

# Middle College News

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**MIDDLE COLLEGE**  
at College of San Mateo

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## Movin' up: Stay connected to your child's high school

*(excerpted from an article by Ginger Sisson)*

One of the primary differences between the elementary school and secondary school experience is the vast change in parental involvement. The parents who served as room parents or showed up at every PTA meeting often "drop out" by the time their child reaches high school. Why? At this crucial time, teens need more input from parents, not less. So what is going on here? You wouldn't miss a ball game, play or award ceremony.

So don't be content with a twice-a-year contact with school at parent-teacher conferences. Get to know the principal, meet your teen's counselor and teachers.

The good news for parents of teenagers these days is that more and more school professionals view parents as partners rather than as passive recipients of teacher advice. Teachers and administrators increasingly invite parents to work together, reducing the feelings many parents have had of being patronized--one of the barriers to home/school relationships.

Understanding the importance of establishing good communication and being able to accomplish it, however, are two different things. Whom do you contact? Where do you go with concerns or questions? The following suggestions can help you find your way through the maze.

--Believe that your involvement--even in times of trouble--is desired. As a high school staff member, I have frequently received phone calls from parents who had

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## Principal's Corner

By Greg Quigley

Thanks to parents and students for attending the Middle College Open House on February 4. The students and staff appreciate your support.

Congratulations to teacher Greg Lance for winning the SMUHSD's Golden Apple award for February. The award is given to a district employee for exemplary service to the students, the school and the community.

Though we're just one-third of the way into the semester, students will start planning for next semester. All students will meet with the advisor or counselor Jesenia Diaz to design a Student Education Plan. The SEP deadline is late-April. Students who are continuing at CSM, either as a Middle College student or as a regular college student, must complete the SEP. Students will begin registering for summer and fall classes in early-May.

Enclosed in this month's mailing are the progress reports for the three high school classes, including comments from the English and social science teachers. The six-week grading period ended Feb. 20; the next grading period ends April 10.

We will request progress reports from the college staff in mid-March. Parents who want to find out how their student is doing in a college class should contact one of our high school teachers. Our teachers then will contact the college instructors.

Parents will be notified when a student's attendance becomes a concern and interferes with his/her learning. Although students are attending college and are maintaining the responsibilities of college students, the MC program strives to keep parents/guardians involved in their student's academics and attendance.

On February 9, Lauren Casentini spoke to the students about career paths. She is Vice President for the Midwest and California Regions for CLEARResults, an energy-efficiency consulting firm. She addressed some of the challenges she faced in her career as a young single mother in a male-dominated industry. Her primary message was centered on the importance of personal initiative. She progressed through the ranks by taking on more responsibilities, even if it meant doing undesirable jobs. It was this initiative that enabled her to earn the trust of her managers. She credits these experiences with teaching her skills and providing the necessary confidence to grow personally and professionally.

Mrs. Casentini had followed up on a request by some of our female students to form a mentoring group on campus. We are in the process of working through the details.



### MIDDLE COLLEGE CALENDAR

| Date                 | Event  | Time         | Location           |
|----------------------|--|--------------|--------------------|
| March 6              | Gatsby Party   | 7pm-10pm     | Bldg. 10, Room 487 |
| March 17             | Last day for CRER 122 class                                | 11:10am-noon | Bldg. 14, room 206 |
| Weeks of March 16/23 | CSM mid-term exams   |              |                    |
| March 19             | First day for CRER 121 class                               |              |                    |
| March 23-27          | No School, Spring Recess                                   |              |                    |
| March 25             | MCHS application deadline for SMUHSD students              |              |                    |
| April 8              | Student Testing/Parent Information for Fall '15 applicants |              |                    |
| April 10             | End of 12-week grading period                              |              |                    |

## Movin' Up (continued from page 1)

already made up their minds about a situation, and their attitude was angry, defensive, and threatening. The school business is no different from any other--the customer does come first, particularly in this age of school choice. Remembering this when you call will allow you to give the school the benefit of the doubt, and can lead to solutions rather than tension. Most teachers have solid reasons for making choices, but none are infallible. Give them the opportunity to explain or to make corrections.

--Talk to the right person first. Is the problem or concern in a classroom? Contact the teacher, not the principal. Find out when your child's teachers have planning periods, and contact them then. Do they have a voice mail system? Leave a message that sounds friendly, states what you need, and when you will be available for a return call. These are all simple measures, but they will create a positive climate for conversation, spark real change, and increase your opportunities for involvement at every level.

*Ginger Sisson, who wrote the article for [www.partnershipforlearning.com](http://www.partnershipforlearning.com), is a media specialist.*

## Gatsby Party, March 6

Middle College students are hosting a 1920s-themed "Gatsby Party" on March 6 from 7-10pm at the CSM College Center. Students are encouraged to wear 20s style costumes; hitting the thrift store or the back of closets is encouraged rather than buying new clothes! There will be Jazz Age music and dance, a costume contest, games, food and more. We expect students and guests to abide by school rules and behave responsibly while having a good time.

