



# Granite City Community School District #9

Community Newsletter

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Spring 2009

## Safe Schools Grant

Granite City School District, in conjunction with the Granite City Police Department, made application for a safety grant. The grant will provide the district with funds to help accomplish many safety and security modifications to school buildings. The program includes locked doors for all classrooms, secure entry vestibules at each school, improved and expanded video cameras for both inside and outside surveillance, and emergency radios. Work will begin within the next few months on the project. It will take approximately 12 months to complete all of the projects. Special thanks to Supt. Harry Briggs, Police Chief Rich Miller, Mr. Brad Eavenson, and Mr. Donnie Harris.

## Approach discipline in a stepfamily as a team

Discipline is just one of the tricky issues new stepfamilies may face. To handle discipline issues smoothly:

- Let **the biological parent** do the correcting when possible.
- **Explain the house rules** as a couple. Show your child that you're a team.
- **Don't expect peace right away.** Becoming a family is a process. It takes time to build love and respect between kids and their stepparents.

Source: Virginia Molgaard, "Parenting in Stepfamilies," Iowa State University Extension, Program

## Automated Dialing Program

Recently, the school district purchased and implemented an automated dialing system. This will allow parents to receive an automated call when school is closed due to inclement weather. The system will also allow the district to provide automated calls to remind parents of registration dates and other key events.

If you did not receive a call during the recent periods of inclement weather related school closings, please notify your child's school with the correct telephone information. You may also go to the district website

[www.gcsd9.net](http://www.gcsd9.net)

to complete a telephone error form.

## Hold your child accountable

Try not to think of discipline as punishment. Think of it as being about accountability.

That is, focus on holding your child accountable for their actions when they misbehave—not merely on punishing them. "I asked you not to put your dirty hands on the wall, but you did anyway. Now you need to clean it up. Would you prefer a sponge or paper towels?"

Source: "Solutions to Parents' Top Discipline problems," Family Education.com, <http://life.familyeducation.com/discipline/parent/29452.html>.

## Illinois Principal Association Student Recognition

Principals in Granite City School District belong to the Illinois Principal Association. This offers our administrators with membership in a professional organization that provides them with leadership education, networking, and legislative updates. In addition, the IPA supports a program annually that allows principals to recognize students in their exiting grade that have demonstrated leadership and good citizenship characteristics. Students are recognized at a breakfast held in April at the Gateway Convention Center in Collinsville, IL. The students being recognized this year are:

Frohardt—Savannah Jaspering

Maryville—Sarah Boyd

Mitchell—Bailee Warsing

Niedringhaus—Kelly Jones

Prather—Reagan Clemons

Wilson—Eric Patrich

Worthen—Brooke Walker

Coolidge—Sarah Deguire, Baylin Petrillo, Jack Schultz,

Jimmy Starnes

Grigsby—Chris Harris, Tara Vaughn

GCHS—Megan Dittman, Tiffany Frisbie, Matt Jones, Jayne Law, Ryan Lockridge, Ryan Schooley

Congratulations to our students for their accomplishments. Special thanks to our administrative team for their continued desire to promote excellence in leadership.

Harry A. Briggs, PhD  
Superintendent

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### Upcoming Events:

- March 20, 2009  
Spring PT Conferences  
School Dismissed Early
- March 30, March 31, April 1, and April 3 -  
Kindergarten Registration for 2009-2010
- April 9—13, 2009  
No School—Spring Break
- April 22—23, 2009  
Prairie State Achievement Test (PSAE), Grade 11
- May 15, 2009  
Graduation



**Mitchell School Playground 2008**—Thanks to the efforts of the Madison County Planning and Development Committee and the Mitchell School PTA, a new playground was erected and dedicated in September 2008. The playground has a new recycled Rubber Poured Solid Surface and new climbing equipment. Special thanks to all who made this a reality—Mrs. Helen Hawkins, Dr. Bob Daiber, Mrs. Ann Linenfelder, and Mitchell PTA Presidents Mrs. Margaret Jacobs and Mrs. Annette Caldwell.

