



# Graham Middle School



August 17, 2023

## Message from Principal, Heidi Galassi:

Hello Graham Families!

As we complete the first full week of the new school year, I wanted to take a moment to extend my heartfelt appreciation for your support and dedication to our school community. It has been a week filled with anticipation, nervousness, excitement, and the joy of reuniting with friends and classmates.

Our students have embarked on a journey of learning, growth, and discovery, and we are thrilled to witness their enthusiasm and commitment. Adjusting to a new school year can bring about a mix of emotions, and we understand that some of our middle school students might be experiencing feelings of nervousness as they settle into their routines and classrooms.

Please know that our dedicated teachers and staff are here to ensure a smooth transition for all students. We are actively fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment where every child can feel valued, supported, and encouraged to thrive. Our goal is to create a space where nervousness transforms into excitement for the opportunities ahead.

As parents and guardians, your role is pivotal during this phase. Your words of encouragement and reassurance can greatly influence how your child perceives and approaches this new chapter. Engaging in open conversations with them about their experiences, acknowledging their feelings, and highlighting their achievements will contribute to their sense of belonging and confidence.

Here are a few ways you can support your child's acclimation:

1. **Encourage Communication:** Create an atmosphere where your child feels comfortable sharing their thoughts and concerns about school. Listen actively and provide guidance when needed.
2. **Celebrate Small Wins:** Acknowledge even the smallest achievements, whether it's making a new friend, participating in a class activity, or completing a task independently.
3. **Establish Routine:** Routines provide a sense of stability and predictability, helping children feel more secure in their surroundings.
4. **Stay Involved:** Attend school events, parent-teacher conferences, and engage with our school community. Your involvement sends a powerful message of support.
5. **Promote Self-Care:** Emphasize the importance of taking breaks, getting enough sleep, and practicing activities that help reduce stress.

We are confident that with your partnership through the triangle of support, our students will thrive and flourish throughout the year. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us if you have any concerns, questions, or feedback. Together, we can make this school year an enriching experience for every child.

**Back To School Night on August 23rd, Wednesday, at 6:00 p.m.**

Our Back to School Night is **Wednesday, August 23, 2023**. Please see the information below for details regarding Back to School Night. Student attendance is optional.

**Important:** Your child will be bringing home their daily class schedule on Wednesday, August 23. Parents will have an opportunity to join each of their child’s classes during the evening. If your child does not bring home their schedule, please start in their first period class.

**Graham Middle School  
Back to School Night (BTSN) Schedule  
Wednesday, August 23, 2023**

**6:00 - Start of BTSN -** GMS TV Presentation in 1<sup>st</sup> Period at 6:04

**7:02-7:12 PM -** PTA/MVEF/SSC/other tables in courtyard near Innovation Center

**Student Name** \_\_\_\_\_

Period	Subject	Teacher	Room #
1 <sup>st</sup> Period 6:04 GMS TV 6:14 - 6:23			
2 <sup>nd</sup> Period 6:27 – 6:36			
3 <sup>rd</sup> Period 6:40 – 6:49			
4 <sup>th</sup> Period 6:53 – 7:02			
5 <sup>th</sup> Period 7:12 – 7:21			
6 <sup>th</sup> Period 7:25 – 7:34			
7 <sup>th</sup> Period 7:38 –7:47			
8 <sup>th</sup> Period 7:51 – 8:00			

**Please note: Classroom visits are 9 minutes and the passing period is 4 minutes. PE will meet in the MUR.**

**6:04pm -** GMS TV - Please be in your child’s first period class to watch our GMS TV. Our Graham Principals, PTA president, and MVEA president will be welcoming families.

**6:14pm -** Stay in your first period classroom. This will begin our Back To School Night sessions!

**7:02-7:12pm -** A 10 minute break is provided for using the restrooms and getting to know other Graham Families. This will also be a great opportunity to learn more about PTA, ELAC, SCC, and other school groups.

**6:14-8:00pm -** We want to make sure that you have the opportunity to meet all your child’s teachers. Each session is 9 minutes long with a 4 minute passing periods to get to the next class.

A friendly reminder, this is a great opportunity to learn about each teacher and the courses your child will be taking. Due to the brief amount of time for each session, if you have specific questions about your

child's education for teachers, please email or contact the teacher at a different date. Thank you for your understanding.

