

Volume 1, Issue 1

August 2008



WOODBURY HIGH SCHOOL

Digest

Welcome to the 2008-2009 School Year!

It is the beginning of another school year, and this one will be packed full of excitement. It is the last year that Woodbury High School will house only grades 10 through 12. Beginning in the 2009-10 school year, the new grade configuration will be in place. This coincides with the opening of East Ridge High School. With ninth graders in the building, schedule changes a possibility, and a re-vamping of the high school to follow the High School Redesign recommendations, it will be a busy year.

With so much happening, we will send out a newsletter each term to keep parents informed. There will be opportunities for input and certainly times when

we will want to know how you feel changes may impact your student. Please be sure to call or email with any concerns.

The construction at Woodbury High School is thankfully almost over! This summer felt like we were in the midst of a disaster zone. But the changes to the HVAC system, supported through your referendum dollars, will make a huge difference in the building. We hope that there will no longer be the large swings in temperature from area to area. And the football field is wonderful! Not only will it be better for football and soccer players, it will be available longer through the season and to more groups. We no longer have to fear that the

field will be torn up before a game. It will be beautiful without the constant maintenance. Again, this is a result of tax dollars at work.

Please take a moment to read through this newsletter to see the events and projects we will be working on throughout the year. And, as always, call me if there is anything you need.

Linda Plante

Principal, Woodbury High School



Parents' Building Advisory Council

The PAC (Parents' Building Advisory Council) is open to all parents, community members and staff at WHS. PAC participants serve as **communicators** between students, staff, parents and community members, as well as **advisors**

looking ahead at ways to approach educational programs. In this capacity, PAC members are **advisors** to the building principal, and **decision makers** assuming the role of representative decision makers for parents. Your

PAC meets one Monday each month at 7PM in the WHS media center. Please see the schedule of meetings listed below and make the decision to become involved in Woodbury High School. One PAC rep is on our SITE team

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of representative decision makers for parents. Your

High School. One PAC rep is on our SITE team.

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PAC Meeting Dates and Topics

- *September 8– Discussion of weighted grades and classes affected*
- *October 13– Discussion of High School Redesign Task Force recommendations*
- *November 10– Discussion of WHS education delivery model for ninth graders*
- *December 15– Discussion of school start times and implications for buildings*

Parking Changes

Each year Woodbury High School sells parking passes to our students for spots in the lots. Previously, we have had a Senior lot (closest to the school) and a junior lot. Sophomores who drive purchased passes for the junior lot. Last year our parking spaces were reduced, causing us to have a limited number of senior spots, with any extras going over into the junior lot. This caused quite a bit of controversy with students as seniors who were not able to get into the senior lot felt slighted. Additionally, we had seniors who bought passes and then gave them to juniors!

Passes were sold twice a year. This caused some bookkeeping problems, as well as logistical problems requiring parents and students to apply twice. In order



to try to clean this situation up a bit, parking passes for the 2008-2009 school year will be sold “en masse” **once** per year. Permits will be sold to **seniors on August 20 from 10-3, and juniors on August 22 from 10-3. All remaining passes will be sold on August 26 from 10-3.**

Pass prices have been altered. We will have Priority parking passes (in the former senior lot) which will be sold for \$180 for the year. All remaining passes are priced at \$160 for the year. There will be opportunities for Day Passes at \$5 per day.

Because of accidents and rules violations which have occurred in the past, we have instituted a brief tutorial session for any student desiring a parking pass. This session will cover the rules for the parking areas, and the consequences should those rules be violated. The class runs once an hour, on the hour from 10 until 3 on the dates previously listed as sales dates for the passes. Passes are first come, first served.

Open House Scheduled for September 4

Woodbury High School will hold its first Open House on September 4, 2008 from 7-8:30 PM. This will be an opportunity to walk through your student’s schedule, meet the teachers, and get an overview of the curriculum. Additionally, there will be an opportunity to see the construction progress in the building and on the football field.

The evening will begin with a meeting

for all parents in the auditorium to review the general curriculum and vision for the next two years. This meeting will begin at 7PM sharp in the auditorium. **Please plan to be at the high school by 6:45 in order to pick up a schedule and be ready for the 7 PM**

meeting.

This event is an important way to begin the school year. It is our hope that all parents will plan to attend. Since the building will be moving to a 9-12 format, some commonly asked questions will be addressed. Research clearly indicates that



Grading Incentives for Rigorous Coursework

Grading Incentives for Rigorous Coursework

Throughout last spring and during this summer, a committee has been working on a plan to give incentives for rigorous classes. This “weighted grade” proposal will go to the School Board again on August 14. Under this system, all Advanced Placement, College in the Schools and University of Minnesota advanced math classes will be in line to have the class grade multiplied by 1.2 on the final transcript. Students at both Park and

Woodbury High School have struggled balancing GPAs with the desire to take the toughest classes offered. Now students will gain additional credit in the form of a multiplier for the final grade. It is our hope that this incentive will result in more students taking more Advanced Placement courses. Research supports the fact that students achieve higher scores on ACT and SAT performance measures if a significantly rigorous program of

studies is followed. Several adaptations of this proposal have been discussed with the Board, and the final version should be available by the end of August. Please call Linda Plante if you have questions.

