



What's Up @ G&P

October 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 Graham and Parks Families,

I hope everyone feels settled back into the routine of school. The weather is cooler, we're all wearing socks more often, and children are learning the expectations of a new grade level.

One of our priorities at this time of year is to teach all children the routines that will allow them to act with greater independence during the school day. Kindergarteners learn to read the choice board and select activities to work on with peers. Fifth graders use what they know of inverse math relationships to check their work without teacher direction. Students who entered without any English actively participate in Morning Meeting each day. Children learn to ask for help on the swings on the playground, to give positive feedback on a peer's writing, and to applaud when someone performs at a whole-school assembly. Students learn how to take care of their own learning, classroom materials and each other. Throughout these last few weeks, teachers have been teaching the habits and routines that children need to know in order to be independent learners.

One routine we hope you'll teach and reinforce at home is the importance of a good night's rest. It's easy to notice when a child hasn't had enough sleep. They're at a disadvantage from the moment they arrive at school. Please be sure children in grades K-5 are getting 10-11 hours of sleep each night. We recommend that JK students get even more. Harder challenge: increasing the amount of hours the grown-ups get to sleep!

Have a wonderful beginning of fall, everyone.

Warmly,

G&P Calendar and Highlights

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

October

- Friday, October 4, 8:30 – 8:45 AM, [FCEP Monthly Coffee](#), G&P Lobby, then Bourbon Coffee at the Porter Square Exchange Building
- Monday, October 7, 8:30 – 9:15 AM, G&P Lobby – [Friends of G&P meeting](#), all are welcome!
- Wednesday, October 9 – **Grades 3, 4 and 5 Classroom Back-to-School Night**
 - **Orientation for new families** - 5:30-6:00 PM Meet specialists, learn about Steering Committee and other volunteer opportunities)
 - **Grades 3 and 4**
 - 6:00-6:15 -- all 3rd and 4th grade community together in the library
 - 6:15-7:00 -- in individual 3rd and 4th grade classroom
 - **Grades 5**
 - 6:00-6:45 -- in individual 5th grade classrooms
 - 6:45-7:00 -- all 5th grade community together in the library
- Wednesday, October 9, 9:00 – 9:45 AM, G&P Library – [Parent Coffee on Early Literacy and Numeracy](#)
- **Monday, October 14: NO SCHOOL – Columbus Day Holiday**
- **Tuesday, October 15: NO SCHOOL – Eid Al-Adha Holiday**
- Friday, October 18, 2:30 PM, G&P Conference Room – [Arts Committee Meeting](#)
- Saturday, October 19, G&P Cafeteria – [Friends of G&P Fall Rummage Sale](#)
- Wednesday, October 23, 6:00 – 7:30 PM, G&P Cafeteria - [World Foods Potluck & Family Cultural Exchange Kick-off](#)
- Friday, October 25, 2:45 – 5:00 PM, G&P and next door at Harvard – Linnaean Community School Halloween Party

Looking Ahead...

November

- MAKE A NOTE: Street Cleaning Days are in effect until December 1
- Tuesday, November 5 – REMEMBER to VOTE! Note the G&P gym is a polling place.
- Wednesday, November 6 – School Picture MAKE-UP Day
- Monday, November 11 – NO SCHOOL – Veteran’s Day Holiday
- Wednesday, November 27 – EARLY RELEASE – beginning of Thanksgiving Break
- Thursday, November 28 – NO SCHOOL - Thanksgiving Day AND First Day of Chanukah
- Friday, November 29 – NO SCHOOL – Thanksgiving Break

December

- Tuesday, December 10 – REMEMBER to VOTE! Note the G&P gym is a polling place.
- Monday Dec. 23, 2013 through Wednesday January 1, 2014 – NO SCHOOL – Winter Break
- Thursday, January 2 – Back to School after Winter Break

G&P Happenings

IMPORTANT REMINDER: School District Calendar Change!!!

Per vote of the Cambridge School Committee - all CPS schools will be CLOSED on Monday, October 14 and Tuesday, October 15th. School will return to session on Wednesday, October 16th. An updated school calendar is posted on the CPS website.

Grades 3, 4, 5 Back to School Night

Wednesday, October 9, 5:30 – 7:00 PM

Orientation for new families - 5:30 – 6:00 PM in the Cafeteria (overview of the school year, meet specialists, learn about Steering committee and other volunteer opportunities).

Grades 3 and 4

6:00-6:15 -- all 3rd and 4th grade community together in the library

6:15-7:00 -- in individual 3rd and 4th grade classrooms

Grade 5

6:00-6:45 -- in individual 5th grade classrooms

6:45-7:00 -- all 5th grade community together in the library

IF you find yourself without childcare for the evening: by advance reservation, there is childcare for students of kindergarten age or older. Please bring cash – we have a suggested donation of \$5 per child, or whatever feels right. Please use this link to reserve: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/PJFRGZT> or contact family liaison Judy Amendola at 617-349-6577 x115, jamendola@comcast.net by MIDNIGHT on Monday, October 7th.

