



GRADE 10 GHS PARENT MEETING
OCTOBER 13, 2020 7:00pm

AGENDA

1. **Welcome/Update** - Mr. Ralph F. Mayo, Principal

- Mr. Mayo commended both the parents and students for following the new guidelines that had been established at GHS. The students are wearing their masks, are following the social distance protocols, wearing their ID cards and are focused on their studies. He understands that there are technical issues that still need to be addressed, but assured the parents that our staff is working diligently to address each of them.

He discussed the two Capital Projects that are moving forward and was hopeful our new entranceway and Cardinal Field will be completed as quickly as possible.

Mr. Mayo praised the PTA for all of the work that they have been doing behind the scenes at GHS and stated that we could not be as successful without their amazing support. HE encouraged all parents on the call to join the PTA.

Mr. Mayo then introduced our three new administrators: Mr. Matthew Hartigan, Interim Program Administrator for Special Education; Mr. Andrew Byrne, Folsom House Administrator and Program Coordinator for the Mathematics Department; Mr. Thomas Pereira, Dean of Student Life.

2. **PTA Welcome** from PTA Grade 10 Coordinator, Ms. Jennifer Frascella

- Please join the [Greenwich High School PTA](#), swag is still available for new members

3. **Importance of the 10th grade year - First experience with opens and how to manage time:**

Mr. Matthew Hartigan, Program Administrator of Special Education

- The first thing your sophomore student notices when he/she opens their schedule is: I FINALLY HAVE OPENS!
- What are opens?
 - i. They are open blocks in the schedule where students do not have an assigned class to attend
 - ii. Usually sophomores have 1 -5 opens depending on their schedules
- Freedom with Responsibility
 - i. Greenwich High School philosophy
 - ii. Allow students to advocate for themselves and manage their time by making good decisions
- **Ways to utilize opens:**
 - i. Learning Centers for all subjects - students can drop in during opens
 - 1. Math
 - 2. Science
 - 3. English
 - 4. Social Studies
 - 5. World Language
 - ii. Email teachers to make appointments to review assignments
 - iii. Media Center
 - 1. Quiet space to complete work and utilize Media Center
 - iv. Group Projects
 - 1. Opens are a great time for students to meet to discuss projects

- v. Email teachers/research Clubs
 - 1. Virtual Club Fair
 - 2. If there isn't a club you are interested - you can create one!
- vi. Make appointments with Guidance counselor
 - 1. Naviance - great activities to prepare for post secondary plans
- vii. College and Career Center - Media Center -
 - 1. College Research
- viii. Student Employment Office
 - 1. Create username and password
 - 2. Part Time jobs
 - 3. Career Research

4. Building relationships: Mr. Andrew Byrne, Folsom House Administrator/ Program Administrator Math Department

- Introduction
 - Sophomore year is a critical year for all students; no longer first year students, but not upper class men and women
 - They are trying to find their voice, their identity, and explore their independence but must stay connected to their school, classmates, and teachers
- Importance of relationships
 - The research on the importance of relationships is clear
 - Students who feel connected to school are more likely to succeed-- they have better school attendance, grades, and test scores and stay in school longer - National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments.
 - Students who feel connected to school are less likely to engage in risky behaviors. These students are also less likely to experience emotional problems.
 - Second only to family, school is the most important stabilizing force in the lives of young people. The school environment provides a natural setting to foster positive relationships among students, adults and peers.
 - The relationships formed between students and school staff members are at the heart of school connectedness. Students who perceive their teachers and school administrators as creating a caring, well-structured learning environment in which expectations are high, clear and fair are more likely to be connected to school. (Blum, Robert, School Connectedness: Improving the Lives of Students, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Baltimore Maryland, 2005).
- By design
 - GHS is built on encouraging students to make/form relationships with peers and adults
 - 5 houses - school within a school
 - House based team -
 - Dedicated counselor for 4 years, school psychologist, social worker, assistant dean, and house administrator
- Sophomore Year
 - When we see students taking on leadership roles in clubs, athletics, and the arts
 - Each club has a faculty advisor - an adult that can help student to further explore a budding passion
 - Students are taking on more challenging courses and/or exploring electives
 - Going for extra help, emailing questions, showing teachers they are interested in the topic are simple ways to connect with the adults in the community
 - We are looking for sophomores to advocate for themselves and take more ownership of their future
 - Whether connecting with a club advisor, coach, or a teacher, each and every student should have an adult in the community that they can go to
 - Teacher recommendations for college or post secondary are generally stronger when there is a long lasting relationship between the adult and the student
- Homework for parents

