

Anticipation

by Diane Woodworth, GCS Superintendent



Do you remember Carly Simon's song "Anticipation"? The excitement of anticipation is how I often feel this time of year. The school

year has gotten off to an amazing start and we've only just begun. There are six months ahead that we anticipate will bring even more excitement and successful outcomes for Goshen Schools.

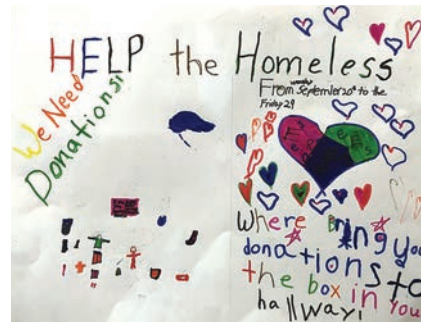
Many people have been working hard to get the positive messages out about our schools and it is paying off. Shortly after students returned in August, we learned our enrollment was up more than 50 students over last year. Considering some of the headwinds facing public education these days, that increase is very gratifying. Our students continue to excel in so many facets of their educational experience. Some of the programs we started last year are really coming into their own. We also enjoyed some nice successes this fall with our student-athletes winning several championships and, most impressive to me, over a dozen selections to the various Academic All-State teams.

I am so proud of the spirit of innovation and community service I see every day. Several are highlighted in this newsletter including the New Tech homeless project at Model Elementary and the Dual Language Immersion initiative at Waterford. Thanks to the selfless dedication of our teachers, Goshen students are being inspired in profound new ways.

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Understanding homelessness

Model Elementary fourth graders confront homelessness.



Even adults struggle during their encounters with the homeless. We see individuals on the side of the road or seated on the sidewalk, head down, homemade sign in hand, asking for a few dollars or some loose change. We ask ourselves the same questions. Why isn't this person working? Should I give money and how will it be used? Is this a scam or a legitimate call to be a Good Samaritan?

If adults have difficulty processing the appropriate responses, imagine the challenges for a fourth grade student. At Model Elementary School, the teachers in the New Tech program saw these challenges as a learning opportunity. They wanted to get the school year started by confronting the question "What does it mean to be a citizen of a community?" Collectively they decided the study of homelessness would be a powerful way to explore issues of tolerance for others, empathy and building a stronger community.

According to Model fourth grade teacher, Emily Shenk, the project has taken on a life of its own. "We started by asking students what it meant to be homeless," Shenk said. "The students quickly realized it wasn't simply a matter of someone not having a home, but rather that individual being forced to face complex and difficult circumstances, ranging from personal disasters to illness or addiction. The kids did a great

deal of reading on the subject of homelessness and actively discussed it among themselves. They learned that homelessness can happen to anyone."

The students were then given the assignment to write personal narratives about what it would be like to be homeless. Shenk says the essays collectively prompted the students to address the question of how they could help the homeless and they soon realized the best answer was finding ways to help those who already help the homeless — specifically, the various Elkhart County social service providers like The Window, Goshen Interfaith Hospitality Network and Faith Mission of Elkhart. Some of the students toured The Window and indicated a desire to be of service there. They also collected over 2,000 toiletries, clothing items and toys for the homeless.

Shenk says that the program has been a point of pride for her and the New Tech team. "What we are most proud of," Shenk noted, "was the opportunity to create kids who are more aware of these issues and, hopefully, will remember these experiences as they become adults. It has given them skills that should serve them well later in life - empathy, understanding, and being more respectful citizens."



Foundation supporters enjoy another big night

The GCS Foundation held their fifth annual Community Trivia Night fundraiser on October 24 at the Peddlers Village Event Center, and the fundraiser was once again a great success, raising approximately \$8,000.

The Goshen Community Schools Foundation is a privately funded educational grant program that strives to improve the innovation and creative experiences for GCS students. Founded in 2008 by several Goshen Schools alumni, the Foundation has been able to raise more than \$83,000 towards this effort.

There were 40 teams entered in the Trivia Night event, made up of educators, business leaders and community members. Prize sponsors included Goshen Brewing Company, Linway Cinemas, Southside Soda Shop, The Nut Shoppe, the GHS Red Zone, Maplecrest Insurance, and Peddlers Event Center.

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Moving beyond bilingualism to biculturalism

Waterford Elementary enriches student experience through Dual Language Immersion program.



It's one thing to learn a foreign language. It's something else again to gain life-changing skills through a totally immersive language program integrated with all aspects of a school's curriculum. This is the goal of the new Dual Language Immersion program at Waterford Elementary. The goal is not just to develop bilingual proficiency but also to achieve true biliteracy and ultimately a sense of biculturalism.

This fall, the program at Waterford began by enrolling students entering kindergarten. Next year, a second class of kindergarten students will be added as the original students move into the first grade. The process will continue until all Waterford classes are fully engaged. The premise is that students are best equipped to acquire a second language at a young age.

Instruction is divided between two high-quality classrooms. The English-speaking teacher uses half of the instructional day to teach English/Language Arts (Reading/Writing) as well as reinforcing key concepts/skills taught in the Spanish classroom (Science, Social Studies, Math). The Spanish teacher uses the other half of the day to teach Spanish literacy, mathematics and portions of social studies, science, and health topics from the GCS curriculum aligned to the Indiana Academic Standards. The Spanish teacher speaks only in Spanish and communicates using a wide-range of engaging strategies including pictures, songs, games, body language, expressions, etc. Children at this age are adept

at acquiring language in meaningful contexts. Beginning with the second semester, students will begin transitioning toward speaking Spanish only while learning in the Spanish classroom.

