

Paw-sitively Connected

Great Path Academy at MCC



Summer Bridge to a New School Year

Summer Bridge is a wonderful tradition that the staff and upperclassmen here at GPA have grown to treasure. We all know that the incoming freshmen are not only coming to high school, but also coming into a college campus and a whole new group of peers from all over the place. This program has supported our incoming students over the past few years by offering opportunities to get to know the staff, their fellow peers and also the school campus. This article focuses on an incoming student's perspective and also one of the upperclassmen who volunteered to facilitate during the bridge program.

In the words of Jaden Del Gobbo, a freshman new to GPA this year:

"Summer Bridge. The Summer Bridge program for the class of 2019 is something I will never overlook. Summer Bridge is a program for freshmen that helps the transition from their old school to GPA go easier, and let me tell you, it worked! Not only

did Summer Bridge give freshmen a chance to socialize and become friends with freshmen and upper classmen, it gave them the chance to meet teach-



Above, GPA students during Summer Bridge 2015

ers, learn the lay out of the school, get situated with the rules and regulations, and, possibly most significant, rid them of any and all anxiety. I can tell you from personal experience that I was really nervous coming to GPA. I was scared about making new friends and fitting in, but the Summer Bridge program literally took all of that away. If

GPA Clubs!

This fall, students picked clubs from a list that varied from crocheting to a GSA. Indoor soccer and strength-training are other options. With the GPA schedule designed to hold clubs during the school day, all GPA students get the opportunity to get involved in the school community in a variety of ways.

Darnisha A., a senior at GPA, is a member of the Spanish Culture Club. She says, "We're going to learn about different

cultures, as well as the food. We are going to do different activities involving the cultures, beliefs, locations, holidays and traditions. We will be examining Cinco de Mayo and those types of things. I'm most excited about the food! I love food. I'm also excited to help some people open up their eyes to my parents' culture and this club is the perfect place for that."

Kim P., a sophomore, is in the GPA Reading and Writing

not for the Summer Bridge program, many freshmen would have found the transition to GPA much harder. The Summer Bridge program was all about trust and community

building exercises that promoted friendship and safety there. I recommend the Summer Bridge program and hope this is a program that stays at GPA."

Mattea Whitford, a senior who volunteered at Summer Bridge, speaks to the experience through the eyes of an upperclassman:

"It was really fun to help out with my friends. We got to meet a bunch of new freshmen, who were pretty cool. Gabi, Magan and I student taught with Mr. Buder. We had the opportunity to tell our experiences from being at school here at GPA to the new students. I think it gave them a good idea of what the school is really like, it is better to hear it from students than teachers. We played games to learn about each other, like 'The Big Wind Blows' and those games helped everyone to get to know stuff about each other."

Club. She says, "We are going to be learning how to write and making newsletters for the school. Other students, teachers and parents will get the experience and know what we are doing in school through our writing."

Tyuanah W., another sophomore at GPA, is Strengthening and Conditioning. "I'm most excited to work with the yoga equipment," she stated.

Details on each club, as well as the advisors, can be found on the school website at www.greatpathacademy.org.

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Special points of interest:

- Did you know? The GPA Guidance Office has an Independent Reading library that students can check books out of! See Ms. Spencer for details.

Unified Arts News

Art News: To start off the school year, GPA Art students were asked to think about whom they are and the unique qualities that they bring here to GPA as young professionals. Next they created their own "Personal-Ties" to express their personality and future endeavors! (Photo top left.) GPA Art students are learning how to create visual-verbal art journals. They will use these throughout the semester to explore ideas and document their artistic processes. (Photo, left middle.)

Culinary: We have been very busy in the Cougar Kitchen working on class cookbooks with



recipes that are important to each of the students. Stay tuned for the link to our blog that will showcase many things such as cooking demonstrations, recipes, and students practicing techniques at home.

Small Business Management: Our budding entrepreneurs have started to work on their business plans. The students have picked various businesses like;

equipment, plumbing, sneaker design firms and hair salons. We are ending this month with creating the first section, the mission and vision statements.

Health: Students are off to a great start by learning about healthy/unhealthy foods. Each student is asked to create a healthy recipe and bring samples for the class! Next the students will be visiting the GPA Garden to learn about Organic Farming.

Social Studies News

In World History, students are learning about the formation of early civilizations. Students have been comparing the Code of Hammurabi to modern day laws. Students have started exploring the foundations of religion and the way religion has influenced the world. The current struggle of refugees in Europe is also being analyzed. In United States History, students have been studying the Gilded Age. We have

been debating the pros and cons of the technological advancements, influx of immigrants and rise of big businesses that characterized this period.

In Criminal Justice, we have been discussing America's experience with crime during the last half century and how this has shaped the criminal justice system. We have also explored the principle of due process and identified its significance in the American crim-

inal justice system.

Civics class are beginning their study of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship with an introduction to the Enlightenment philosophers, John Locke and Thomas Hobbes. Additionally, students will investigate a recent period of Somalia's state of affairs to draw a modern connection to Mr. Hobbes' idea of a state of nature and the need for effective government.

