



Griswold Public Schools

Superintendent's Update

Week of September 28, 2015

The community of the Griswold Public Schools educates for excellence by empowering students to become compassionate, confident, creative, and resourceful members of society.



I'm so glad I live in a world where there are Octobers.

~ L.M. Montgomery

Calendar



Monday, September 28 – “Ribbon Cutting” Ceremony to open the Beagary Fund Computer Music Lab at Griswold High School, 5:15 PM. Prior to the Board meeting, we will celebrate the official opening of the digital music lab at GHS, which was completely funded by the Beagary Foundation from Brooklyn, CT. All are welcome to attend this event.

- **Monday, September 28 – Board of Education Meeting in the GMS Library, 6:00 PM.** We will honor our September Employee of the Month and inductee to the Connecticut High School Coaches Association Hall of Fame, Gerry Chester.
- **Tuesday, September 29 – GMS School Family Community Partnership in the GMS Cafeteria, 2:45.** The GMS School Family Partnership meets on the last Tuesday of the month from 2:45 – 3:45 PM.
- **Tuesday, Friday, October 2 – Children First Griswold Collaborative Meeting at GHS (Room 3103), 9:30 AM.** All parents and community members are invited to this meeting of the full partnership of providers who support the efforts of Children First Griswold.



Friday, October 2 – Free Coffee in the Superintendent's Office, 8:00 – 10:00 AM. The coffee will be brewing again for coffee #9 (of 24)! Cups and lids are provided or bring your own travel mug!

- **Saturday-Sunday, October 3-4 – DiRoma Fun Fall Festival Fundraiser.** Saturday's hours are from 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM and Sunday's hours are from 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM. Proceeds benefit the Griswold Public Schools!
- **Monday-Friday, October 5-9 – National Fire Prevention Week.**
- **Tuesday, October 6 – Health Fair and Flu Clinic for Griswold School and Town Employees at Griswold High School Cafeteria, 1:30 – 5:30 PM.** Flu shots available for free to those on the school and town insurance. Representatives will be there from Brown & Brown Insurance, CVS Caremark, Cigna, Oxford/United Health, and the State of Connecticut HEP Plan.
- **Wednesday, October 7 – Griswold Building Committee Meeting in the GES Library, 6:00 PM.**
- **Wednesday, October 7 – Griswold High School Parents Advisory Council in the GHS Library, 7:00 PM.**
- **Friday, October 9 – Professional Development Day for Teachers, No School.** The schedule is as follows:

	Teachers Certified Staff	
7:30-8:30 AM	Breakfast	GMS Cafeteria
8:30-10:00 AM	Legal Issues in Education	GMS Auditorium
10:15 AM-2:30 PM	Building Activities Including SLOs	GES, GMS, & GHS
12:00-2:30 PM	PMT Training* SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS ONLY	GHS Gym

	IAs Non Certified Staff	
7:30-8:30 AM	Breakfast	GMS Cafeteria
9:00-11:30 AM	PMT Training (This will be paid time)	GHS Gym
Noon	DCF Training for NEW Staff (This will be paid time)	GMS Central Office
	NO AFTERNOON ACTIVITIES	

- **Saturday, October 10 – Health and Wellness Fair in the Griswold Middle School, 9:00 AM – Noon.** This event is being sponsored by the Griswold Bicentennial Committee and will feature a local farmer's market along with the Backus Hospital Van, bone density screening, dental screening, and blood pressure measurements. Door prizes, too!
- **Monday, October 12 – Columbus Day, No School.**

