

*Wishing you  
and yours a  
very Merry  
Christmas and a  
Happy New  
Year!*



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

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## Friends of U.S.D. #248

## Early Release Wednesdays Proving Beneficial

In recent years, several area school districts have designated one day a week for an early release schedule, allowing time for remedial instruction for struggling students, staff development, and teacher collaboration. Because data indicates that creating time for these activities improves student success, Girard schools followed suit this school year.

In the USD 248 school district, Wednesdays were chosen as a one-hour early release day. Because there are no extracurricular activities scheduled on Wednesdays, this ensures that staff members who sponsor or coach such activities will be available during this time.

According to administration, the new schedule is proving to be beneficial to both students and staff.

"This time has been invaluable to both the students and the teachers," Girard High School principal Todd Ferguson said. **"GHS is averaging 25 percent fewer students with a D or F during this first semester than last year."**

Ferguson went on to say that the ability to effectively collaborate and work with the At-Risk students in a small group setting has proven very effective to this point. The time allotted for teacher collaboration is allowing for a more cohesive and organized district K-12 curriculum.

"As talented as our teachers are," Ferguson continued, "having the time to share their teaching strategies and collaborate among themselves will help Girard schools improve academic consistency and better meet the educational needs of all students."

GMS principal Randy Heatherly and RVH principal Mark LaTurner concur.

"The early release days allow our staff to gain valuable professional development," said LaTurner. "Specifically, this has benefited us in our new reading program. We have also used this time to glean various types of testing data which allows us to focus in on the specific needs of each learner."

### SUPERINTENDENT

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## Girard Trojan Activities Center Being Utilized

Since the beginning of September, the Girard Trojan Activity Center has been available to the patrons and students of USD 248. The activity center houses three basketball courts, four turf batting cages, a turf infield throwing area, and restrooms.

"We are very pleased and surprised at how many people use this facility," said Tom Stegman, Assistant High School Principal. "Over 400 students and patrons use it on a weekly basis."

The activity center provides multiple uses for community members. The facility is available from 5:00am to 8:00am as a walking facility during unfavorable weather conditions. From 8:00am to 3:00pm, students at The Learning Center use the facility for physical education classes. Girard Middle School basketball practice is

held at the facility after school for 7th and 8th grade participants. Finally, in the evenings, the Girard Youth Recreation Association uses the facility for basketball practice. Parents can also take their children to the baseball and softball batting/throwing cages from 6:00pm to 9:00pm. Currently, all Girard youth basketball activities are held at this facility from 8:00am to 2:00pm on Saturdays.

The spacious facility is the result of a collaboration of several community organizations. The creation of 3 athletic courts within the existing USD 248 building was part of a school district bond issue that was passed in May of 2014. The addition of turf, carpet, batting tees, pitching mounds, batting screens, and batting mats for the facility were jointly purchased with the

assistance of the Girard Recreation and Girard Youth Association. Portable bleachers have been added to provide seating for spectators.

Funding for portable scoreboards was provided by the Girard Area Community Foundation. This foundation works with donors helping to fulfill their charitable giving plans. Their gifts benefit the common good and quality of life in our community.

"This new facility provides a quality practice area for student athletics as well as an indoor space for patrons and youth activities in the Girard Community," USD 248 Superintendent Blaise Bauer said. "It's an impressive facility for a town of our size, and a real asset to our community. We are very proud of it."

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# USD 248 Bond Construction Update

Construction at all three USD 248 school buildings is in full swing. Several major projects are nearing completion, while others are making exciting progress. The tentative schedule for remaining bond construction projects is as follows:

Construction on the new GMS Office and GMS English classroom will be completed by December 18th. Pending carpet installation, GMS should be operating out of their new office area as of January 5, the beginning of the spring semester. The English classroom, next to the middle school offices, is expected to be completed over the Christmas break and ready for students when classes resume on January 5th. If carpeting is not installed by this date, temporary carpet will be laid and Mrs. Megan Stoneberger's classes will begin meeting in this classroom when students return on January 5.

Once the current GMS office and teacher workroom have been vacated, remodeling of that space will begin. This area will become a larger

workroom and conference area. This work will begin in January, and remodel of this space should be completed by March.

Work in the GHS Construction Trades classroom and Computer Lab is expected to be completed by December 18th. The new computer lab will be ready for use when classes resume on January 5th. GHS Construction Trades instructor, Mr. Craig Seibert will be moved into his new classroom at this time also.

GHS Agricultural Science classrooms will be next on the docket. Construction / Remodel work will begin in these rooms in early January. During the spring semester, Mr. Alan Boultinghouse and Mr. Joe Curran will be relocated to the IDL Room and Mrs. Peggy Marshall's former classroom respectively. This remodel should be completed by April.

Remodeling of the GHS office area (Principal's office, School Resource Officer, Counselor, etc.) will begin in early January. Completion and move-in is projected to be around

the end of the 2015-16 school year. Due to this construction, Mrs. Christen Jackson will be relocated from her current classroom to a classroom south of the cafeteria for the spring semester.

Construction on the GHS Commons area is on-going, and a completion date of late April or early May is expected for this project.

At R.V. Haderlein Elementary, the construction of a new cafeteria and office administration area should be completed by the end of March or first of April. For practical reasons, however, administrative spaces will be moved over the summer so as not to interrupt normal school operations.