We don't want students to feel like they cannot afford to attend. However, an important theme in *The Great Gatsby* is the way those far less fortunate are often forgotten and left in the wake of our dreams. For us to simply party in opulent splendor would miss this point. Therefore, the event is a fundraiser for our student club, The Middle College Effect, which works to raise awareness about poverty and to address it through microloans to impoverished women in Guatemala. The club has raised over \$7,000 for microloans in collaboration with the Hillsdale High branch of the club this school year. They are raising money for a study tour to Guatemala this summer to learn more about these loans and how they work in developing countries.

If parents can send their child with a donation of any amount and/or provide them with some amount of spending money for raffle tickets, games, etc., that would be wonderful, but no one will be turned away and there will be much fun at no cost. Donations can be made out to the club's sponsor, "San Mateo Rotary Club." If you can provide finger food/hors d'oeuvres, that would be wonderful, but is not required. This is the third year of the Gatsby Party, a community-builder and great time for the students.

### ✓ SAT/ACT DEADLINES

The next SAT test will be Saturday, March 14; the late registration deadline is March 3. The following SAT and Subject Tests are May 2 with an April 4 registration deadline. This would be a good time for juniors to take the SAT and Subject Tests. View [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) for details. The next ACT will be April 18; the registration deadline is March 13. See [www.act.org](http://www.act.org) for more information.

### ✓ CAASPP TESTING

All juniors will take the state-mandated California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) at CSM, just as they would have at their high schools, the weeks of April 6 and 13. The testing is done during the three-hour high school block. Students will receive a test schedule in March.

### ✓ ATTENDANCE REPORTING

Parents/guardians are reminded that they must call the Middle College office (574-6101) to report a student's absence, otherwise the absence is considered a truancy. Students should not take vacations during the semester.

Students, not parents/guardians, should call the high school or college teachers when the student is absent. Two reasons: the teachers sense the student is concerned about missing the class and class material; and the student can complete assignments at home and not fall behind.

### ✓ CHSPE REGISTRATION

The California High School Proficiency Exam (CHSPE) is offered to students 16 years and older who'd like to earn the equivalent to a high school diploma. Middle College students who have taken and passed the test in the past usually continue their education at the community college.

The spring test date is Saturday, March 21. The late registration deadline is March 6; the emergency registration is March 17. No walk ins are admitted on the test date. Results are mailed in late April. See [www.chspe.net](http://www.chspe.net) for more information.

### ✓ SMUHSD/CSM SUMMER SCHOOL

Applications for the six-week SMUHSD summer school will be available in the Middle College office in mid-March. Summer school, only for students needing to make up a class, will be held at Capuchino High School from June 8 to July 17. For more information, contact Mr. Lance or Mr. Clardy. CSM summer school begins Monday, June 15.

## Fall 2015 Applications

Middle College is accepting new students for 2015-16. The application deadline is March 25. Applications were mailed to the SMUHSD counseling offices and are available on-line at the Middle College website:

[www.collegeofsanmateo.edu/middlecollege](http://www.collegeofsanmateo.edu/middlecollege)

For information, call Middle College at 574-6101. Mr. Quigley will be visiting SMUHSD schools in early-March.

## Career 122/121 classes

All students are required to take and pass CRER 122 ("Study Skills") to meet a graduation requirement for Middle College. Most new students began CRER 122 on Jan. 22. The eight-week class covers such topics as time management, organization, note-taking and test prep and runs through March 17. CRER 121 begins March 19.

## Middle College, SMUHSD graduations

Seniors have been contacted by staff regarding graduation info. Seniors need to provide their full name, which will be listed on their diploma. Also students will be placing orders for caps, gowns and tassels. The graduation is June 2 at 5:30pm at the CSM Theater with a mandatory rehearsal on May 27 from 2pm-4pm. Students have the option to participate in their home school graduation ceremonies.

Other ceremonies are scheduled for...

*Aragon, May 28, 5:30pm - Aragon High School Football Field*  
*Burlingame, May 28, 4pm - Burlingame High School Football Field*  
*Capuchino, May 29, 1pm - Capuchino High School Football Field*  
*HMB, June 11, 6pm - HMB Football Field*  
*Hillsdale, May 28, 5:30pm - Hillsdale High School Great Court*  
*Mills, May 29, 1pm - Mills High School Football Field*  
*Peninsula, May 27, 2pm - Capuchino High School Auditorium*  
*San Mateo, May 28, 7pm - Performing Arts Center*  
*Adult School June 17, 7pm - CSM Theater*