



What's Up @ G&P

December 2013

Visit our website:

<http://grahamandparks.cpsd.us>

Main Office
617-349-6577

School Cancellation Line:
617-349-6513

Tardy or Late Line:
617 349-6577 x125

Contacting G&P Staff

For time sensitive messages,
call the main office at
617-349-6577.

While staff cannot take phone calls during the day, you can leave a voice message by calling 617-349-6577 and using the classroom number as the extension.

Staff members have email addresses as follows:
First initial and last name as one word, followed by

@cpsd.us

For example, Jane Smith would be jsmith@cpsd.us

Staff members also have mailboxes in the front office where you may leave a note.

Communicate with the G&P Community

Email lists:

Blackboard Connect for official school announcements, sent to email addresses on emergency cards.

gp21 is a parent-run Yahoo group with discussions of school matters as well as sharing of information and resources. Visit groups.yahoo.com/group/gp21

Steering Committee

Minutes can be viewed on the school website

If you would like this document translated, please contact the Bilingual/World Languages Department at 617-349-6468. Announcements are authored and proofread by each individual contributor. If you have a question or comment, please contact the contributor directly using the contact information listed in the announcement. The parent volunteer editor(s) may be contacted at graham.parks.newsletter@gmail.com.

A Note from Principal Sarah Fiarman

Dear Families,

Recently, we've had several vivid demonstrations of our school's CARES values (be Curious; Aim high; Respect everyone; be an Engaged learner; Show kindness). At a school assembly in November, students shared ways they work on CARES throughout the curriculum. K students shared quilts they made that showed their individual connections to the CARES values. First and second graders showcased the self-portraits that required considerable engagement in the work. Third graders reflected on how the CARES values were infused throughout their Eat Food, Mostly Plants expedition, and fourth graders demonstrated their ability to aim high through multiple revisions of their portfolio covers. Fifth grade students described their four-day trip to Nature's Classroom in Maine, where they put the CARES values into practice beyond the school day – in bunkrooms, at dinner, and in the woods and beaches.

On top of all of the hard work in individual classrooms, students and families have also contributed to a food drive to show how we can show kindness to our community. Parents helped to organize this year's drive and will distribute the food to families in need both at G&P and our larger community.

In January, we'll ask students to think specifically about how they demonstrate the CARES values at home. Look for a notice home next month explaining the project.

Very soon, families will receive the annual appeal from the Friends of G&P. I invite everyone to consider this an opportunity to show your support for the school by contributing something to the Friends. As the Friends seeks outside donations, fundraising participation rates matter. A donation of any amount – just \$5 -- would make a valuable difference.

In the meantime, have a wonderful month, a joyful vacation, and a happy new year!

Warmly,

G&P Calendar and Highlights

Items that are underlined have more information in the G&P Happenings section.

December

- MAKE A NOTE: Street Cleaning Days are in effect until December 31.
- Friday, December 6 - "How to do a Read Aloud" informational coffee – 8:30 AM – 9 AM in the library. Librarian Ann Niederkorn presents. The topic is how to read with younger children in a way that promotes early literacy for both fluent English speakers and for children for whom English is their second language.
- Friday, December 6 – Family Cultural Exchange First Friday Coffee - 8:45 at Bourbon Coffee at Porter Square Exchange Building. Participants are invited to gather in the school lobby at 8:30 AM and walk over as a group or go over independently.
- Tuesday, December 10 – Superintendent Jeff Young meets with parents/caregivers to review principal search process and gain input. 6:30 PM in the Graham and Parks Library. Childcare will be provided by advance reservation. Contact family liaison Judy Amendola at jamendola@cpsd.us or 617-349-6577. Flyers with details will come out closer to the event.
- Tuesday, December 10 – REMEMBER to VOTE! Note the G&P gym is a polling place.
- Thursday, December 12 – Steering Committee Meeting – 5:30 – 7:30 PM. Childcare can be provided by advance reservation. Contact family liaison Judy Amendola at jamendola@cpsd.us or 617-349-6577.
- **Monday Dec. 23, 2013 through Wednesday January 1, 2014 – NO SCHOOL – Winter Break**

Looking Ahead...

- Thursday, January 2 – Back to School after Winter Break
- Friday, January 31, Kindergarten Music Concert – 8:45 AM in the auditorium
- **Monday, January 20 – NO SCHOOL – Martin Luther King Jr. Day**
- Friday, February 7, Grades 1 and 2 Music Concert – 8:45 AM in the auditorium
- **Monday, February 17 through Friday, February 21 – NO SCHOOL – February Break**
- Tuesday, March 11 – **EARLY RELEASE DAY**, dismissal at 12:25 PM
- Friday, March 28 - Grades 3 and 4 Music Concert – 8:45 AM in the auditorium
- Grade 5 Instrumental/Chorus concert – TBD
- **Friday, April 18 – NO SCHOOL – Good Friday**
- **Monday, April 21 through Friday, April 25 – NO SCHOOL – April Break**
- Wednesday, May 14 – **EARLY RELEASE DAY**, dismissal at 12:25 PM
- **Monday, May 26 – NO SCHOOL – Memorial Day**
- Thursday, June 5 – **EARLY RELEASE DAY**, dismissal at 12:25 PM
- Wednesday, June 18 – Tentative Last Day of School, no snow days

G&P Happenings

Informational Morning Coffee – “How to do a Read Aloud” for the younger set – Friday, December 6th

Our next coffee is “How to do a Read Aloud”. This will be a jam-packed half-hour full of tips on how to read with younger children in a way that promotes early literacy for both fluent English speakers and for children for whom English is their second language.

The event is on Friday, December 6, just in time to take advantage of our winter break and put some extra academic “nutrition” *and fun* into the loving practice of reading books together.

