

RATIONALE FOR THE PRINCIPLES:

- 1) (All kids can learn) Research has supported this statement for years. What it also states is that it may take longer for some students than it takes for others. Reality for GHS is that by the year 2017 ALL GHS 11th graders must achieve 100% proficient on the MME. We must be ready. Research also supports different strategies, methods, learning style profiles and approaches for different learners. We have been working on some of these things at GHS for the past three years, and we must continue. We know that the majority of our students like learning in the block because they said so when I asked them in my survey last year, but teaching within the block demands varied educational strategies. Are we using the very best ones for our students? Are we using the ones that we have learned on a regular basis or do we revert to old ways? This is IMPORTANT. If we believe all students can learn even if it takes some longer, and we know that we need to provide many and varied opportunities for the learning to take place then we MUST provide the very best possible opportunity.
- 2) School has always been about learning this is not a "new" concept; however, since NCLB and ED YES, the bar has been raised and accountability has taken on a new meaning. GHS did not make AYP last year and we were very close to not making it again this year. We have had an over-all ED YES grade of C for the past two years and that is just not good enough. We must do better. We have areas of brightness. Our AP scores are something to be proud of each year and we have many students that go on to post secondary education and do well, but we want more for every GHS student! We want all of our students to meet his or her potential.

- 3) Many GHS students encounter barriers of one type or another..., attendance and skipping, behavior, failing classes, dropping out, low achievement but not special education or 504. We have worked on several of these items over the past three years, and we have made some positive changes along the way; however, we have also done some enabling along the way too. I have learned that in education nothing at the building level is ever black and white. We need to filter what we do through the "WILL THIS HELP THE STUDENT NOW AND IN THE LONG RUN" sieve as we work to eliminate these barriers over the next three years.
- 4) We have a knowledgeable and committed teaching staff at GHS. This staff has always been willing to learn new things and do what is best for the students, and it seems as if every year there has been something new. This year will be no different. In all four CORE areas, the state has changed the Standards and Benchmarks. We have the MME (replacing the MEAP) which consists of the ACT, Work-Keys and Michigan Generated Items. We, as a high school staff need training on this new test so that we can properly prepare the students. This year we also begin preparation for new State High School graduation requirements.
- 5) Through all of the above, we must never forget that we are dealing with people. While we up the accountability and requirements at GHS for all, we must also realize that things like Student Voice, Spirit Week and teachers smiling and laughing in the halls is still very healthy. All of the positive incentive type things that we have started over the past three years must continue for students and we need to continue staff social events as well. "Work Hard and Play Harder when the work is done," is a great motto.