Also at RVH, the new storm shelter classrooms, music room and library are expected to be completed by July. Demolition of the southwest wing known as the "Cheese Factory" will begin once the current 2nd and 3rd grade classrooms, as well as the library, have been vacated.

All construction should be complete and spaces ready for students at the start of the 2016-17 school year.

## Girard Trojan Activities Center

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The Activities Center is available for all USD 248 patrons. With a \$10 deposit and a signed Acceptable Use Contract, adults may receive a key card to access the facility.

To ensure the longevity of this facility and the safety of our students, USD 248 administration request the following rules be followed at all times:

- 1) No alcohol or tobacco products
- 2) No climbing on batting cages or any other equipment
- 3) No food, sunflower seeds, or gum
- 4) Baseball and softball throwing in the caged areas only
- 5) Batting helmets worn at all times in the batting cages
- 6) Patrons are responsible for all trash or damages
- 7) USD 248 is not liable for injuries during use of this facility

If you are interested in using this facility or would like to take a tour, please contact Tom Stegman at Girard High School, 724-4326.



Above, portable scoreboard purchased with a grant from GACF. Right, batting cage furnished by Girard Recreation and GYA. Below, courts.



## RVH News

### RECOGNIZING RVH PTO

The holiday season is a great time to recognize those who give unselfishly. It takes many people for a school district to be successful. Board of Education members who serve as elected volunteers, and school staff come to mind. And while I am grateful for all they do, I want to focus on those that serve in a different capacity.

RVH is blessed to have a great relationship with our Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). In my short tenure as the building principal, this group has invested an extraordinary amount of time and treasure in our school and more specifically, our students. At the conclusion of our last school term, the PTO asked how they could be a part of the renovation that is taking place on our campus. Their only goal was to impact students in the best way possible.

Two projects were presented and without hesitation, they were all in. Earlier this semester, a new basketball court was built on our 2nd through 5th grade playground, south of the school. This court will replace the east courts that were eliminated by the new construction. This playground serves nearly 320 students a day.

The second project is a new swing set that will stretch nearly 50 feet in length. This gift is on hold until our construction is complete and we regain access to the eastern end of our pre-kindergarten through 1st grade playground. The funds have been committed and PTO is now looking to future projects that will impact our students.

Under the leadership of Becky Herlocker, Meghan Tersinar, Melodee Knopp, Misty Sabine and Erin Senecaut, RVH PTO is a prime example of how volunteerism makes a difference in our schools and community. These fine ladies have built on a great tradition that has been sustained through the years by many volunteers.

RVH says, "Thank you!" to all the parents and patrons that have contributed to our schools and students in any way. Your efforts do not go unnoticed.

- Mark LaTurner

## GMS News

### BUILDING PROJECT: GMS OFFICES/COMMONS AREA

Work is progressing at a rapid pace on our new GMS offices. The new office area will feature a new reception area, principal's office, counselor's office, and conference room. This area is just north of the existing office area. We are expecting to move into the new offices in January. For the remainder of the school year we will continue to use the east entrance as the entry for students and patrons. The new HS/MS commons area is projected to be completed by summer. Once the commons area is completed, all students and parents will enter at the east doors of the commons and proceed to either the high school or middle school office areas. The new office areas will offer much more space and efficiency, while routing all traffic through the commons will promote a safer and more secure environment. It is very exciting to see the progress of the project as we move closer to moving into the new offices.

### SCHOOL WEBSITE

Please remember that our school website [www.girard248.org](http://www.girard248.org) is a great resource to view school calendars, handbooks, and other important information regarding each school within the Girard school district.

### CANVAS / POWER SCHOOL

We encourage all parents to go to our school website and log into their child's Canvas and Power School accounts. Canvas will show parents the daily lesson plans / assignments for each of the core teachers. PowerSchool is still the official grade book and will show parents the current grades in each class. If you need assistance in being able to access these accounts, please call the GMS office, 724-4114.

## GHS News

### DUAL CREDIT CLASSES OFFERED

In conjunction with Fort Scott Community College and Pittsburg State University, GHS will offer three 3-credit classes for college credit during the spring semester. Through FSCC, GHS will offer Micro-economics (seniors in American Government AP are eligible) and English 102 (seniors in English IV AP are eligible). Through PSU, GHS will offer Speech Communication (juniors and seniors are eligible). Tuition and fees for these classes are \$97 per credit (\$291 per class), and students must qualify for admission to the classes through either an ACT Score or a Compass Test Score. Students wishing to take a class through FSCC need to enroll online through their GIZMO student account. Students who take the PSU class will enroll with a PSU representative during class after the beginning of the year. For additional information, call Mrs. Hey, GHS Counselor, at 620-724-4326.

### FAFSA INFORMATION

For seniors planning to attend college in the fall, it is almost time to file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to be considered for grants (both federal and state), loans, work study and need-based scholarships. Students may file the FAFSA beginning January 1 through the website [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov). This is a free service, so if you are asked for any money, you are on the wrong site. Many colleges have "priority" deadlines by which you should file the FAFSA. These can be as early as March 1, so parents of seniors are encouraged to file their taxes early. If you have filed your taxes by the time you begin the FAFSA, completing it is fairly straightforward and easy. If you have not, you can use "estimated" figures, but you will be asked to provide documentation later to verify your numbers. If you need help, you may contact Marilyn Hey, high school guidance counselor, for assistance.