First Parent Coffee on Early Literacy and Numeracy

Wednesday, October 9, 9:00 – 9:45 AM, G&P Library

Last year, we started a series of morning coffees, each with a particular theme or focus. For example, one meeting focused on understanding MCAS for parents whose children were taking MCAS for the first time. Another coffee looked at the new math curriculum as outlined in the Common Core State Standards.

We are kicking off our Parent Coffee Series this year by looking at ways to support young children, specifically our JK-K students, in reading and math at home. Florinda Freda, our Reading Interventionist, Kathy Greeley, the JK-5 Literacy Coach, and Claire Dahill, the JK-5 Math Coach will be leading the meeting. Unlike most of our coffees, this one will follow the JK-K Parent Breakfast on Wednesday, October 9 from 9:00-9:45. All parents are welcome though!

For more information contact Kathy Greeley at kgreeley@cpsd.us or Claire Dahill at cdahill@cpsd.us

First Arts Committee Meeting

Friday, October 18, 2:30 PM, G&P Conference Room. We will be planning arts events for the coming year. New members are welcome! For more information contact Deborah Sullivan at debsullivan@cpsd.us or 617-349-6577 Ext. 118

Join the Family Cultural Exchange Program (FCEP)!

We encourage you to take part in the Family Cultural Exchange Program (FCEP). FCEP pairs international families who have children in the Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) program with host families from the general education classrooms. Any family with a child at G&P for at least one year can participate.

The program has two components. First, we encourage you to contact your partner family. This can range from a simple phone call now and then to touch bases, to playdates, or more organized activities. We'd like you to engage at whatever level is comfortable for you.

G&P will also host FCEP events throughout the year. Scheduled events so far include:

- The first "monthly coffee". Bourbon Coffee at the Porter Square Exchange Building, Friday October 4th, 8:45AM. Group leaves from school lobby at 8:30AM.
- The "World Foods Potluck." G&P cafeteria, Wednesday, October 23rd, 6:00-7:30PM.

Although you can join at any time, we encourage you to fill out an enrollment form by October 11th so that the FCEP committee will have all forms when it meets to pair host and international families. All students should have received forms from their classroom teacher; they can also be picked up at the FCEP table in the lobby. Completed forms can be given to your classroom teacher, dropped off at the FCEP table, or emailed to Julie McKinney at jmckinney11@gmail.com. We will announce partners and make introductions at the "World Food Potluck" on October 23rd. You will also receive an email with your partners' contact information.

This is the third year for the program and we continue to grow in numbers! Please join us in building community, establishing friendships—and having a lot of fun!

Are you interested in creating a school event but aren't familiar with the logistics?

We've got a helpful Task Template! Please see Judy Amendola, Family Liaison or Liza Tague, RoomParent Coordinator. This template is a Microsoft Excel document that models a hypothetical event, shows you who you need to contact for permits, gives a sample timeline, and the like. Contact Judy at 617-349-6577 x115 or jamendola@cpsd.us and Liza Tague at oltague@gmail.com

Did you attend the grade JK, 1, 2 Classroom Back to School Night?

Donations for childcare and snacks did not cover the costs of the event so we are still accepting donations for the JK, 1, 2 Childcare and Snack Fund. If you came without cash, or just didn't realize there was a donation box, please consider making a donation now in any amount that feels right. (*The suggested donation amount was \$5 per child*). Donations can be left in the family liaison's mailbox in the main office or with the school secretary. Thank you!

About School Email Lists and Yahoo!Groups

The school has three email lists. Blackboard Connect, gp21 and VassalLane Middle School. If your child is enrolled, you provided your email at registration or on your emergency card, you are automatically on the Blackboard Connect list, which posts official school announcements. Sign up instructions for our parent-run interactive gp21 and VassalLane Yahoo! Groups list serves are on the school website <http://grahamandparks.cpsd.us>.

School and District Websites: <http://grahamandparks.cpsd.us> - Graham & Parks School website.
www.cpsd.us - District news, resources and information.

Linnaean Community School Halloween Party

Friday, October 25, 2:45 – 5:00 PM, G&P and next door at Harvard. Students are welcome to our annual Halloween Party sponsored by Harvard H.A.N.D. No admission. Ages 8+

5th Grade News

Nature's Classroom Information Night

Tuesday, October 1, 6:00 – 7:00 PM, Room 224

A representative from Nature's Classroom will present and overview and time will be provided for questions and answers about this year's overnight trip scheduled for October 29-November 1, 2013.

Grades 3, 4, 5 Back to School Night

Wednesday, October 9, 5:30 – 7:00 PM – see complete details in the G&P Happenings sections.

Museum of Science Field Trip

Tuesday, October 1, 8:45 AM – 2:15 PM, Museum of Science, Boston

The field trip will explore exhibits that tie in with the Grade 5 Science curriculum.

Overnight Field Trip to Nature's Classroom

Tuesday, October 29, 9:00 AM thru Friday, November 1, 2:30 PM, Ocean Park, Maine

Nature's Classroom is a residential environmental education program. It gives children the opportunity to experience nature outside of the walls of the classroom and develop a sense of community, confidence in themselves and an appreciation of others.

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_mcnерney@yahoo.com for more details on how you can participate.