Sophomore/ New Student Orientation

With over six hundred new sophomores coming to the building, Woodbury High School has planned a get together to ease the transition from junior high school to high school life. The Sophomore and New Student orientation will take place on August 21, beginning in the Woodbury High School Auditorium. A letter showing the times for each student along with a bus schedule has been mailed to homes. Students from Woodbury Junior High will arrive at the building at 9 AM. Former Lake Junior High students will arrive at 1PM. There will be a meeting for each group in the auditorium where we will welcome students to the school and give an over view of practices and procedures at Woodbury High School. We will stress the four components of High School Redesign: Rigor, Rele-

vancy, Relationships and Results, and will add an additional component dealing with Responsibility.

As we welcome these students to the building, we will also allow time for Lifetouch National Studios to take pictures for student ID s. Student Planners will be available for sale at a cost of \$5 each and we do urge students to purchase and use these in their time at WHS. Please complete the Student Health Card and bring it to the Orientation.

Buses to take the former Woodbury Junior High students home will leave at 10:30 AM. Lake students will leave this building at 2:30 PM. Students will have time to find their lockers and get used to opening them.

Finally, Parking Orientation sessions for sophomores wishing to purchase a parking pass will be held on August 26th. These sessions will run from 10AM until 3PM. The cost of the pass is \$160 for the year.



Looking at the Schedule

As work on the High School Redesign continues, a look at the actual daily schedule is inevitable. How can we best prepare our students for State and National testing, provide rigorous, relevant coursework that continues all year, develop programs which nurture relationships in the building, and get the academic results we desire? Certainly the four period day has provided students with choice options which are difficult to beat: foreign language allows for acceleration to levels 5 and 6, and math classes

continue to AP Calculus. The District is currently looking at financially sustainable options to determine if the four period day does allow us to take the steps necessary to improve achievement, or look to another model which might better serve our needs. A committee of approximately 30 students, community members, staff members and administrators is analyzing this situation. The group has looked at schedules currently being used by high performing districts around the metro in hopes of incorporating time

in the schedule for meaningful interventions while not eliminating student choice. One element of the High School Redesign recommendations will be to analyze course offerings in order to eliminate redundancies. The committee hopes to make recommendations to Board by late September. This will allow staff members time to revamp curriculum before the opening of the 2009-10 school year should a change in schedule be recommended. If you have questions email lplante@sowashco.k12.mn.us.

Royal Excellence

Royal Excellence

Royal Excellence is Woodbury High School's model of the National Renaissance Program. It is designed to provide a framework for the school to give positive recognition and rewards to as many students and professional staff as possible, in much the same way a business community rewards positive performance. Royal Excellence encourages high expectation by providing incentives for those students who achieve higher levels

of academic performance, great attendance, and exemplary conduct. The program consists of two recognition formats: **The Academic Letter** for students who maintain a GPA of 3.34 or higher for the entire school year is awarded at a formal recognition program which occurs each fall. This year, the Awards Program will be held on September 22 at 7 PM in the auditorium. The **Student of the Term Breakfast** is held once per term (first

one on October 31)and spotlights students selected by each teaching department determined to be the best "all around" student making a positive contribution to that department. The parent(s) of the selected students are invited to the breakfast and the students chosen receive incentive rewards donated by local businesses. Students are publicly thanked by their teachers. This is a wonderful event!



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Home of the Royals

Check out our new Web Page!

www.sowashco.k12.mn.us/whs

What Makes a Good Teacher?

The Hindu says a good teacher needs knowledge, communication skills, and aptitude. They define aptitude as wanting to do it.

Ad Prima: Toward the Best Education Information says good teachers:

are good at explaining things

keep their cool

have a sense of humor

like people (especially those in the age range they are planning to teach)

are inherently fair minded

are practical

have a command of their subject

are practical
have a command of their subject
set high expectations and hold their students to those expectations
are detail oriented
are good time managers
can lead or follow
don't take things for granted

A blog, [Ripples of Improvement](#) provides a list of the Top 10 qualities of a good teacher.

1. Confidence
2. Patience
3. True compassion
4. Understanding
5. Ability to look at things in multiple ways and explain things in more than one way
6. Dedication to excellence
7. Unwavering support
8. Willingness to help student achieve
9. Pride in students' accomplishments
10. Passionate

