



For the parents, students and community of Gotha Middle School

Gotha Activity Line Call:

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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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Principal's Message

Gotha Families –

I cannot believe this year is coming to an end. The students and staff has worked incredibly hard this year, and I know that work will translate when we get to state testing. In preparation for those assessments, please make sure your student is getting plenty of rest and is coming to school prepared to work hard. Our assessment schedule is as follows:

May 1-2 FSH Reading Sessions 1 & 2

May 6-7 FSA Math Sessions 1 /2&3)

May 8 NGSSS 8th Grade Science

May 13-14 FSA EOC Algebra 1/Geometry

May 15 NGSSS Civics

May 16-29 CFE windo

We have a number of FUN events scheduled for the end of the year! Stay tuned for our 2019 Gotha Lip Dub which will be recorded on May 24th. We are also holding a No Referral Field Day that day for students who are behaving and making smart choices through the end of the year.

Have you heard about the “summer slide?” Students can actually lose skills and knowledge over summer break. Having year-round access to a wide range of interesting reading material, this and other studies conclude, helps narrow achievement gaps and prevent summer learning loss. Here are three quick tips for preventing the summer slide:

1. Research shows that reading just six books during the summer may keep a struggling reader from regressing. When choosing the six, be sure that they are just right — not too hard and not too easy. Take advantage of your local library. Ask for help selecting books that match your child's age, interests, and abilities.
2. Read something every day. Encourage your child to take advantage of every opportunity to read.
3. Keep reading aloud to your children to help build listening comprehension skills with grade-level and above books.

Students will be receiving a copy of our One Book, One School, One Summer reading prior to the end of the school year. This year's book is Game Changer by Tommy Greenwald. This is their book to read and keep. Follow us on social media to have opportunities to talk about the book with other students and staff members! Kids who read the book will be invited to an ice cream social when we return to school in August.

I hope everyone takes time this summer to rest and recharge. Spend time together as a family! This was an AWESOME school year, and I look forward to what 2019-20 has to offer!

Monica L. Emery, M.Ed.

Principal

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>



End of the Year Device Collection

All student devices will be collected for the summer. This includes the laptop, charger, and hot spot if applicable. Please note that missing or damaged equipment will incur the appropriate fees as assigned by the digital deans. This process will occur as the last of the CFE tests are given. Students should bring their digital devices and be ready to turn them in starting on May 22nd. We will collect through a content area class. All digital fines are to be paid at SchoolPay.com. If you are unsure if your student owes digital fines, please contact trina.labaw@ocps.net with the student's ID number.

Orchestra News

All state materials will be available soon. If your student is interested in auditioning for the All-State Middle School Ensemble please make sure they get the audition materials before they leave for the summer.

Language Arts

7th Grade

Language Arts has finished the year strong with the FSA ELA tests, completing both the writing and reading portions already. We will wrap up the year by reading a class novel that is historical fiction set during World War II. While reading, we will analyze plot, characters, and setting and how these elements interact to tell a story. Finally, students will reflect on their ELA goals and get excited for summer reading to keep their skills fresh!

8th Grade

We will begin to discuss literature, poetry, art, film, articles, testimonials, and historical documents related to the Holocaust in 8th grade ELA. This topic allows for some great discussion opportunities. We encourage you to ask your child about what they are learning in Language Arts class and add any insight that you can for them to process this difficult topic. You can expect to see your students working on creative, hands-on classwork and projects throughout this unit.

You can expect that your child will be working on creative, hand-on projects and classwork during this final unit. They will also be reading novels that relate to themes and subject matter found during this time period in history.

Life Science

Mr. Rose's 6th Life Science classes have been learning about the Human Body Systems. For the digestive system students created and simulated working stomachs in class. They learned about the different ways the body breaks down food through chemical and mechanical digestion. Some students even followed Mr. Rose's lead and ate crickets in each class to model digestion on their own! Science rules!



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April was Autism Awareness Month

ESE department shows their support for Autism Awareness Month.



The Project Lead the Way

Sixth grade classes were CPR and First Aid certified as part of their unit on Vital Signs. Melissa, from Heart Start, came to school and taught students the process for completing CPR, as well as how to do abdominal thrusts on choking victims, how to administer epinephrine auto-injectors, what to do during a seizure, and how to recognize stroke symptoms. Students are continuing their spring course on Biomedical Sciences and are learning about pathogenic illnesses, the senses, the brain, and will work to complete a murder mystery at the end of the year.



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Student Government

Gotha's Student Government participated in this year's Relay for Life. Relay for Life fundraises on behalf of the American Cancer Society. Together SGA helped celebrate life, remember those who we've lost to cancer, and fight back via fundraising and fun. Money raised helps the American Cancer Society continue to make a global impact on cancer. Whether funding research to find a cure, provide free lodging to patients one of the American Cancer Society's Hope Lodge facilities, transportation to and from treatment, or support a 24/7 hope life that provides information and support whether by phone, email or online chats.

World History

During the 4th quarter, 6th World History will be completing units on Rome, Christianity, and the Americas as well as reviewing for our End of Course exam. Some well-known topics we will be covering are how Rome began, famous achievements (Colosseum & Roman road), famous leaders (Julius Caesar, Mark Antony & Cleopatra to name a few), the Republic, and the fall of the Roman Empire. These units are founded through standards SS.6.W.2, W.3, and W.4. **EOC exam dates are from May 13-24th.**



Resource videos to check out...