**GCHS Theatre Department** presents *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*—April 16 and 17, 2009. This timeless fairy tale is brought to life with all the familiar characters of the childhood story. Audience members will have the opportunity to meet the evil Queen and have a chance to sing along with the seven dwarfs. 17 student actors and 30 tech students ranging from freshman to seniors help bring the production to life. Tickets are \$5.00 per person. Since past shows have been sold out, the theatre department recommends making reservations by calling 451-5808.

## Madison County Young Authors

Students in Kindergarten thru Eighth Grade are invited to write their own original manuscripts for submission to the Madison County Young Author Program. The purpose of the Young Author Program is to support classroom teachers in their efforts to encourage students to develop original manuscripts as an aspect of creative writing, reading, listening, and sharing. Each building conducts a review of the submitted manuscripts and sends their best manuscripts forward to the GCSD Young Author Competition. This year, the district judging was held on February 11, 2009. Each building holds their own recognition for the writers in their building.

The **Emerson Excellence In Teaching Award for 2008-2009** was presented to Mrs. Janet Gordon, Special Education Teacher at Prather Elementary School. This is the 19th year the program has been sponsored by Emerson. The award was presented at the Ritz Carlton, Clayton, MO in October 2008. More than 100 teachers from throughout the metropolitan area were honored for their vital role in shaping students' lives.

## Saturday Scholars

Did you know...89 GCHS students participated in the Madison/St. Clair County Saturday Scholars program. This was the largest group representing Madison County high schools. The program offers selected students the opportunity to participate in a distinguished math, science and technology lecture series. The program is held each Saturday during February annually. Students travel to Edwardsville High School to participate in the lecture series.

This year, the lecture series

There the manuscripts were read by three reviewers—parent, student and teacher. The reviewer knows only the grade level of the writer. A formal rubric is used to evaluate each manuscript. Illustrations are not part of the evaluation. The selection of manuscripts is divided into three groups: K-2, 3-5, and 6-8.

The district is allowed to submit one manuscript to the Madison County Young Author Conference for each 100 students enrolled in grades K-8. The county honorees participate in the Madison County Young Author Program on April 25. This year, the county conference will feature

## AWARDS

**2008 Spotlight School Awards**—Maryville, Niedringhaus and Wilson Elementary Schools were recently recognized by the Illinois State Board of Education for their academic achievement on the 2008 ISAT. They were part of a group of 499 schools recognized across the state. The Spotlight award recognizes a high poverty school where the academic performance is closing the achievement gap. Congratulations to students

and staff in all our schools, but especially those that we celebrate with ISBE on the Spotlight award.

**2009 Those Who Excel**—Watch for more information in the next newsletter as we honor Teresa Meador, Teacher; Harry Briggs, PhD, Administrator; Pam Cook, Student Support Personnel; Ruth Lathrop, Educational Service Personnel; Jerry McKeach, School Board Member/Community Volunteer; Granite City Park District, Team.

featured Dr. Carl Bender speaking on "Global Warming: Green House Effect; Ms. Elonka Dunin speaking on "Kryptos, the Unsolved Code at CIA Headquarters"; and Mr. Bruce Clements, MPH speaking on Bio-Terrorism and Pandemic Influenza. The final event provided the students opportunity to participate in a cadaver demonstration at St. Louis University. In addition to the student lectures, a session was held for parents to provide them an overview of the college selection and financial aid proc-



Dr. Michael Lockett as an accomplished storyteller. Students have the opportunity to hear Dr. Lockett and meet with fellow writers from across the county.

The district is allowed to submit one manuscript to the Illinois State Young Author Conference for each 500 students enrolled in grades K-8. The ten state honorees will participate in the Illinois State Young Author Program on May 16. The state honorees will be recognized at the Board of Education meeting on May 12. Mrs. Lori Silva is the district coordinator for Young Authors, Mrs. Marti Kismer is the county coordinator for Young Authors.

ess.

The goal of the program is to expand knowledge in a variety of areas, provide opportunities to exchange information with professionals, to demonstrate the value of education, to allow young people to meet other talented teens, to nurture interest in science, math and related careers, and to serve as a stimulus for working toward academic potential. Amy Heath and Nancy LeVault coordinated this program.

