



## Contents

Head of School Update	1
Valentine's Dance	2
College Financial Aid	2
Enrollment Lottery	2
SAT 10	2
Staff Retreat	2
Night Out at Kieran's	2
Poetry Outloud Winners	2
Voices Meeting	2
Kieran's Irish Pub	2
Voice lessons	2
Great Extravaganza	3
Shakespeare Classic	3
PSEO Information	3
Sports Update	3

### Attachment

Kieran's Pub Reservation Form

## Future Events

- ◆ 2/3 – Special Education Advisory Council – 5:30
- ◆ 2/5 – Valentine's Dance for A2 & A3 students
- ◆ 2/8 – College Financial Aid, 6:30 pm
- ◆ 2/9 & 10 – SAT 10's for all students
- ◆ 2/11-12 – early release on 2/11 for staff retreat; NO SCHOOL on 2/12
- ◆ 2/15 – President's Day –NO SCHOOL
- ◆ 2/17 - Board Meeting
- ◆ 2/24 - Night Out at Kieran's
- ◆ 2/25 - Community Voices –
- ◆ 3/2 - Staff Development (Early Release 1 pm)

### Ongoing:

Coffee orders due by Monday at noon

## News from Christina Beck, Head of School

I hope that many of you had a chance to go to the A1 J-term production at The Wellstone Center. Lydia and I sat marveling at the wit, mastery and delight that students exhibited. Many thanks are in order for the teachers who planned and carried out this creative feat that exceeded expectations, to the parents who cooked and volunteered and supported all through the month, the patrons who came to watch, and to Mary and J.P. for their vision and dedication. To our students, this was a memorable production that you can be very proud of. Thank you!

Over the course of J-term, a number of petty thefts took place. Most incidents had happy endings, but the process of recovering items, doling out meaningful consequences and dealing with mistrust and loss was difficult for everyone. The faculty and staff have already begun to refine our process to deal with lost and/or stolen items. We are also planning an educational strategy that will be both preventative and restorative in nature. I strongly recommend that all valuables and electronics be left at home. I will keep you posted on school-wide developments in this arena and welcome your input.

## Summer Opportunities

I would like to work together to share resources regarding summer opportunities for youth. If you have experienced or know of a camp, class, or other activity that you'd like to share, please bring in some literature. We will compile them in a three ring binder and make it available here at school.

## Annual Report

The board approved the 2008-2009 annual report at its January meeting. Look for that on the website later this week.

Last week's Community Voices meeting was an open meeting where parents were invited to bring questions, concerns and commendations. We had a passionate discussion about key experiences at GRS. This open format allows for us to hear what's percolating in the community so we can better communicate with you and be responsive to your concerns. If you haven't attended one yet, please consider coming to a Voices meeting in the spring.

Please note there is an early dismissal for all grades on Feb. 11 and no school on the 12<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup>. The faculty will take this opportunity to hold its annual retreat at Bay Lake Resort in Deerwood, MN. For those of you who have been long associated with the school, this is where Adrienne Kuchler Eldridge works. While there, we plan to do the visioning work that will guide our planning for next year. I hope to share some of that with you later this month.

**NOTE: GRS Website will be down for about an hour sometime between 9 pm and 1 am tonight as we do some upgrading. No email, PowerSchool or web access will be possible while it is down.**

### **Valentine's Dance for A2 & A3 students – Friday, 2/5**

On Friday, February 5, student organizers from spring intensive groups have organized a Valentine's Dance at GRS from 6 to 9 pm. The cost will be \$5 for couples and \$3 for individuals. Food, music and fun will be had by all in attendance with the proceeds going to help with spring intensive traveling groups. For more information, please contact Zach Schultz at [zschultz@greatriverschool.org](mailto:zschultz@greatriverschool.org) who can put you in touch with the student organizers.

### **College Financial Aid Presentation – Monday, 2/8**

All high school students and families are invited to a presentation about financing the next step after GRS - college. On Monday, February 8 from 6:30 to 8 pm, a financial aid counselor from Hamline University will make a presentation about the different types of financial aid available for college students – including work study, grants, scholarships and loans. She will also discuss the FAFSA, the federal free application for financial aid. Lastly, she will discuss different ways families can plan for financing college.

### **Enrollment Lottery**

Today was the enrollment lottery for the 2010-2011 school year. It was attended by 4 prospective parents and administered by Christina Beck, Sarah Lawrence-Lupton and Lydia McAnerney. This year, over 146 applications were received for next year. The majority of openings are in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade as most of our students have indicated they will be staying for the next grade. IF your student decides not to return, please let Lydia McAnerney know as soon as possible as there is a waiting list in every grade.

### **SAT 10**

Each year, our authorizer, Hamline University, requires us to administer the Stanford Achievement Test. This standardized test is used to measure academic knowledge of secondary school students. Each level of the test is broken into subtests or strands covering various subjects such as reading comprehension, mathematical problem solving, and science. The tests include three types of questions: multiple choice, short answer, and extended response. Besides requiring a written answer of five or six sentences, the extended response may also require the student to graph, illustrate or show work. Such answers are usually included within the areas of science or mathematics. Students will take the SAT 10 next Tuesday and Wednesday mornings.

