

Excel in Mind, Body, and Character



George Mason High School Newsletter

Tyrone Q. Byrd, Principal

November, 2011

Dear Mustang Parents and Guardians:

We have completed the first quarter of the 2011 – 12 school year. First quarter grades can be viewed on AccessGM at 8:00 a.m. on Monday, November 14. Hard copies of report cards will be handed out to students during homeroom on Wednesday, November 16. George Mason students earn credits by the semester, and this report card represents 40% of their progress toward that semester grade. The second quarter will represent another 40% and the semester exam will represent 20% of the final semester grade.

The first quarter of the school year typically presents unique opportunities and challenges. The past nine and a half weeks have been no different. Our community has concurrently engaged in a full slate of rigorous academics, comprehensive extracurricular activities, and exciting social events. This community has a well-earned and long-lasting tradition of excellence and the first quarter serves as evidence of our collective ability to hit the mark.

As we begin our second quarter, I implore everyone to aggressively encourage your children to avail themselves of the extensive array of resources offered daily at George Mason. Our teachers and counselors go the extra mile and are available before, during, and after school to support your children as they strive to achieve ever higher levels of academic and social success. While ensuring that students are appropriately challenged, we recognize that providing adequate support is equally as important. Our collective commitment to remedial and enriching supports grows stronger daily and together we can ensure that no child goes without consistent guidance.

Excelling in Mind, Body, and Character takes a team effort. We genuinely expect to create and maintain long-lasting relationships with you as we unite to advocate for the children of this amazing community.

The second quarter of the school year encompasses the Thanksgiving and Winter breaks. We encourage you to utilize the Google calendar on our website to keep abreast of the numerous activities we have planned for this exciting time of the year. George Mason students have access to a robust extracurricular program. Please help your child develop, implement, and maintain a system to effectively manage their time. We expect that, with our support, each Mason student can participate in a fulfilling and responsible fashion.

Thank you for your continued support. We look forward to the promise of a successful second quarter and I hope to see you at a play, or game, or at the grocery.

Sincerely,

Go Mustangs!

Tyrone Q. Byrd
Principal

Important Dates

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

November 14

Report Card grades accessible in PowerSchool

November 14

Begin 2nd Quarter

November 16, 17, 18 and 19

Fall Musical – *Thoroughly Modern Millie*

7:30 p.m. – Auditorium

November 22

Special Education Parent Meeting

Mustang Café – B121

8:15 a.m. – 8:45. a.m.

November 23

Holiday Early Release– 1:45 p.m.

November 24 - 25

Thanksgiving Holiday

December 7

Financial Aid Night

7:00 p.m. – 8:15 p.m. – Mustang Café

December 8

Winter Band Concert

7:30 p.m. – Auditorium

December 10

District Band Auditions

West Potomac High School

December 14

Parent Walk-In (PWI)

7:15 a.m. – 7:45 a.m.

December 14

Early Release Wednesday – 1:45 p.m.

December 15

Chorus Concert

7:30 p.m. – Auditorium

Mustang Café

December 22

Holiday Early Release—1:45 p.m.

December 23- January 2

Winter Break

January 3

School Reopens

January 4

PTSA Meeting

7:30 p.m. – Library

January 5

- IB Forum
9:30 a.m. – Auditorium
- IB Awards Ceremony
7:00 p.m. – Auditorium

January 11

Early Release Wednesday – 1:45 p.m.

January 11

Parent Walk-In (PWI)

7:15 a.m. – 7:45 a.m.

Mustang Café

January 12

IB Information Night

7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Mustang Café

January 14

VCU Festival of Winds and Percussion

January 14

It's Academic Taping

NBC4

4001 Nebraska Avenue, NW

Washington, DC 20016

Audience should arrive at 2:00 pm.

Game will air February 18, 2012, at 10:30 am on NBC4.

January 16

Martin Luther King Day

All-Staff Holiday

January 23, 24, 25 and 26

Semester Exams

January 24

Special Education Parent Meeting

Mustang Café – B121

8:15 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.

January 25

Early Release Wednesday – 1:45 p.m.

