



Graham Middle School

Handbook 2025-26

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Sebastian Benavidez, Principal

Student Name:_____

Mountain View Whisman District Vision

We inspire, prepare and empower every student

Mountain View Whisman District Mission

Every student, family, staff and community member is engaged and committed to learning in a collaborative, diverse and innovative partnership

Essential Elements

I Belong – Together We Can – Pursue Knowledge – Take Pride – Do No Harm

Graham's Mission Vision

All members of the Graham community will collaborate to develop an innovative and inclusive environment that produces resilient, creative and compassionate life-long learners who are ready to contribute thoughtfully to their community.

Graham's Collective Commitments

Student's learning and well being will drive our action

We will communicate and collaborate with the Graham community

We will consciously be inclusive and equitable

We will build culture of shared leadership

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Academic Standards and Policies

Grading

Graham Middle School uses a grading system based on the traditional five grade system. We use the following letter grades and their Grade Point Average (GPA) point values. In certain circumstances, a teacher can modify grades. The modified grade will be identified by a commend in the grade report.

A student's GPA is computed at the end of each trimester by adding up the GPA for each class, divided by 8 (the number of courses they are taking) to obtain their final GPA. Students and parents are provided with passwords to PowerSchool to check the grades online. We strongly suggest that both students and parents monitor grades on a regular basis

Letter Grade	Percentage Range	GPA Value
A	90% - 100%	4.0
B	80% - 89%	3.0
C	70% - 79%	2.0
D	60% - 69%	1.0
F	< 60%	0.0

Homework

The Governing Board recognizes the meaningful homework with timely feedback that contributes toward building student responsibility, self discipline and life-long learning habits, and the appropriate homework can affect a student's ability to meet state and district academic expectations.

Average Nightly Homework by Grade Level	
6th Grade	60 minutes
7th Grade	70 minutes
8th Grade	80 minutes

In addition to regular nightly homework, parents should expect regular reading assignments each week. Teachers should take into account the time needed for nightly reading when assigning homework. Courses such as band, choir, and honor classes may also require time beyond that indicated above.

Students who miss school work because of an excused absence shall be given the opportunity to complete all assignments and tests that can be reasonably provided. As determined by the teacher, the assignments and tests shall be reasonably equivalent to, but not necessarily identical to, the assignments and tests missed during the absence. Students shall receive full credit for work satisfactorily completed within a reasonable period of time. Parents should contact the Front Office and request homework materials to be picked up the following day after 3:00 pm.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as taking someone else's work and passing it off as your own. Examples of plagiarism are:

- Copying another student's homework or essay.
- Cheating during assessment

Consequences for plagiarism can be an F for the assignment, parental contact, and administrative referral.

To avoid plagiarism, you have two options:

- 1- Cite passages that are copied word for word.
- 2- Say things in your own words.

Progress Report

Trimester report cards are sent to parents through email. Parents may log into PowerSchool to view grades throughout the school year. It is recommended that parents of students who receive a C or below should encourage students to contact the appropriate teacher to find out what can be done to improve grades. Students and parents are encouraged to check PowerSchool on a weekly basis to check on their child's grades and missing assignments

Students Below 2.0

A minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 is necessary for participation in extracurricular activities such as after school sports, after school events, etc. Student GPAs will be checked before and during extracurricular activities. When a student falls below a 2.0 GPA, the administration will make every effort to conference with the student and family. These students may also be discussed during grade level meetings. During this time, a plan of action will be discussed and specific interventions will begin to help bring the student up academically. Eighth grade students must have a 2.0 cumulative GPA and a 2.0 GPA in Trimester 3 in order to participate in the promotion ceremonies.

Independent Study

Parents whose student will be absent for 3 or more days should contact the Front Office to discuss the possibility of an Independent Study Contract. **A request for an independent study must be signed by a parent at least one week prior to the absence**, except in the case of illness. An independent study contract is approved at the discretion of the school administration, up to a maximum of 14 days per year. A student must be in good academic standing to qualify. You may request an Independent Study contract for the following reasons:

- Illness or injury
- Educational alternative
- Personal necessity

School Policies

Attendance

Regular attendance at school is the first step toward academic success. Students are responsible for attending school regularly and on time. Parents are responsible for providing transportation for students to attend school regularly and on-time. Attendance is taken and reported within the first 15 minutes of each class period. Parents will be notified by phone and/or mail of attendance problems.

It is important that you call the absence line to report your child absent. Without a phone call or email, the absence will be considered unexcused after 48 hours.

To report absences, please call (650) 526-3570 ext. 2680 or email grahamattendance@mvwsd.org.

