

# GHR NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2008



## From the Principal~ Mr. Dave Petrone

Greetings!

I hope that you enjoyed a tremendous summer filled with outdoor fun and special family times. I am excited that we are back at G. H. Robertson Intermediate School, ready for another outstanding year of learning. We have much to be excited about as we start the 2008-2009 school year. I am thrilled to announce that we have achieved "Safe Harbor" in the subgroup "Students with Disabilities" in both mathematics and reading. As you may remember from last year the G. H. Robertson Intermediate School was identified as "in need of improvement – "year one" because of a single set of circumstances – fewer than 68% of our Special Education students scored proficient or above in reading; and fewer than 74% of our Special Education students scored proficient or above in math. Achieving "Safe Harbor" was a major accomplishment that required the cooperation of the **entire** staff, not to mention endless hours of additional work. This achievement speaks volumes to the caliber of instruction delivered each and every day to the students of Coventry.

As a result of our PTO's endless support, new technology has been brought into some classrooms, which continues our drive to become more competitive with surrounding districts. As you tour the school next week during open house you will notice other improvements around the building as well. I'm very excited about the ways GHR continues to move forward and continues to provide students with the best education possible.

There are many summer days left (I hope) and I encourage you to enjoy them. I look forward to seeing you at our open house on Wednesday September 10<sup>th</sup> as well as throughout the school year. As always, should you need to contact me, I can be reached at 742-7341 or via email [dpetrone@coventryct.org](mailto:dpetrone@coventryct.org)


Sincerely,  
David Petrone  
Principal

### Inside this Issue

3rd Grade News	2
4th Grade News	2
5th Grade News	3
Math Matters	3
Band	4
Superintendent	4
Reading	4
Nurse's Corner	5
Media Center	5
MUSIC	6
PTO	6

# SEPTEMBER 2008



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	 10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				



- HOLIDAY

## News from Grade 3

In the spirit of the upcoming presidential election, our third graders have been "elected" to third grade. They are working hard at showing a great sense of community, developing organizational skills, and demonstrating respect toward others, while building a sense of confidence in themselves as learners. Third grade is a time when many children begin to take ownership of their learning and behavior, and our classrooms support this growth academically, socially, and emotionally. Our new third graders are quickly settling into an exciting year where each new day will be busier and more exciting than the last. Here is a look at some highlights of what is to come during the month of September:

**Open House** is a wonderful opportunity for your child to 'show off' his or her new classroom and introduce parents to teachers and new classmates. It is always great to see so many families stop by for a visit,



so please be sure to mark your calendars for Wednesday, September 10<sup>th</sup> from 6:30pm to 7:30pm. We look forward to seeing you!

**Homework** serves as a tool in helping your child become more responsible and organized, as well as manage his or her time efficiently. Expect that your child will come home with math homework four nights per week. We strongly encourage you to get involved with these Home Links and help your child when necessary. While some may be due the next day, there will be a few longer range activities. Other homework includes studying the weekly spelling list and completing the weekly reading log. Students are expected to read a minimum of one hour per week. Each book they record on their logs counts toward our Read At Home (RAH) program.

Since it is early in the year, third graders can read chapter books or picture books, provided they are "just right" for their reading level. Please help by providing an appropriate time and place for your child to practice his or her reading.

Mark your calendars for our **Mystic Aquarium** field trip on Friday, October 31<sup>st</sup>! Students are in the midst of studying animal adaptations. As part of our third grade curriculum, third graders study animals' special features that help them to survive in their habitats. Visiting the aquarium allows students an opportunity to see how a specific group of animals adapt to their environment. If you are interested in chaperoning, please indicate your interest on the permission form, which we will be sending home.

We feel we are off to a great start, and we know that sets the tone for a fantastic year.

Sincerely,

Heidi Bosco, Erin Brown, Anne Burke, Ronnie Giana, Donna Gwozdz, Jennifer Emerson, Jan Spangle, Gail Sroka, and Katie Stiles

## News from Grade 4

Jerry Craig, Mike Daigneau, Jim Dzwonchyk, Janine Goldsnider, Erin Hazzard, Nora Jones, Michelle Santese, Barbara Timberman

We are most enthusiastic to return to a new beginning in fourth grade. We have been getting to know our new students and are looking forward to a great year.