Julea Ciesielski, Master Teacher, says that even though the Waterford program has only been in effect for a few months, there is already a positive buzz in and outside the community. "The sister-in-law of one of our faculty members told us she was so impressed by what we are doing here that she has made it a goal to get her children into Waterford so they can participate."

Dual Language teachers, Courtney Gordon and Karina Ortega, are quick to note parental acceptance of the initiative. According to Gordon, "Parents are shocked at how their children are gaining confidence in their language skills and expanding their vocabulary. As a result, the parents are becoming more heavily involved. They know they are making an investment in their children."

It is likely that investment will pay big dividends in the future. Two of the goals of the program are to help students develop high levels of proficiency in high school, college and the workplace; and to help them become more competitive in the global economy. In fact, students who participate fully in the Waterford Dual Language Immersion program will have gained sufficient skills to be within two college credits of a language minor by the time they get into college.

Season's successes

Some Highlights of fall sports at Goshen High School

Success came in many shapes during the fall season at Goshen High School. Here are just a few of the highlights.

The Boys' Soccer team won the Northern Lakes Conference Championship and sectional and regional titles with an impressive 17-4 record. Lucas Bontreger led the team, setting school records (season and career) in goals and total points and also owns the career record in assists. He was one of five GHS players (Boys & Girls) selected to the state all-star teams. Besides Bontreger, the first-team all-stars were Flavio Cruz and Jillian Kissinger. Aniya Hartzler was chosen for the second team and Manny Castillo was named a District Top Player.



The Boys Cross-Country team advanced to semi-state for the sixth straight year. Felix Perez-Diener was the overall conference champion. In addition, all 40 members of the Boys Cross-Country team earned Kiwanis Scholar-Athlete status recognizing athletes with GPAs of 3.0 or higher.

The Boys Tennis team also posted a 17-4 record, a significant accomplishment for a team that returned only two letter winners from last year.

Girls Volleyball won its first sectional match in eight years.

And the GHS football team made it to the sectional finals.

So far this season, 14 GHS student-athletes have earned Academic All-State honors. In addition, 22 students earned Northern Lakes Conference recognition – 15 first-teamers and seven honorable mentions. In addition, 75 percent of GHS fall sport participants achieved Kiwanis Scholar-Athlete status, an eight percent increase from 2016.

Larry Kissinger, GHS athletic director, also notes with pride that over 175 students participated in the Be The Best leadership program. Several others became Stay In Bounds Ambassadors and advocated the importance of positive character attributes in their visits to Goshen elementary schools.



Crimson Marching Band caps season with great performance at ISSMA Semi-State

Goshen High School's Crimson Marching Band represented the school well at the ISSMA Semi-State competition in Indianapolis. Although the band narrowly missed an opportunity to advance to the state competition, all in attendance agreed Goshen put on a first-class performance. GHS Principal Barry Youngmans said it best, "They were outstanding."



GHS smashes Fairfield at Pumpkin Drop



At the Ninth Annual Pumpkin Drop on Halloween hosted by GHS Engineering/Technology Department, 20 teams from Fairfield and Goshen High Schools competed to see who could successfully build a vehicle capable of protecting a pumpkin from injury after falls of 50 and 102 feet, respectively. Four GHS teams survived the highest drop.



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Anticipation

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Our Strategic Planning process is progressing nicely as well. Additional public meetings are scheduled for December 4 and 12 to explain the facilities committee recommendations. I strongly urge all of you to attend one of these informative sessions.

Of course, I would be remiss if I didn't give a big shout out to our many enthusiastic supporters of the Goshen Community Schools Foundation. The recent Trivia Night was a great success and the donors who give so freely to our Goshen schools are invaluable to our future.

Finally, thank you to our students and parents, faculty and staff. I believe I have one of the best jobs in the world and the support I receive from all of you makes every day a joy.

The holidays are upon us, so on behalf of the entire Goshen Schools community, I would like to wish you all a blessed and happy holiday season.

Facilities Committee new school recommendation

GCS will host public meetings to further explain the Facilities Committee recommendation to the school board for building a new 5-8 Intermediate School on the school-owned property at SR 119 and Greene Road. The recommendation also includes converting GMS to a 5-8 Intermediate School.

Please plan to attend one of the meetings to learn more and to give your input.

Meetings will be held at these locations and times: Monday, Dec. 4, at 7:00 p.m. in the GHS Cafeteria Tuesday, Dec. 12, at 6:00 p.m. in the GMS Cafeteria.

2017 Events

December 1
Crimsonaires at 1st
Presbyterian Church (First Fridays)
6:30 & 7:30 p.m.

December 1
GMS Fall Dance and
Drama Presentation
7:30 p.m.

December 3
GHS Winter Orchestra Concert
3:00 p.m.

December 4
GMS Coffee with the Principal
10:00 a.m. & 5:00 p.m.

December 7
Winter Orchestra Concerts
5th & 6th Grades: 6:45 p.m. at GMS
7th & 8th Grades: 8:00 p.m. at GMS

December 11
GHS Winter Band Concert
7:00 p.m.

December 14
GMS Winter Choir Concert
7:30 p.m.

December 15
GHS Christmas Choir Concert
6:00 p.m. & 8:15 p.m.

December 22
End of 1st Semester

December 25 – January 5
Holiday Break, No School

January 12
GHS Winter Guard Preview Show
7:00 p.m.

January 15
Martin Luther King Jr. Day
No School

January 28
Music Faculty Benefit Recital
at GHS
2:00 p.m.