



“Ram Report” January 11, 2019

Week in Review

- GJSHS faculty and staff had an Hour of Power on Wednesday, January 9th.
- AP Language and Composition classes began making their persuasive speeches in the cafeteria. Ms. Swistak invited teachers and classes who wanted to listen to the speeches of her students. These speeches are scheduled to continue early next week.

Shoutouts

- Congratulations to the following students who were selected to the UMass Honor Band:

Jordan Healy, Brandy Heath, Amelia Weatherbee, Daniel Mainville, Molly Hoffenberg, Dylan Holubowich, Katrina Pelchat, Casey Funk, Nathan Drapeau, Andrew Hutchinson, Evan Anderson and Emily Frank

The UMASS Honor band is a festival where students are split into three concert bands and get to perform with students across the Northeast. The students have a single rehearsal and perform on Saturday, February 9th at the UMASS Fine Arts Center. Students were nominated by Mr. Sargent based upon their merit, growth and dedication over the course of the year.

- Granby Legion: We were happy to have our two recent 2018 Granby High School Scholarship Winners and our Lions Youth Speech Winner for District 33-Y, Hampshire County, join us for dinner tonight. Anabel Evren, who is attending Ithaca College, in Ithaca, NY, and Brandi LeBlanc, who is attending UMass, Amherst, were our scholarship winners, and spoke about their first college semester. Sam Gould, our Lions Youth Speech winner, delivered his winning speech to us. The Granby Lions Club always looks forward to hear from our scholarship and speech winners, and we wish them all the best in their future endeavors.

Things to know...

- In the fall of 2018 The Massachusetts Department of Education of Elementary and Secondary Education issued a new accountability system for all school districts in Massachusetts. The new system moved districts away from the past

practice of being recognized and/or supported solely on the results of standardized tests. The new system now includes additional indicators that will be used to recognize schools that are demonstrating success in addition to identifying schools in need of support (for more information on the new accountability system you can click [here](#)). The “chronic absenteeism” indicator is likely the one that has had the most immediate impact on schools and families. Chronic absenteeism is defined as the percentage of students missing 10 percent or more of their days in membership. In a typical 180-day school year, this is the percentage of students who miss 18 or more days. The chronic absenteeism rate includes both excused and unexcused absences. Granby, like many other districts, has worked to understand this new indicator and identify ways we can address it proactively. Additionally, we are working to identify supports and resources that can be used to support families. At GJSHS, we have had many discussions about this and have started to pilot new approaches. One step that has been taken is letters have been created and are being sent home once a student reaches 3 absences, 6 absences, and 9 absences (excused and unexcused). These are form letters that are intended to be a part of a larger conversation and to ensure parents/families and the school are on the same page. To date, we have received feedback on these letters that have resulted in changes and we are open to any additional feedback people may have. With that said, there are certain components of these letters that will likely need to remain in place, but we are always open to discuss things like this with you to help you better understand our rationale. If you have received one of these letters, or receive one in the future, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs. Jordan-Gagner (ajordan-gagner@granbyschoolsma.net) with any questions and/or comments.

- The Strategic Planning Initiative for Families and Youth (SPIFFY), a Hampshire County coalition focused on youth and family well-being, will be conducting the Prevention Needs Assessment Survey (PNAS) at Granby Jr/Sr High School on **Monday, March 4th, 2018** throughout the school day. Eighth, Tenth, and Twelfth graders are surveyed every 2 years in school districts across Hampshire County. The PNAS measures alcohol, tobacco, and drug use, a variety of factors that place students at risk for problem behaviors and factors that protect students from problem behaviors. The purpose of the survey is to gather the information needed to plan important prevention and intervention programs to combat such problems as alcohol, drug use, and violence in our schools and communities. It will also help us judge the effectiveness of our current prevention and intervention efforts. Students may opt-out of the survey at any time. If you do not want your child(ren) to participate in the survey, please send in a written note to

Mrs. Jenks, School Nurse Leader at Granby Jr/Sr High School or email her at njenks@granbyschoolsma.net. Thank you.

- National Honor Society students are available to be tutors. If you are interested in learning more about this please contact administration and/or guidance.
- Schedules for the second semester will be posted on PlusPortals on Monday, January 14th. The second semester does not start until late January 2019.
- Take a look at what our new Audio/Visual Production class is doing at GJSHS. [Here](#) is RamCam's Youtube channel. This is an exciting new class and we are happy to share the product of their work with the community.
- Click [here](#) for information on the Walden Woods Essay contest.

Look Ahead

- GJSHS staff has a faculty meeting on Monday, January 14th in the library.
- The district Educator Evaluation work group will meet Monday, January 14th after the faculty meeting in the GJSHS library.
- Mr. Dorman's Legal Studies court will attend the first session of their "mock trial" at U.S. District Court on Thursday, January 17th.
- Any senior who is applying to the *Doctor for a Day* program must submit their completed application, including letters of recommendation, to Ms. Bierden by January 23rd.
- The Granby girls' basketball team will play in the 2019 Hoophall Classic in Springfield, MA on Friday, January 18th at 4:00PM. Tickets will be on sale for students during lunches.
- The Class of 2019 is running a Boston Celtics ticket raffle. The cost is \$10 per ticket and the drawing will be held on January 18th. Please contact Ms. Mahoney with any questions.
- Pioneer Valley Driving School will be offering drivers' ed classes at GJSHS from February 19-22 from 8:45AM-3:45PM and February 25-27 from 2:30-4:30PM. A mandatory Parents' Night will be held on February 19th from 6:00-8:00PM. For more details please contact Pioneer Valley Driving School at 413-253-7432.
- Our next Student Advisory Council meeting will be on January 25

Student Support Suite

- Scholarship opportunities are beginning to come in. Seniors should check the listings outside of the Student Support Suite and the cafeteria hallway, as well as the Guidance [webpage](#).
- Ms. Bierden has been meeting with those students who took the PSAT test in October to review their score reports. All students will receive a copy of their score report and a test booklet to review their answers. If you have any questions, please call Ms. Bierden in the Guidance office at 467-7106.

Resources, Supports and other things of interest...

- The MCAS test has changed for the 2018 administration. The next-generation MCAS is a computer-based test for all students in grades 3-8 and grade 10. This [article](#) want to help students meet the next-generation MCAS with confidence and success!

Athletics

- The booster club is looking for volunteers....If you are interested, please email Tammy Sosa at Tammysosa1175@gmail.com
- **Admission prices:**
 - Basketball games \$5 adult \$3 senior citizens/students
- Mark your calendars for the Granby Duals on January 12, there will be an admission charge.
- Season tickets are now on sale! \$35 for 10 games (Adults) \$20 for 10 games (senior citizens & students)
- Hoophall Classic tickets are on sale for \$6.00. Granby vs. South Hadley on January 18th @ Springfield College. Tickets will be sold during the school day and at evening games.
- Remember there is no food or drink allowed in the gym during games.

Athletics in the news:

[In the news](#)

Basketball sports' schedules can be found on www.miaa.net