Excused Absences

A student's absence shall be excused for any of the following reasons:

- Personal Illness
- Quarantine under the direction of a county or city health officer
- Medical, dental, optometrical, or chiropractic appointment
- Attendance at funeral services for a member of the immediate family, which shall be limited to one if the service is conducted in California or three days if the service is conducted out of state

If a student's absence is not called in, please bring a note. **All notes must state the problem/reason for the absence, give the date(s) of absence, identify the student, and be signed by parent or guardian.**

Students must report to the Office upon returning to school, to obtain an admit slip.

Unexcused Absences

A student's absence shall be unexcused for any of the following reasons:

- Oversleeping
- Transportation problems
- Suspension from School
- Vacation
- Work at home
- Leaving school without permission
- Non-school social, profession or athletic activities

After 3 unexcused absences, a student is considered truant by law and next steps will be taken.

Tardiness

Being punctual is an important habit to develop. Students will be considered tardy if they are not in their teacher's designated area when the bell rings. Students arriving late must report to the Front Office to obtain an admit slip.

Discipline Policy

Dress Code

In cooperation with teachers, students, and parents/guardians, the principal or designee may establish school rules governing student dress and grooming which are consistent with law, Board policy, and administrative regulations. These school dress codes shall be regularly reviewed.

MVWSD's dress code values students and family choice in what a student wears to school. We prioritize comfort, individual expression, and respect for cultural and personal styles, while maintaining a safe and focused learning environment. We appreciate when parents and guardians support students in selecting attire that is appropriate for a school setting.

School-directed changes to a student's attire should be the least restrictive and disruptive to the student's school day. Administration and enforcement of the dress code shall be gender neutral and consistent.

Allowable Dress:

- Students must wear opaque clothing that covers private parts, including both a shirt with pants/shorts/skirt (or equivalent) and shoes.
- Clothing must be suitable for classroom activities including physical education, and safety requirements of science, culinary and engineering labs.
- Specialized programs or extracurricular activities may require specific attire, such as performing arts or athletics uniforms or safety gear.

Non-Allowable Dress:

- Clothing or accessories that depicts nudity or sexual acts.
- Clothing or accessories that promote hate, including symbols of hate, target groups based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious affiliation, or any other protected groups, are strictly prohibited.
- Clothing or accessories that depict violence or are meant to intimidate others.
- Clothing that depicts or advocates the use of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana or other controlled substances. Logos may or may not meet this criteria.

Read the full dress code policy here: <https://www.mvwsd.org/cms/One.aspx?portalId=418858&pageId=536100>

Substitute Teachers

Substitute teachers are guests at Graham and should be treated accordingly. They are to be treated with respect at all times. Substitutes teachers will enforce classroom and school rules and be expected to follow the Graham discipline policy

Transportation

Drivers should be careful and courteous when driving on school campus (i.e. front of school drop off, back of school drop off). It is very important that drivers respect the speed limits and pedestrian rights of way. It is also important for drivers to respect and follow instruction of personnel directing traffic in various locations on campus. When dropping off students, please pull all the way forward and do not leave your car unattended in front of school (please park in parking spots if leaving the car unattended).

Electronic Devices

Cell Phones & Smart Watches

At the discretion of the teachers, students may be allowed to appropriately use cell phones for academic purposes. Cell phones must be turned off during the school day. (From 8:25 am until dismissal) They may be used only before or after school, but not any other time during the day. If a staff member hears or sees a student using a phone during the day, the student will call home and the phone will be turned into the office. (The school will not be held responsible for the theft, damage or loss of any phone). Smart watches are to be used for telling time but should be on airplane mode.

If parents need to contact students during the school day, they can contact the office at (650) 526-3570.

Chromebooks

Chromebooks are used only for academic purposes at school and at home. Students are expected to bring their fully charged Chromebook each day to school. If a student's chromebook is damaged or not working, they are immediately required to turn it in to the office to get it repaired. Students are expected to protect these chromebooks by leaving them in their sleeves and in their backpack. Students should take care not to drop their backpacks, to avoid damaging the display screen.

Student Expectations

Student Responsibilities

Student responsibilities as follows:

- Arrive to class on time every day (8:25AM)
- Be prepared to learn, using appropriate materials
- Speak to everyone in a respectful manner
- Show respect and courtesy to everyone on campus
- Maintain and respect all necessary school supplies
- Listen and follow directions
- Keep hands, feet and other objects to yourself
- Throw away garbage in appropriate receptacles and keep campus clean
- Actively participate in class

- Use school equipment properly and safely
- Persistently pursue learning
- Complete classwork and homework assignments in a timely manner
- Follow all school rules
- Check grades on Powerschool weekly
- Stay on campus until the end of the school day

Parent Responsibilities

Parent responsibilities as follows:

- Get your child school on time
- Model respect
- Talk to your child about their school work
- Check grades on Powerschool weekly
- Discuss and model appropriate school behavior
- Expect your child to be successful
- Communicate with teachers
- Read school communications

PowerSchool

Use [PowerSchool](#) to access student grades and assignment information. Students should check PowerSchool at least 2-3 times per week to make sure they are aware of their progress and able to advocate for themselves, should any issue arrive.

