



*Excel in Mind, Body and Character*

# George Mason High School Newsletter

Tyrone Q. Byrd, Principal

February, 2012

Dear Mustang Parents and Guardians,

Report card packets will be handed out during Homeroom on Thursday, February 2. This packet contains your child's second quarter and first semester grades which can also be viewed in PowerSchool on January 31<sup>st</sup>. Each quarter contributes 40% of the semester grade for a total of 80%. The semester exam contributes the other 20% of the grade. Please note that only the semester grade appears on the high school transcript. This means those colleges/universities and others seeking transcripts will receive only two grades for each course taken at George Mason High School: the 1<sup>st</sup> semester grade and the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester grade.

While it may be difficult to believe, we are quickly approaching the mid-point of the 2011 – 12 school year. The third quarter and the second semester each begin on Monday, January 30<sup>th</sup>. Our third quarter is generally a time of intense academic and extracurricular activity. We welcome the accompanying enthusiasm and encourage our children to partake in as many of the extensive offerings Mason has to offer as possible. The members of the Mason faculty also recognize that along with this plethora of challenges and opportunities comes the potential for distraction. Please encourage your child/children to continue to make effective use of the multitude of academic resources we provide. I strongly recommend that families collaboratively design and implement a strategy to guide their usage of our Mustang Block, the Math Lab, the Writing Lab and other less formal resources. We are here to assist in the development and implementation of this important strategy and are willing to support your efforts on the home front. Together we can greatly enhance the academic and extracurricular experience our children have throughout the remainder of the 2011 – 12 school year.

George Mason High School continually distinguishes itself as an exceptional institution of learning and development. This edict is true, in great part, to our commitment to community, shared ownership, and open communication. If we truly endeavor to *Excel in Mind, Body, and Character* we must be committed to supporting each other in all that we do. Our individual efforts to achieve will eternally fall short of the mark if we have not brought another along with us. We have all given so much to make George Mason a model for others to follow. Be committed to this endeavor and we can't fail. Hold me accountable for this and I promise to do all I can to see that every member of our community has the opportunity and support they need to achieve. Our No Excuses credo begins with me. Have a great third quarter and I look forward to seeing you around campus.

Tyrone Q. Byrd

Principal

***GO MUSTANGS!***

The following items (*if applicable*) are included in your child's report card packet.

- Letter to Parents of AP Students
- Booklet for AP Students and Parents
- SOL Test Score
- Special Education Progress Reports
- ACT Practice Test Registration Form
- All Night Graduation Celebration Flyer
- International Dinner Flyer

**Important Dates:** *Please note that some of these dates have changed since the beginning of school and some other changes may still occur.*

**February 2**

Report Cards Distributed

**February 2, 3 and 4**

District Band

Hayfield High School

**February 8**

Parent Walk-In (PWI)

7:15 a.m. – 7:45 a.m.

Mustang Café

**February 8**

Early Release Wednesday – 1:45 p.m.

**February 9, 10 and 11**

District Chorus

Hayfield High School

**February 20**

President's Day

All-Staff Holiday

**February 21**Rising 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Parent Night

7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. – Mustang Café

**February 22**

Early Release Wednesday – 1:45 p.m.

**February 25**

State Band Auditions

James Madison University

**February 28**

Special Ed Parent Meeting

8:15 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.

Mustang Café – B121

**March 1**

Interims Available on AccessGM

**March 3**

PTSA/Kaplan ACT Practice Test

9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. – TLC

Pre-registration Required

**March 7**

International Dinner/PTSA

6:30 – 8:30 p.m. – Mustang Café

**March 2, 3**

District X Band Festival

Annandale High School

**March 9**

Parent/Teacher Mini Conferences

7:45 – 9:30 a.m.

Cafeteria/Auxiliary Gym/Main Gym

**Two-hour Delay for Students****March 10**

District X Chorus Festival

West Potomac High School

**March 14**

Parent Walk-In (PWI)

7:15 a.m. – 7:45 a.m.

**March 14**

Early Release Wednesday – 1:45 p.m.

**March 14**

ACT Test Strategies

4:30 – 9:00

Mustang Café

**March 27**

Special Ed Parent Meeting

8:15 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.

Mustang Café – B121

**March 28**

Early Release Wednesday – 1:45 p.m.

**March 29**End of 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter**March 30**

Professional Day

No school for students

**April 9**Begin 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter**April 11**

Parent Walk-In (PWI)

7:15 a.m. – 7:45 a.m.