Have a great evening getting to know our amazing Graham Teachers and our academic courses!

**Math Placement Appeal Process**

Our middle schools take very careful consideration when placing students into math courses so that students can be successful and confident in their coursework. Student placement is determined objectively by i-Ready assessments with secondary data points of CAASPP scores. Changes in placement for students who did not meet the criteria for advanced math pathways (.1 and .2) are unlikely. However, the Mountain View Whisman School District does have a new placement appeal process. Please go to [https://www.mvwsd.org/academics/teaching\\_the\\_standards/math](https://www.mvwsd.org/academics/teaching_the_standards/math) to learn more about the process. The deadline for submitting Appeal Forms is 4pm, August 28th.

Sincerely,  
Heidi Galassi

## School News

### Graham Counselors

We are excited to share an August Attendance challenge to motivate students to be here at school. Starting Tuesday, August 22nd to Thursday, August 31st, students with perfect attendance will be invited to an ice-cream social during lunch time on Friday, September 1st. Please encourage your child to be here at school on time every day! Also, stay tuned for our Attendance Presentation flier that will be sent out next week. The presentation will be in person next Wednesday, August 23, 2023 at 5:30pm at the Graham Auditorium.

Information on attendance facts can be found here:

[English](#)

### School & Community Engagement Facilitator (SCEF)

As part of Graham's plan, we have a School and Community Engagement Facilitator who will work to ensure that every student, family, and community member will feel valued and supported while working, learning, and partnering with our school. Here at Graham, Natalie Lescano our School and Community Engagement Facilitator. She specifically focuses on students who are socioeconomically disadvantaged and/or English learners and works to organize parent education, provide translation services, and support positive student behavior. Natalie's overall goal is to increase parent education and engagement, support our PTA and ELAC parent groups, and form strong relationships with students and families. She can be reached at [nlescano@mwwsd.org](mailto:nlescano@mwwsd.org).

### First principal's coffee, August 18 at 9:00 a.m. in person

We will be discussing the start of the new school year, safety, and answering any questions you may have regarding all things Graham. Please check in at the main office and meet in MUR at the back of the school.

### Graham's Afterschool Sports

Sports are starting Monday at 3:30 in the Gym? The starting sports are boys' basketball, girls' soccer and Cross Country please bring your emergency forms with you in order to participate. Forms are located on the Graham website under Programs and PE and Athletics.

### Graham's PTA

**The Graham PTA welcomes you to the 2023-24 school year!**

We hope you had a great summer and are as excited as we are for the awesome year ahead.

- We would love for you to [join the PTA](#) (please see attached flyer) and,
- Attend our **General Meeting** via Zoom on **Tuesday, August 15 at 7pm** (details below)
- **New to Graham this year - Konstella!** Join us in [Konstella at Graham](#). It will be our main communication channel. Please see the attached flyer for more information.

### Reporting an Absence

Please call the 24hour automated Attendance Line at 650-526-3570, ext. 2680 or email [grahamattendance@mwwsd.org](mailto:grahamattendance@mwwsd.org) to report an absence or late arrival. Provide the following information: date of absence, student's name, grade, reason for absence, and name and relationship of the person reporting the absence. After reporting a COVID positive absence on the attendance line or by email click [here](#) to fill out the COVID reporting form.

### Bell Schedule

You can access the Graham Bell Schedule [here](#). School starts at 8:25am every day.

### Medication Forms

If your child requires medication to be kept at school, please pick up a [medication release form](#) from the school office. We cannot administer any medication without the forms. Please note that all medication, even over the counter medications, need a medication form signed by your doctor. For more information [click here](#) to be linked to the Physical Health webpage.

### **Drop-off and Pick-up**

There are different options for arriving at school. Please check out the Graham website for ideas for [Walking and Biking to School](#). If you plan to drop off your student on campus, please use the parking lot in front of the library for drop off and pick up. Please pull all the way up and then let your students out. Please do not pull out of the line. This is to assure that everyone safely exits their vehicle. The MVSP (Gym) parking lot will be for staff only. Also, Lane Avenue may not be used as a drop off or pick up location for students. Due to the limited space, it causes a safety hazard for our students.