January 26

End 2nd Quarter/1st Semester

January 27

Professional Day

No School for Students

January 30

Begin 3rd Quarter/2nd Semester



Financial Aid Night

December 7, 2011

7:00 p.m. – 8:15 p.m.

Mustang Café

This year's Financial Aid Night will be presented by Tom Peridou from George Mason University. The program will provide information about the financial aid application process, the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid), important deadlines and other relevant financial aid topics for current seniors seeking financial aid for the 2012-13 school year.

Agnes Meyer Outstanding Teacher Awards

Again this year the Washington Post is recognizing excellent teachers with its Agnes Meyer Outstanding Teacher Awards. Completed nomination packets must be received in the Superintendent's office by January 13, 2012. Nomination forms are available in the main office and are posted on the website at www.fccps.org/agnesmeyer



IB Forum

January 5, 2012 at 9:30 A.M. in the George Mason Auditorium

Parents are invited to join the Class of 2014 for an assembly in the auditorium on Thursday, January 5, 2012, beginning at 9:30 a.m. Students will hear from alumni and current students who have participated in the IB program – both Certificate and Diploma recipients/candidates. George Mason High School graduates and IB students will answer questions about their own experiences in our IB program and how those experiences helped prepare them for college or university. Parents are welcome to this unscripted student forum. Please sign in at the welcome desk or the main office and obtain a visitor's badge before proceeding to the auditorium.

IB Awards Ceremony for Class of 2011 Graduates

January 5, 2012 at 7:00 P.M. in the George Mason Auditorium

On Thursday, January 5, 2012, at 7:00 p.m., we will hold our IB Awards Ceremony in the school auditorium where we will congratulate all GM IB graduates and formally present their IB Certificates and Diplomas.

Community members, family and friends are invited to recognize the hard work and dedication of all IB 2011 graduates - and to join us for a reception afterwards in the Mustang Café. Please mark your calendars!

IB Information Night

Parents of eighth, ninth and tenth grade students who are interested in learning more about the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program at George Mason High School are invited to attend the IB Information Night on **Thursday, January 12, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.** in the Mustang Café. The program is designed for parents and guardians of students in grades 8, 9, and 10.

*The International Baccalaureate Diploma Program at George Mason High School
Celebrating Thirty Years of Excellence and Expanding Opportunity*

Virginia Governor's School and Startalk Programs Summer 2012

Academic Programs, Visual and Performing Arts and Language Academies

Students interested in learning more about the Summer Residential Governor's Schools Academic, Visual and Performing Arts Programs and Language Academies must visit with Mason's Governor's School Advisers as soon as possible:

- Academic Programs: Mr. Misra, Room D108
- Visual and Performing Arts: Ms. West, Band Room
- Language Academies and Startalk: Ms. Planas, Room C102

Exceptional juniors and sophomores are eligible to apply for the Governor's Residential Summer Schools in the following academic areas:

Summer Residential Governor's School **Opportunities:**

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS:

- [Summer Residential Governor's Mentorship in Engineering](#)
June 24 – July 21
Location: Christopher Newport University, Newport News, VA 23060
- [Summer Residential Governor's Mentorship in Marine Science](#)
June 24 – July 21
Location: Christopher Newport University, Newport News, VA 23060
- [Summer Residential Governor's School for Agriculture](#)
June 24 – July 21
Location: Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA
- [Summer Residential Governor's School for Humanities](#)
June 24 – July 21
Location: Radford University, Radford, VA
- [Summer Residential Governor's School for Mathematics, Science and Technology](#)
July 1 – July 28
Location: Lynchburg College, Lynchburg, VA
- [Summer Residential Governor's School for Life Sciences and Medicine](#)
July 1 – July 27
Location: Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS PROGRAM:

- [Summer Residential Governor's School for Visual and Performing Arts](#)
June 24 – July 21
Location: Radford University, Radford, VA

WORLD LANGUAGE PROGRAMS:

- [French Academy](#): June 23 – July 14, 2012, at Washington & Lee University in Lexington
- [German Academy](#): June 23 – July 14, 2012, at Washington & Lee University in Lexington
- [Spanish Academy](#): June 23 – July 14, 2012, at Washington & Lee University in Lexington
- [Japanese Academy](#): June 24 – July 15, 2012, at Randolph-Macon College in Ashland
- [Latin Academy](#): June 24 – July 15, 2012, at Randolph-Macon College in Ashland