We are continuing with our informational morning coffees. Look for additional coffee topics and dates in the January newsletter. For your future reference, handouts are posted on the G&P website after each coffee in series.

Transitions in Graham & Parks Leadership

- At this point you all have received a letter from Principal Sarah Fiarman regarding her departure at the end of the school year as well as a letter from Superintendent of Schools Jeff Young regarding the transition, asking for a response to a survey about qualities your family would seek in your new principal, posted on www.cpsd.us and laying out the 2013-14 Principal Search Timeline. If you have not received this letter, please contact either the main office or family liaison office. Notices will be sent out recruiting families for the Resume and Interview Committees. We will keep you updated as the process moves along.
- Congratulations and best wishes to Assistant Principal Barry McNulty, who will be retiring after thirty-nine years of outstanding service to the Cambridge Public School District. Barry will be looking forward to, among other things, spending more time apple picking and kite flying with his grandson! Barry, we will miss you and wish you every happiness! Families will be updated on the hiring process and timeline for Barry’s position as soon as we have information available.

Kindergarten Registration for Siblings Entering Graham & Parks Next Fall can be done at the school up until January 10th

Tuesday, December 3. Registration packets will go home via backpack express to families who returned the yellow sibling search form. Registrations for siblings of current Graham & Parks students can be done here at the school with the liaison up until January 10th. A schedule of available appointment times will go out to you in the Registration Packets, and via email to those who have sent in forms. After January 10th, registrations can be made at the Family Resource Center (FRC). ALL JK/K registrations are due to the FRC by Friday, January 31st.

Please be sure to let family liaison Judy Amendola know if you have a sibling entering in the fall and have not yet returned a form. Contact Judy at jamendola@cpsd.us (please put SIBLING SURVEY in subject line) or call at 617-349-6577x115.

Boxtops are Back!

Families who have been at G&P for a while know that two years ago we launched a BOXTOPS FOR EDUCATION drive and used the money to start our collection of books in many languages for the school library. We got a little off-track last year, but we're back and eager to re-launch the program! Did you know that there are many, many products that qualify, including food and drinks, office supplies, paper products - even clothing! Get a complete list in the lobby or online at <http://www.boxtops4education.com> SAVE BOXTOPS COUPONS AND BRING THEM TO SCHOOL. The collection box is in the lobby. Thank you!

For more information contact Ann Niederkorn at 617-349-6577 x233 or aniederkorn@cpsd.us

Introducing new administrative intern, Liz Drury.

Liz Drury ("Ms. Liz") joined our school in November as an administrative intern. She's a middle school math and science teacher from Maine who is on leave for a year to study at Harvard in the School Leadership Program. She'll be at G&P for 2.5 days each week for the rest of the school year as she gets her principal licensure. She has two grown sons. Before she became a teacher, Liz and her husband co-owned and operated a family restaurant. If you see her, feel free to introduce yourself as she gets to know our community. Welcome, Ms. Liz!

Music News

We've set this year's concert schedule up to accommodate all our families:

- Kindergarten – Friday, January 31 – parents welcome!
- Grades 1 and 2 – Friday, February 7 – parents welcome!
- Grades 3 and 4 – Friday, March 28 – parents welcome!
- Grade 5 Instrumental/Chorus concert – TBD

All concerts in the auditorium and start at 8:45 AM.

Friends of Graham & Parks News

We welcome new and old members of the G&P community.

Please join us in raising money and helping teachers with funding for special projects. Any and all levels of participation are needed. Contact Liz McNerney at liz_mcnerney@yahoo.com for more details on how you can participate. You do not have to attend meetings to be a member AND the Monday morning meeting time is not cast in concrete. Let us know what works for you!

Friends is thrilled to report that the 5th graders had a terrific 4-day expedition to Ocean Park, ME with Nature's Classroom this fall thanks to the generous financial and chaperoning support of the 5th grade families.

December marks the launch of our annual campaign (look out for our letter). This year our goal is to have all G&P families and community members contribute to the campaign--whether you give 25 cents,

\$25 or \$250 your participation in this fund drive will mean so much to your child's education, to our teachers and to our community.

The money we raise will go directly to the teachers for their use on classroom materials, field trips, and special projects. And thank you--your contributions, whether they are in volunteer time or money, make all the difference for all our kids!

The next Friends meeting is Monday, December 2, 8:30-9:15 AM in the lobby. We'll be stuffing envelopes for the Annual Appeal mailing.

Our Health Matters - Sleep

Do you sleep well and feel wide-awake and energetic all day long?

If yes, that's great!

If not, you are not alone!

Many people are not getting the sleep they need!

How much do we need?

- Newborns (0-2 months) 10.5-18 hours
- Infants (2-12 months) 14.5 hours
- Toddlers (1-3 years) 12-14 hours
- Preschoolers (3-5 years) 11-13 hours
- School age (5-12 years) 10-11 hours
- Adolescents 8.5 to 9.5 hours
 - Growth hormone is secreted into the bloodstream at night!
- Adults: 8-9 hours

Lack of sleep in children and teens:

Learning problems in school

Difficulty concentrating

Trouble remembering what they have learned

Impaired attention span

Trouble absorbing new information

Behavior problems in school

Feeling moody, cranky and irritable

Impaired judgment

Sleep debt: You can make it up!

Tips for a Good Night's Sleep

Establish a regular sleep & wake schedule/Create a bedtime ritual

Maintain a quiet sleep environment/Dim lights & turn down music

Teach children to recognize the signs of sleepiness

Drink less fluids before going to sleep

Avoid caffeine drinks and heavy meals close to bedtime

Exercise regularly, but do so in the daytime

Use a mattress, pillow, and bedding that are comfortable to you

Beware that alcohol, drugs and some medications can affect sleep

Enjoy your sleep!