



Director's Report
Presented to the GPA Board of Directors
November 27, 2018

Scholastic Book Fair

Our GPA Book Fair is currently underway this week - November 27th - 30th - just in time to inspire reading over the winter break, or provide opportunities to give books as gifts.

Quarter 1 Finals

Students took their Quarter 1 finals in mid-October. Every student in every course took a quarter final to show what they had learned in their classes during Q1. These grade level end-of-quarter exams were designed by grade level department teams to provide quarterly data to show students learning around their content standards. These exams are uniform among grade level content teachers and worth 25% of the student's final grade. In addition to measuring student learning, the quarter finals also provide our students with college-like experience of high stakes exams. Campus was quiet throughout the week and our students definitely rose to the occasion.

English/Language Arts (ELA)

Our ELA department completed a school wide read aloud of our mentor text *Through The Cracks* in October, making connections to our GPA history. San Diego Writing Project received a grant to continue working with our senior class on analytical writing skills, as well as teach our high school ELA and History teacher in professional development on site this winter and early spring. On demand essays have been administered schoolwide for Quarter 1, and will be administered again each quarter (in addition to the processed essays assigned in each class throughout each quarter). Achieve 3000 launched in September and teachers are tracking student progress and Lexile growth. A mid-year assessment will take place in January. Achieve 3000 trainers have conducted three professional development sessions on site so far, and two more will take place as the year progresses. GPA consultant C. Hunter will focus her work this year on class libraries, independent reading, and conferring for grades 6, 8, and 10. Those libraries will become the models for grades 7, 9, 11/12. Playwrights Project will return this year for our 9th and 10th graders, this will be our fourth year working with this exciting team. Students are provided a teaching artist several days a week for six weeks to learn how to write plays, and actors come to do a dramatic reading student's plays at the end of the project.

History

Achieve 3000 launched in our History classes in October. Professional development and support was provided, as well as time to observe ELA teachers who have been using the program for one year. Achieve also includes iCivics - this will provide our 8th , 9th and 12th grade history teachers with additional resources. Goals for the History department this year also include continued writing instruction aligned with ELA, and bringing learning to life through project based assignments. This October, the Class of 2019 had the opportunity to become civically engaged with real-life government and politics. Seniors listened to a presentation from Jesus Cisneros of InspireUS, which is a non-profit organization looking to help the youth practice their civic duty. In total 86 seniors were pre-registered for future elections, however, we were lucky enough to have 4 seniors actually vote in the 2018 midterms.

Off site opportunities so far for History teachers have included attending SDSU on **Thursday, November 15 at 4 p.m.** for a lecture, discussion, and reception with Sam Wineburg, the Margaret Jacks Professor of Education and of History at Stanford University, as well as an upcoming training at SDCOE in the spring.

Science

STEM opportunities continue to expand at GPA. The Robotics Team is off the ground, currently mapping their events schedule for the year while delving into instructional videos about design principles, soldering, and multi-rotors/multi-copters. Ninth grade Biology students recently completed a multi-disciplinary unit, including on-site instruction and a culminating field trip to Mission Bay Aquatic Center. The unit tied together principles related to buoyancy, wind and weather, water pollution, and simple pulley machines.

Made possible through the DROPS (Drought Response Outreach Program for Students) grant, 6th grade students are currently engaged in a two-week water cycle and water quality unit, taught by guests from GPA's Earth Lab partners. The program provides a combination of on-site instruction and hands-on wetlabs.

This year, GPA's Science teachers will participate in a variety of off site trainings. This year's offerings range from San Diego County Office of Education's 3-day NGSS Academy for first and second year teachers to PoPPCon (Power of Pathways and Partnerships Convention), organized by SDUSD and UCSD's CREATE office.

Math

All 6th through 12th grade students took part in initial math assessments in September. Teachers have analyzed data and are in the process of making instructional decisions based on their analysis of the initial assessment data.

