



What's Up @ G&P

May 2011

If you would like this document translated please contact the Bilingual/ELA Department at 617-349-6468.

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A Note from Principal Sarah Fiarman

May, 2011

Dear Families,

Welcome back from spring vacation, everyone!

I continue to be struck by the many aspects of our school that rely on the generous support of parents -- fundraising, organizing, coordinating, among others. Members of the Friends of Graham and Parks raise money for teachers, special events, and school traditions. Room parents serve as important supports for individual teachers and the class. Parent volunteers have launched and maintained initiatives such as the Mural/Desen Sou Mi all-school magazine, the Family Cultural Exchange Program, our school lunch composting program, the garden, and school tours, as well as the online school newsletter. And for decades, throughout each year, volunteer members of the Steering Committee have dedicated countless hours guiding and governing the school's policies and direction. This year's Steering Committee members are no exception -- committing an enormous amount of time over weekends and late-night pizza, taking time out of family gatherings and work trips to serve on this joint parent-teacher governing board. This volunteer work helps our school serve all children well.

There is another vital way that families support the work of the school. This is in the daily support that parents provide to engage their children with the academic and social challenges of school. For example, I recently heard a mother of a seventh grader describe a new routine in her household -- everyone in the family takes 20 minutes to stop everything and read. She hopes it will increase her son's engagement with his daily reading assignment. I've heard parents pointedly ask their children to tell about when they have helped another child in class or discuss how they can show compassion for a child who seems unhappy. And parents reach out to each other to support the classroom community as well. A mother regularly offered another child a ride to school events when she learned that his parents weren't able to attend with him. A father let his child's teacher know about a hurtful comment his daughter's classmate made, and he also called that child's mother to let her know. He said he'd known this family since their children were in kindergarten together so it was not difficult to pick up the phone to reach out to a fellow parent. These conversations -- parent to parent, parent to child, parent to teacher -- strengthen our community in important ways just as the committee work does.

Thank you, families, for all of the work -- seen and unseen -- that you do to support this community of learners.

Warmly,

Sarah

G&P Calendar and Highlights

Items that are underlined have more information in the [G&P Happenings](#) section.

May

- Tuesday, May 3: 6:00 – 8:00 PM – G&P Library - **Community Meeting – “The Innovation Agenda: Next Steps.”** Gather to discuss next steps we can take to move forward as a community. The meeting starts promptly at 6:30 pm. Pizza at 6 pm. Please RSVP for attendance, pizza and childcare using this link: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/WFQSZ33> . Or contact Family Liaison Judy Amendola at 617-349-6577x115. A flyer with more details will be coming home via back pack and email.
- Thursday, May 5 through Sunday, May 8 – **Beyond the 4th Wall presents “Grease”**, Auditorium. 7:00 PM Thursday through Saturday, 3:00 PM Sunday.
- Monday, May 9th – by 9 AM - **Deadline for Hiring Committee Volunteer Responses**
- Monday, May 9: 8:30 AM – **Friends of Graham & Parks Meeting**, G&P Conference Room. All are welcome!
- Tuesday, May 10 and Thursday, May 12: 8:15 – 9:00 AM – **Friends of G&P in partnership with Cambridge Local First** selling "Where the Locals Go - a coupon book to Local Independent Businesses in Cambridge and Somerville - over \$1,000 of savings inside", G&P Lobby. Learn more about Cambridge Local First on Wednesday evening, May 11, 7:00 – 8:30 PM.
- ***Wednesday, May 11: EARLY RELEASE – Dismissal at 12:25 PM.***
- Wednesday, May 11: 1:15 PM - **Kindergarten Open House** for incoming students and families– Linnaean Street Lobby
- Thursday, May. 12: 6:00 – 8:00 PM - **Steering Committee Meeting**, G&P Conference Room. Childcare by advance reservation, contact Family Liaison Judy Amendola at jamendola@cpsd.us or 617-349-6577 x115.
- Saturday, May 14: 6:30 – 8:00 PM – (Note new, corrected date). **G&P Grade 7 and 8 chorus with 7th and 8th graders from St. Peter’s School for a “Playing for Change” Benefit Concert** at Saint Peter School, 9 Concord Avenue, Cambridge.
- Monday, May 16: 8:30 AM – **Family Cultural Exchange Program (FCEP)** committee meeting, G&P Conference room. Drop by with any feedback or thoughts for next year!
- Friday, May 27: 8:00 AM – **Green Streets Walk/Ride Day**
- ***Monday, May 30 – NO SCHOOL – Memorial Day***

Field Trips and Room Activities

As of April 26. Any changes or additions will come directly from the classroom teachers.