English News

English II is working on their first unit "What Makes a Good Society?" in which students question the components of an ideal society and contrast them with the events that happen in America's society.

Honors students just completed a project entitle "Liberty and Equality", where each student presented research based findings to persuade peers on whether or not America was actual "free and equal." College Prep students just completed a utopia project where students created a model of a utopia with peers and defended why

their utopia was the ideal place to live. Honors will be reading Lord of the Flies next and College Prep will start a short story unit with "Harrison Bergeron" as their first short story.

Students in ninth grade English are reading the "Scarlet Ibis" by James Hurst as part of the first unit. They are learning how to complete a close reading--a skill which they will use throughout the year. Students are also working on their first thesis-based essay. As they work toward completing their final paper, they will learn how to com-

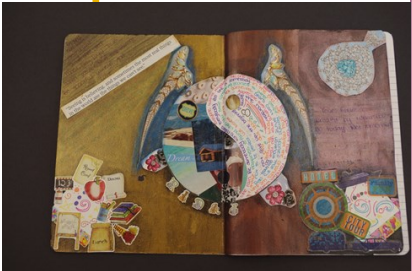
plete the stages of the writing process.

In American Literature, students are examining and discussing "What is an American?" through a variety of texts. We'll use these ideas to create a foundation of what American Literature is when we read our later novels.

In College Writing, students are reading One Hundred Years of Solitude, discussing the magical realism of Latin American literature and the importance the novel holds in 20th Century lit.



Below: The art journal of student artist, Rida Jafri, a senior at GPA.



Science News

Biology students have begun the year by examining what it means to be sustainable based on the three pillars; economy, society, and environment. In this first, short unit, the students analyze various real world scenarios to determine sustainability challenges and to then develop potential solutions to those challenges.

Physical science students are working through the first unit of the year which delves deeply into skills necessary for scientific literacy and numeracy. We began by designing systems of measurement to better understand the metric and US sys-

tems. We are now creating games to teach others how to convert between units of the metrics system.

Genetics students are in the thralls of learning the intricate history of the discovery of the DNA molecule, its structure, and component parts. This foundational understanding of DNA structure and how it applies to genes, in addition to a first project on chromosome 4 mutations, will help students realize the significance of the study of genetics.

10th grade students are already beginning to prepare for the upcoming CAPT in March of



To the left, Ms. Chaki's class getting their science on!

GALAPAGOS!!!- 2016 March break GPA will be traveling to the Galapagos! The very islands where Charles Darwin collected the data that lead him to his theories of natural selection and evolution! Any student who has passed Biology is welcome to sign up. Details can be found at: www.explorica.com/Thurrott-8568

2016. Students have taken their initial baseline assessments and should be well aware of their current level within the next week or so. Student have also been given assignments on studysland.com to help them practice. Look for a letter home soon related to additional CAPT preparation strategies and opportunities!

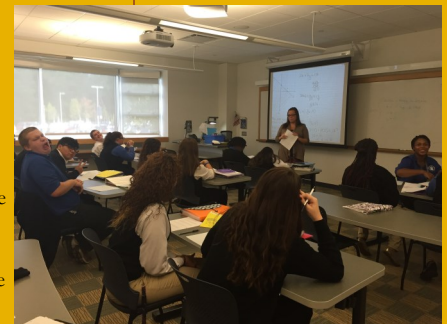
Math News

Mr. Hoffman's classes are off to a great start! Algebra is focusing on understanding patterns in numbers and in nature, and then figuring out how to use these patterns to answer questions based on real life scenarios. College Prep math is reviewing to get ready for their pre-test so they can complete the entire Aleks math program. Only one student pulled it

off last year, so we'll see who can rise to the challenge. Calculus Honors has the daunting task of reviewing 4 years worth of material in just 3 weeks, and they are doing a phenomenal job. They have taken a pre-test and no one has scored below an A. This is shaping up to be a great year.

In Ms. K's Algebra II class, we are

off too a great start! We have started unit 1 on Functions and Inverse functions. As a class we are exploring linear programming and how to maximize profit in real world situations. In pre-calculus it has been great working with the same group of students I had last year! We have started unit 1 on conic sections.



Above, students in Ms. K.'s math class working hard!

Our 2015-16 School Community

This school year, we welcome an incoming freshman class of 84 students. An overwhelming amount attended GPA's Summer Bridge in order to get to know each other and the school community, please see the article on the front page for details about this program. We have students from 28 area towns represented in our whole school community: Bolton, Bloomfield, Bristol,

Broadbrook., Coventry, East Granby, East Hampton, East Hartford, East Windsor, Enfield, Granby, Hartford, Hebron, Manchester, Meriden, Middle Had-dam, Middletown, Montville, New Britain, Newington, Plantsville, Rocky Hill, South Windsor, Stafford, Tolland, Vernon, Wethersfield, Windsor.

Our school population has grown slightly to 273 students in all four grades. We still are keeping it a priority to stay a small

learning community! We are very pleased to be able to have siblings of current and past GPA students to welcome into our school community. Of note, the Medovich family now has Brendan and Kaylin who attend GPA, but also an Italian exchange student, Michelle A., who is a great addition to our school community. Our students and her can both learn from each other. We are looking forward to another great year of hard work, growth and fun!



