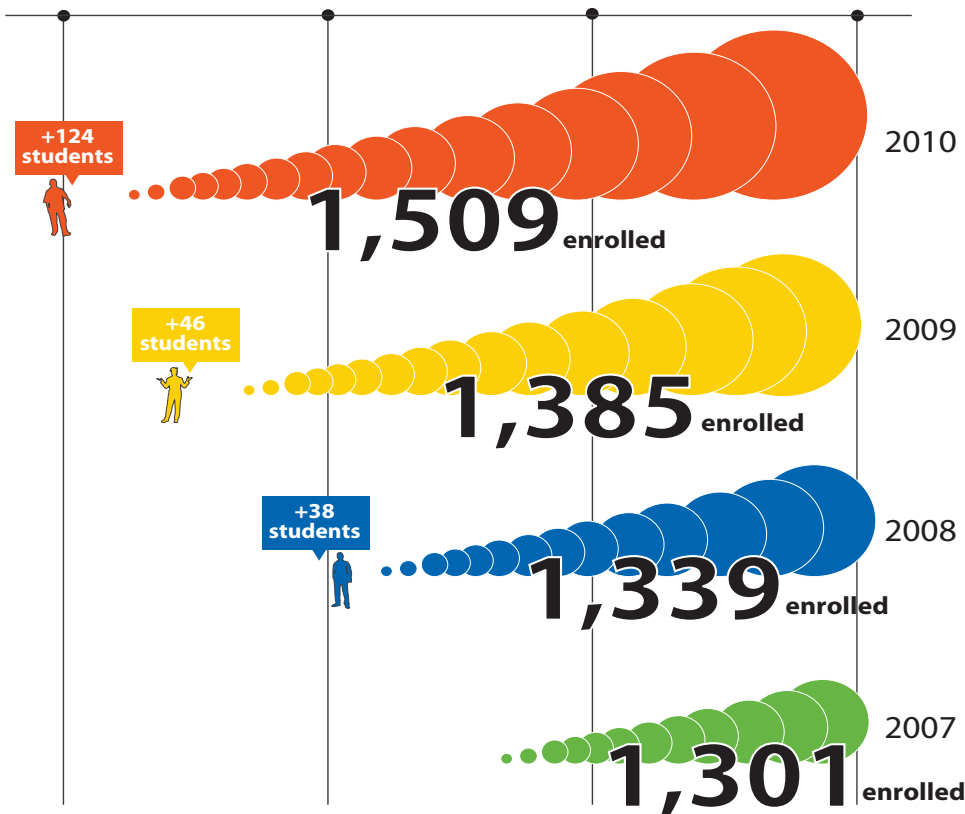




thewarriorbeat

OGHS welcomes more than 120 new students



By: Kent McCarty
Editor

For anyone who has had to walk down A-Hall after third block, it is evident that enrollment numbers at Oak Grove are up drastically for the 2010-2011 year compared to previous years. In fact, OGHS alone has added 124 students to the roll since last year, a number that's more than the total school growth over the last three years combined. This year's big increase brings total student enrollment to just over 1,500 students in 9th-12th grades.

Though some of the student population's increase for this year comes from the size of the massive freshman class of well over 400, making it the largest class OGHS has ever seen, many of the new students that

have joined the Oak Grove student body have moved to the area and chosen Oak Grove over many other local schools because of the accolades the school has received. "I think it just shows what a great school and staff we have at Oak Grove," Principal Wayne Folkes said. "Our district has the best facilities, the best faculty, and the best students, and I think people moving to the Pine Belt take notice of that when deciding what area they'll choose to move to."

According to Folkes, big increases like the one the school saw this year are expected to become the norm for future years. "When we're measuring growth at the high school level, we first look at class sizes in the middle school to see how many more students each of those grades has compared to the number

of students in each of the four grades housed in the high school," Folkes said. "Our numbers show that the number of students in the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades is comparable in size to this year's freshman class, so obviously as those students make their way to the school, our numbers will grow even more."

The growth that's expected over the next several years poses challenges for all of the schools in the district, but especially for schools like the high school that have to worry about not only fitting students in classrooms, but also having enough common space to allow for students to safely travel between classes. The potential for an overcrowding problem has been noticed by district officials and they are currently developing a five-year comprehensive plan for effectively managing the constant influx of students.