- Wednesday, May 4: Rooms 106 and 111 Franklin Park Zoo, 9:15 AM – 2:15 PM
- Friday, May 6: Rooms 220, 224, 225 Harvard Museum of Natural History
- Tuesday, May 10: Room 111 Family Breakfast, 8:15 – 9:15 AM

Looking Ahead

- Tuesday, June 7 through Friday, June 10: **Book Fair**, with a Family Event on Thursday evening.
- Thursday, June 9: 6:00 – 8:00 PM – **Book Fair Family Night**. Come read in the garden, take a book walk, drink milk or tea and eat cookies or cakes. Everyone welcome.
- Thursday, June 9: 6:00 – 8:00 PM - **Steering Committee Meeting**, G&P Conference Room. Childcare by advance reservation, contact Family Liaison Judy Amendola at jamendola@cpsd.us or 617-349-6577 x115.
- ***Monday, June 20 – Early Release Day for Grades K-7. Dismissal at 12 NOON.***
- ***Monday, June 20: 1:00 PM – Eighth Grade Graduation, G&P Auditorium.***
- ***Thursday, June 23: Last Day of School***

G&P Happenings

Congratulations to 6th Grade Teacher Anna Marsh and her students!

Congratulations to 6th Grade Teacher Anna Marsh and all the 6th grade students, who recently won the *Green Heroes* award from the CPS Science Department and the Cambridge Science Festival. In addition, Anna Marsh was selected as 2011 Curious Teacher! The awards recognize the work Anna carried out with her students to study energy and conduct an energy audit of the school. The class created solar hot water heater design challenges, and measured energy use at home and at school. To wrap it all up, the students wrote about alternative energy for their class magazine. Ask a 6th grader for a copy!

Important hiring updates from Sarah Fiarman – seeking parent volunteers for hiring committees.

I am seeking parent volunteers for a hiring committee to hire two new teachers for the 3rd and 4th grade teaching cluster. Meg Howe, 3rd grade teacher, will not be returning to Graham and Parks next year as she is relocating to Los Angeles. I know her students -- and colleagues -- will miss her a great deal. The second opening is due to the fact that I have asked Rebecca Figueroa to cover Linnaea Adams's one-year maternity leave in the 6th grade. While Rebecca has enjoyed teaching 3rd and 4th grades, she has also been interested in exploring older grades and this is a good opportunity to do this while bringing stability to the 6th grade in this critical transition year for our school. It is likely that I will ask one of our current fourth grade teachers to remain in fourth grade to ensure a buddy teacher for each of the new teachers next year. I will determine this in consultation with the teachers in the next few weeks as hiring begins.

If you are interested in serving on either the resume screening or interview committee, please respond to Judy Amendola (jamendola@cpsd.us) by 9 AM on Monday, May 9th and let her know which committee you are interested in joining. Resume screening will take place May 10-12, interviews will take place during the week of May 16th.

Math teacher hiring is still in process. We have excellent candidates and are working out logistics with patience. I'll let everyone know once the final appointment is official.

SEI teacher interviews have begun. I'll keep everyone up to date on this hiring process as well.

Grease is the Word!

Thursday, May 5 through Sunday, May 8 – Beyond the 4th Wall presents the musical “Grease”, featuring cast members from grades 3 through 8 and an entirely family friendly plot that could only be found in Cambridge. Thursday, Friday and Saturday the show starts at 7:00 PM. Sunday the show starts at 3:00 PM. \$11 for adults, \$6 for children.

Save, Save, Save! And Help G&P at the same time!

