

**SAMUEL GOMPERS
FINE ARTS OPTION SCHOOL**

**PARENT AND STUDENT
HANDBOOK**

2009 – 2010

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TO THE PARENT

This handbook has been compiled to familiarize you and your student with procedures and programs at Gompers Fine Arts Option School. It is important that you keep this handbook in a convenient place for reference during the school year.

We also want to create a positive and successful learning experience for all students at Gompers School. To make this happen we need the cooperation, support and partnership of you, the parent. Your understanding of the school's efforts to maintain an environment conducive to teaching and learning is most important for our success.

Please frequently talk to your student about *your* expectations of them as well as *their* responsibility for courteous behavior and always being prepared to learn while they are on the school campus.

During our Opening Exercises each morning we present *Project Wisdom*, a series of inspirational and thought provoking statements. These statements conclude with:

“Make it a great day, or not. The choice is yours.” We say here, use this document to help make it a great year.

VISION STATEMENT

We the students, parents, school personnel and community are united in our quest for academic excellence, responsible social interaction and arts appreciation for all students.

MISSION STATEMENT

Gompers School will graduate all students, including those with special needs, prepared for success in high school and beyond. Through an emphasis on literacy, mathematics, science, social sciences, fine arts, technology, and social emotional development, our students will develop the skills, knowledge, attitudes, and values to take an active role in their learning, become critical thinkers and contribute productively to the community.

ABOUT US

Gompers Fine Arts Option School is named in honor of Samuel Gompers, a prominent labor leader in American history. The school plant is a Dever-type construction, which has received some rehabbing. An older building built in 1926, it boasts a 1995, 5,500 square foot cafeteria addition which is air-conditioned and includes a warming kitchen, eating area and 34 foot link to the main building located at 12302 South State Street (1 West, 12302 South) near the Calumet river. The entire campus is bounded by 123rd Street on the North, 124th Street on the South, State Street – east and Lafayette on the West.

Gompers School serves approximately 400 students in grades four through eight, and is served by some 50 staff including administration, teachers, educational support personnel and custodial staff.

PROGRAMS, INITIATIVES, ACTIVITIES

Reading and Mathematics

- Teaching to Illinois Learning Standards
- Accelerated Reading and Math
- Striving Readers Grant
- Real Men Read Program
- Classroom Libraries and Literacy Centers
- Reading Assistance with Specialty Teachers
- Literacy Specialist
- After-School Reading and Math Tutoring
- Technology Inclusion Instruction at all Grade Levels

Supplementary Programs and Activities

- School Based Problem Solving
- Chicago Magnet Cluster Initiative: Fine Arts
- Individual and Small Group Counseling
- Spelling Bee, Science Fair
- Varied Field Trip Experiences
- Chorus, Band, General Music Appreciation, Visual Art
- Color Guard
- Professional Development for all Staff
- Cluster 6/Area 18 Academic Competitions
- Gifted Program
- Two School-wide Scholastic Book Fairs annually
- Word for the Day, Project Wisdom, Calm Classroom
- Graduation, Awards Programs

Home, School, Community Activities

- Local School Council, NCLB Parent Workshops
- Partnership with KBS Computers
- School Social Worker, Nurse, Psychologist, Speech Therapist
- Referrals to Community Assistance Agencies
- Report Card Pick-Up Days

ACADEMIC PLANNERS

In September, all students are issued an *Academic Planner* date book to record homework assignments, special projects and parent reminders. This is a teaching/learning tool for fostering organization and responsibility.

Students should:

- Maintain their *Academic Planner* consistently
- Complete all assignments carefully and on time
- Turn in all assignments on time

Parents should:

- Be familiar with the homework policy.
- Review your student's *Academic Planner* frequently.
- Review your student's completed homework regularly.
- Provide a quiet study environment at home.
- Communicate with the teacher if there is a homework concern

ASSEMBLY PROGRAMS

Assembly programs are an extension of the classroom instructional program. All classes have the opportunity to participate in our programs in addition to band, chorus and visiting artists' concerts. Parents are invited to attend the assemblies and concerts held in our auditorium.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students are expected to be in school every day. The goal on a daily basis is 95% school-wide. We expect all students to be present unless an illness, emergency, or the funeral of a close relative is being observed. Students must return to school with a note stating the reason for an absence. Quarterly and annual Perfect Attendance awards are given to students with no absences or tardies.

