

Granite Falls Middle School

205 North Alder Ave., Granite Falls, WA 98252 360.691.7710 FAX 360.283.4415 www:gfalls.wednet.edu



September Parent Newsletter

Welcome Back!!

On behalf of the Granite Falls Middle School Staff, I would like to welcome all new and returning students and their families to the 2009 – 2010 school year.

I hope you have had an enjoyable summer vacation and that you are looking forward to taking on the new challenges of this school year. We look forward to your involvement and support throughout the upcoming year. Please do not hesitate to call if you have questions or concerns.

Mr. Bianchini

Student Schedules:

Student schedules will be mailed on Wednesday, August 26th. We will not be printing extra copies so students need to hang on to the mailed copy and bring that to school on the first day.

Upcoming Events:

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Tues., Sept. 1 | First Day of School - 7:35 MS Cross Country and Volleyball practices begin |
| Fri., Sept. 4 | NO SCHOOL |
| Mon., Sept. 7 | NO SCHOOL |
| Tues., Sept. 15 | PICTURE DAY |
| Thurs., Sept. 17 | OPEN HOUSE – 6:30 pm |

Newsletters On-Line Only

In an effort to cut costs, future Newsletters will be available on-line at www.gfalls.wednet.edu. They will no longer be mailed home. If you do not have access to the internet and wish to have a hard copy, please call the Middle School office at 360.691.7710 and we'll make sure you receive a copy.

The new school year is upon us! I hope your summer break was productive, restful and fun. As the long days of the summer come to an end, the excitement of a new school year builds in our heads and hearts. I encourage all GFMS students to take the time, before school starts, to develop a set of academic, social and personal goals.

As the Assistant Principal of GFMS, I look forward to working with the students, staff and parents to make 2009-2010 a ROCK Solid year. My goals will be to increase student learning, minimize costly distractions, teach the principles of respect and integrity, and recognize and celebrate student achievement.

I am thrilled to be a part of the GFMS team once again this year. Our staff is committed to making this a successful year for our students and community members. Your active support and involvement combined with our best professional efforts will insure academic success for all of our children. I believe that every child has the potential to learn and can achieve academic excellence. The goal of our school is to provide every student with high quality instructional experiences and a rigorous curriculum so they can actualize their unique potential academically, emotionally, and physically.

Last year we spent time as a staff examining ways we could provide a more excellent educational experience for both students and staff at Granite Falls and we developed and began to implement a "Culture of Care." This year we will expand on the "Culture of Care" idea to include the development of a "Culture of Responsibility." It will be an opportunity for everyone to take PRIDE in learning, one another and our school.

Please feel free to communicate with me (Livelia@gfalls.wednet.edu or 360-283-4346) if you have any questions, ideas, or concerns.

Leslie Ivelia

Access School Information On-Line:

The Granite Falls School District has a wide variety of information available on the District's website at www.gfalls.wednet.edu. Information includes reports required by the state, student handbooks, the school calendar, commonly requested forms, supply lists, lunch menus, School Board minutes, sport information and much more. If you cannot access the District website, contact Claudia Scherrer at 360.691.7710 for hard copies of requested documents.

It is important that we update critical information for better communication. If you have changed your email address or want to add your email address, please complete below and return to the Middle School office as soon as possible.

Parent Name: _____

Your Student's Name: _____

Email Address: _____



Lunches for Middle School students:

| | |
|-------------------|--------|
| Breakfast Regular | \$1.75 |
| Breakfast Reduced | \$.00 |
| Lunch Regular | \$3.00 |
| Lunch Reduced | \$.40 |

Free/Reduced Lunch Program forms must be updated at the beginning of each school year. Application forms are available on-line and **hard copies will be sent home with students on the first day of school.**



Middle School Sports Requirements:

Any 7th or 8th grade student interested in participating in a sport during this school year should pick up an Athletic Packet. The following paperwork must be completed and turned in before students will be cleared to participate:

1. Physical
2. Insurance or Waiver
3. Signed Athletic Code
4. Emergency Locator Card
5. ASB Card (\$20)
6. Participation Fee (due within one week after teams have been selected).
7. Signed Concussion in Sport Document

Sports offered 1st Quarter: Girls' and Boys' Cross Country, Football, & Girls' Volleyball

GRANITE FALLS MIDDLE SCHOOL

Granite Falls School District ♦ 205 N. Alder Avenue ♦ Granite Falls WA 98252 ♦ (360) 691-7710 ♦ FAX (360) 283-441

Mr. David Bianchini, Principal

Ms. Leslie Ivelia, Assistant Principal

August 25, 2009

Dear Parent or Guardian,

The 2002 federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act, also known as the “No Child Left Behind,” requires all schools, school districts and states to show that all students are meeting achievement targets in reading and math. The State of Washington has established three ways to measure student achievement in order to meet this federal mandate:

- 1) Performance of fourth, seventh and tenth grade students on the yearly Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) test
- 2) The rate of unexcused absences for first through eighth grade students
- 3) The graduation rate for high school students

Individual schools, school districts and the state as a whole are deemed to be making “adequate yearly progress” (AYP) if they meet the targets that have been established in each of those three categories. When a school does not meet AYP in one or more areas for one, two, or more consecutive years, schools must provide parents about specific steps that will be taken to improve.

