



Mountain View
Whisman
School District

Graham Middle School



September 1, 2023

Message from Principal, Heidi Galassi:

Hello Graham Families!

Did you know that 50% of students who miss 2-4 days in the first month of school go on to miss nearly a month of school?

We wanted to let you know attendance is a top priority. When children miss school days, they miss out the opportunity to learn from their teachers. The more children miss, the harder it is for them to keep up with those who attend school regularly.

- Research shows that missing 10 percent of school, or just 2 days a month, negatively affects a student's academic performance in reading and math.
- Students who are chronically absent in grades TK-2 are far less likely to read proficiently at the end of grade 3.

Attending school every day helps students build their super powers like reading, writing, math skills, and provides opportunities to connect with friends. If you need support with getting your child to school, please call our front office or email our support team for assistance.

Unless your child is sick, please make sure to send them to school on time each day. Being absent in the first month of school can predict poor attendance throughout the year, so let's start strong!

Sincerely,

Dr. Heidi Galassi

School News

Graham Counselors

As we prepare to transition into a full normal schedule this week, here are some tips that can help to ensure your child is successful at school and at home.

1. **Communication:** Establishing a good relationship between teachers and parents from the beginning of the school year sets a strong foundation for the student.
2. **Organizational Skills:** Organization is about organizing your thoughts, managing your time, planning, and knowing how to get things done.
3. **Time Management:** Helps students become more efficient and productive.
4. **Foster Self-Advocacy:** The ability to communicate your needs. People who self-advocate are more likely to thrive in school, work, and life.
5. **Establish Routines:** Routines provide structure and consistency. They increase organization, reduce stress, and even help students perform at their best.

Additional information can be found here:

<https://www.piqe.org/5-tips-for-a-successful-school-year/>

Parking Lot issues

Parents: please pass on this information to anyone who picks up your student (grandparents, siblings, etc.)

We have been noticing several safety concerns at the front of school during our after school pick up. In order to keep your students safe from harm, we need all adults to be good role models. Please, stay in your car when picking your student up so that you can move forward in line. We promise, your student will be able to come and find you if you are parked along the curb.

Please do not have your student get into the car in the turn lane in front of the school. This is NOT a parking area. The cars in the turn lane must be able to move forward to keep the flow of traffic moving.

Please use crosswalks at all times, we have already had some near misses this year with adults and students crossing the street.

Please follow the directions of the adults who are out directing traffic. They are there to keep you and your children safe. A few extra minutes of patience and traffic is worth a life.

Anything But a Car Day

Wednesday September 6 is Graham's first Anything but a Car Day of the year! Arrive at school by bus, bike, on foot, or any other way that doesn't use a car, and you'll get a Hershey Kiss and a chance to win a gift certificate for boba. If you can't make it this week, that's ok, ABC will be on the first Wednesday of every month all year long.

The Spring Musical is Sister Act, Jr!

The Spring Musical is open to the entire school! If you are interested in being part of a full musical production, you should audition! *Everyone who auditions and commits to the rehearsal schedule will be cast. Auditions will take place November 28, 29, and 30.* Please visit [the Spring Musical Webpage](#) to download audition materials. Interested students must attend a lunchtime meeting on Wednesday November 1st.

Principal's Coffee, September 8th at 2:00 pm 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.

ELAC Meeting, September 13 at 5:00pm in person

We are looking for more parent members to participate in our English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC). In this group we discuss English Learner support at Graham, review reclassification requirements, provide feedback for our Site Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA), and more! We meet about 4-5 times throughout the year. Please email Natalie Lescano at nlescano@mvwsd.org if you are interested or have any follow up questions. Please check in at the main office and meet in MUR at the back of the school. We hope to see you there!

School Site Council Meeting

We have a few openings for the School Site Council this year. If you are interested in joining or would like to nominate someone you think would be a good fit for the School Site Council, [please submit your nomination here](#). The nomination window will be open for ten days, and be followed by a vote. The first School Site Council meeting will be scheduled soon after all members are confirmed.

Reporting an Absence

Please call the 24hour automated Attendance Line at 650-526-3570, ext. 2680 or email grahamattendance@mvwsd.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

September 4, Labor Day Holiday (No School)
September 8, Principal's Coffee at MUR 2:00-3:00PM
September 13, ELAC Meeting at MUR 5:00-6:00PM
September 15, Principal's Coffee at MUR 2:00-3:00PM
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

Sown to Grow

MVWSD is again partnering with Sown to Grow for the 2023-24 school year for grades K-6. Sown to Grow is a platform designed to promote safe and supportive classrooms. Through student check-ins and reflective activities, students are encouraged to engage in self-awareness, set personal goals, and develop essential social and emotional skills. This data allows teachers, principals, and counselors to proactively reach out to support student needs. For more information, please read the attached letter.

[Sown to Grow Letter \(English\)](#)

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 lcocoran@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. 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 or Jennifer Nunez at (650) 526-3500 x1061.

MVWSD Seeks Parents & Staff Members for Health & Wellness Committee

The Health & Wellness Committee is looking for parents and staff members for the 2023-24 school year! This committee aligns District efforts to support student wellness through health education, physical education and activity, health services, nutrition services, psychological and counseling services, and through promoting a safe and healthy school environment.

Last year, the committee's work helped increase student access to nutrition information and education, professional development on USDA standards for school nutrition, and supported student opportunities

for physical activity throughout the school day. We are seeking at least 1 parent and 1 certificated staff member representative from each school.

If you have experience, knowledge, or interest, please complete an application at: <http://mvw.sd/health>. Applications are due by September 13.