- **Monday-Friday, October 12-16 – National School Lunch Week.**
- **Tuesday, October 13 – Board of Education Policy Subcommittee Meeting, 9:00 AM.**
- **Tuesday, October 13 – Board of Education Meeting in the GMS Library, 6:00 PM.** Please note that this meeting has been moved to Tuesday evening due to Columbus Day. We will introduce our Wall of Fame Inductee at this meeting, Mary Rose Deveau (Class of 1951).
- **Tuesday, October 13 – GES PTO Meeting in the GES Library, 6:00 PM.**
- **Wednesday, October 14 – PSAT Exam at GHS for all students in Grades 10 and 11, 8:00 AM.** The cost of the test is covered by the school district in order to promote an awareness of the SAT. The PSAT is the practice test exam for the SAT and the qualifying exam for the National Merit Scholarship Competition for juniors.
- **Wednesday, October 14 – Griswold High School Open House Evening, 6:00-8:00 PM.** This evening is for all students and parents at GHS, including incoming Grade 8 students. This is a great chance to hear about programs available to students at GHS. There will be informational booths for all of the academic and elective departments and student led tours of the building. Parent Workshops will include: Griswold High School Offerings at 6:00 PM, Post-High School Planning at 7:15 PM, and Financial Aid for College at 6:00 PM.



Friday, October 16 – Free Coffee in the Superintendent’s Office, 8:00 – 10:00 AM. The coffee will be brewing for coffee #10 (of 24)! Cups and lids are provided or bring your own travel mug!

- **Friday, October 16 – Griswold Principal Appreciation Day. *October is American School Principals’ Month.*** The 16th of October is National Boss’s Day, so we will take the opportunity to thank our team of Principals, Assistant Principals, and Administrators: Sue, Mark, Marceline, Michele, Glenn, Joe, Rita, Erin, and Steve.
- **Monday-Friday, October 19-23 – National School Bus Safety Week.**
- **Monday-Friday, October 19-23 – “Say Something” Week.** Use this week to become familiar with the schools’ anonymous Tip Line on the website. ([Click here.](#)) Our goal is student safety, school safety, and community safety.

- **Wednesday, October 21 – 1:10 PM dismissal for GES afternoon Parent Conferences.**
- **Wednesday, October 21 – Evening Parent Conferences at GES for **Grades K, 2, and 4.****
- **Wednesday, October 21 – GHS National Honor Society Induction in the GHS Cafeteria, 6:00 PM.**

- **Thursday, October 22 – 1:10 PM dismissal for GES afternoon Parent Conferences.**
- **Thursday, October 22 – Evening Parent Conferences at GES for **Grades 1 and 3.****

- **Friday, October 23 – GHS Homecoming Pep Rally, 1:30 PM.**
- **Friday, October 23 – GHS Homecoming Parade and Football Game.** Join us at GHS for the annual Homecoming events!
- **Saturday, October 24 – GHS Homecoming Dance in the GHS Gym, 7:00 PM.**
- **Monday, October 26 – Board of Education Meeting in the GMS Library, 6:00 PM.**
- **Tuesday, October 27 – Board of Education Policy Subcommittee Meeting, 9:00 AM.**
- **Tuesday, October 27 – Presentation for Teachers on Retirement/Retirement Planning by Met Life in the GMS Auditorium, 2:30 PM for GHS/GMS teachers and 3:45 PM for GES teachers.** Met Life will be on hand to discuss topics of interest for those teachers close to retirement or for those who wish to begin planning for retirement.
- **Wednesday, October 28 – GES School Family Community Partnership in the GES Library, 3:30 PM.**
- **Friday, October 30 – Red Ribbon Rally at GMS.** This event is part of the Red Ribbon campaign sponsored by the National Family Partnership. Visit their website at: www.redribbon.org. The 2015 National Red Ribbon theme is “*Respect Yourself. Be Drug Free.*”
- **Saturday, October 31 – Halloween.**
- **Sunday, November 1 – Daylight Savings Time ends.**

Mark your calendar now for the GMS Book Fair!

- Monday, November 2 – Griswold Middle School Book Fair during school hours.
- Wednesday, November 4 – Griswold Middle School Book Fair during school hours – and from 2:30 – 7:00 PM in the GMS Cafeteria.
- Monday, November 2 – Griswold Middle School Book Fair – during school hours.

