

GARDEN CITY COMMUNITY SCHOOL



FAMILY NEWSLETTER: SUMMER 2009



Dear GCCS Families,

We hope you and your children have been enjoying your summer! Since August goes fast and many of you have been asking questions, I thought you'd appreciate a summer update! Enclosed you will find:

- 1) Newsletter with general information
- 2) Fee payment form*
- 3) Bus schedule
- 4) Updated school calendar
- 5) Home language form (for new students only)*
- 6) Lunch program form*

*Please return these completed forms before school starts by mailing them or dropping them off at the school office. If no one is there, just use the mailbox outside the door.

FAMILY POTLUCK

GCCS SUMMER POTLUCK!

for everyone involved with GCCS!

Thursday, August 6, 2009

6:00 - 7:30PM at DeMeyer Park

DIRECTIONS: located north off McMillan Road - between 5 Mile and Cloverdale.

Watch for the brown direction signs to the park & the "Welcome GCCS" sign where we'll meet!

Let's get-together to visit with old friends and meet our new families!

This park is beautiful - covered eating area, basketball courts, large grassy areas, playground, pond, sand volleyball, etc!

Please bring:

- 1) a food dish of your choice big enough to feed your family members
- 2) plates/utensils to eat with
- 3) blanket for family to eat on, if desired
- 4) balls and outdoor games to start up activities of your choice!

Drinks & cups will be provided.

SCHOOL START & OPEN HOUSE As the enclosed calendar shows, school starts Monday, August 31 for grades 1-8 and on Tuesday, September 1 for kindergarteners. We will have our traditional OPEN HOUSE Thursday, August 27 from 6-7PM for students and families to informally visit their classrooms and teachers. Final class lists will be available August 19 when the school office officially opens.

VOLUNTEERS Parent/family involvement is very important at our school.....your help and input is wanted and needed! Teachers will have classroom volunteer forms for you when school starts and there will be an "All School Volunteer Opportunities" form available on the website early September. Currently, we are looking for more adults to be *office greeters*. This is a great opportunity to get to know the school! Please let me know if you are able to sign-up for a certain full or half day of the week to answer phones and greet our school guests. There will be a short training for this just before the GCCS Open House Thursday, August 27. As soon as the "fort" has been built for the playground, a time will be announced for anyone interested in helping *complete the playground*. If you are interested in being our Volunteer Coordinator(s), please let me know.

SUPPLY LIST This will be posted on the GCCS website by August 6 and be available at the office.

LUNCH FORM The enclosed "Federal Free & Reduced Lunch" form needs to be completed by all families - whether they qualify or are interested in the program or not. These determine some additional state funding that is very important to our school.

PROGRAM UPDATES

The ARTS Of course we are continuing to integrate the arts (visual, music, movement/dance, and theater) throughout our entire curriculum! Rebecca requested another year of maternity leave, so she will be available on a consultant basis as will Linda Buczynski. Staff has been receiving considerable training in the arts last year and through the summer. We will be inviting guest artists on a regular basis – as well as college student teachers – to add to our incredible program. As an art education specialist for 18 years, I hope to be working with the children and staff as much as possible myself! *Let me know if you have talents to share so we can add you to our schedule!*

PE We plan to increase our health education program this year by increasing physical education and health through our “Healthy Schools” grant we recently received. Counselor Cyndi Groth-Landis and teacher Elizabeth Sackman – with the help of parents Sara Covington and Karen Myers - started this last spring. We will continue to partner with the Boys & Girls Club to bus to their facility in addition to staff training in “Brain Gym” which uses movement to teach children how to learn better. Let me know if you’re interested in volunteering with his area!

ENVIRONMENTAL FOCUS Staff is increasing our focus on using the environment throughout their curriculum. We have recently been chosen to be the pilot school the Watershed Project will be working with to develop their wetlands curriculum and are very excited about this! Fish and Game trainings are being scheduled for the staff to get closer to our environmental certification.

SPECIAL SERVICES UPDATE

NEW STAFF There have been some changes to our Special Education and Title I program and - thanks to extra funding - we will be receiving as part of the federal stimulus package - we are able to continue to improve our impressive services! We have hired two excellent paraprofessionals with incredible backgrounds! Linda Selby has years of teaching experience, was trained in Montessori and has her Masters in Education and Reading. Shana Freedman has a degree in psychology and is a psycho-social rehabilitation specialist. Susan Mills and Pat Griffin will be returning. – as will our incredible classroom teachers!

We were not able to re-hire our former Special Services Coordinator since she did not have the required certification needed for the state to reimburse us through federal funding. Our hiring committee (composed of a teacher, parent, special education specialist, board member and myself) hope to finalize the hiring of our new Coordinator within the next two weeks. We are excited to have excellent, highly qualified applicants!

OPEN HOUSE As soon as the new Coordinator is hired we will have an Open House for families to meet. Individual visits will be welcomed afterwards.

FEE PAYMENTS

These fees need to be given to our office manager, Michele Roth, so they may be entered into your child’s account. See the enclosed form to make arrangements that will best work for your family. We want to help make this as easy as possible for your family to pay, so create your family’s payment plan as best fits you. Let Michele or I know if you have questions or concerns, please!

SPECIAL PROGRAMS: Kindergarten - \$75 each, 1-8 - \$150 each. This will help us continue our arts integration and environmental focus at the school that make our school so unique. In the past, all costs were covered by a federal grant which just ended so this is what will help replace some of the costs for supplies and equipment. We continue to apply for grants to also help.

LUNCHES: \$3.50/each. Please pay in advance on your child’s account. If you qualify for the federal lunch program, you will be contacted after the form is returned. NOTE: 1) lunch is not part of the kindergarten program and 2) hot lunch will be available Mondays – Thursdays. 3) Friday will be sack lunch day where each child will have the fun of preparing their own lunch to bring. We are hoping you will help us with our Healthy Schools program and teach them how to prepare and eat healthy!

SCHOOL BOARD & COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

Our school board meets every third Monday at 7PM. You are always welcome to join these! A wonderful group of volunteers donate their time to this aspect of the school. Learn more about them on the website. Community Council consists of parents, staff, and board and community members interested in the school and is used as an advisory board. Your parent reps to the school board, Michael Tetrault and Sara Covington, will be making arrangements for the first meetings of this group soon.

SCHOOL NEWS

We plan to go “paperless” this year as much as possible, so please be sure to watch the school website for current information. After this mailing, our newsletters and updates will be on-line to be sure information doesn’t get lost on the way home from school, to save money, and to communicate with our families as quickly as possible. If interested...be sure to check the School Board section on the website for board meeting minutes and my detailed director reports for “more information than you ever wanted to know!”

As always – please be sure to contact me if you have any questions or concerns! The staff and I look forward to seeing you and your children soon!

Sincerely,

Cindy Hoovel, Director
Garden City Community School
9165 Chinden, #101, Garden City, ID 83714
(208) 377-0011
cindy.hoovel@gardencityschool.org