally, Room 15 would like to congratulate our "Students of the Month" Rosheen M. for September and Alexis N. for November!

Room 8 December 2006

Room 8 is abuzz with learning, fun, and activities. We worked as a team to decorate the door of our room when we entered the Halloween Door Decorating contest. We also decorated our door on Veterans' Day on November 11 after we learned about it. Once again, we worked together so that our door honored the teacher, social worker and staff of our room who are veterans- Mr. AJ, Ms. Liz and Mr. Roland (who is one of our science teachers). We also worked together during class meetings each week. We voted to have a Thanksgiving party. It was a great time! Mr. John brought in a Turkey. We also had pumpkin pie, macaroni and cheese, stuffing, bread, fried chicken, sweet potato pie and clementines. It was good eating, good feelings and a memorable day.

We are learning many things. Besides our regular academic subjects we are learning to organize. Each of us decorated and organized our desks. We keep an organized binder of all our completed schoolwork. We keep our current schoolwork organized in folders. We have been learning the importance and value of keeping our things organized.

We have also been working on improving our cursive signatures and cursive handwritings. Every day we do a short cursive handwriting activity after gym. It helps us calm down, relax and improve our cursive reading and writing skills.

One of the cross curriculum continuing lessons we have every Friday is "My Trip Across Country." Each of us used a real road map of the U. S. and mapped out a road trip that travels across at least four states. Everyone chose his or her own trip. Some people chose trips they have actually taken. We figured out mileage, time for travel, and cost of gas. We practiced gathering information from a travel club web page where we learned about the cost and benefits of emergency road service. We will continue to learn more each week about planning a road trip we could actually take in the future.

Extracurricular activities abound! We have members of our class who are on the Boys Varsity, Girls Varsity, and JV Basketball teams. Two of the girls in our class are on the Cheerleading Squad. Practice and game days are exciting days for us. We also have two girls on the Step Team. As well, four students and a staff member are practicing to perform in the Holiday Show. These are good incentives to keep our behavior in check so we can be on privileges and attend practices and games.

Room 6

There has been a lot going on in Room 6! We have been working very hard on mastering the social skills so that we can earn different rewards. On October 25th, our class earned a trip to Johnson's Family Farm to pick pumpkins. On November 8th, our class earned a socialization period from Mr. Tony, our classroom consultant, for earning a certain number of points. It was a very fun time. Thanks, Mr. Tony!

Miss Wright and Miss Kelli set up a multiplication racetrack for us. Our whole class has been working to master all twelve times tables. If we are able to master the times tables, we will earn a reward. We have been practicing very hard, and will be able to master the tables in no time!

During Reading class, we have been reading a very good book, Tuesdays With Morrie. This is a book about a man who visits his dying professor to discuss the meaning of life. As you can see, we have been very busy in Room 6!

Room 16

Greetings from Room 16! We have had an exciting time so far this year. We took a trip to Robson's Farm for pumpkin and apple picking. It was a very enjoyable trip. Congratulations to Britney. She has moved up to Level 4! Great job! Congratulations also to Terry, who has moved up to Level 4 too!

For Thanksgiving, we all had dinner together. On the menu was stuffing, macaroni and cheese and chocolate cream pie. Happy Holidays!



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