**April 11**

Early Release Wednesday – 1:45 p.m.

**April 11**

PTSA Meeting

7:30 p.m. – Library

**April 11**

College 101 – Senior Panel

7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. – Library

**April 12**

Report Cards Distributed

**April 12, 13 and 14**

State Band

James River HS—Richmond

**April 18-19**

IB Art Show

Open to Public

7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Auditorium

**April 21**

Solo &amp; Ensemble Festival

Poe Middle School

**April 24**

Special Ed Parent Meeting

8:15 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.

Mustang Café – B121

**April 26, 27 and 28**

State Chorus

EC Glass HS--Lynchburg

## Naviance/Family Connection

Family Connection is a powerful planning and advising website (<https://connection.naviance.com/gmhs>) for students and parents. Some of the options offered in the program are:

- Building multi-year course plans
- Researching local scholarship options
- Searching for colleges and viewing multimedia college profiles
- Displaying scattergrams and application statistics from GMHS
- Registering for college visits
- Accessing Web links and custom pages from GMHS
- Exploring personality types and career interests

Students, if you have forgotten or misplaced your password, please contact your counselor or Ms. Bracken. Parents, if you would like access to Naviance, please contact your student's counselor or Ms. Bracken.

## Summer Enrichment Programs

Information on summer college and university enrichment programs, experiential camps, internships, etc. is available:

- In the College and Career Center in the *Summer Opportunities* binder
- On the Naviance/Family Connection website under *College, Enrichment Programs*

## Parent/Teacher Mini-Conferences

Parent/teacher mini-conferences will be held on **Friday, March 9, beginning immediately at 7:45 a.m. and ending promptly at 9:30 a.m. in the Mustang Café, auxiliary gym and main gym.** These conferences will provide you an opportunity to speak with teachers of your choice for three to four minutes to discuss your student's progress and to make appointments for additional conferences if you so desire. *No appointments are required for these March 9 mini-conferences.*

All classes will begin at 10:00 a.m. that day with buses serving students on a modified schedule. (A letter detailing bus routes will be published on the [www.fccps.org/gm/](http://www.fccps.org/gm/) website in early March.)

## National Honor Society News

In September 2011, juniors and seniors with at least a 3.5 GPA were invited to submit a list of activities and service to the NHS Faculty Council. This list was used to help the Council select members for the 2011-2012 school year. Juniors and seniors who were new to GM this past September with at least a 3.5 cumulative GPA at the end of the fall semester will be invited to submit a list of activities and service to the NHS Faculty Council during February for possible admission to NHS. This invitation will come to eligible students by mail.

If you have questions, please see Mrs. Weber or Ms. Webster.



## International Dinner

*A Night of Family Fun*

Wednesday, March 7

6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Mustang Café

This year the GMHS International Dinner will be held on Wednesday, March 7 at 6:30 PM in the Mustang Café. For those new to the school, the International Dinner is an annual event hosted by the GMHS International Club and sponsored by the PTSA and ESOL/Foreign Language staff. It is a fun celebration of our diverse Falls Church community, with over 250 attendees enjoying a delicious array of ethnic foods and entertainment with an international flair. It is a time for all families to come together. It is a wonderful family event.

This year, the International Club will raffle Restaurant Gift Certificates from local ethnic restaurants. All funds raised will support a child in the Sudan. Bring your checkbook or cash so you can participate in the raffle. If you would like to donate a Restaurant Gift Certificate, please contact Holly Garcia at [garciah@fccps.org](mailto:garciah@fccps.org) or 703 248 5500 x3102.

Attendees should bring an entrée, side dish or salad for 8-10 people to share. Disposable containers are advised and please label your dish. Don't have time to cook?? Bring a family size dish from one of our local ethnic restaurants!! Desserts are provided by the PTSA.

As there is about 20 minutes of entertainment after dinner, please contact Jane Cashin or Holly Garcia ([garciah@fccps.org](mailto:garciah@fccps.org)) if you have any ideas about entertainment for the evening. We certainly hope there will be student performers and perhaps an invited group from outside the school. Dancers, singers, and musicians are welcome.

Volunteers are needed. This is a PTSA sponsored event which cannot happen without the help of volunteers to make extra food and/or be part of the kitchen crew. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Jane Cashin at 703-534-5247 or [cashinjl@hotmail.com](mailto:cashinjl@hotmail.com).