## Character Education

In July 2006, Wood River-Hartford Elementary School District #15, was selected to oversee a grant from the US Department of Education, Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools, to implement the CHARACTER Plus process in all schools in Madison County, Illinois. The Partnerships in Character Education Program (PCEP) grants are funded to research the effect of Character Education on our nation's young people—how it affects school climate, student sense of autonomy, belonging and competence, discipline referrals and academic achievement. According to Jeanne Foster, Project Manager, the Madison County Character Education

Partnership provides schools with school leadership team training, character education resources, coaching support for staff development in character education, and evaluation services over the four years of the program.

The Madison County School districts were randomly placed into two groups. The first group immediately began implementing the CHARACTER Plus way in all schools; the second group served as a control group with implementation beginning in 2008. Our district began implementation in 2008. Each building has developed a leadership team that includes administration,

teachers, and parents. Quarterly training has been provided. Parents have the opportunity to complete surveys about the program. Monthly character traits are promoted. The character traits for the second semester of 2008-2009 are:

January—Respect For Others

February—Loyalty

March—Trustworthiness

April—Cleanliness

May—Integrity

Watch for more information on this program as we move into our second year. Many schools feel they are having positive change as part of this program.



### Kindergarten and Early Childhood Registration 2009-2010

Do you know someone who will turn five years old on or before September 1, 2009? If so, please remind them about Kindergarten Registration. The district conducts a spring registration for incoming Kindergarten children annually. Registration is held at various sites—Head Start South and North, Early Childhood Center, the Board of Education Office and Kirkpatrick Homes Community Centers. Various services are held at the registration sites and may include medical and dental clinics. Students

attending also receive basic school supplies and beginning reading books. Early registration helps the district to plan and staff our Kindergarten classes.

In order to register, families need a copy of the child's certified birth certificate, a copy of the child's immunization records, child's social security number, two proof of residency documents and a photo identification for the parent or legal guardian. Flyers are distributed in area schools, day cares and other sites. If you would like more

information about Kindergarten, please call 451-5800 (Elem. Education), go to the district website, or contact one of the area elementary schools. For information on Early Childhood or to schedule a screening appointment, call 451-5836.

#### RECYCLING NEWS

*Don't forget our recycling programs—all schools have a dumpster to collect newspapers, magazines, and old office paper. Money raised helps each school.*

### Study Island

Granite City School District #9 utilizing funds from various grant programs including Title I, Title II-D and the Clayborne Grant purchased an online program known as Study Island. This is a great resource for preparing students for the state standardized tests. "Study Island is an online product designed to help your child master the standards specific to his or her grade in Illinois. Study Island's focus on

the standards enables students to improve their performance in all skill areas tested on the Illinois State Achievement Test (ISAT), which leads to improved test performance." If you have Internet access, your child can access Study Island from home, as well as school, to prepare for the state assessments. Study Island has increased security features site-wide to provide greater peace of mind. The

program is available for students in Grades 3—8 at both the public and some parochial schools in the district. Watch for information sent home from your child's school or contact your child's teacher for more information. The program is available year round and is a great tool for all students.

The web address is:

[www.studyisland.com](http://www.studyisland.com)

#### GCSD #9 Schools

- GCHS, 451-5808, Grades 9-12
- Coolidge Middle School, 451-5826, Grades 6-8
- Grigsby Middle School, 931-5544, Grades 6-8
- Early Childhood Center, 451-5836, Birth to Five
- Frohardt Elementary, 451-5821, Grades K-5
- Maryville Elementary, 931-2044, Grades K-5
- Mitchell Elementary, 931-0057, Grades K-5
- Niedringhaus Elementary, 451-5813, Grades K-5
- Prather Elementary, 451-5823, Grades K-5
- Wilson Elementary, 451-5817, Grades K-5
- Worthen Elementary, 931-5700, Grades K-5

*Grigsby Middle School hosted their First Regional Girl's Volleyball Tournament in March 2009. They did a great job in the competition and won the Regional Tournament. They will play Edwardsville Liberty Middle School in the Sectional Finals. The winner will move to the IESA 8th Grade State Tournament. Congratulations to all our student athletes.*