AWARDS - HONOR ROLL

An awards program is held at the end of the school year. Awards are given for Honor Roll and Perfect Attendance. The Honor Roll consists of students with A's and/or B's in all subjects and no checks. Perfect Attendance means no absences or tardies. Other awards include band, chorus, sports, citizenship, best dressed and various competitions.

CALENDAR 2009 – 2010

| Date | Activity | Note |
|------------------|--------------------------|-------------|
| September 2 | Teacher Institute Day | No Classes |
| September 3 | Teacher Institute Day | No Classes |
| September 4 | Teacher Institute Day | No Classes |
| September 25 | Staff Development | No Classes |
| October 12 | Columbus Day | No Classes |
| October 23 | Staff Development | No Classes |
| November 6 | Professional Development | No Classes |
| November 11 | Veterans' Day | No Classes |
| November 18 | Report Card Pick-Up | No Classes |
| November 26-27 | Thanksgiving Holiday | No Classes |
| December 4 | Staff Development | No Classes |
| December 21- | | |
| January 3 | Winter Vacation | No Classes |
| January 18 | Dr. King's Birthday | No Classes |
| January 29 | Professional Development | No Classes |
| February 11 | Staff Development | No Classes |
| February 12 | Lincoln's Birthday | No Classes |
| February 15 | President's Day | No Classes |
| March 1 | Pulaski's Birthday | No Classes |
| March 29-April 2 | Spring Vacation | No Classes |
| April 9 | Professional Development | No Classes |
| April 21 | Report Card Pick-Up | No Classes |
| May 31 | Memorial Day | No Classes |
| June 17 | Teacher Institute Day | No Classes |

8th Grade Graduation

Monday, June 14, 2010, 10:00 am, Gompers School Auditorium

Summer Vacation

Schools close for students on Friday, June 18, 2010 at 10:00 am

CARE OF PROPERTY

The care of textbooks and other materials belonging to the school is the responsibility of each student. Damage to or destruction of the school's property is a serious offense. Parent/guardians must pay for lost books or damage done by the student. Non-payment or non-return of textbooks or other school property may result in retention of the student report card.

CELL PHONES

Cell Phones are permitted only with written approval between parent/guardian **and** the principal. If approval is granted the cell phone must be turned off while on school premises. A violation will result in the cell phone being confiscated and returned only to the parent/guardian.

EARLY DISMISSAL

Early dismissals can seriously disrupt the entire educational program for your student. Please try to avoid early dismissals whenever possible.

Procedures for each child's safety and protection:

- Student must be picked up by parent or guardian of the student
- Parent/guardian must be listed on the Emergency Form.
- Parent/guardian must sign the child out of school at the Main Office.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES, VIDEO GAMES, ETC.

Headphones, radios, tapes/CDs, MP3 players, game boys, and other computer games, toys, electronic equipment etc. are not permitted in school or on field trips. These items will be confiscated and returned only to the parent/guardian.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

An *Emergency Form* is issued to each student during the first week of each school year and when a student enrolls for the first time during the school year. The *Emergency Form* must be filled out completely and returned to the classroom teacher or registrar immediately.

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide updated information to the Main Office if any changes occur during the school year.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS

The Chief Executive Officer, upon recommendations by staff, may decide that an emergency closing of the school system is necessary. The decision may encompass any of the following options:

- Close the entire school system, including the schools and offices.
- Cancel classes and open schools and offices for emergencies only.
- Open schools and offices but suspend bus service.
- Close individual schools when events warrant.

Once the decision has been made to close the schools, the Chicago Public Schools Office of Communications immediately passes on the information to the news media. You may access this information by listening to WMAQ (670 AM), WGN (720 AM), WBBM (780 AM), and Fox-TV.

ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES

Current Students – First Day

Students who are currently enrolled at Gompers in grade 4 should go to the cafeteria. Students currently enrolled in grades 5-8 should report to the auditorium. Their teacher will meet them there and escort them to their new classroom. Note: the first day of school is a full day. Students will be dismissed at 2:45 p.m. Lunch is served, but no breakfast.

New Students

The parent, legal guardian, or temporary custodian of a child seeking enrollment in Gompers School for the first time must present **proof of age** and necessary **medical records** – this includes students enrolling from Jesse Owens Community Academy. The person seeking enrollment for the child must also present **evidence of current address**. Evidence necessary for proofs of address may include, but not be limited to: child's birth certificate, court documents, deed, employer ID, Illinois Department of Public Aid card, Illinois driver's license, MediPlan/Medicare card, passport, State of Illinois ID, utility bills, voter registration card, child's baptismal record and/or lease agreement.