Currently in year one of implementation, GPA's high school math teachers are engaged in ongoing professional development, peer observations, and collaborative planning around College Prep Mathematics (CPM). CPM is a Common Core aligned curriculum that moves instruction from traditional model-and-practice approaches to math toward a problem based, open-ended, group work approach. The transition from a direct instruction centered model to a collaborative problem solving model has its challenges and places students on a steep learning curve. Teacher training has centered not only around curriculum and instruction but also around supporting students through the transition.

GPA continues its membership in the Gates grant funded San Diego Math Network, spearheaded by UCSD CREATE. This year, each participating school/district will design an "improvement loop" with the goal of addressing a specific area for improvement through the use of measurable data.

Spanish/Language Other Than English (LOTE)

Our Spanish program continues to thrive at GPA as we serve 8-12 graders in Spanish classes ranging from Spanish 1 to AP Spanish Literature. Both Ms. Beck and Ms. Avila are currently hosting teacher interns from USD. Ms. Avila is also teaching teachers how to teach Spanish one night a week at UC Riverside. We are proud to host budding teachers and to share the expertise of our powerful Spanish team. This year, our Spanish department has also adopted several new texts from SDSU to align throughout the curriculum and expose students to the college level language work expected. New Language standards from the CDE are being considered for release in 2019 and our team will be studying these standards to identify shifts and implement.

Wingspan (College Counseling Center)

During the month of October and November numerous college representatives came to Gompers Preparatory Academy during high school lunch to provide information and resources to our students.

October College Representative Visits

Point Loma Nazarene University [Wednesday, October 3]

Harvard University [Wednesday, October 10]

Whitworth University [Thursday, October 11]

Grossmont School of Nursing [Tuesday, October 16]

UC Berkeley [Friday, October 19]

UC Santa Cruz [Tuesday, October 30]

November College Representative Visits

Penn State University [Thursday, November 1]

San Diego Fire Department [Tuesday, November 6]

UC Irvine [Thursday, November 8]

During the month of October and November numerous college representative gave special PowerPoint presentations in Wingspan and the Dining Hall.

College Presentations

UC San Diego [Tuesday, October 2]

Grand Canyon University [Wednesday, October 3]

UC Santa Barbara [Monday, October 29]

San Diego State University [Thursday, November 15]

The following workshops were presented and are scheduled during the Fall season to inform and prepare for college and financial aid applications:

College Applications 101

This workshop informed parents on four year colleges, the application process, important dates and deadlines, and the class of 2019 senior commitments.

Spanish Session

Wednesday, September 26, 2018 | 5:30pm -6:30pm

English Session

Thursday, September 27, 2018 | 5:30pm - 6:30pm

Financial Aid 101

This session informed parents about the financial aid application process and the items senior students need to successfully submit their financial aid applications.

Spanish

Wednesday, November 28, 2018 | 5:30pm - 6:30pm

English

Thursday, November 29, 2018 | 5:30pm - 6:30pm

We are wrapping up college application submissions for the UC and CSU systems. Senior students began the UC application in September and the CSU Application on October. All qualifying seniors who have a 3.0 GPA and above will have submitted their four year college applications by November 30, 2018.

Facilities

New Gymnasium and Athletic Buildings

Contractors are busy preparing the north campus for construction of our new gymnasium and athletic buildings, including demolition of handball courts and moving two bungalow classrooms down to the Sixth Grade Village. We anticipate that official groundbreaking will be scheduled for January.

Heating Ventilation Air Conditioning (HVAC)

The HVAC project is scheduled to be completed by the end of school year. Students and staff are looking forward to having centralized heating and cooling, especially for the coming spring, when temperatures and humidity often rise to uncomfortable levels.

Proposition 39 Energy Efficiency Project

Funded by the state Prop 39 Energy Efficiency grant, electricians have been replacing most of the interior and exterior light fixtures on campus to new lower energy use LED lamps. We appreciate having brighter lights on campus and look forward to the cost savings these lights will bring to GPA.

GPA Charter Renewal

Our current charter with San Diego Unified School District is due for renewal on July 1, 2019. We will submit our charter renewal documents to the District in the coming weeks, in an effort to renew our charter before March.