- The next Friends meeting is Monday, October 7, 8:30-9:15 AM in the lobby. You do not have to attend meetings to be a member AND that Monday morning meeting time is not cast in concrete. Let us know what works for you!
- The Fall Rummage Sale is Saturday, October 19, in the G&P Cafeteria. As you do your fall cleaning, please keep us in mind. Gently used toys, games, books, sports equipment and household goods are welcome. All proceeds to support classroom projects and field trips. More information will follow on where and when to drop off. If you're interested in volunteering at this event, please contact Nancy Popper at nancy-popper@comcast.net

Many Thanks...

To the Supporters of the Weekend Backpack Program

Thank you to all who supported hungry children at G&P and throughout the district through the Weekend Backpack Program!

The program is aiming to serve hungry children at all the schools in addition to those at G&P. Thanks to all of you, the Whole Foods 5% day netted the program close to \$15K! And generous donations added almost another 4K to the start-up fund. The Cambridge Housing Authority will be adding a portion as well so the program hopes to meet their financial goals soon. Thank you everyone!

If you didn't get to the 5% day, and would like to make a donation, please contact alannamallon@gmail.com

To the Creators of the First Ever G&P Family Handbook

This year, thanks to G&P teachers Karen Engels and Anne Smith this summer, we have a G&P Family Handbook. It holds a wealth of information! Our thanks to the many Room Parents who reviewed, critiqued and offered improvements. Thank you to school secretary Cheryl DePasquale for the print production. Copies were distributed to families during the first week of school. If you need a copy, there are extras in the front lobby in the Lucite stands near the Big Blue Butterfly.

To Our Wonderful Welcoming Committee

Volunteers on the Welcoming Committee invited all our new incoming JK/K families to get together over the summer at several events and topped it all off with the *Popsicles in the Park* event for *all* new families just before school started. What a wonderful way to bring new families into the school community. Thank you all!

To 5th Grade Ice Cream Extravaganza Organizers and Donors

Our first-ever 5th-grade Ice-cream Extravaganza celebrating the moving up of our 5th grade cohort was a huge success this past spring. Many thanks to the parents who set up and ran the photo booth and karaoke machine. We are also very grateful for the generosity of Berryline, Lizzy's, Shaw's and Emack & Bolio for their donations of frozen yogurt, ice cream and toppings.

Please let these local companies know that we value their support of our school. Next time your family is up for ice-cream, consider dropping by one of our donors, and mention the event. Our generous merchants love to hear back from us as much as we love enjoying their delicious donations!

To Everyone at the Back To School Potluck!

In spite of the heat, we celebrated the best Back-to-School Potluck ever!

Thank you to everyone who brought such a dazzling and delicious array of foods to the Potluck. It couldn't have been more festive and fun. And special thanks to all the behind the scenes folks - the organizers, advertizers, set-up and clean-up crews.

Steering Committee News

Welcome to the SY 2013-2014 Steering Committee Representatives

The Steering Committee is the governing body of Graham and Parks and functions much like the Board of a corporate or non-profit organization. It is empowered to make decisions on policy issues that pertain or affect the school directly. The Steering Committee's goal is to promote the continuous development of G & P as a progressive, child-centered school, to ensure that all students excel academically and socially, and to provide both parents and staff a voice in the governance of the school.

This academic year's Steering Committee members are:

Parents

Lisa Laskin, 2 nd grade parent	617-576-2511	lisalaskin@gmail.com
Mary-Ann Matyas, parent co-chair, 3 rd & 5 th grade parent	617-945-5462	ma.matyas98@gmail.com
Deborah Morse, 1 st grade parent	617-945-5771	morsedj2002@yahoo.com
James Tague, 1 st & 3 rd grade parent	917-215-6917	jtague001@gmail.com
Sean Werley, JK & 2 nd grade parent	617-441-7901	sean_werley@yahoo.com

Staff

Claudie Jean-Baptiste, Kindergarten teacher Teacher Co-chair		cbaptiste@cpsd.us
Claire Dahill, Math Coach		cdahill@cpsd.us
Katie McCarthy, 5 th grade Sheltered English Immersion teacher		kmccarthy@cpsd.us
Anne Smith, 2 nd grade teacher		asmith@cpsd.us
Josh Wairi, 5 th grade teacher		jwairi@cpsd.us
Judy Amendola, G & P Family Liaison		jamendola@cpsd.us
Mary Ellen Breen, Community Member		mbreen@cambridgema.gov
Barry McNulty, Assistant Principal		bmcnulty@cpsd.us
Sarah Fiarman, Principal		sfiarman@cpsd.us

All G & P staff members can be reached via the main school number: 617-349-6577

The Steering Committee meets monthly, usually on the 2nd Thursday of the month, from 5:30 – 7:30 pm. All G & P families and community members are welcome and encouraged to attend!

If you are not able to arrange childcare, childcare can be made available at the school by advance reservations received by mid-night two days prior to the meeting. (Typically the Tuesday prior by mid-night for a Thursday meeting). Contact family liaison Judy at 617-349-6577 x115 or jamendola@comcast.net