





# Great River School

Engaging intellect, shaping character, building community.



## Great River News

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### Future Events

- 9/1 Varsity Soccer Practice - CANCELLED
- Orientation - 6-8:30PM
- 9/7 First Day of School
- 9/11 A1 Trip departs
- 9/15 GRS Board 6:30PM
- 9/17 A1 Trip returns
- 9/20 No School
- 9/21 A2 & 3 Trips depart
- 9/22 GRSF Board 6PM
- 9/24 A2 & 3 Trips return
- 10/5 A1 Academic Orientation - 6:30 PM

## New Format for Great River News

Dear Lydia,

Welcome to our new format for the GRS News. Each Tuesday, you will be receiving this email newsletter with reminders, information and dates to mark on your calendar. As we go along, look for some new features to be added. I hope this will help you stay in touch and up to date throughout the year ahead.

Because we keep the email list by grade in case there is a notice for a particular grade, you might get more than one copy of the newsletter. Please delete one and chalk it up to making sure you are kept as informed as possible.

Lydia McAnerney

### Orientation Wednesday Evening

Orientation for the fall trips and A2 & A3 academics will occur tomorrow evening, Wednesday, September 1. This is an event we've been anticipating all summer and kicks off the year ahead. You will see our building looking spiffy and clean, talk to teachers happy to greet returning students and welcome new ones and learn all the details about what is in store for the year. If you are unable to make it to the evening's festivities, please feel free to stop by later in the week to collect your student's packet - we will be open 8 am - 4 pm. Alternately, students will receive their packet when they arrive at school on Tuesday, September 7.

Schedule for Wednesday, September 1

6 - 6:30 Social time, pick up student packets (along with schedule if student has registered for electives)

6:30 - 7 Welcome by Christina Beck, Head of School and brief announcements

7 - 8 Orientation for Odyssey (A1) and Fall trips/academics for the year ahead (A2 & A3)

10/14 PSAT  
10/16 Harvest Festival  
4-7 PM  
10/18 Evening out at  
128 Cafe  
10/20 No School

Join Our Mailing List!

8 - 8:30 Social time, ice cream for all

### Fall Odyssey & trips

Each year at this time, all GRS students look forward to getting out of the school and traveling and working together. More importantly, this is a time to build their community of learning and begin the academic exploration that will begin on the road, on the farm or around the campfire or lake. Teachers and students build relationships that help make the year go more smoothly.

Who is going where?

#### September 11- 17

Adolescent 1 - west to North Dakota, Wyoming and Montana

#### September 21 - 24

Adolescent 2 - east to the Lake Country Land School

Adolescent 3 - 11th G - North Star Quest northward to explore colleges, visit the North House Folk School and the Great Lakes and ourselves!

- 12th grade leadership trip with Wilderness Inquiry in the Apostle Islands.

This year, the Great River School Foundation's Annual Fund, kicking off on October 1, will support these life changing Key Experiences. Please consider making a donation to continue making these opportunities a cornerstone of the GRS experience. Our goal is for 100% of all GRS families to participate. Consider how much of an impact these experiences have on your student's education and growth as you discuss how you will be involved.

### GRS Directory

Each year, we publish a directory of families and their contact information. This year, we will offer an new and improved version, sometime in the early fall. As in the past, it will only be available to GRS families. We have collected many forms from new and returning students with updated information. We would love to have everyone's information so we can have as complete a directory as possible. If you have moved, have a new phone number or email address or do not want your information included, you must contact us by September 24. Otherwise, we will use the information in Powerschool or what was published last year. Please help us make this directory as complete and accurate as possible. Forms for updating your information will be available at orientation.

### Tax Reminder

**SAVE YOUR SCHOOL SUPPLY RECEIPTS AND SAVE MONEY ON YOUR STATE TAX RETURN!**

Information Provided by Mid-Minnesota Legal Assistance Tax Law Project

You may be able to claim a state tax credit or subtraction for costs related to your child's education. This covers children in kindergarten through high school. The maximum credit is \$1,000 per child and eligibility is based on your family's income. Anyone can take the subtraction regardless of income.

To claim the credit or subtraction save receipts for your children's school supplies, including pencils, pens, crayons, notebooks, calculators, etc. You can also claim expenses for things like: tutors, academic text books,

fees paid to others for transportation, music lessons, after school academic programs and academic summer camps. Additionally you can claim the cost of computer hardware and educational software (up to \$200).

To claim the credit you will need to fill out Schedule M1ED with your Minnesota State Tax Form, to take the subtraction use the worksheet on the back of Form M-1. Remember you MUST save the receipts from your purchases to the claim the credit or subtraction.