### **Bike Cage**

Please remind your students to lock their bikes in the bike cage. While the bike cage protects student bikes from theft by individuals passing our campus during the day, it does not guarantee theft protection after school from persons entering the bike cage. Locking their bike is the best way to ensure that the only person who walks away with a bike from our bike cage is the bike's owner.

### **Important Dates**

August 23, Back to School Night from 6:00-8:00PM

August 28, Picture Day

September 4, Labor Day Holiday (No School)

September 8, Principal's Coffee at MUR 2:00-3:00PM

September 15, Principal's Coffee at MUR 2:00-3:00PM

September 15, ELAC Meeting at MUR 5:00-6:00PM

September 29, Principal's Coffee at MUR 2:00-3:00PM

October 2, Picture Day Re-take

October 6, Principal's Coffee at MUR 9:00-10:00AM

October 10, Choir Concert at Auditorium 7:00PM

October 12 and 13, Teacher Service Day and Recess Day (No School for Students)

October 27, Principal's Coffee at MUR 2:00-3:00PM

October 27, Halloween Dance 4:30-6:00PM

November 3, End of Trimester 1 Minimum Day for students, dismissal time 12:50PM

2023 -2024 School Year Calendar - [Here](#)

## **District News**

### **The Board of Trustees will meet on Thursday, August 17 at 6:00 p.m.**

Some of the topics include:

- Response to City of Mountain View's Fiscal Report on North Bayshore Master Plan
- Environmental Sustainability Advisory Council Progress
- Monta Loma Fencing Choice

For meeting details and agenda, please click here: <https://www.mvwsd.org/trustees>.

### **Superintendent's Community Check In on Friday, Aug. 18**

Please join us for our Community Check-In with Dr. Ayindé Rudolph on Friday, Aug. 18 at 3:30 p.m.

Bring your questions. Spanish interpretation will be provided. Click here to register: <http://mvw.sd/CC818>.

Mark your calendars for all upcoming community check ins! A [list of dates and login information is here](#).

### **District orientation**

Recordings of last week's Parent University District Orientation presentation are now available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#). To register in advance for future Parent U meetings, visit [mvwsd.org/ParentU](http://mvwsd.org/ParentU).

### **School meals are free, but fill out the EzSchool Meals application to help you and your school**

MVWSD will continue to provide free meals this year to all students as part of California's universal meal program.

However, parents need to reapply for the Free and Reduced Price Meals program now for this school year. If you think you could qualify ([qualifying income levels listed here](#)), we ask you to [apply at EzSchool Meals](#) to help MVWSD receive additional funding to support students who are in need, and may help your family. If your child is eligible for free and/or reduced-price meals, your family could get medical benefits, housing benefits, utilities benefits and more. Qualifying is one factor in your child's eligibility for free MVWSD after school care and summer camp.

The more applications your school gathers at the start of each school year, the more additional funding it can receive for all kinds of programs. If you are currently out of work, you may qualify and help your school, regardless of your financial situation. Apply at <https://secure.ezmealapp.com/> or call your school office.

### **Looking for an afterschool program? Read on to see if your child qualifies for MVWSD+!**

A student qualifies for the free [MVWSD+ afterschool program](#) if one or both of the following conditions are true:

- **The student is an [English Learner \(EL\)](#).** EL status is established via the results of the Initial ELPAC exam, which is being administered to certain students in August and September. Results are usually available within two weeks of the completion of testing. If you have questions about the Initial ELPAC exam, please contact Leticia Corcoran at [lcorcoran@mvwsd.org](mailto:lcorcoran@mvwsd.org).
- **The student qualifies for free or reduced price lunches based on federal income guidelines.** At this time, lunch for all children is free, but this may not always be the case. To fill out the application for free or reduced lunch, please go to [ezmealapp.com](http://ezmealapp.com). Qualifying students' data is collected at the state level and usually appears in the district's data system within two weeks. If you have questions, please contact your school office.

Soon after a student's EL or Free/Reduced Lunch Status changes to indicate he/she qualifies for MVWSD+, you will receive an email from the MVWSD+ Team inviting your child to enroll.

For questions or troubleshooting, please reach out to [plus@mvwsd.org](mailto:plus@mvwsd.org) or Jennifer Nunez at (650) 526-3500 x1061.



