

UPCOMING EVENTS

GHS Awards Ceremony
Friday, May 13, at 8:00am

GHS Graduation
Sunday, May 15
1:30pm, Baccalaureate
3:00pm, Commencement

8th Grade Celebration Day
Wednesday, May 18 (this is also the last day of school for 8th graders)

Last Day of Classes for Students
(this is a full day of school)
Friday, May 20

Summer School Begins
Monday, June 6

Have a safe and enjoyable summer break!



Girard Unified School District No. 248
415 N. Summit
Girard, KS 66743

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District Improvements Near Completion

Two years after passing a \$16 million bond issue to update and expand learning and activity facilities in USD #248, there is a definite light at the end of the proverbial tunnel in regards to the many construction and remodeling projects in Girard schools.

Remodeling of several classrooms at R.V. Haderlein Elementary and Girard High School took place over the summer break in 2015. Those updated spaces are already in use, although some of the remodeled rooms at RVH will take on a new identity once all of the new construction is complete. Remodeling of classrooms at the middle and high schools has been ongoing throughout this school year, and should be completed before summer break. Several additional classrooms at RVH are scheduled to be remodeled after students are dismissed for the summer recess.

At the district Bus Barn/Activity Center, three new athletic courts, batting cages, and fielding space turned unused square footage into valuable practice space for both Girard Middle School and Girard High School athletic teams, as well as area youth league teams and other community members. This impressive facility has been in use since September of 2015.

In January of this year, administrative and support offices were completed at GMS. Despite the fact that the office area has yet to be connected to the new commons area, these staff members are moved in and enjoying their new spaces. Once complete, the commons area will be the main entry for both GMS and GHS. Construction on this space, a much-anticipated part of the improvements process, is well underway (pictured above), and is expected to be complete in August.

Another summer project at GHS is a perimeter fence that will enclose the north end of the campus, adding significant security for students moving between buildings.

RVH Elementary will have a completely new look when students return in the fall, most notably the main entrance, which will now be located on the north side of the building. Ten new classrooms and a library are near completion on the north and east sides of the campus. This addition creates a rectangular building with a courtyard interior. New construction on the northwest side of the building will house the cafeteria/kitchen and administration. The old "cheese factory" wing, which is currently home to the library and eight classrooms, will be razed over the summer. Once demolition is complete, that area will

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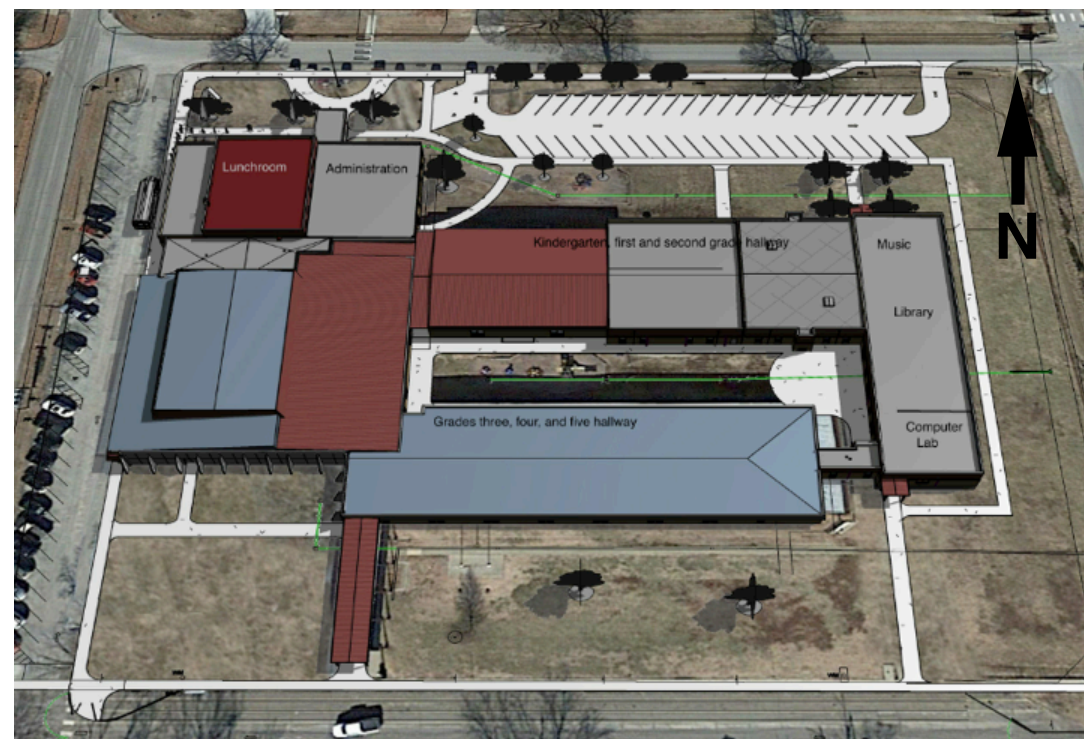
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become much-needed playground space.

