

James Gillespie's High School Council

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19th September 2009

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am writing to update you on the work of the School Council, the body representing parents and carers in the school community, and to invite you to the **School Council AGM** and a **Special Session on Rebuilding JGHS**. This will be held on **Tuesday 6th October 2009, at 7pm** in the school. Papers are enclosed, and the Agenda appears overleaf.

All officer posts are filled at the AGM, and can be shared. Sub groups can be set up at any time, on different areas of interest. Thanks go to all the parents who have got involved in the last year. Come along and join in! All School Council meetings are open to every parent/carers.

The Events Group has been very active again this year – see their flyer enclosed, and do consider offering your help, it can be a lot of fun.

This year, due to reductions in the School's budget, far less paper communication is going out to families. The School website carries a lot of information, including the School newsletter, and on curriculum content; it is worth checking it regularly. See the enclosed flyer for more information.

This will be my last letter to you as School Council Chair – I will not be standing for reselection. It has been a wonderful experience to have been involved in the transition from School Board / PTA to School Council over the last four years; especially to see the expansion in numbers of parents/carers who are involved with the school community. My thanks go to those parents and carers with whom I've had the privilege to work on a variety of issues.

My main focus since I joined the School Board in 2005 has been the need for new buildings at JGHS. I can remember when we thought that it might cost £1.5M to fix things up – how naive we were! Now JGHS is the City's top priority, for a complete rebuild costing £40M-£50M. If we are fortunate, then soon after you read this the Scottish Government will announce funding for the rebuild to proceed. But in any event, the first stage of the process, designing the new school, has been funded by the City Council. This will take place over the coming year – it is your opportunity to help define the physical shape of JGHS for your children and their successors. For this reason, we are devoting the bulk of the October 6th meeting to a **Special Session on Rebuilding JGHS**.

The Special Session will include breakout groups discussing a variety of topics including environment/energy, campus feel / architectural design, planning process, and pupil involvement (bring your ideas!). We hope it will lead to a number of focus groups which can work on specific aspects of the rebuild, to provide input to the design and a channel of communication with parents. Even if the AGM is not your cup of tea, please come along to the Special Session and get involved in this exciting renewal of JGHS – the earlier you get involved, the more impact you will have!

Yours sincerely

Nigel Goddard, Chair, James Gillespie's High School Council

PS. If you have not yet contacted Fiona Hyslop / your MSPs, supporting the rebuild of JGHS, please do so before September 28th to increase our chances of being allocated funding. See the enclosed background document (reverse of the agenda) for facts and contact addresses.