FEES (Students)

The principal approves the collection of all student fees. Parents will be notified in writing prior to any fee being collected. Typical fees include:

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Lost/Damaged Textbook | <i>Prorated on age of book</i> |
| Field Trips | <i>Optional Expense-Cost Varies</i> |
| Graduation Activity Fees | <i>Priced according to vendors- See Graduation Parent Letter</i> |

Class/Individual Pictures *Optional Expense-Cost Varies*

Breakfast/Lunch *See: Lunch Program*

FIELD TRIPS

All money and permission slips for field trips must be turned in no later than two school days prior to the scheduled trip. Students will not be allowed to accompany their class on a field trip without a signed permission slip. Parents acting as chaperones are welcome. Please let your student's teacher know in advance if you are available to chaperone. No siblings will be allowed to attend field trips.

Note: Students must wear their school uniform on a regular basis to be permitted on field trip(s). Students must be in school uniform on trip day to participate unless otherwise indicated.

HOMEWORK POLICY

Homework will be assigned every Monday through Friday. In addition, your student may also be involved in long-term assignments, projects, and research.

The following are suggested minimum time allocations as stated in the *Homework Policy K-12* handbook published by the Chicago Public Schools.

- Grades 4, 5, 6 – 45 minutes per day, *Includes all subjects*
- Grades 7, 8 - 90 minutes per day, *Includes all subjects*

LOCAL SCHOOL COUNCIL

Local School Councils (LSC) are designated as the school team that will monitor the School Improvement Plan for Advancing Academic Achievement (SIPAAA) and other duties including electing officers, drawing up by-laws, rules

and operating procedures. The SIPAAA is a document mandated by state law and is designed to improve the performance of students through more effective delivery of instructional and support services. Councils are authorized to retain or select principals in their schools. The LSC consists of the principal, two teachers, six parents and two community representatives.

All meetings begin at 5:00 p.m. and are generally held on the second Tuesday of the month. Please contact the school office for the current meeting schedule.

LOST AND FOUND

Personal belongings should be labeled in some way to facilitate their return if lost. The 'lost and found' box is located on the first floor near the cafeteria. Eye glasses, watches, keys, etc., that are found, are retained in the school office. Students, not the school, are responsible for their personal property.

LUNCH PROGRAM

Students whose households are Food Stamp or "Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) recipients are eligible for free meals. Children from families whose household income is at or below the federal guidelines are eligible for either free or reduced meals. To decide your status, please complete and submit the *Lunch Application Form* available in the main office. An application needs to be submitted each year for all students. Even if your student may not eat lunch each day, an application should be completed and submitted. This is how schools receive their textbook and discretionary funds. For every student that is eligible for free or reduced lunch and we do not have a completed lunch application, we lose approximately \$750.00 per student. Please do not deny Gompers School

and its students, money by not completing and returning your application.

Students who elect to bring a bag lunch to school may do so. However, **junk food items are not permitted in the building.** We are concerned about the number of students who come to school with non-nutritious items. The volumes of junk food brought into our building are not only non-essential meals, but are a source of additional trash and waste which are deliberately thrown on the floor or left in lockers or desks. **As of January 26, 2004, pop, chips, candy or other non-nutritious snacks are not allowed in the school.** It is our goal to ensure a healthier and safe learning environment for all of our students and staff, and joint cooperation is needed.

MEDICAL REQUIREMENTS

The following physical examinations and inoculation guidelines apply to all students attending a Chicago Public School. Physical examinations must be less than one year old when the student enters in the fall.

Physical Examinations are required for students entering 5th or 9th grade or transferring in from any school other than a Chicago Public School

Required Inoculations and Number of Doses Needed:

| | DPT/DT | Hepatitis B | Polio | MMR |
|-----------------------|--------|-------------|-------|-----|
| 5 th Grade | 5 | 3 | 4 | 2 |

MEDICAL EXCLUSIONS

Because one or more of the following symptoms may be a sign of an illness that is very contagious to the other students, children may be excluded from school. They may return to school with a doctor's statement.