Please make sure family contact information is up-to-date to make communication between school and home more seamless- Contact the Office to make any necessary changes.

[Parent tutorial for PowerSchool](#)

Student Materials & Belongings

Bicycles, Skateboards, Scooters

- The Bike Cage is open at the start and end of the school day. Students biking to school should plan accordingly so that they can secure their bike.
- Must use helmets when using bikes, skateboards, scooters, etc.
- Things with wheels are used to get to and from school and are not to be used on campus before, after or during school hours.

Backpacks

- Backpacks should follow dress code expectations.
- Students should review their schedule nightly so that they include only necessary materials in their

- backpack each day.
- Your backpack contains precious cargo, such as your school Chromebook- please be responsible when handling it.
- Students are responsible for their belongings and should keep their backpack with them throughout the school day to ensure their materials do not get misplaced.

Litter

It is the responsibility of **everyone** at school to keep the campus clean and free of trash. This campus is our home and it is your home away from home. It is the responsibility of all Graham Bears to keep our home clean. Please pick-up after yourself and place all trash in the garbage cans. **Food is not allowed on the track or turf.**

Delivered Items

If you are having something dropped off from home, please check in at the front office to see if it has arrived. Parents can drop off any forgotten items at the front office for students to pick up.

Birthday greetings, bouquets and balloons should NOT be brought to school as they cause a disruption in class and will not be delivered to the student. Restaurant food deliveries are also not permitted.

Activities and Enrichment Programs

Activity Rules

Students must honor the following rules when participating in school activities:

- Only Graham students may attend these events
- Students are expected to follow school rules, even after school hours
- Student must remain at the activity until the end
- Students with GPAs below 2.0 may not attend the activity
- Parents are required to pick their student up immediately after the event
- Students who are suspended may not attend activities
- Student must be present at school for at least half the day to attend any after school activity including participating in Graham sports

Afterschool Sports

Students are encouraged to participate in the different sports offered after school. Graham competes with other schools in the Valley Junior High Athletic League (Cupertino, Los Altos, Sunnyvale). Some of the sports offered are: Cross Country, Volleyball, Soccer, Basketball, Girl's Softball, Track and Field, and Wrestling. There are sports donations for each season played that helps cover the cost of buses, coaches and officials. To participate in after schools sports, students must maintain 2.0 or higher GPA during the sports season

Clubs

Every year, Graham has several groups that meet either before or after school, or during lunch. Some examples of the clubs that have existed are: AM GMS TV, Black Student Union, Latino Student Union, Queer Straight Alliance, Bridge Club, Dance Team, etc. Groups will be promoted through morning announcements, Bear Tracks and our website.

Homework Club/Assistance

- Students may be invited to join the Work Completion Club.
- For more information on the availability of homework clubs, please contact your Counselor.

School Services

Counseling

[Students may request counseling](#) or be referred by their parents, teachers, or an administrator. Counselors may meet with a student a single time without parental permission.

Library

The Graham Library is open before school, during break, lunch and after school. The Library offers students access to both fiction and nonfiction books to read for pleasure and to enhance their reading skills. The library is also available for quiet study and research. In addition, teachers periodically bring classes to the library to check out books and use it for class projects.

Lost and Found

The lost and found is located in front of the office. Lost items remaining unclaimed will be donated to a charitable organization.

Medication

Medication may only be distributed to students by the office staff. Student must have a [Medication Release Form](#) on file in the office

Health and Safety

Please refer to the district's [Virtual Wellness Center](#) for the latest information on physical and mental health.

Food Service

Students receive free brunch and lunch each school day. Students must present their ID card for the school to record an accurate tally of meals provided.

Restrooms

Students must sign out from their class when leaving for the restroom and must sign back in when returning to class. Students will be given a hall pass to go to the restroom. Students should use the school restroom for its intended purpose only. Students are responsible for keeping the restroom clean and free of graffiti. Restrooms are subject to supervision.

Visitors on Campus

Visits during school hours should be first arranged with the principal or designee. When the visit involves a conference with a teacher or principal, an appointment should be scheduled during non-instructional time.

Any person who is not a student or staff member shall register immediately upon entering any school building or grounds when school is in session. (Penal Code 627.2)

The principal or designee may design a visible means of identification for all individuals who are not students or staff members while on school premises.

No electronic listening or recording device may be used by any person in a classroom without the teacher's and principal's permission. (Education Code 51512)

We encourage all individuals to assist in maintaining a safe and secure school environment by behaving in an orderly manner while on school grounds and by utilizing the district's complaint processes if they have concerns with any district program or employee. In accordance with Penal Code 626.7, the principal or designees may request that any individual who is causing a disruption, including exhibiting volatile, hostile, aggressive, or offensive behavior, immediately leave the school grounds.