



AUGUST 2018

Issue 1

Gotha

Growl

For the parents, students and community of Gotha Middle School

Gotha Activity Line Call:

407-521-2360

Press the number 6.

Gotha Middle School

9155 Gotha Road

Windermere, FL 34786

Phone: 407-521-2360

Office Hours

Monday-Friday:

8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

School Hours

Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri.:

9:30 a.m. to 3:50 p.m.

Wednesday:

9:30 a.m. to 2:50 p.m.

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'Gotha Growl'

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P.O. Box 271

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Issue# 1

Principal's Message

Hello Gotha Families!

I can't believe the summer is coming to a close and we're gearing up for the 2018-19 school year! I hope you all have had the opportunity to spend time together and that the students are ready to get back to work.

As you know, we are going digital this school year. That means that your student will access their courses through an online platform called Canvas. All of the direct instruction will be on the course page, so it is accessible to them 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In addition, we will have a 2018-19 Gotha Student Canvas course where announcements, messages and calendars will be accessible to both the students and the parents. Please plan to attend our Digital Open House on Friday August 3rd at 8:30 am.

I hope all students have read Restart by Gordon Korman! It was a great book and I'm looking forward to discussing it with the kids. All students who have read the book will be invited to participate in a Restart Kickoff Party when school starts. If they haven't picked up their book, there are still copies available in the main office.

Meet Your Teachers will be on August 9th from 5:30 – 7:30. That evening, students will receive a copy of their tentative schedule and will follow a shortened bell schedule which will allow each of your student's teachers to introduce themselves. I hope you are all able to attend.

Enjoy this last week of summer break, and I look forward to seeing all of our Grizzlies on August 6th!

It's a Great Day to be a Grizzly!

Mrs. Monica Emery

Gotha Middle School

Gotha Middle School is a student-oriented school that focuses on the whole child. We promote a partnership between students, educators, parents, and community to achieve our goals of:

- Academic excellence
- Character development
- Technological proficiency
- Preparing students for transition to high school

Visit Gotha Middle School's web site at: <http://gothams.ocps.net>



Mr. Gladden

After working as a Manufacturing Engineer for almost 20 years I decided to become a teacher. I am a 4th generation educator in OCPS. I was a third grade teacher at Ridgewood Park. I then went to Jones High School as a Math Coach and Math teacher. While there I also spent 3 years as the Athletics Director for the campus. In order to get prepared for Administration I transferred to Oak Hill Elementary as the Administrative Dean and was there for almost 4 years. I was appointed into my first AP position back at Ridgewood park and was there for 3 years, then I was transferred to Ocoee Elementary where I spent the last 2 years before becoming a Grizzly.

I am married to the Principal of Pinar elementary and we have 6 children and 7 grandchildren,

I graduated from the University of Michigan and completed my Ed Leadership education at Stetson.

My hobbies are bowling, shooting and motorcycling

I really enjoyed reading the Restart book. I personally felt like I was a part of the nerd group because that's what I was considered to be in high school.

I am looking forward to my adventures here at Gotha because I have never yet worked in the middle school environment and am looking forward to the challenge.

PTO Corner

Dear GMS Families,

Welcome to the 2018-19 school year! For those of you who are new to Gotha Middle or are unfamiliar with the GMS PTO, we are a volunteer organization made up of parents, teachers, administrators, and support staff dedicated to the successful education of our children. The PTO works hard to help make the school year enjoyable, exciting and rewarding for students, teachers and parents.

The purpose of the GMS PTO is to aid our students and staff by providing support for educational and recreational needs; to promote open communication between administration, teachers, and parents and to encourage Gotha school spirit and pride. The PTO uses the resources gained through fundraising and business partnerships to support the efforts of our school and staff.

To have the most successful year possible, we need the support and involvement of every family at Gotha. You can give back to GMS in the form of time, talent and/or resources. We have many volunteer opportunities that require as little or as much time that you have to offer. Whether your interests are supporting faculty (faculty snack, teacher appreciation, quarterly faculty birthday recognition), supporting students (honor roll rewards, Grizzly Greats, 8th grade celebration, Guardian Angels) or any of our other programs, we have an opportunity for you.

Please join us at our first PTO meeting to learn more or email GMSPTOPresident@gmail.com for more information.

Stay updated on school activities, information and needs - text @gothapto to 81010

We look forward to an outstanding year working together with our GMS families!

Kellie Kullich & Trisha Engler - Co-Presidents

Karen Heyn & Kim Murphy - Co-VP

Kristen Rutherford - 2nd VP

Gwen Richman - 3rd VP

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Summer Coding

This summer, Gotha piloted the EMC Game Coding Camp for the district. 25 Gotha students spent five weeks learning how to create code and were able to create and build their own video games!