Fever Dizziness-Weakness

Skin Rash-Infections

Swollen Glands in neck
Diarrhea
Extreme Pallor (Paleness)
Severe Cough or Cold
Chicken Pox
Fungal Infection (Ringworm)
Meningitis
Hepatitis

Sore Throat
Severe Pain anywhere
Vomiting
Open Sores
Conjunctivitis-*Pink Eye*
Scarlet Fever
Measles-Rubella

MEDICATION AND DRUG POLICY

Many students are able to attend school regularly only through effective use of medication in the treatment of chronic disabilities or illnesses that may hinder the health and welfare of others. The Board of Education strongly recommends that medication be administered in the home. Parents should ask their doctor to arrange for medicine administration outside of school hours. If this is not possible, parents may come to school to administer medication to their children.

School personnel will supervise students when medication is taken at school. Parent and physician consent forms must be on file with the school nurse before any medication can be taken at school. Asthmatic students may keep their inhalers in their possession, if they are responsible.

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND – Parent Advisory Council (NCLB-PAC)

All meetings are held once monthly in the Gompers School cafeteria. Meetings begin at 9:30 a.m. or 1:00 p.m. alternately. Please contact the school office for the current schedule.

PARTIES

Class parties must be approved by the principal. Celebrations must be kept to a minimum. Remember, we are an institution of learning. Classroom parties are permitted to celebrate winter vacation in December and the end of the school year in June only. For health and safety reasons only store bought items will be served. Home-prepared foods will not be served. Note: Individual Birthday parties and similar events cannot be shared at school.

PICTURES

School pictures are taken as a service to parents each year. You will be notified as to the date and time. Typically school-wide pictures are taken in the fall. Students in grade 8 will also have graduation pictures taken, usually in January.

PROMOTION POLICY

The decision to pass or retain a student includes but is not limited to the following criteria:

- The Chicago Public Schools' Promotion Policy
- Mastery of the Learning Standards
- Emotional Maturity
- Scores on Unit Tests; Report Card Grades
- Attendance; Behavior
- Teacher Recommendation

Grades 6 and 8 are considered benchmark grades. These are the grades where determination is made whether a student is ready to proceed to the next level. Students might be retained in other grades if the documentation supports it.

REPORT CARDS AND PROGRESS REPORTS

Report Cards are issued to all students four times a year. Parents are to pick up report cards for the 1st and 3rd marking periods between 12:00 noon and 3:00 p.m. or between 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. See *Calendar* for Report Card Pick-Up days

Report Card Distribution Days

For the 2nd and 4th quarters: These are regular attendance days for students. They will receive their report card at dismissal.

Progress Reports

Progress Reports are mailed to the homes of all students after the fifth, fifteenth, twenty-fifth and thirty-fifth weeks of school.

GRADING SCALE

| Regular Education | Gifted Education | Special Education |
|-------------------|------------------|------------------------|
| 93 – 100 = A | 95 – 100 = A | <i>Use Modified</i> |
| 87 – 92 = B | 87 – 94 = B | <i>Grading in</i> |
| 78 – 86 = C | 80 – 86 = C | <i>accordance with</i> |
| 70 – 77 = D | 72 – 79 = D | <i>Individualized</i> |
| 0 – 69 = F | 0 – 71 = F | <i>Education Plan</i> |

It is important for parents to keep in touch with your student's teacher to track student's progress.

SAFETY (Traffic)

When driving your student to school please drop him/her off at the curb nearest the school rather than across the street from the school. Children will dart around cars and run into traffic. Also, please do not drive along the curb.

Many students pick-up and drop-off siblings at Jesse Owens School which causes much back-and forth traffic at 124th and State Streets. Please be aware of this and drive slowly and carefully around the school campus. The safety of our student walkers is of high priority.

SCHOOL HOURS

Entry Procedures - Students

On school days, students are not to arrive on the school grounds earlier than 8:30 a.m. On good weather days, staff will provide supervision on the playground at 8:30 a.m. Students line-up in their classroom assigned space at 8:50 a.m. The entry bell rings at 8:55 a.m. The tardy bell rings at 9:05 a.m. The dismissal bell rings at 2:45 p.m.

Breakfast is served between 8:30 a.m. and 8:50 a.m. Students coming for breakfast will enter through the South playground entrance at 8:30 a.m.

After classes have entered the building, students must enter at the main entrance nearest the parking lot to receive a tardy pass. On days when the weather is inclement students will enter the building at 8:30 a.m. 4th and 5th grade students will sit in the cafeteria and 6th – 8th grade students will sit in the auditorium.