We are studying the fascinating world of insects. Did you know that insects have been on this earth for over 370,000,000 years and make up 85% of the entire animal kingdom? Through a variety of activities, observations, and discussions, the students will be learning about the characteristics of insects, the changes they go through, and how they defend themselves. This is a unit of study that most children really enjoy!



Through the month of September, we are all working our way through a geometry unit in math. The world is filled with geometry. There are angles, segments, lines, and curves everywhere you look.

There are 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional shapes of every type. We are noticing geometric shapes around us, and looking at the ways simple shapes such as triangles, rectangles, and circles are combined.

The students are learning to use straightedges and compasses to design a variety of figures.

Please be looking for your child's agenda book each night. Every child has been given a planner in which to write down homework assignments and special projects. All children should be bringing this book home on a consistent basis. It is our hope that the students will develop good organization, and homework habits.

In the morning our students are given a snack time. We are encouraging them to bring in healthy snacks such as fruit, vegetables, cheese, crackers, etc. As more and more information becomes available about the general health of children, we are making an effort to promote good nutritional habits. Thank you for your cooperation in this venture.



## News from Grade 5

### Grade 5 – September Newsletter

Fifth graders are off to a great start! They have been busy learning their schedules, mastering their lockers, and meeting new friends. This year, we welcome two new teachers to fifth grade ...Ms. Silvernail, who is teaching reading and language arts, and Mr. Spivey, who is teaching math.

All students will be given an agenda book and a green homework folder to help with organization. The agenda book keeps students and parents informed about daily assignments and upcoming tests and projects. It also includes the GHRIS handbook.

We encourage parents to check it daily.

Every child is expected to read 20 minutes each night and have his/her reading log signed by an adult. The completed reading log is passed in each Friday. We encourage all students to participate in the school-wide RAH program.

Nature's Classroom is quickly approaching! 103 students are registered to attend. We will be going to Ivoryton, CT September 16 – 19. Students remaining at GHR will participate in a program at school, which includes a trip to Trailwood Sanctuary in Hampton, CT.

The students have made a wonderful transition to fifth grade. We look forward to meeting with families and friends at GHRIS Open House on Wednesday, September 10. Please feel free to call us throughout the year with any questions or concerns.

Gr 5 – Mrs. Bernier, Mr. Carlson, Mrs. Piteo, Ms. Steeves, Ms. Silvernail, Mrs. Sandberg, Mr. Spivey, Ms. Woodin



## MATH MATTERS- Kim Licata ASSIST Teacher



### Math Matters—Mrs. Licata, ASSIST Program

Everyday Mathematics, our math program, offers our students a broad and rich experience in mathematics. This program helps to incorporate math in everyday work and play. Some of the key features of the Everyday Mathematics program include: problem solving for real-life situations, developing readiness through hands-on activities, cooperative learning through partner and small-group activities, review throughout the year, and ongoing assessment.

In this program, children are expected to master a variety of skills and concepts, but not the first time they are encountered. Math skills are taught in a repeated fashion, beginning with concrete experiences. Each grade level builds on and extends concept understanding so that children can face a new challenge with a firm foundation of knowledge.

Each child has a student reference book that includes mathematical information and procedures that support the program. Game rules, ongoing routines, reference tables, a glossary of terms, and calculator usage information are some of the sections included in this book. Students may bring these reference books home as needed, but the book needs to be brought back to school each day.

There is a home-connection component to this program. Each time a new unit is introduced there will be a Family Letter sent home with your child. This letter provides a general overview of the unit, important terms/vocabulary, and information on how to guide your child through the assigned homework. Please remember to save all of the family letters. They are very helpful.



**From the Band Room:  
Mrs. Gould**



This month, grade 5 students who are planning to pursue a band instrument will be given the opportunity to try the different mouthpieces and instruments to see what sparks their interest. All grade five students are eligible for this program. However it is not mandatory.

Once an instrument is chosen, students are encouraged to rent or borrow one rather than purchasing a new instrument. Please be extremely cautious of Internet instruments and those sold by large discount stores. It is important to wait to see how much desire the student has in regards to playing and practicing.

Students will attend a weekly group lesson and later in the year, a full band rehearsal as well. This group will participate in 2 performances this year.

Your child will be sent home with a packet of forms, a letter and a permission slip that must be signed and returned in order for the student to be in the band program.

I am looking forward to working with your child!