Media Center News

This year the media center is undergoing changes! Not only are the desktops gone, more space has been reclaimed. Eventually we will add café tables and comfortable seating. We have deleted many of the old and outdated materials and replaced them with **new electronic (e-books) and print resources**. Be sure to check out all of our new titles as well as the **Destiny Discover** page in the Library Resource Folder in Launch.

We have also added maker items this year. Students are able to utilize our **3D printers** after creating their projects online in **Tinkercad** or other 3D programs and saving to their USB drives. The *Windermere Observer* published an article about our 3D printers this summer as well. Students can explore circuits with **Little Bits** kits and **Snap Circuits**. Coding and programming can be explored with our **Sphero** robot. We have low tech maker opportunities including **card making, paper crafting, and yarn works**. If **green screen** video and **stop motion video** are an interest we have that too!

This is going to be a fun year of exploring opportunities and we look forward to what our Grizzlies create!



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Five "Must Do's" for Parents to Assure Success in School

- 1. GET AND STAY CONNECTED.** Register and access our online parent access software, monitor your child's progress on a weekly basis and communicate with your child's teachers if you have questions, concerns, or if you'd like to request additional information regarding resources that may help your child master course standards. Be aware of what's happening in your student's school life and *TALK ABOUT IT*. Your interest and involvement has a tremendous effect on your student's performance and attitude at school.
- 2. ESTABLISH A SOLID HOME STUDY ROUTINE.** Encouraging and supporting this vital activity will improve your student's attitude and performance at school and instill a work ethic that endures for a lifetime. **SET A SCHEDULE.** Establish a regular timeslot for this important daily activity. Seek your child's agreement and commitment to reserve this time each day for homework and study. Encourage this discipline. **CREATE THE ENVIRONMENT.** Students can be easily distracted. Teach them to create an atmosphere conducive for concentration. Minimizing social media access, loud music, and other detractors will improve effectiveness and retention. Having a defined study area works with some students but not all. The most important factor is the discipline of doing it every day. **OBSERVE AND ENGAGE.** Psychologists suggest that it takes three weeks to break or establish a habit. Commit three weeks to assisting with your student's daily routine. Make good homework practices a habit for both of you.
- 3. MAKE DAILY ATTENDANCE THE EXPECTATION:** Very few things have as much negative effect on academic performance as poor attendance. Be clear in your attitude towards attending school every day. In the working world, attendance is equated with dependability.
- 4. ENCOURAGE EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITY:** Involvement in any of our many clubs, sports, and arts programs improves academic performance, attendance, and discipline issues. We have something for everyone. Participation in these activities enhances school life and looks good on career and college applications. Also, help your child plan and execute community service, which is a requirement for earning *Bright Futures* scholarship money.
- 5. HELP YOUR STUDENT PLAN FOR POST-GRADUATION:** Talk to your student about career interests and passions. Several free online career assessment questionnaires are available such as <https://www.sokanu.com/> that may help. Assist with a search for colleges or technical training programs that will prepare them for a career that interests them. Learn the entrance requirements and costs associated with attending those colleges or programs. They should be asking questions about career opportunities but may not know the right questions to ask. Our guidance counselors can help. No matter what they dream of doing after graduation, planning for the next step is a wise choice. Post high school education contributes to a better quality of life. But whether or not they go on to a college, university, career or technical school, the information and skills they learn in high school will always be important in the working world. Everyone, in every kind of job, needs to be able to write and speak clearly, listen carefully, understand what is written and spoken, and use math effectively.



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Parents, Establish a Solid Home-Study Routine

Encouraging and supporting this vital *daily* activity will improve your student's attitude and performance at school and instill a work ethic that endures for a lifetime.

- 1. SET A SCHEDULE:** Establish a regular timeslot for this important daily activity. Seek your child's agreement and commitment to reserve this time each day for homework and study. Encourage this discipline. In many ways, it's his/her job and should be an important part of the daily routine. Your support and involvement in your student's home-study effort makes a huge difference in the high school experience.
- 2. CREATE THE ENVIRONMENT:** Students can be easily distracted. Create an atmosphere conducive for concentration. Minimizing social media/phone access, loud music, and other detractors will improve effectiveness and retention. If you notice distractions or deterrents, suggest possible remedies. Having a defined study area works with some students but not all. The most important factor is the discipline of doing it every day.
- 3. OBSERVE AND ENGAGE:** Psychologists suggest that it takes three weeks to break or establish a habit. When school resumes, commit three weeks to observing your students daily routine. Make good homework practices a habit for both of you. Your daily assistance and attitude toward school have a huge impact on your child's success.



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Upcoming Dates of Importance

August 13: First day of school
August 13: Soccer tryouts begin
August 24: Vision Screening
September 3: Labor Day- no school
September 17-21: Book Fair
September 20: Back to School night
6:00pm – 7:30pm (book fair open)
October 12: End of grading period 1

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