Entry Procedures – Parents/Visitors

Parents and visitors must enter the building through the main entrance (nearest the parking lot at 123rd and State Streets) and come directly to the *Main Office*. Parents wishing to confer with staff may do so from 8:30 a.m. to 8:55 a.m. after signing in at the *Main Office*. Visitation to staff outside of this time frame must be arranged directly with the staff member.

With administration and teacher approval, parent/guardian visitation to the classroom may occur.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Students are expected to conform to the Chicago Public Schools Student Code of Conduct as outlined in its handbook. A copy of the handbook is issued to each student during the first week of school. A review of the handbook is also presented to all classes. All parents/guardians should become familiar with these guidelines.

SUPPLIES

Students are expected to bring basic supplies of pencils, pens and paper to school each day. Additional supplies for art, music, physical education, and so on will be requested as needed and are also detailed in the *Class Syllabus*.

SYLLABUS

Each grading quarter every student/parent will receive a brief synopsis of the skills that students will be expected to attain, project due dates, extra credit, and homework policy along with materials and supplies needed for each class. You should receive your syllabi on:

| | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 st Quarter | Monday, September 14, 2009 |
| 2 nd Quarter | Monday, November 9, 2009 |
| 3 rd Quarter | Monday, January 25, 2010 |
| 4 th Quarter | Monday, April 5, 2010 |

TARDY PROCEDURE

The entry bell rings at 8:55 a.m. Students arriving after the 9:05 a.m. tardy bell are marked late and must receive a tardy pass. Students are welcome to arrive at 8:30 a.m. for breakfast. Once students arrive at school, they are not permitted to leave school grounds.

Parents are expected to monitor closely whether your child is reporting to school on time. Check the report card

quarterly for attendance and tardies. Communicate with the teacher for a follow-up.

TELEPHONE (*Also see Cell Phones*)

The school office telephone must be kept open for business purposes. Students may not use the office telephone except in emergencies as determined by school personnel. It is most difficult for us to accept personal messages for individual students without interruption of the instructional program. We appreciate your cooperation in not asking us to deliver messages to any individual student except in emergencies.

UNIFORMS/STUDENT DRESS CODE

The Gompers Local School Council voted to institute a student dress code. It is supported by the Chicago Public Schools and is as follows:

Girls:

- Yellow Blouse
- Navy Blue skirt, jumper or pants
- Solid dark blue sweater

Boys:

- Light Blue Shirt
- Navy Blue pants
- Solid dark blue sweater

Note:

- Boys are not to wear earrings (or any other materials) in their ears. Nose, eyebrow and tongue-piercings are not allowed.
- Blue jeans are not part of the school uniform.
- Tops or bottoms with profane writing or emblems, shorts that are not Gompers standard uniform style, and hoodies must not be worn during the school day.
- If you are unable to purchase a uniform, please see our School Community Representative for assistance.

YOU CAN HELP

The home and school must work together to assure each student's maximum educational progress. There are many ways in which you can help. Here are a few:

- Children need a balanced diet in or to maintain good health, and the condition of your child's health influences his/her progress in school. Children need to eat foods from the four basic food groups. We notice many of our students having pop, candy and chips for breakfast.
- Some students have learning problems that are not caused by a lack of ability, but by emotional disturbances. A stable, happy environment, as free from tension as possible is important to the child's emotional stability.
- Commend your child's strengths and successes and be understanding of limitations and problems.
- If your child has difficulty in school, learn the reasons why and provide encouragement.
- Talk to your child.
- Listen to your child.
- Attend school field trips as chaperone.
- Attend school assembly programs, LSC meetings, NCLB meetings

| |
|--|
| What Does A Good Student Look Like? |
|--|

1. Comes to school everyday
2. Comes to school on time everyday
3. Greets teachers and other students by saying, "Good Morning"
4. Comes to school prepared to learn
5. Comes to school with learning tools, for example: pens, pencils, paper, homework
6. Wears the school uniform daily
7. Completes all class work on time
8. Completes all homework on time
9. Keeps hands and feet to self
10. Never says bad things to others, including talking negatively about another student's mother, father and other relatives
11. Obeys the Chicago Public School's Student Code of Conduct
12. Follows all directions the first time given
13. Understands the meaning of "Excellence"