GREAT PATH ACADEMY AT MCC

A Middle College High School

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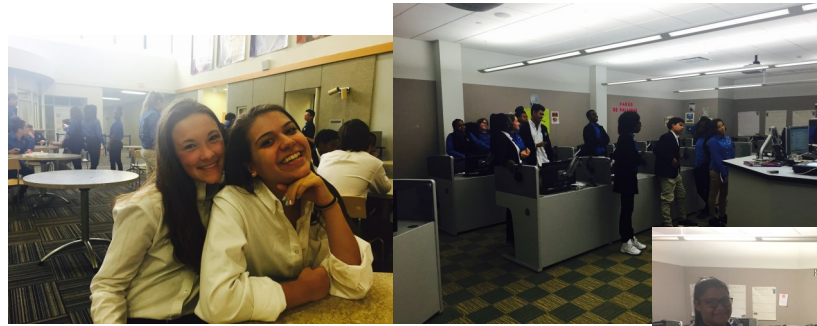
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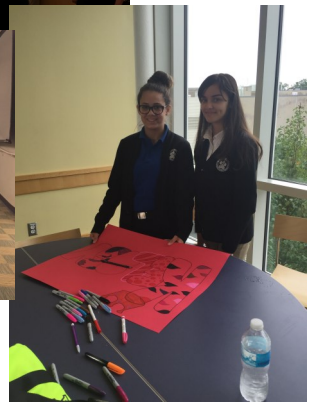
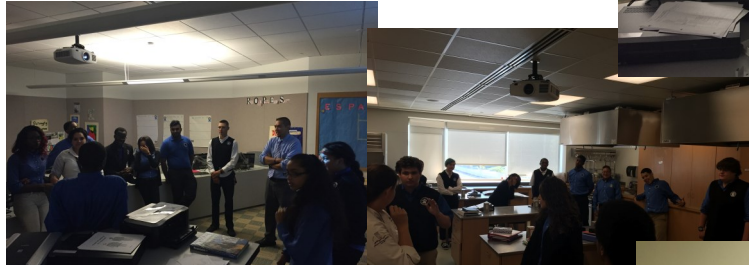
Respect,
Responsibility and Safety

We're on the web!

www.greatpathacademy.org

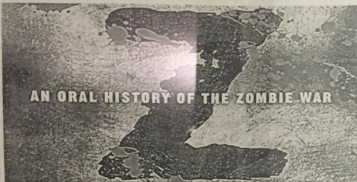


Back to school photos of the school community.



Theatre@GPA 2015-16 Season

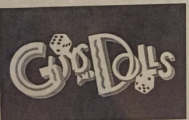
A new production we will create



Adapted from Max Brooks' *World War Z*
Performances: November 19-21

Auditions:
Tuesday Sept 1st and
Thursday Sept 3rd
2:30-4:30 PM, Room 126

Audition info and signups are posted outside room 126.



The Classic Musical Comedy
By Frank Loesser, Jo Swerling and Abe Burrows
Performances: May 5-7 (Tentative)
Audition Info: TBD

Theatre@GPA

Theatre@GPA announces its 2015-16 season:

A new play adapted by GPA faculty and students: *An Oral History of the Zombie War* with a cast of 16 GPA students, plus Special Guest Faculty Zombies.

Production dates - Nov. 19-21

The classic musical comedy *Guys and Dolls* book by Jo Swerling and Abe Burrows; music by Frank

Loesser

Production dates - early May (still contingent on MCC scheduling)

Auditions have been held this fall.

Jasmine Cruz, a senior this year at GPA, has two roles in the Fall Production of "An Oral History of the Zombie War". She will be playing Christina, a soldier who is in the war and also Maria, a soldier in the Russian Army. The play is a story about the world trying to fight off the zombies after they have taken charge. "This play is different, because we have never done something like this before, it's edgier and has no music or dancing. We have done musicals in the past. I'm excited, because there is a musical coming up this spring. I'm

There are no conversations— it's an oral history. The monologues are pretty chunky and long. We are all looking forward to doing the zombie make-up and the rough costumes. There are a lot of 'oldies' who have done plays together before, but some new faces, too. I'm also really excited, because a lot of the faculty here are going to play the zombies, so we are getting volunteer zombies. Everyone should come to check this play out, because zombies are cool! (Just kidding). Just because it's something different and I think that everyone will enjoy it." Jasmine Cruz will be performing this fall in the play.

Great Path Academy @ MCC does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religious creed, age, gender, gender identity or expression, national origin, marital status, ancestry, present or past history of mental disorder, learning disability or physical disability, political belief, veteran status, or sexual orientation. The following individual has been designated to handle inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies: Susan Canty, Title IX Coordinator, cants001@hartfordschools.org.

Thank you to the following donors to the PBIS Gotcha Cart this month:

Dunkin' Donuts for the donations of "any-size free beverage" vouchers.

We appreciate the support for helping to recognize GPA Student Cougars for being Responsible, Respectful and Safe!

If interested, donations can be made to Ms. Canty— please email cants001@hartfordschools.org or call (860) 512-3723.