



News from GSA February 2023

Shared by GSA's Head of School with members of school boards, select boards, superintendents, the Budget Review Committee (BRC), and the budget and finance committees of Blue Hill, Brooksville, Brooklin, Castine, Penobscot, Sedgwick, and Surry, current parents and faculty, and anyone else who requests an emailed monthly version. News from GSA will also be posted on our website.

News from the GSA Board of Trustees

- The Board is finalizing the Head of School Search Committee, to be chaired by former trustee and alumna Deb Ludlow '77. The committee will consist of current and former trustees, faculty and staff members, alumni, current and former parents, and members of the wider community. Board Chair Sally Mills will announce the committee's membership and its process and timeline as soon as the committee is fully constituted.

Campus News

- GSA's Director of College and Career Counseling, Peter Goss, resigned last month to move to New Mexico. I am very pleased that we have been able to hire Katy Rinehart to fill this important position on an interim basis. Katy served as our director from 2017 through 2019. She is familiar with GSA and our programs, so our students will be well-served by her expert guidance.
- Middle School Basketball Night took place on January 25 and was a great success! Sixty-eight middle school students attended, as well as more than 30 elementary students. They watched GSA's girls' and boys' teams each win their games, and enjoyed games, contests, and pizzas!
- Juniors and Seniors have been preparing for their Independent Study and Internship experiences, to run from February 27 through March 10. Students design and carry out projects with a faculty advisor

- and a project mentor who also evaluate their work. An exhibition of their finished projects is scheduled for late March, so stay tuned!
- This year 31 students have taken advantage of Alternative Course Contracts, a way to study something not in our curriculum, or take an online college-level course. This year's ACC's include *Marine Fabrication*, *Right Whale Genetics Research* and *Thai Language and Culture*. Online college courses included *American Sign Language*, *Fundamentals of Music*, *Anatomy & Physiology*, and *Introduction to Criminal Justice*.
 - The past few months have been spent redesigning GSA's website to be more attractive, easier to use, and more effective. The new website will go live in early February.
 - We have begun the second part of our NEASC re-accreditation Self Study. Part 1, Foundations, which assessed finances, facilities, health & safety, and our mission, was completed in January. Part 2, Program, focuses on our curriculum, classroom experience, learning results, the culture of the school and, in general, all facets of student experience. A NEASC visiting team will be on campus in May to evaluate our Foundations Self Study, and another NEASC team will visit in late October to evaluate our Program Self Study.

Finances

- Our second quarter financials have been compiled, and, despite lower than expected enrollment, and some higher expenses (notably, health insurance costs) we expect to end the year with a balanced budget. We are watching all expenses very carefully, and have instituted a spending freeze on all non-essential expenses. As always, our goal is to protect student programs from negative impacts.
- With a GSA Fund goal of \$325,000 this fiscal year, we are 81% there, with just over 5 months to go! Total giving to GSA is running 12% ahead of last year at this time. We will use these months and Giving Day to press on and work toward surpassing our goals.

Facilities

- Since we currently do not need the Wyandotte building to house boarding students, we have converted the rooms into rentable spaces, and have contracted with a local company to provide tenants.

Recent Student Highlights

- Senior Dell Davis-Batt (Brooksville) has been coordinating our peer tutoring program this fall and spring, recruiting and scheduling peer tutors for study halls and after school. Her interest in this is an outgrowth of her ISIP project as a junior, where she investigated and presented a proposal for students to serve as writing tutors at GSA.
- Seniors Andy Hipsky (Blue Hill), Austin Chandler (Surry) and Tony Esposito (Surry) represented GSA in the Maine All-State Jazz Festival at Bangor High School. All three students worked with nationally recognized guest artist clinicians over the course of three busy days, culminating in a performance with the other top jazz students in Maine on Saturday, January 14 at the Bangor High School Performing Arts Center.

Basketball!

- We are excited for GSA's basketball teams to compete in the state tournaments, and hope community members will continue to support our athletes. Prelims will be the week before February vacation and the tourney continues through vacation. The state championship game is scheduled for March 4th. Keep up with the teams through our social media accounts on [Instagram](#) and on [Facebook](#), where scores and updates are posted regularly.

Thank you for taking the time to read this, and for your service to the well-being of our shared peninsula community. We want to hear from you, and invite you to reach out to me by phone (207-374-2808), by email to t.seeley@georgestevens.org, or in person.