For RVH 2016 summer school, students will need to enter the building on the north side due to demolition work on the south. Drop off and pick up will resume on the south side of the building in the fall.

"It's been tricky trying to have school and still make progress on the construction projects," said Superintendent Blaise Bauer. "There have been more than a couple of times that we've had to request that a certain part of the construction process be postponed until after 3:00pm or even until the weekend."

Students and staff have taken it all in stride, however, and simply look forward to the finished product. All improvement are expected to be completed by the time students return to school in August.



SUPERINTENDENT

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With spring upon us, I decided it's as good a time as any to address some things that I've noticed or have been asked lately and do some "spring housekeeping".

First of all, in light of the recent storm that blew through our quiet little community, I want to commend and acknowledge the wonderful show of community service that we witnessed in the aftermath. I am especially proud of our USD #248 staff and students who volunteered to help clean up yards, as well as community areas. This display of neighborliness is one of the reasons we say Girard is "A Great Place to Call Home."

Secondly, I want to explain the recent decision to release students for the summer recess a few days early. Beyond the fact that we have not missed many days of school for weather or other issues, the primary reasoning for this decision was out of necessity to stay on schedule with construction. In order for workers to make the most of the summer break, we need several areas completely vacated by Friday, May 27. Asbestos abatement teams are scheduled to arrive the following Monday to prepare these areas for remodel or demolition. It is simply too much to ask our classroom teachers to maintain a normal class schedule, pack up their classrooms, and be moved out by this date, without giving them adequate time to make this happen.

And last, but certainly not least, is to once again say "Thank you" to our community for the amazing support you consistently bestow on our schools. As we enter into the final stages of construction in our schools, I am very much aware of your generous hand in making this incredible vision a reality. I've said it before, and I say it again: Together, we are readying Girard schools for the future. I find this very rewarding, gratifying and inspiring. You can be proud of the part you have played in taking this great community to the next level.

Speaking of construction, our improvement projects have consumed much of my time over the last two years. As rewarding as it has been to be part of making our vision come to fruition, I am looking forward to hanging up my hardhat for good and getting back into classrooms, riding buses, and visiting with patrons again. I want to thank you for your patience during this hectic time.

One-to-One Learning Environment Moves Forward with New iPads

At the April 2016 USD #248 Board of Education meeting, school board members approved superintendent Blaise Bauer's recommendation to purchase new 9.7" iPads to replace the 7.9" iPad minis currently being used in all district schools. In 2013, the district committed to a three-year program utilizing one-to-one iPad minis for all students grades 5 through 12 throughout the school year. The recently-approved program is a four-year plan and includes the sale of the old iPad minis, and the purchase of new iPads equipped with the larger display.

Since the onset of the one-to-one iPad initiative three years ago, teachers have used the iPads to deliver innovative instruction while creating immersive learning experiences. Apps, interactive textbooks, and learning systems, such as the Canvas learning management system, have enabled these devices to become powerful learning tools. The new iPads will allow students to be even more productive with features

such as Split View, where students can work simultaneously in two, side-by-side apps.

The recommendation by Mr. Bauer was based on input from the district's technology steering committee, comprised of administrators, teachers, and board members. Committee members have met over the past year to collaborate and develop a vision for technology in our school. This included discussion of devices as well as a pilot of MacBooks in two of Mrs. Robin O'Malley's high school English classes.

The next generation iPad will continue to nurture the digital age learning environment.

"We are inspired by the impact these devices have had on teaching and learning, and we're excited about the commitment to the one-to-one learning environment," Mr. Bauer stated. "Exposing and immersing our students in the most up-to-date technology is an expectation for today's schools."

District to Resume "Early Release" Wednesdays

Throughout the 2015-2016 school year, Girard schools have released students around 2:00pm on Wednesday afternoons, an hour earlier than the normally-scheduled release time. This "Early Release" schedule has allowed for teacher collaboration and staff development, as well as valuable intervention time for At Risk students.

At GMS and GHS, every 2nd and 4th Wednesday is dedicated to At Risk students. Students are able to work in a smaller group setting with the teachers in whose classes they are struggling. The remaining

Wednesdays are dedicated to teacher and building collaboration time and/or professional development.

"The Wednesday Early Release has been a great addition to this school year," said GHS English teacher, Kayla Pruitt. "It's an effective motivational tool that encourages students to keep their grades up, and it also provides teachers much-needed time for quality professional development."