- Find out who that adult is for your child, if they do not have someone right now, reach out to the guidance counselor or house based team for support

5. Build a diverse set of experiences by becoming active participants engaged in both classroom and extra-curricular activities:

- Mr. Thomas Pereira, Dean of Students & Ms. Karen Foster, Student Activities Director
 - Sports/Arts/Theater/Music
 - Clubs - Virtual

The Importance of Getting Involved

- As adapted from Princeton Review, AVID and 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teenagers

Tip #1 - Know your options - visit the website

- under [Student Activities](#) for a list of clubs
- [Athletics](#)

Tip #2 - Choose Quality over Quantity & Understand that you CAN'T be everywhere all the time

- Please know that colleges understand this

Tip #3 - Deepen your engagement over time

- Starting in 10th (or 9th) grade may allow you to rise up to leadership positions down the road

Tip #4 - Try to Gain Professional Experience

- Internships
- Work Experience - [Student Employment](#)

Tip #5 - Consider giving back to the community

- Volunteering & Community Service - utilizing clubs such as buildOn

Tip #6 - Joining activities helps to strengthen executive functioning skills such as:

- Time management
- Organization

Tip #7 - If you don't see a club - start one

Tip #8 - Helps to build relationships with staff - outside the classroom

As with most things - you get what you put in

Clubs -

- Club information can be found on the GHS website. <https://www.greenwichschools.org/greenwich-high-school/student-life/student-activities/clubs>
- All clubs are meeting virtually until further notice.
- Some clubs are "on hold" until they can meet in person again.

Daily Bulletin -

- Can be found on the GHS website <https://www.greenwichschools.org/greenwich-high-school/student-life/student-activities/daily-bulletin>

Reminders/Announcements -

- School Pictures
 - If your child had his/her picture taken in September, they will be ready in late October.
 - If you pre-ordered pictures and your child is attending school in either cohort - they will be available for students to pick up at the school store. An email will be sent out when they arrive.
 - If you did not pre-order pictures and your child is attending school in either cohort - a proof will be available for pick up. This proof shows the pictures and has all the info to order if you would like to do so.

- If your child is a full remote learner - his/her picture packet or proof will be mailed home to you.
- If your child missed having his/her picture taken in September, the photographer will be back at school on Tuesday, Nov. 17th from 12:00 - 4:00 pm for the Greenwich cohort and remote learners and on Thursday, November 19th from 8:30 - 11 am for the Cardinals cohort. Pictures will be taken in the Galleria (the hallway outside the PAC). No appointment is necessary. However, if your child has class during that time, he/she must go to class first and ask permission to leave to get the picture taken.
- If your child would like to re-take his/her picture, they may have their picture taken on the dates above. There is a \$5 fee plus you will need to return the original photo package if one was ordered.
- Yearbooks are now on sale and may be purchased at yearbookforever.com
- PTA incentives - your child may pick up them up at the school store

6. Benchmark Assessment on 10/14 - PSATs/SAT lens and School counseling/Post HS planning: Ms. Judith Nedell, Guidance Coordinator

- Your sophomore should have checked their English and Math teacher's Schoology pages to access the Benchmark assessments
- A Lot of great information can be found on the [Guidance/School Counseling Website](#)

Please note that all of the panelists contact information can be found on the [Greenwich High School Website](#)