As for the current overcrowding situation in the hallways of OGHS, Principal Folkes has a few helpful pointers for the student body. "Take the road less traveled in the hallways and walk down side halls and back halls when you can. Obviously the main halls are going to be more crowded. Secondly, walk on the right side of the hallway just as you would drive on the right side of the road. Finally, and most importantly, don't stop along the way to start up a chat. Time between classes is limited, and there's just no way everyone can make it to where they have to go if you stop the flow of traffic to talk with a friend," Folkes said.

To welcome all of these new students, the Student Council hosted a breakfast this morning in the courtyard.

Eight OG students named National Merit Semifinalists

By: Anna Kate Baygents
Staff Reporter

Oak Grove High School was proud to announce seven National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) semifinalists last month. The recipients were Dillon Beck, Ryan Henry, Connor Lawson, Kent McCarty, Evan Prehn, Taylor Rigney, and Steven Wild.

NMSC is an independent, not-for-profit, organization that strives to identify and honor academically talented students. This program supports education by providing scholarship opportunities. Since founded in 1955, NMSC has recognized 2.8 million students and provided over \$1.4 billion in scholarships.

To achieve this award, students must score in the top three percentile on the PSAT in their state. Approximately 16,000 students make it to the semifinalist stage. The chosen applicants must then complete an in-depth application and submit a recent SAT score. Only 15,000 will advance to finalists, and those results will be announced in February.

"It's so rewarding to see all of our hard work finally pay off," Steven Wild said. "As a freshman, the testing date seemed so far away. Looking back as a senior, those strenuous six semesters flew by. I'm proud of all of us."

A sister organization to NMSC, National Achievement Scholarship Program (NASP) recognizes African American students who scored high on the PSAT. Jared Keys was one of about 1,600 participants named NASP semifinalists. Keys is the second from Oak Grove to be awarded this honor. The process of becoming a NASP finalist is much like that of NMSC. In late January, Keys will be notified if he qualifies as a finalist.

"This is one of the greatest things that has ever happened in my high school career," Keys said.

All of these students put hours of hard work into achieving this honor, and many began preparing their freshman year. Humanities I and II, taught by Andrea Clark, are courses offered at OGHS that help prepare students for the test. In these classes, students take numerous practice tests and are taught skills to quicken their reading time.

"National Merit Scholarship Competition is a great opportunity for students to earn money for college," Mrs. Clark said. "I encourage all students to work towards this award."

Student Council plans 2010 Homecoming events

By: Ashley Ricks
Staff Reporter

On November 5 Oak Grove will play Wingfield for the homecoming game. Homecoming week has been a tradition throughout high schools across America for years, but at Oak Grove this particular week always has its own special energy. Every year the school comes together for a week-long celebration. From dress-up days to hallway decorating, everyone enjoys the excitement of homecoming.

This year the theme is going to be as intense as ever. Although an official name has not been implemented, student body officers want homecoming 2010 to be centered around music. "We're really excited about this year, music is an entertaining theme, and we hope that it will get many students involved during the week," Student Body President Victoria Stein said.

Throughout the week the students will be able to get involved in many traditional events and competitions. Student council members and their classmates will have to put their imaginations to work in the hallway decorating competition. Each

grade is assigned a hallway and is judged on their creativity and artistic skills throughout the hallway.

Another long-standing tradition is Battle of the Bands. Students with musical talent are encouraged to sign up for the competition. For years past, this has been one of the biggest events of the week. Family and friends gather to hear what talent the bands can dish out. Battle of the Bands is a great way for students to show their talents that, otherwise, may not be heard around the community.

The powderpuff football game is another crowd-drawing event. Each year, the cheerleaders arrange a friendly game of flag football. Senior and junior girls practice with football players as coaches to get ready for the fierce game and fight for the win on the field. On the sidelines, of course, are the cheerleaders, but they are not your average cheerleaders. Senior and junior boys cheer on their teams throughout the game and are the halftime entertainment.

Of course the most recognized tradition of them all is the homecoming dance. After the game, students go to the gym to

take pictures and enjoy a night of dancing. The dance starts at 9:00 p.m. and ends at midnight.

For the first time last year, a carnival hosted by the Key Club took place during Homecoming week. The event was a great success. The Oak Grove community came together to enjoy an array of fun booths and concessions for the evening. Clubs and staff participated in making the carnival happen. Students got to throw pies at teachers and even made them go for a swim in the dunking booth. Key Club is planning to host the carnival again and hoping for an even more exciting event this year.

Homecoming week is always an important part of the school year. "Homecoming is one of my favorite parts of the year," Stein said. "Hopefully, this year will be one of the best yet."

To find out this year's homecoming theme as well as dress-up days, follow *The Warrior Beat* on Twitter.