For these reasons, the district has decided to continue utilizing the Early Release schedule.

RVH News

NEW READING PROGRAM A SUCCESS

RVH recently implemented The Comprehensive Literacy Model into K-5 classrooms as their new reading program. This literacy model began with Dr. Linda Dorn from the University of Arkansas Little Rock. The main focus within this model is to provide individualized learning for each student, allowing our teachers more opportunities to read and conference with each student. Students are given a Developmental Reading Assessment to determine the child's reading level. The results from this assessment support our teachers in choosing books for each student. The students are then placed into groups of 5 or less within the classroom, to read and discuss their book.

While the teacher is conferencing with a small group, other students are completing author studies, and/or working on spelling and vocabulary skills to prepare for their group discussion. In our lower levels, the students are actively participating in learning stations, providing a review of skills they were introduced to during whole group instruction.

Throughout the year, teachers record weekly observations for each child during their reading conferences held within small group learning. These notes provide specific data to support teachers in monitoring student improvement and developing learning goals as the student progresses.

Our staff models the importance of reading daily by introducing the students to new books, whether it be through a read aloud in the classroom or encouraging independent reading, along with small group discussions around their leveled book. Many students have found a favorite author or a book series they enjoy. The students are motivated to read and we have experienced positive outcomes within our first year of implementing Comprehensive Literacy.

We look forward to the long-term gains our students will exhibit as we continue to grow in this model. Change is never easy, however, we are well on our way to creating life-long learners through quality reading instruction.

GMS News

STATE ASSESSMENTS

GMS students recently completed state assessments. All students grades 6-8 were required to take the MDPT writing, Math Performance Task, English Language Arts, and Mathematics. Additionally, students in grades 6 and 8 took the History/Government assessment and 8th graders also took the Science assessment. This was the first year students took the Kansas Assessments on an iPad. Overall, testing went well considering the number of assessments we are required to take.

8TH GRADE CELEBRATION DAY

Last day for 8th grade students is May 18 and will include: awards program, a movie, homeroom parties, free time/music in the gym, and a parent-sponsored dance that evening. Additionally, our 8th graders are given the option to go to Silver Dollar City on May 17.

STUDENTS AWARDS

Parents and family members are invited to attend the following GMS Awards Programs:

- 8th grade: Wed., May 18, from 8:15-9:30am
- 7th grade: Fri., May 20, from 8:15-9:15am
- 6th grade: Fri., May 20, from 10:00-11:00am

SPORTS CAMPS/ PHYSICALS

Students grades 6-11 can get a FREE sports physical sponsored by Girard Medical Center from May 2 - June 17. Parents can call the clinic for an appointment. Physical forms are available in the HS and MS offices and should be completely filled out to hand in when going for the physical.

Students playing MS sports next year are encouraged to attend the appropriate summer camps. Camp registration forms are available in the office.

- Basketball Camp - May 23-25
- Volleyball Camp - June 6-10
- Football Camp - July 11-13

GHS News

CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT CLASSES

The following concurrent enrollment college classes will be offered to GHS juniors and seniors during the 2016 fall semester, through Pittsburg State University and Fort Scott Community College, as noted: English 101 (FSCC), American Government (FSCC), General Literature (FSCC), College Algebra (FSCC), Performance Appreciation (PSU), and American History (PSU). Classes are offered for 3 college credits.

Students must apply for admission (some seniors will have already done this), and provide qualifying Compass Test or ACT scores. The cost per class this year was \$291 (\$97 per credit), but is expected to go up slightly. Students may pay online with a credit/debit card, bring a check to Mrs. Hey prior to the third day of class, or set up payment plans with the colleges. Online enrollment for these classes will begin in early May.

For more information, see Mrs. Hey during HS enrollment in August.

DRIVER'S ED INFO

Driver's Education classes will begin Monday, June 6, at 8:00am. Interested students can pick up and return applications at the GHS main office. Learner's permits are not required. Students must be at least 15 years old by December 31, 2016, to participate. The cost of the classes is \$130. Classes are 8:00-11:00am, Monday through Friday from June 6 through June 30. The driving portion of the class is scheduled by appointment and will be completed by July 21, possibly earlier depending on the student's driving ability. GHS will hold a Driver's Ed enrollment meeting in the HS cafeteria at 6:30pm on Thursday, May 5. This meeting is not mandatory, but is recommended for interested students and their parents or guardians.

GHS SUMMER SCHOOL

Summer school starts Monday, June 6 at 8:00am in the GHS computer lab. If your student needs to catch up on credits, please contact the GHS office (724-4326) and speak with either Mr. Ferguson or Mrs. Hey.