If you would like an event listed in the Calendar section of the weekly Update please forward dates and information to Paul Smith: psmith@griswoldpublicschools.org



Notes

■ **DiRoma Home and Garden 3rd Annual Fall Festival to benefit GPS**

Please plan to attend the DiRoma Fun Fall Festival Fundraiser on **Saturday, October 3** (10:00 AM – 6:00 PM) and **Sunday, October 4** (10:00 AM – 3:00 PM). Proceeds are being donated to the Griswold Public Schools and the Breast Cancer Foundation. Last year, proceeds from the DiRoma Fair funded the GES Exploratory Enrichment program. The event includes food, games, live music, vendors, free drawings throughout the day, face painting, and a free bouncy house. Admission is \$1.00 per person. **Please thank them for their support of the Griswold Public Schools!**



■ **Griswold Public Schools Tip Line – If you see something, say something!**

Please take the opportunity to become familiar with our Tip Line. It can be used anonymously or with name attached to alert school officials and staff to any concern on the part of students or parents. A link from the front page of the website brings users to a page that asks a few quick questions. Please note that it is not manned 24 hours and should not be used to replace 911 – or – 211. Each tip will be investigated in a timely manner.

From: <http://www.sandyhookpromise.org/>



During the week of October 19-23, 2015, hundreds of schools and youth organizations from across the United States will be participating in Say Something Week. Say Something Week raises awareness and educates students and the community through training, advertising, public proclamations, contests and school awards, and media events. Say Something Week reinforces the power young people have to prevent tragedies and Say Something to a trusted adult to protect a friend from hurting themselves or others!

■ **2015 Alumni Wall of Fame Honoree!**



GRISWOLD HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNI WALL OF FAME

Please extend your warmest congratulations to the 2015 honoree!

Mary Rose Deveau

Griswold High School Class of 1951

GPS Secretary for 41 years &

Griswold Historical Society President / Municipal Historian

Mary Rose will be recognized by the Griswold Board of Education on Tuesday, October 13 at 6:00 PM in the GMS Library.

■ **The State of Connecticut needs your input!**

Please note: The Griswold Public Schools were asked to forward this to parents and staff:

The Connecticut State Board of Education has embarked on a planning process designed to guide policy and practice improvements for the Department of Education on behalf of all of Connecticut's children over the next five years. Focused on the goals of equity and excellence of education for all, a critical goal of the effort is to gather feedback from citizens to help inform decision making. As a stakeholder invested in the quality of Connecticut's public education system you are invited to participate in this survey and share your thinking on these vital topics.

Survey found at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CTStrategicPlanning>

Thoughts



Making sure that learning “sticks.”

How do we get students to **master** the most important deep learning skills and content?

By “master,” we mean acquiring the ability to use skills and content in meaningful ways throughout life. It may just be that revisiting those skills and the content throughout schooling is the most important key to learning that sticks. We know we want students to be able to have advanced skills in literacy and math, as well as be able to demonstrate abilities like communication, critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and character (Griswold 2025). We must find ways to address these student outcomes at every grade level giving the students a chance to practice and revisit. In addition, based on research highlighted below we must make sure that the knowledge and skills being taught (the curriculum) are relevant to our students’ future needs

Kim Marshall highlights two important takeaways from the article/research bellows:

First, we need to make sure the curriculum – the knowledge and skills being taught – will be valuable to students in the future. Downstream relevance isn’t always obvious – for example, a student who grows up to become an English teacher may not be called upon to use plane geometry, solid geometry, or trigonometry, but having learned them may help with visualizing spatial relationships among objects – an important life skill.

The second implication is that schools need to go beyond coverage and orchestrate spiral review of the most important information to make sure it’s retained. “Revisiting subjects can protect against forgetting and sustained study over several years can help make certain knowledge permanent.”

When Knowledge Is Unforgettable by Daniel Willingham in *The Atlantic*

Adults remember more of what they learned in school than they think they do—thanks to an aspect of education that doesn’t get much attention in policy debates.

I recently found a box of papers from high school and was shocked to see what I once knew. There, in my handwriting, was a multi-step geometric proof, a creditable essay on the United States’ involvement in the Philippine revolution, and other work that today is as incomprehensible to me as a Swedish newscast.