"Pompeii - The Last Days"

"Horrible Histories - Rotten Romans"



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Service Learning

Our Service Learners have been busy! We are about to wrap up Recycle Rally. We've recycled an estimated **455 pounds** of plastic and aluminum, and that doesn't include any of the paper, cardboard, or glass that has been recycled this year! We've been working on individual service projects, where students chose a societal cause to focus on and activities they could do to make a difference. They're being activists! We lead the **Kids Heart Challenge** for the **American Heart Association**, which included taking the Kids Heart Challenge pledge online. They chose to either drink more water, be more active, or do acts of kindness every day during the challenge, which ended April 19th but the benefits of this challenge should carry on everyday. The Service Learning classes also recently sent in their donation to benefit the **Kathy and Mike McNulty Academy** on Rusinga Island, in Kenya. Students participated in a fundraiser to help the students at the school get clean water systems and food. They were so excited! It's been an incredible year for Service Learning!

Theater News

Ms. Hart's Theater classes are working on a performance and technical theater project modeled after the Florida Thespian Society competition that occurs each year, and that Gotha will participate in next school year. Students are preparing three Individual Events (IEs) that could range from a solo musical piece to a group pantomime to a costume design. Students will present their rehearsed performance pieces to the class and defend their technical designs.



In addition, the theater classes would like to thank you for supporting our Theater Showcase held on April 23rd in the auditorium. Guests were able to see the extremely hard work and great achievements these young thespians have accomplished over this school year and celebrate the rebirth of Gotha's theater program.

Gotha Middle School's theater program was personally chosen as one of only four other OCPS middle schools to participate in a performance event in partnership with the Orange County Bar Association where middle school theater students reenact landmark court cases in celebration of Law Day. The theme this year is "Free Speech, Free Press, Free Society." Ms. Hart's 5th period Theater 1 class will represent Gotha Middle School on April 30th at the Pugh Theater at the Dr. Phillips Performing Arts Center.



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Trina LaBaw

trina.labaw@ocps.net

Gotha Middle School



The Gotha Chorus has had a very successful year. Highlights included singing the National Anthem at an Orlando Magic Game, Performing at Gaylord Palms for ICE, performing twice at Disney, including a 2nd place finish for our Concert Choir at Festival Disney, and performing at Fun Spot. Many different students were selected to Honor Choirs like All-County, All-State, and ACDA Male Honor Choir. At MPA, Concert Choir received Straight Superiors while the Treble Choir received an overall Excellent with a Superior in Sight Reading. Students also gave back by caroling around campus, singing at school ceremonies, and performing at our local Relay For Life with Dr. Phillips HS, Ocoee HS, and Palm Lake Elementary.

Media Center News

We had a terrific year this year as our circulation more than doubled over last year. We also added more new books to the media center all year long and will continue to receive new materials over the summer to keep our readers well stocked. Over the summer, our E-books are still available for check out from any internet connected device and are free to use. They return themselves so you don't have to worry about due dates! If you prefer, you can also use the Virtual Library Card located in the Library Research folder on Launchpad which allows you to access the free materials (including learning new languages) from the Orange County Public Library.

If your student owes library fees or books, please check the Library Research Tools folder on Launchpad, open Follett Destiny (District) and as the page opens, click the menu icon of three parallel lines to see the fines and checkouts on the student's account. If books are owed to other schools, you can return them at Gotha or to the school they belong to as well. Fees can be paid on schoolpay.com and your account will be cleared in August.

One Book, One School, One Summer

Our book selection for all returning and new students to Gotha Middle is Game Changer by Tommy Greenwald. A group of students was able to attend the Skyped author visit and talk to Mr. Greenwald on May 3rd in order to get excited over reading this novel. Game Changer is an engaging story told through text messages, online chats posts, as well as dialogue and inner thoughts. Help keep your student reading this summer and read Game Changer with us! There will be follow up in August as well as rewards. The author, Mr. Greenwald, is already interacting with us on Facebook!

Read-a-Palooza! Summer Reading Challenge

Encourage your student to enter the summer reading minutes into Scholastic.com's Read-a-palooza and add time to the global reading counter! Combat the summer slide through active reading. Visit www.scholastic.com/summer to enter time starting May 6th.



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DPLC Team

The DPLC Team had a great year representing Gotha at the district's Professional Learning Communities trainings. Our focus this year was on increasing the engagement of all students through rigorous discussion and responding to text-dependent questions. As a school we planned for and facilitated opportunities for all students to select and use strategies for close reading. We look forward to moving ahead with our DPLC goal of having students use literacy strategies to write with evidence in response to complex texts across all content areas.



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Come see the magic of Mary Poppins as she helps transform the Banks family. This production will be **May 9-11th**. Tickets can be bought in advance online at teachtix.com/gms or can be bought at the door. Purchasing tickets ahead of time is recommended, as our past musicals have sold out most of their showings.

Finishing Strong

We are rapidly approaching the end of the 2018-2019 school year. Right now, the focus of your student should be on a strong finish and you can help. Your attention and involvement in this effort will reinforce the importance you place on your child's education. Please take the following steps to support your student during this critical time.

1. Reinforce positive and successful school habits. Attention in class, homework, test preparation, and attendance are key factors.
2. Access and review your student's progress, attendance, and test schedules on (Parent Portal.)

3. Help your student to create a plan to improve current weaknesses and prepare for final exams.
4. Be aware of tutoring and study assistance classes available at the school and encourage your student to participate.
5. Re-establish your student's home-study routine.
6. Help your student to stay focused. 'Coasting' is a natural, but deadly tendency.

Your involvement is a tremendous positive factor for a strong finish. Your interest, willingness, and dedication to helping your child succeed provides an unmistakable message. Your child will thank you for it - someday.