

Last year, I published our district's letter to Santa. I prefaced the letter by explaining how the financial landscape has changed for schools and how capital projects will need to be funded completely by the school district. With a major drain looming with the pension crisis, districts are looking for other funding streams via philanthropy.

So, each year I will write Santa and hope that somehow, our dreams become reality.

*Dear Santa:*

*We have been a very good district this year, doing our best to meet students where they are and empower them to be all they are capable of being. We have some things that would really make our year! Here is our list:*

- 1. A building for set construction and storage. I know you were too busy to come to our production of Phantom of the Opera, but if you had, you would have witnessed an amazing performance with amazing sets. We need a building where we could build and store sets. The Phantom set was built right on the stage which is difficult since the stage needs to be used for other performances and practices. Right now, sets are created and destroyed every year since we have no place to keep them. A vacant building in the community with adequate ceiling height would work as well.*
- 2. A Performing Arts Center. I was sitting at the middle school chorus concert noticing how we probably couldn't fit another child on the stage. When the director asked 5th and 6th grade parents to go to the cafeteria to make room for the 7th and 8th grade parents, I thought how great it would be to have a larger facility with a large performance space, adequate space for rehearsal and more seating for the audience.*
- 3. A Pavilion on Linden Field. If your elves could build us a pavilion on the south side of the home stands, we'd be grateful. Most of the events at the field need areas for things such as alumni gatherings, bake sales, etc. and it would be great to have an area permanently under roof.*
- 4. A Fitness Center. I'm pleased to say that we have many students interested in getting and staying fit and our present facility is too small and under-equipped. We have a great space to build a facility on the east side of the high school gym. If you can get us one, it would be a great place for you to work off that Christmas Eve cookie binge.*
- 5. A shipping and receiving area. Those guys who have huge trailers that bring us stuff don't like the fact we don't have a loading dock. Having such an area would keep them happy and help us with inventory control.*
- 6. 1000 iPads. The iPad project at the middle school is going very well, so why not one for every student!?*

*Sincerely,*

*Your friends at GMSD*

So, there you have it. If you run into the man in the red suit this season, put in a good word for us. We'll even settle for a nice person looking for a tax deduction. It's Christmastime – anything could happen!