The Health and Wellness Committee will meet 4 times during the school year on Zoom, with the first meeting scheduled for September 28.

If you have any questions, please contact Brian White, Health & Wellness Coordinator at bwhite@mvwsd.org.

MVWSD seeking District Equity Advisory Committee members

MVWSD is continuing our work by engaging meaningfully with the community on issues of equity through the District Equity Advisory Committee (DEAC). The goal of the DEAC is to provide feedback to the Superintendent on how to support MVWSD towards achieving its goals of becoming a more equitable and inclusive school district.

We are seeking a combination of district-level leaders, principals, teachers, staff members, and parent participants who represent the interests of both elementary and middle schools. Committee members will be expected to attend and participate virtually in meetings held monthly (on average) online in the evening hours.

If you're interested in participating, please [complete the application here](#).

Volunteer with MVEF!

MVEF needs 1-3 additional volunteers at each school in MVWSD. MVEF school representatives help the families at their school understand what MVEF is and why it exists so that they are inspired to donate and spread the word about the impact of MVEF funding. MVEF also needs volunteers to help with planning our annual Gala and other community events. To learn more, visit:

<https://www.mvef.org/volunteer>

Mentor Tutor Connection: Volunteer Information Session

Mentor Tutor Connection is holding a Volunteer Information Session on Wed., Sept. 13, 12:00 - 1:00 pm, MVLA District Office Conference Room, 1299 Bryant Ave., Mountain View. Please join us and learn about becoming a mentor and/or a tutor in the Mountain View and Los Altos public schools. Help a local student to a brighter future! To register go to www.mentortutorconnection.org/events - or email programs@mentortutorconnection.org.

August/September CAC and LCC Events

SELPA 1 CAC and the Learning Challenge Committee are your groups for special education and broader learning challenge needs. We are ALL having learning challenges right now, and CAC and LCC are here to help. If you have questions about learning challenges and special education needs, email selpa1cacinfo@gmail.com or check out www.selpa1cac.org

We encourage families to learn about the sensory needs all children: [Try a Sensory Diet](#)

Parent Chat

September 12, 10 am

Are you concerned about the emotional well-being of your child? Peer to peer support for parents of teens with mental health challenges. Every second Tuesday of the month at 10 am on Google Meet. Meeting is for 1 hour only due to Google Meet limitations. Contact trudy.palmer@me.com for invite.

September 13, 10 am Morning Let's Talk - IEP/504 support group. Have questions about the process to get help for your child? Have an IEP but are not sure how to make changes? Need to vent? This is your confidential group. Register at:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZModeirqToiHdQpAOpxx4g3NaLHuElaLtJs>

Missed our Parent Education events last year?

We have a YouTube channel with many of our past events including last year's Inclusive Fun Fair for summer camps and recreational activities, Anxiety and Depression in Children with Learning Challenges, SMART Goals and IEP Troubleshooting, and more. Channel is here:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCuy7lcVz-4LTDxv2Jaq13nw>

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) from 6 - 8 p.m. For more information, see flyers attached or visit mountainview.gov/evictionprevention.

City Searching for Volunteers to Serve Community

Recruitment is open for upcoming vacancies on several City boards, commissions and committees that weigh in on a wide range of matters. If you have an interest or background in the City's downtown interests, environmental planning process, library, parks and recreation, performing arts, inclusive community relations or bike and pedestrian concerns, we welcome you to apply to serve on one of these bodies. Find more information and the application form at MountainView.gov/Advisors. Questions can be directed to the City Clerk's Office at city.clerk@mountainview.gov or 650-903-6304. The deadline to apply is Sept. 29 at 5 p.m.

SCCOE Family Engagement Symposium 2023: Sept. 9

Join SCCOE's upcoming free Family Engagement Symposium "Belonging Begins with Me" on Saturday, Sept 9, 2023. Workshops include Family Writing Activity - Writing Your Belonging Story, Establishing Your Financial Roots, How to Raise and Nurture an Antiracist Family, and more! Register here:

<https://sccoe.to/PEPBelongingSept9>.

Announcing the MVLA Parent Education Speaker Series for 2023 - 2024

The MVLA Parent Education Speaker Series is excited to announce our speaker line-up for the 2023 - 2024 school year. Nationally and internationally recognized experts will join us to discuss important topics on child and adolescent well-being, as well as our own - including how to help kids face the unique challenges of growing up surrounded by computers, how to raise successful adults and break free of the traps of overparenting, exploring why puberty is so different for today's kids than past generations and figuring out how to beat the college admissions system.

2023 - 2024 Speaker Events

Devorah Heitner

Growing Up in Public: Helping our Kids Navigate the Digital Coming of Age

Wednesday, September 13, 2023 - 7pm

Mountain View High School - Spartan Theater

Julie Lythcott-Haims

How to Raise an Adult: Break Free of the Overparenting Trap and Prepare Your Kid for Success

Tuesday, October 10, 2023 - 7pm

Mountain View High School - Spartan Theater

Cara Natterson & Vanessa Kroll Bennett

This Is So Awkward: A Conversation About How Puberty Has Changed

Tuesday, November 17, 2023 - 7pm

Los Altos High School - Eagle Theater

Susan Paterno

Game On: Why College Admission Is Rigged and How To Beat the System

Thursday, March 7, 2024 - 7pm

Los Altos High School - Eagle Theater

For more information, visit mvlaspeakerseries.org. Events are free thanks to our generous sponsors: [MVLA High School Foundation](#), [Los Altos Educational Foundation](#), [Mountain View Educational Foundation](#), and the [Los Altos-Mountain View PTA Council](#).