



GROSSMONT UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT'S NEWSLETTER

From the office of Superintendent Robert Collins

1.23.08

Padres' Brian Giles Inducted Into Granite Hills Hall of Fame



County Supervisor Dianne Jacob, Superintendent Bob Collins, GUHSD Trustees and Granite Hills Cheerleaders pose for a photo with Brian Giles following the induction ceremony.

Yesterday, at Granite Hills High School, 1989 alumnus Brian Giles returned to his alma mater to be inducted into the School's Hall of Fame. The Padres All-Star spoke to the students about his life in high school and his road to becoming a recognized athlete.

More importantly, Brian Giles provided each student with a vision of what they could become with effort. The ceremony and engagement of students reminds us all that the history of our high schools is filled with graduates who have excelled in their chosen fields. We also have thousands of other graduates who excelled in medicine, law, education, science and business. They provide the same vision of "who I can become" to our students.

In the coming months, the District office will work with schools to identify those graduates who have distinguished themselves in a wide range of endeavors. The goal is twofold:

1. **Support each school** in the development of their Hall of Fame.
2. Provide a method of **recognizing Hall of Fame inductees in the greater East County community**. As a larger community, we must take pride in the accomplishments of our graduates.

Our high schools have produced amazing graduates who have affected the quality of life in East County. They are heroes to our students, parents and community.

Congratulations to Brian Giles and Granite Hills High School for helping each of us remember the heroes who are part of our school communities.



Grossmont Union High School District Honor Band

A Plan for Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA)

Last night I met with the GUHSD Band Directors and listened to their concerns and observations. The discussions once again led to the question of, "Is there a plan for performing arts in Grossmont?" It is a question that we will answer during the course of this semester and one that the VAPA Strategic Planning Group is working on. The next question asked is, "What will a visual and performing arts plan be about?" Remember, a plan isn't written yet and is still to be debated, but I would hope that the following points should be considered:

1. The **foundation of any plan is expectations and goals**. There is no question that **outstanding school districts have outstanding arts programs**. It is part of the culture of a school district. That includes a commitment to an instructional program which includes instrumental, choral, performing arts, dance and visual arts.
2. It is not about a one-year plan or a one-time infusion of dollars. A plan needs to **realize a vision for the arts over five years**.
3. A plan should involve the greater arts community in East County. We want to ensure a quality program in each school, but that needs to be translated into **partnerships with community visual and performing arts organizations**. It is through these partnerships that we build an arts culture.
4. **Partnerships** need to include our surrounding community colleges, **Grossmont and Cuyamaca, San Diego State University and UCSD**.
5. We need new facilities that were not originally included in the construction of our schools 40 and 50 years ago. Schools were built without **theaters or multipurpose rooms that have the necessary sound, lighting and stages to support strong performing arts programs**. Band and choral rooms were often left out of the original plans or are simply inadequate. Dance rooms with appropriate floors need to be included also.
6. A strong visual and performing arts program begins in elementary and middle schools. We need to **work with our feeder districts** to help support those programs.
7. In the context of an overall plan, **funding** addresses issues of stipends, coordinators, summer school programs and transportation. Funding is also an issue of grant writing and investigating alternative sources. However, a strong visual and performing arts program is not just about more dollars; it's about a commitment to the arts.

I continue to be impressed with the programs we currently have and their many accomplishments. Our students win competitions, travel the world performing and are recognized for outstanding performances. A strong, well-designed visual and performing plan will further support these programs and provide a framework for building new programs in our district. Thank you to our strategic planning group who will put together a model plan for the arts that will guide our District over the next five years.