### **Staff Retreat**

One of the many advantages of a small school is the opportunity for faculty to gather at a retreat and take a close look at issues and ideas. The GRS annual staff retreat will be next Thursday, 2/11 and 2/12 and Friday. We will be leaving for an off site location to get away from the distractions of school to concentrate on curriculum and the future of the school. It is an opportunity for staff to relax together as well and celebrate each other and our successes. There is a half-day on Thursday and no school on Friday.

### **Night Out at Kieran's Irish Pub – February 24 (6:30 – 8 pm)**

The Great Extravaganza is our school's annual spring fund raising event. Last year, we held a kick off event for adults only, dinner and social time at Kieran's Irish Pub in Minneapolis. It was such a success, the Great Extravaganza Committee has decided to do it again. We will feature great food (Shepherd's Pie, Salmon or Veggie Burger) and dessert as well as a cash bar. This will be an opportunity to hear about plans for this year's Great Extravaganza, socialize with other Great River supporters and get a free ticket to the May 8 event. Tickets to this event are \$25 per person and include dinner and dessert AND a ticket to the Great Extravaganza in May. Kiernan's Pub is located in downtown Minneapolis (330 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave S.) – parking is easily found in a nearby ramp or on the street! Look for a reservation form in this newsletter (RETURN BY 2/15) and on the web. Come have a relaxing evening and bring a friend to benefit GRS!

### **Notes about voice lessons**

After a short article and Bio in a newsletter, and much promoting by Caroline, an exciting group of 12 voice students took advantage of the on-campus lessons! The use of the choir room for lessons after school was an easy choice. After touring of the building, with the help of Christina and Caroline, we found a quiet, unused

spot for the students who cannot stay after school! We now have "The Stairwell Studio", thanks to Caroline's keyboard and Dorley's music stand!! The present students are all talented and I am urging all to be in choir by Spring term. IT IS NOT TOO LATE TO REGISTER for these lessons. Hope some of the young men, now in and about to be in choir, will take advantage of these lessons. Join the talented girls and the one talented boy, so we can put together some of the great Broadway duets. Lesson goals: Solos, confidence now - college scholarships later. For registration, see Caroline or call the teacher - Dorley Lerud 952-346-8012.

### **Great Extravaganza**

For the 5<sup>th</sup> year, we are pleased to announce the annual spring fundraiser, the Great Extravaganza. This is an opportunity to socialize with other GRS supporters and families at the school, have some great food and participate in the live and silent auctions. Letters went out with student grades, asking for donations for the auctions. Nothing is too small or too big! Think about what items, services or great gatherings you might bid on...and consider making a donation of those kinds of items. This year, we will be including new prizes for the raffle, NOT the wall of wine as included in the letter (sorry for the misprint). We will be offering chances for gift certificates from a local mall and other cool offerings. Watch for lots more information about volunteering and donating in future newsletters and chances to purchase tickets at other GRS events.

### **Shakespeare Classic**

How do you encourage children and young adults to make play-going a lifelong activity? A great start is this entertaining event, the Shakespeare Classic, which lets young people ages 8-15 experience the powerful stories, poetry and imagination of William Shakespeare. The highlight of the day is a matinee performance where attendees receive a specially prepared play program created for young audience members. Immediately following the performance, the entire audience is invited to a post play party with the cast for photographs and refreshments. This season's Shakespeare Classic is *Macbeth*, March 21, 2010, at 1 p.m. Tickets can be purchased through the Box Office at **612.377.2224**. All tickets \$10. (Phone only) *The Shakespeare Classic is made possible by generous contributions to the Sheila and Kenneth Livingston Fund.*

### **PSEO for 2010-2011 Juniors and Seniors**

Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) allows high school juniors and seniors to take courses, full-or part-time, at a postsecondary institution for high school credit. The program provides students with a greater variety of class offerings and the opportunity to pursue more challenging coursework than may be available at the high school. The tuition, fees and required textbooks are at no cost to students. If you missed the full description last week and want more information, please contact Karen Cedars at [kcedars@greatriverschool.org](mailto:kcedars@greatriverschool.org). or 651-305-2780, ext 104.

### **10<sup>th</sup> Graders considering the International Baccalaureate Program**

Tenth grade students will need to start thinking about whether or not they are interested in pursuing the International Baccalaureate diploma OR plan to take a test in a particular subject area. While this is not a decision that needs to be made now, students will need to have considered this option when registering for courses for the 2010-2011 school year. Now is a great time to begin the discussion with your student about how they want to plan their junior and senior high school years.

### **Sports Update**

#### **A2 & A3 Basketball**

Practice for the boy's basketball team continues daily at 5 pm at Twin Cities Academy. We have both Varsity and B-Squad teams. Varsity games this week include: tonight, 2/2 at 6 pm vs AFSA at AFSA and Thursday, 2/4 at 5pm at Northstar Academy. B-Squad games are tonight, Tuesday, 2/2 vs St.Paul Prep at TCA and Thursday, 2/4 at 5:30 vs Pact Charter at TCA.