STARTALK 2011 - Programs in VA

(Please note that these are not Virginia Governor's School programs as they are funded by federal grants; however, they function much in the same as Virginia Governor School Language Academies)

Virginia Commonwealth University's School of World Studies is offering three-week residential language programs to Virginia high school students through the federally funded STARTALK initiative again in 2012. Funding is anticipated for programs in Arabic, Chinese, Russian, and possibly Portuguese. (VCU has been offering STARTALK programs since 2008 that parallel the Virginia Governor's Foreign Language Academies in French, German, Spanish, Latin, and Japanese.) For More information:

<http://www.has.vcu.edu/wld/academies/index.html>

Please see the following Virginia Department of Education Web Page to Learn More about Virginia Governor's School Academic and VPA Programs:

http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/governors_school_programs/summer_residential/index.shtml

Please see the following Virginia Department of Education Web Page to Learn More about Virginia Governor's School Foreign Language Academies:

http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/foreign_language/language_academies/index.shtml

For more information about any of these Governor's School Programs and the application process at George Mason High School, please contact Asheesh Misra at 703.248.5590.

Language Study Opportunities

Summer

The High School Diplomats International Friendship Program is a cultural enrichment program that brings together high school students from Japan and the United States for a ten day stay at Princeton University. Sophomores or juniors interested in participating in this program may visit the website <http://www.highschooldiplomats.com/> or see Señora Planas in Room C102. All application materials for this program must be completed prior to January 1, 2012.

Youth Exchange Program

Year Long

The Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange Program provides 250 scholarships for American high school students to live with a host family and attend school in Germany for a year. Sophomores, juniors and seniors who have a 3.0 GPA and will be between 15 and 18 years old at the start of the program are eligible. No prior knowledge of German is required. For more information, you may visit this website <http://www.usagermanyscholarship.org/> or see Señora Planas in room C102.

News from the School Clinic

Please help us prevent the spread of illness by keeping sick students home until they are fever free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medications. A 24 hour period is also recommended if your student suffers from an upset stomach and GI symptoms. Also, please reinforce our prevention messages at home by reminding your student to practice good health hygiene, such as frequent hand washing, coughing or sneezing into their sleeve or a tissue and not sharing personal items with other students, such as drinks or eating utensils. If your student contacts you when they are feeling ill, please remind them to go to the School Clinic and follow proper check-out procedures. Please encourage your student to call you from the Clinic. Students who need to take medications must have a medication authorization completed, signed and brought to the Clinic. Prescription medications require a physician's signature.

Parent Walk-In Meetings Mustang Café

7:15 a.m. – 7:45 a.m.
Wednesday, December 14
Wednesday, January 11
Wednesday, February 8
Wednesday, March 14
Wednesday, April 11
Wednesday, May 8
Wednesday, June 13

Important Reminders from the Attendance Office

Students Released During the School Day

Students who have parent permission to leave school before the official end of the school day must bring to school a document showing parent permission for early departure. Students must show this note to the teacher before the beginning of class and leave class without disruption to other students. Any student leaving the building must sign out at the main office. To protect the integrity of instruction, main office staff is not authorized to call into a classroom to arrange for student release or to give messages to students.

Messages to Students

Because we place a high value on the instruction our students receive, we do not interrupt classes to deliver personal items or personal messages unless there is a true emergency. To deliver routine messages we will post a student's name on the white board in the hall outside the library to indicate an item or message waiting. Parents are also reminded that students have limited access to their cell phones during the duration of the school day and therefore may not receive messages until they are allowed to access their phones.

Parent/Teacher Mini-Conferences
Friday, March 9
7:45 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

**Hey GMHS Students,
Need help with homework?** Bring it with you!

Want to study for tests or quizzes? Bring it with you!

Need to review for midterm/final exams?

If so, come to Mrs. Tooze's room, A114, for peer-to-peer tutoring on Tuesdays during Mustang Block. Members of the Future Educators of America will be available to help you succeed in high school.



**Tuesday Tutoring in Tooze's Room
Mustang Block A114**