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**Excellence In Education—We Strive For It  
Each Day!**



**SCHOOL STARTS ON AUGUST 13,  
2009, FOR THE 2009-2010 SCHOOL  
YEAR. DISTRICT REGISTRATION  
WILL BE HELD ON JULY 28, 29, AND  
30. WATCH FOR MORE INFORMA-  
TION.**

## Board of Education

Members of the GCSDB Board of Education are elected for four year terms. The Board of Education is responsible to the people and, therefore, should attempt to reflect the opinion of the community; however, school board members must look to the future more clearly than is required of the average citizen. The results of many decision and actions of the Board will not be realized at once but will set the course for education for future years. The Board of Education should support those educational philosophies and procedures needed to promote an adequate education for this community based upon the needs of the pupil population.

The purpose of the district is to guide the student toward his/her maximum development based on his/her needs and interest in a democratic society.

Granite City Community

Unit School District #9 participates in the following joint programs known as Region I Special Education. The Board of Education also holds membership in the Southwestern Division of the Illinois School Board Association (local), the Illinois School Board Association as a means of promoting the cause of public education in Illinois (state). The Board of Education is also a member of the Chamber of Commerce of Southwestern Madison County.

The Board of Education meets on the second and fourth Tuesdays. Meetings are held at the Board of Education Office, 1947 Adams Street and begin at 7 PM. Typically, the Board holds only one meeting in July, November, December and in the spring (March or April) due to spring break. Information about prior meetings and upcoming agendas can be found on the

district website.

The next Board of Education election will be held on Tuesday, April 7, 2009. Early voting starts on March 16 until April 3 at the Brown Recreation Center. At this time, four four-year positions and one two-year position will be filled. Generally, school board elections are not heavily voted and we encourage everyone to vote. Everyone on the ballot is worthy of consideration. The school district is fortunate to have the following candidates on the ballot:

**Two-Year Term**—Ron Dillard and Kevin Sykes (elect one);

**Four-Year Term**—Jeff Parker, Jerry McKeachan, Steven E. Dohnal, David Ruebhausen, Ralph R. Burnett Jr., Walt Whitaker, V. Rochelle Shipley, and Janine Luehmann (elect four).

**Please VOTE!**

**Mission Statement**—Our district is committed to providing a safe learning environment, which enables all students to develop intellectually, physically, morally, and emotionally to the very best of their abilities. This learning environment must offer students the opportunity to practice and adopt the principles, values, and ideals which will help them to become self-sufficient and effective citizens in today's democratic society. Our goal is to promote learning as a life-long process.

**In Memory Of**— Mr. Adam Zimmer, a first year teacher in our Special Education Department, and his wife, Lindsay Arnold-Zimmer, were killed in a tragic accident on February 21, 2009. Mr. Zimmer loved children, was friendly and outgoing, and was excited about embarking on a career in education. Mr. Zimmer graduated from GCHS and pursued his education at SIUE. He will be missed by his students and fellow staff members.

**Did You Know...**Students from Coordinated Youth and Human Services of Madison County, IL recently participated in a special photography project. The students attending AEP's junior high and high school programs focused their photographic efforts on Granite City's historic, but neglected downtown. Their weekly trips to photograph the streets, buildings and people of Granite City join the ongoing efforts by local government and business leaders to jumpstart a downtown revitalization. Photos on display at City Hall until March 31, 2009. CYHS is a not-for-profit social service agency serving Granite City, Madison, Venice, and surrounding communities in Southwestern Illinois. CYHS was founded in 1944 in direct response to the need for delinquency services in Granite City. The Alternative Educational Program (AEP) was started in 1973 to serve students who have a demonstrated lack of success in traditional school programs.



GCSDB #9 Board of Education  
Jeff Parker, President  
Ralph Burnett, Vice-President  
Beverly Scroggins, Secretary  
Walt Whitaker, Treasurer  
Mark McAmish, Member  
Jerry McKeachan, Member  
John Parker, Member

Harry A. Briggs, PhD  
Superintendent  
Tom Schooley, School Attorney