For additional information and a more detailed list of what expenses can be claimed go to the Minnesota Department of Revenue Website [www.taxes.state.mn.us](http://www.taxes.state.mn.us) and enter the search term "Education Credit and Subtraction". For the pdf of this article, click on <http://www.lawhelpmn.org/link.cfm?2672>

### Community Voices

Last year's Community Voices meetings were one main method of communicating with parents and guardians. Meetings this year will include opportunities to learn more about the school and supports for students and time to air issues, concerns and comments that are on your mind. Please plan to attend and add your voice in the Great River School community. The first meeting of the year will be on Thursday, September 16 at 6:30 pm. The meeting will be an open meeting to discuss the year ahead and review some of the highlights for the year. Watch for more details in the next newsletter. We hope you will come for discussion and to meet other GRS parents/guardians

### Fall Sports

In the high school (A2 & A3), we are off to a good start with soccer and are excited to add a cross country team to the mix. Soccer practice began in mid-August, and will continue through October with games beginning in September. If you like to run or think it might be fun to try running, the first practice will be Monday, August 30th and run through Friday September 3rd. All students at GRS are invited to come run. For more information, please go to the Fall sports page on this website (Activities/Athletics) or contact Pat Miles by phone: (651-487-0424) or email ([miles002@umn.edu](mailto:miles002@umn.edu)). Unfortunately, we did not have enough students to do a volleyball varsity level team, but there will be a club team. All girls interested in playing volleyball should talk to Marcus at Orientation on September 1 or contact him at 651-329-2219 for more information.

Junior high soccer (A1) will begin following the Odyssey, in late September. Check the school website (Activities/Fall Sports) for more details or stay tuned here for updates.

### Yearbook from 2009-2010

Between this and that and the other thing, the yearbook from last year is not yet completed. During the first CAS (Creativity, Action and Service) block, A2 students will be working on the document to finish it up. Publication is expected in October. Thanks for your patience.

### Academic Orientation for Adolescent 1

The focus on Wednesday, September 1 for all A1 students and families will be on the fall Odyssey. In order to cover all the necessary details, and have the evening end at a reasonable time, the academic orientation for the year will take place on Tuesday, October 5 at 6:30 pm. At that time, A1 students will have been in classes for just over two weeks, so will be well into their routine. This makes the orientation have some context as parents/guardians will have had a chance to see what their students are doing and have time to generate questions about the why and how learning takes place at this level.

### Driver's Education

Each fall for the past few years, GRS has worked with Driver's Education, Inc. to offer a half-credit Driver's Education course for eligible students. If we have at least 18 students interested in taking this course, we will set it up to start in early October. It seems to work best to do the classes after school, two days a week for 5 weeks. Interested students can sign up at orientation on 9/1 or on the student bulletin board just inside the main school entrance.

### Research study at Macalester = money for GRS

Do you have 10-17 yr old child? Want to earn \$100 (\$90 plus \$10 for travel)? If you have at least one child between 10 and 17 years of age, and are part of a two parent family (married or living together with biological, step, or adopted children), you are eligible to participate in a new research study at Macalester College. Families who decide to participate in our research project visit our offices in St. Paul for a 2.5 to 3 hour session. Families can earn up to \$90 (\$30 per person) for participating, and we'll pay you an additional \$10 for traveling to our office. Families who participate could then donate a portion (or all) of this money to the GRS Foundation for their Annual Fund donation.

Parents fill out some questionnaires regarding family facts, marital relationships, and their children's health and behavior. They also engage in two interaction tasks and watch a short video.

Children and teens will also fill out some questionnaires regarding parent-child relationships, physical health, etc. They will also watch a short video. In addition, we'll take some physiological measurements (heart rate, blood pressure) to see how children respond to different tasks. These measurements involve taking saliva samples and attaching some sensors -- but these sensors shouldn't be uncomfortable or unpleasant.

We'll also ask if each of you is willing to take some saliva samples at home a few days after the office visit. For more information, call 651-696-8182 or email [familylab@macalester.edu](mailto:familylab@macalester.edu) or visit [www.macalester.edu/psychology/familylab](http://www.macalester.edu/psychology/familylab).

### Debate Club

Last year saw the formation of a successful Great River School debate team, with graduated senior Alyssea Chelberg Wacks winning the Junior Varsity division of the state tournament, graduated senior Rebecca Orrison making it to an octo-final round at the Great Midwestern Novice Championship, and now 8th grader Naomi Witney-Hirschmann winning

the National Junior Forensics League tournament. With this legacy we look forward to the 2010-2011 school year. We are expecting a great year with a lot of tournament participation. What do we need now?  
YOU!

Join the Great River School debate team this fall! It is a great way to make new friends, learn how to win arguments, improve your grades, win trophies, get CAS hours, and become educated about issues of global importance, just to name a few. The debate team is growing, and we hope you will join us in making a name for Great River in the debate community.

Parents/guardians? Do you want to help too? Consider donating your time this year to judging at tournaments on the weekend. Coaches will train you in, and you can enjoy as students across the metro battle it out with the power of persuasion! Or, consider running a concession stand for hungry students at tournaments hosted by Great River School.

If you cannot take the time to judge, please consider a donation to help us get off the ground:

- expandable accordion files (30 slots)
- padfolios
- a relatively portable printer
- snacks (popcorn, pop, juice)
- printing materials (ink, paper)
- pens
- highlighters
- kitchen timers
- whiteboard markers
- monetary donations (tournament fees)

Thank you!

For all inquiries please contact [grsforensics@gmail.com](mailto:grsforensics@gmail.com), or call one of the coaches:

Alyssea Chelberg Wacks (612) 462-4337  
Rebecca Orrison (612) 581-0290

See you at orientation night!

Have a great week and last few days of summer. Hope to see you tomorrow night.

**Sincerely,**

Lydia McAnerney  
Great River School

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