### **No MVWSD+ Afterschool Programs on Tuesday, August 22**

Due to preparations for Elementary School Back to School Night and afterschool staff development, there will be no MVWSD+ Afterschool Programs on Tuesday, August 22 (a minimum day for students). MVWSD+ families, thank you in advance for making other arrangements. This affects all Right At School programs, all Beyond the Bell programs, and the district-paid YMCA programs. Programs resume as normal on Wednesday, August 23.

For more information, please contact [plus@mvwsd.org](mailto:plus@mvwsd.org) or call (650) 526-3500 x1061.

### **MVEF needs your support!**

The Mountain View Educational Foundation works collaboratively with the community to raise funds for programs essential to a well-rounded education for all Mountain View Whisman School District students. In the elementary schools MVEF donations fund Art, Music, and Science Enrichment; in the middle schools MVEF donations fund English Language Arts teachers, stipends for clubs, coaches and buses for athletics teams, and supplement performing arts programs. To download a copy of the 2023 informational flyer, visit [this link](#). These flyers with donation information will be coming home with students -- keep an eye out for yours! To donate today, visit [www.mvef.org/donate](http://www.mvef.org/donate)

### **Living Classroom seeking Docents!**

Do you enjoy spending time with kids and being outdoors? Volunteer with Living Classroom to teach fun, engaging STEM-based lessons in your local MVWSD school! No prior teaching experience is necessary. For more information on our volunteer program, please visit: <https://www.living-classroom.org/get-involved.html> or email [susahh@living-classroom.org](mailto:susahh@living-classroom.org).

### **Parks and Rec to host park input community meetings**

Help the City imagine the future of Mountain View Parks and Recreation by joining one of four Community Meetings to kick off the Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan: August 21 and August 22 (Two meetings will be held in person at the Mountain View Community Center, and two meetings will be exclusively online via Zoom). All meetings will provide interpretation services in Spanish, Mandarin and Russian. Childcare and light refreshments will be available for the in-person meetings. Visit [ImagineMVParks.com](http://ImagineMVParks.com) or see attached flyers for more information.

### **Hazardous Household Waste Drop Off event on Aug 26**

The City will be hosting a Hazardous Household Waste Drop Off event on Aug 26, 2023. It is a free event for residents of Santa Clara County to safely dispose of unwanted household hazardous wastes, including paint, batteries, electronics, auto fluids, pesticides, garden chemicals, propane tanks, fluorescent and LED lightbulbs, household cleaners and more. See the attached flyer.

### **Housing and Eviction Help Center**

The City of Mountain View's Rent Stabilization Program runs the Housing and Eviction Help Center (HEHC) at the MV Public Library to provide housing-related support to the community, including information about housing programs and legal resources. These services are available on 1st and 3rd Thursdays (walk-ins welcome or virtually at [mountainview.gov/housinghelpclinics](http://mountainview.gov/housinghelpclinics)) from 6 - 8 p.m. For more information, see flyers attached or visit [mountainview.gov/evictionprevention](http://mountainview.gov/evictionprevention).

### **Notice: National School Lunch / School Breakfast Programs**

The Mountain View Whisman School District announces its policy for serving meals to students under the National School Lunch / School Breakfast Programs for the 2023-24 school year.

All students will be served lunch and breakfast at no charge at the following site: Mariano Castro Elementary School.

Additionally, all students will be served lunch and breakfast at no charge through California's Universal Meals Program (Universal Meals) at the following sites:

Bubb Elementary, Crittenden Middle, Graham Middle, Amy Imai Elementary, Landels Elementary, Gabriela Mistral Elementary, Monta Loma Elementary, Stevenson Elementary, Theuerkauf Elementary, Jose Antonio Vargas Elementary.

For additional information please contact: Deborah Austin, Director of Food Service, 1701 Rock St., Mountain View, CA 94043, 650.903.6965, [daustin@mvwsd.org](mailto:daustin@mvwsd.org).

While the program will offer free Universal Meals for all students, households will continue to be able to complete an application for free and reduced-price meals, which may support the school district's local education funding and could also qualify the family for additional benefits. [Click here for free and reduced price eligibility guidelines and for more information on applying.](#)

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To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form (AD-3027), found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html) and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call 866-632-9992.

Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410
  - (2) Fax: 202-690-7442
  - (3) E-mail: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)
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