Beginning May 10 - Friends of Graham & Parks, in partnership with Cambridge Local First, will be selling coupon books: "Where the Locals Go - a coupon book to Local Independent Businesses in Cambridge and Somerville - over \$1,000 of savings inside". The books are \$10, with \$4 coming right back to G&P. JPLicks, TAGS, Porter Square Books, Orleans, Zing Pizza, 1369 Coffee House, Stellabella Toys, Stone Hearth Pizza, Cambridge Naturals -- all in there.

Stop by the Lobby in the morning (8:15-9) on Tues., May 10 and Thurs., May 12 or come to our table at the Porter Square shopping center on Sat. May 14 or Sun. May 15 (11-4). We'll also have a more in-

depth discussion with Cambridge Local First business people on Wed., May 1, 7:00 – 8:30 PM. Please contact Liz McNerney (liz_mcnерney@yahoo.com) for more information -- we have 1,000 books to sell - up to \$4,000 for G&P.

Library News

The Book Fair is Coming! Mark your calendars. The annual **Graham & Parks Book Fair** will be Tuesday June 7th through Friday, June 10th, with a Family Event on Thursday evening, June 9th. The book fair generates a huge buzz about books and reading among students and is a very important fundraiser for the library.

We depend on parent volunteers to make it happen, so if you can help, please contact Ann, the library teacher, at aniederkorn@cpsd.us. Please watch for notices with more details coming soon in your email or via your child's backpack. Thanks.

Ann Niederkorn, Library Media Specialist
<http://grahamandparkslibrary.edublogs.org>
617-349-6577 x233

Music News

NOTE NEW DATE: **Saturday, May 14**, 6:30 – 8:00 PM, St. Peter School, 9 Concord Ave., Cambridge – G&P Grade 7 and 8 chorus will be combining with 7th and 8th graders from St. Peter's School, BB&N, and Shady Hill in a Playing for Change concert that will benefit the Matenwa Community Learning Center in Haiti. The concert will take place in the evening at St. Peter School. A live band will accompany us and many other wonderful musicians will perform. Mayor Maher and Marco Werman, host of ""The World"" (BBC) will speak at the event. Please save the date!

Debbie Sullivan, Music Specialist
debsullivan@cpsd.us
617-349-6577 x118

Junior High News

Junior High events are generally publicized directly from the classrooms via the weekly syllabi.

- Jr. High Staff/Parent meetings are the first Thursday morning each month, 7:30am Rm. 215
- Do you want to receive the CRLS Newsletter? Go to www.cpsd.us/crls. Sign up box on the left side.

Chris Rettig, Team Leader
crettig@cpsd.us

Of Interest Outside G&P

Rescheduled! Inclusion: Including Samuel and Q & A with Joe Petner

Tuesday, May 10, 6:30 – 8:30 PM, Cambridge Citywide Senior Center. Former Haggerty School Principal Joe Petner will facilitate a screening of the documentary “Including Samuel”, discussion of inclusion of special education students in general education classrooms follows. Workshop is free and open to the public, childcare provided. Contact: Rosalie Rippey at rippsey@cpsd.us or 617-593-4402.

Accessing Housing for Adult Children with Disabilities

Wednesday, May 18, 6:00 – 8:00 PM, Cambridge Rindge and Latin School. Learn about opportunities within Cambridge and the surrounding cities and towns for housing supports and community involvement for your child as they transition to adult services. This workshop is free and open to the public. For more information, contact Jennifer Garcia at jgarcia@cpsd.us or 617-349-6791.

Meeting of the Cambridge Parent Advisory Council on Special Education

Thursday, May 26, 6:30 – 8:30 PM, Peabody School, 70 Rindge Avenue. Join parents and allies of children with special education needs for our final business meeting of this school year. This is a chance to join a discussion of C-PAC's mission and work as well an opportunity to meet parents of children with special education and other special needs and learn from one another. The election of C-PAC Officers will also be held and announced. Contact: Rosalie Rippey at rippsey@cpsd.us or 617-593-4402.

Green Streets Walk/Ride Day

Friday, November 19, 8:00 AM, G&P Main Lobby - Give the family car and the planet a break. Earn discounts from dozens of local merchants by clicking “Raffle & Check-in” at www.gogreenstreets.org. Contact Bob Cowherd at cowherd@alum.mit.edu for more information.