



Metropolitan Family Service

1808 SE Belmont Street
Portland, OR 97214
503.232.0007
Fax: 503.232.9178
www.metfamily.org

January 25, 2011

Contact: Pat Kaczmarek,
Marketing & Communications Manager
Metropolitan Family Service
503.232.0007, ext. 170
patk@metfamily.org
www.metfamily.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Metropolitan Family Service Establishes Successful Community School Program at Gresham High

Portland, OR—January 25, 2011 — New activities and classes are available for students at Gresham High this year. Metropolitan Family Service has created its first after school



A student gets feedback on her student portfolio from Multnomah County Sheriff Daniel Staton, center, while Michael Novak looks on.

program for high school level students. The program is part of the Multnomah County Schools Uniting Neighborhoods (SUN) program.

One of the offerings, a Government class, recently convened a portfolio review and invited local citizens and government representatives to attend. The class is part of the credit recovery program provided with financial

support from Gresham High School and Gresham-Barlow School District. The program assists students who have struggled with the subject matter when offered as part of the regular school curriculum. The credit recovery program is a way for students to complete the course which is a graduation requirement.

In the 24 hours of classroom instruction the focus has been on what it means to be an active citizen. One of the primary activities throughout the class was reading and discussing what instructor Geoffrey Stuckart likes to call the “Owner’s Manual” for our national government: the United States Constitution.



Hillary Barbour, left, from Representative Earl Blumenauer's office and Joel Corcoran, right, from the office of U.S. Senator Jeff Merkley were on hand to review students work.

STRENGTHENING
FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS
WHILE ENHANCING
THEIR PARTICIPATION
IN COMMUNITY LIFE



Metropolitan Family Service

1808 SE Belmont Street
Portland, OR 97214
503.232.0007
Fax: 503.232.9178
www.metfamily.org

In addition, some of the students' favorite lessons included:

- “Pizza Congress” — Students role-played the process of moving a bill through various committees and on the floor of the U.S. House and U.S. Senate, negotiating in a conference committee, and conferring with the President to ensure his support (there was, at one point, a veto threat!)
- Field trip to the Multnomah County Courthouse (an optional, extra credit activity)
- Media analysis — Students examined various pop culture songs by Billy Joel, John Mayer, and other artists to discuss alternative methods of petitioning the government and being an active citizen
- Guest speakers — As an authentic learning experience, students hosted discussions with a local criminal defense attorney and campaign workers from both major political parties
- “Family Feud” — Students worked together, in two teams, to answer questions drawn from the official U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Civics test, which is administered as part of the naturalization process

Metropolitan Family Service's after school program at Gresham High has been successful because the classes are relevant and meaningful to students. Credit recovery classes can make a big difference for students who want to graduate with their classmates, and can significantly increase graduation rates for at risk students.

Background Information

About **Metropolitan Family Service (MFS)**: For over 60 years, Metropolitan Family Service has played a vital role in the lives of children, families, and older adults. We provide services at more than 88 sites, including 57 schools. Metropolitan Family Service makes connections that strengthen the lives of 33,000 individuals and families each year.

For more information contact Pat Kaczmarek, Marketing and Communications Manager at 503.232.0007 ext.170, or visit us online at www.metfamily.org.

SUN Community Schools are a collaboration of local nonprofits, Multnomah County Office of School and Community Partnerships, the city of Portland Parks and Recreation, and Centennial, David Douglas, Gresham-Barlow, Portland Public, Parkrose, and Reynolds school districts

STRENGTHENING
FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS
WHILE ENHANCING
THEIR PARTICIPATION
IN COMMUNITY LIFE