Chances are this is a common experience among adults like me who haven’t stepped foot in the classroom for ages—which might suggest there wasn’t much point in learning the stuff in the first place. But then again, maybe there is.

Research shows that people can often retain certain information long after they learned it in school. For example, in one 1998 study, 1,168 adults took an exam in developmental psychology, similar to the final exam they had taken for a college course between three and 16 years earlier. Yes, much had been forgotten, especially within the first three years of taking the course—but not everything. The study found that even after 16 years, participants had retained some knowledge from the college course, particularly facts (versus the application of mental skills). Psychologists

in another psychology study, this one published in 1991, examined memory for high-school math content and had similar results.

These findings, among others, indicate that **students forget less than they may think they do**. And there's value in what they remember. **These conclusions carry important implications for the subject matter students study in school.**

Naturally, **knowledge sticks if it's revisited**. For example, one study of MIT students found that physics majors remembered material from a freshman course better than students who majored in subjects unrelated to physics. More striking, though, is that continued use can actually make knowledge indelible. In one rather remarkable study, researchers administered an algebra test among adults who had taken algebra anywhere from months to decades previously. Most of the adults struggled to remember how to do the equations, but those who'd studied math beyond calculus (subjects whose mastery requires an understanding of algebra) could still work basic algebra problems—even if they had not done so for decades. In other words, **several years of practicing algebra in more advanced math courses made the former stick permanently.**

Continued use can actually make knowledge indelible.

So why do adults remember some facts they learned in school but not others? For one, the context of a memory—where and when it's learned—might be forgotten even if the content is recalled. That's what happens when one recalls hearing a movie is good, but can't remember who said so. Likewise, a student may remember a fact but not know she learned it at school. And if she hears the same fact many times, figuring out where she learned it first can be especially hard; who first told her that there are four quarters to a dollar? A parent? A teacher? Someone on *Sesame Street*?

Other times a student remembers the context—he knows he studied French at school, for example—but falsely concludes that he's forgotten everything. After all, it's likely that some of the memory remains even if he recalls nothing. This invisible residue of old memories helps a person remember that same material again more quickly than before. Clever research studies on this phenomenon tested Mormon missionaries who learned a foreign language but didn't use it again for decades; forgotten vocabulary was quickly relearned. Other research in more controlled laboratory situations showed comparable results.

Ultimately, this ability to retain some of that knowledge has practical benefits—and the reason for that has to do with the nature of intelligence.

Intelligence has two components. One is akin to mental horsepower—how many pieces of information a person can keep in mind simultaneously, and how efficiently that person can use it. Researchers measure this component with simple tasks like comparing the lengths of two lines as quickly as possible, or reciting a list of digits backwards. The other component of intelligence is like a database: It entails the facts someone knows and the skills he or she has acquired—skills like reading and calculating. That's measured with tests of vocabulary and world knowledge.

Researchers have long known that going to school boosts IQ. The question is whether it makes people smarter by building mental horsepower, by adding to students' database of knowledge and skills, or some of each component. Recent research published in *Psychology and Aging* shows that people who stay in school for a longer part of their lives are no faster at simple mental judgements (like line comparison) than their less-schooled counterparts. Other research published in *Psychological Science* shows that high-performing schools do little to boost kids' mental horsepower. **Instead, schooling makes students smarter largely by increasing what they know, both factual knowledge and specific mental skills like analyzing historical documents and learning procedures in mathematics.**

This view of schooling carries two implications. If the benefit of schooling comes from the content learned, then it's important to get a better understanding of what content will be most valuable to students later on in their lives. The answers may seem intuitive, but they're also subjective and complex. A student may not use plane geometry, solid geometry, or trigonometry, but studying them may improve her ability to mentally visualize spatial relationships among objects, and that may prove useful for decades in a variety of tasks.

The aforementioned research also implies that the sequence of learning is as important as content. Revisiting subjects can protect against forgetting, and sustained study over several years can help make certain knowledge permanent. **Thus, when thinking about what expect students to learn, it's not enough that content be "covered."** Evidence suggests that a student must use such content in his or her thinking over several years in order to remember it for a lifetime.