The Middle School did not meet AYP for the first year in math (Hispanic, white and low income student populations); for the first year in reading (low income student population); and for two consecutive years in reading and math for special education students. Our staff is committed to providing a quality education for each of our students. We are taking the following steps to improve our results:

- Additional staff training in the teaching of reading and math
- Additional highly qualified teachers assigned to reading and math
- Curriculum alignment in grades K-5

In addition, the District is supporting our efforts by providing funds for additional staff training and intervention curriculum for reading and math. Due to not meeting AYP for two consecutive years in special education reading and math, we are required to inform you that you have the option of:

- 1) Requesting public school choice to enroll your child in a neighboring school district such as the Lake Stevens or Arlington School Districts at no cost to you. You should also know that our neighboring school districts did not meet AYP standards either but you certainly have the choice to request that your child attend another school. Enrollment can be made at anytime and start dates for school in those districts is the end of August/first week in September; or
- 2) If you remain in our school, you may request supplemental educational services for free after school tutoring. Services can be obtained from the following: The information about these services will be available as soon as they are received from OSPI.

Our staff will be looking at all avenues to raise student achievement to ensure all students meet the required state learning standards. All parents are welcome to be a part of our improvement process. If you are interested in joining our Learning Improvement Team, or have any questions regarding our AYP status or services, please give me a call at 360.691.7710.

Sincerely,

Dave Bianchini,
Granite Falls Middle School Principal

Attendance Enhancement:

We are requesting your assistance to enhance Granite Falls School District's student absence reporting system. This enhanced system collects information on why students are absent based on the categories below. Our goal in gathering this information is to improve our ability to better serve the needs of our community through monitoring absenteeism rates and trends.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Missed Bus | 9. Head Ache |
| 2. Court Date | 10. Injury or Accident |
| 3. Family Vacation | 11. Medical Appointment |
| 4. Funeral | 12. Other Health Condition |
| 5. Asthma Symptoms | 13. Rash |
| 6. Cold or Flu | 14. Stomach symptoms |
| 7. Dental Condition/Appointment | 15. School Activity |
| 8. Fever | |

In the past, we have requested that you call or send a note to inform us when your child is/will be absent from school. From now on when you phone or send a note to inform us of your child's absence, please indicate from the above list the one reason that best describes why your child is/will be absent.

To protect the health of others, please keep your child home if they have symptoms of cold or flu, rash, or a stomach related illness.

We appreciate your assistance in implementing this enhanced system. If you have any questions, please phone your child's school.

Filming Students:

During the year, Granite Falls Middle School often has the opportunity to photograph and/or videotape our students in a variety of school-related activities. Student recognition programs, news releases, and class lessons and activities are a few examples of these activities.

As such, these photographs and/or videotape footage may be used in communication tools such as behavior review, district newsletters, and with the district and families for student success awards.

Highlighting achievements and maintaining a safe environment in our schools are integral parts of reporting responsibly to our district and community and is a way of sharing in the success of our schools and students. However, it is our primary goal to respect your privacy.

If you object to the inclusion of your child in any of the above, you may permanently remove your child from the "film" list. Please address this issue in writing, stating your child's name and grade. The request must be submitted by the parent or guardian any time, and may be revoked by the parent or guardian at anytime if desired.



Dealing With Dangerous Wildlife:

It's always a good time to review safety tips with your children if they should encounter wildlife in the area:

- Stop, don't run. Pick up small children so they will not run. Stay calm and avoid direct eye contact.
- Never approach the animal but do not take your eyes off the animal or turn your back.
- If you cannot safely move away, try to appear larger than the animal. Do not crouch down or try to hide.
- If the animal displays aggressive behavior, shout, clap your hands, wave your arms or throw rocks.
- If the animal attacks, fight back and try to stay on your feet, do NOT play dead, do NOT run and climb a tree.
- If a bear attack continues, *as a last resort*, protect yourself by curling into a ball or lying on your stomach and playing dead.

Please tell your child to be alert for any wildlife while waiting for the bus or walking home from bus stops or out in the backyard playing. It is always best to have children walk in pairs or as a group, regardless of wildlife. It is also important to discourage students from walking, or cutting through, wooded areas to get to school or home. Report wildlife encounters to the Department of Fish and Wildlife. During regular business hours call 425.775.1311.

District Sanctioned Websites:

With the age of technology developing at such a rapid pace with email, web pages, blogs and podcasting, the District wants to remind parents/guardians to be actively involved in your child's use of technology. The District takes every safeguard to filter sites not appropriate for students while at school. The following domains are the only websites sanctioned by the Granite Falls School District as official school district sites:

www.gfalls.wednet.edu
www.granitefalls.wa-k12.net
www.nwrdc.wa-k12.net
www.switfclassroom.com/gfms

Any other sites that may include blogs, web pages, podcasting or other forms of internet communication are not sanctioned by the Granite Falls School District and are not considered a school sponsored activity or learning tool.

Report To The Community:

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), also known as No Child Left Behind Legislation, requires school districts to annually report on progress outlining very specific information and includes Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) test results broken down by achievement levels, ethnic, gender, disability, English proficiency, Migrant and economically disadvantaged; two year individual WASL trends and State comparison; graduation rates; school goals and school identified for improvement. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction has compiled all the data required by the ESEA law. Information on the Granite Falls School District can be found at <http://reportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us/>. If you cannot access the report online, contact Kathy Grant, 360.691.7717 for a hard copy.

Granite Falls Middle School
205 North Alder
Granite Falls, WA 98252

Current Resident or



The Granite Falls School District is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.

The Granite Falls School District No. 332 complies with all Federal and State rules and regulations and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or disability. This holds true for all district employment opportunities. Inquiries regarding compliance procedures may be directed to the school district's Title IX/RCW 28A.640 Officer, ADA and/or Section 504 Coordinator: Granite Falls School District No. 332, Vervia Gabriel, 305 N. Alder, Granite Falls, WA 98252 (360)691-7717