Sincerely,

Carol Gould

GHR Band



**Superintendent's Corner**

**DONUTS WITH DONNA:** The Superintendent of Schools is available for casual conversations with community members during the school year. "Donuts with Donna" is a way for you to greet your school Superintendent, ask questions, and keep informed about education in our town. Please feel free to stop by, where there will be an informal atmosphere with an open dialogue and no set agenda. The September session of "Donuts with Donna" is scheduled for Tuesday, September 16 from 1:30 – 2:30 p.m. at the Lisicke Beach Pavilion on Route 31/Main Street.

**From the Reading Room ~ Mrs. Sue Hansen**



Reading At Home (RAH)

Information will be sent home regarding the *Reading At Home* (RAH) program. In an attempt to promote reading and build great readers, students earn incentives for books read at home. This program has been very successful in the past.

Encourage your child to read by keeping books, magazines and newspapers around the house. Tell stories about your family and stories you enjoyed as a child. Write them down and save them to read aloud another time. Go to the library together to find books your child will enjoy. Be a good role model – let your child see you read.

**Nurse's Corner ~ Therese McKeever 742-****Nurse's Corner**

Welcome Back! As we settle into a new and exciting school year I would like to take the opportunity to review our medication procedure. If it is necessary for your child to receive medication while attending school, please note GHR and Connecticut State Law mandates the following:

- The child's physician and parent/guardian must provide written consent for *all* medication (both prescription and over-the-counter). Forms are available in the health office.
- Medications *must* be in their original pharmacy or manufacturer labeled container.
- All medications must be transported to school by a responsible adult. Students are not allowed to transport medication to or from school. This policy applies to *all* prescription and over-the-counter medications.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at 742-4529. I'm looking forward to a fantastic new year!

Therese McKeever

**Greetings From the Media Center! ~ Mr. Lowman**

Welcome back to another fantastic school year. We hope you all had an excellent summer and spent some time reading some wonderful books. It's great to see students back in the media center checking out books! Our new books are to arrive shortly and there will be lots of great choices for every reader.

We focused on adding more fictional series to our shelves as well as age appropriate graphic novels that are super popular these days. Over the next couple of months, we will be introducing these new titles to our readers, and I am positive they will be eager to take them home to enjoy.

For our 4th and 5th grade readers, please stay tuned for upcoming information about the 2009 Nutmeg Award books. We discussed them briefly last spring and will spend more time on them in October. If you would like to learn more about them, please visit <http://www.nutmegaward.org>.

**A NOTE REGARDING CAMPBELLS LABELS**

**THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR SUPPORT. WE WERE ABLE TO PURCHASE A NEW OVER-HEAD PROJECTOR LAST YEAR. ALSO WE DO HAVE A CHANGE IN SENDING THE LABELS. WE ONLY NEED THE UPC PORTION OF THE LABEL. THANK YOU AGAIN.**

We welcome any volunteers. Please call Mr. Lowman or Mrs. Russell at 742-7341 X123



**“Just a Note!” From the Music Room  
~ Mrs. Labelle**



The students are busy learning and reviewing the Robertson School song, along with their patriotic songs. We will shortly be starting their education of the language of music, involving note values and rests. We are doing a rhythmic activity with their names while keeping a constant steady beat pattern.

Mrs. LaBelle

Happy September and welcome back. The PTO has been busy scheduling most of our events for this year. We are currently running our first event which is the Fall Fund raiser. All these events can only be successful with your continuing support, and we really appreciate it. We are always looking for volunteers and no amount of time you can give is too small. We welcome any ideas, comments, or suggestions anyone has. Please feel free to call Patty Choiniere at 742-2519.

Please join us at our first meeting being held **September 16, 2008 at 7:00 pm** in the school library. Below is our schedule of meetings and events.



PTO Meeting Schedule

Meetings start at 7:00 pm in the school library. We make all attempts to have these last only 1 hour.

9/16/08

10/14/08

11/18/08

12/16/08

01/13/09

02/10/09

03/17/09

04/07/09

05/12/09

06/9/09

PTO Activities

Fall Fundraiser 9/08/08 - 9/19/08

Snowflake Sale 12/1/08 - 12/5/08

Spring Fundraiser 3/2/09 - 3/13/09

Fall Book Sale 10/2/08 - 10/8/08

Spring Book Sale 2/2/09-2/6/09

# GHR PTO News

**Next PTO  
Meetings! :  
Tuesdays  
9/16  
@ 7pm!**