

STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK 2009-2010

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STUDENT INFORMATION

A. School Hours:

	<u>M, T, TH, F</u>	<u>Wednesdays</u>
Grades K - 5	9:05 - 3:35	9:15 – 3:35
First Bell	8:50	9:05
Tardy Bell	9:05	9:15
Bus Dismissal	3:35	3:35

All children not riding the school bus should arrive on school grounds after 8:50 a.m. Teacher supervision does not begin until that time. For purposes of intramurals, band, chorus, or orchestra, or with special faculty permission, students may enter the building early. Please note that siblings may not accompany students who are enrolled in intramural programs.

For safety reasons, parents should be aware that the playground is not supervised before 8:50 a.m. or after 3:35 p.m. on school days.

B. Professional Development Wednesdays

The students' school day will on Wednesdays will begin at 9:15 a.m., instead of 9:05 a.m. This delayed start of day allows for teachers to learn and plan together on Wednesday mornings for a longer period of time. Bus pick-up on Wednesday mornings will be ten minutes later than your child's regularly scheduled morning pick-up time. If your child does not ride a bus to school, and you are unable to make arrangements for your child to arrive at 9:05 a.m. on Wednesday mornings, your child will be able to arrive at school at the regular time, 8:50 a.m., and he/she will read quietly in the multipurpose room until arrival begins at 9:05 a.m. This silent reading time will be supervised by Graham staff members. On Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, school will begin at 9:05 a.m. Dismissal, all five days of the week will be at 3:35 p.m.

C. Art, Music and Physical Education

Students will receive instruction in these special areas as scheduled. Necessary supplies, materials, and gym shoes are required to participate.

Grades K - 5

Art	50 minutes one (1) time per week
PE	25 minutes three (3) times per week
Music	25 minutes two (2) times per week

D. P. E. Clothes

All students need a few basic supplies for P.E. All children must wear gym shoes (rubber-soled "tennis shoes") for P.E.. Additionally, girls should have shorts to wear when they are wearing a skirt or dress on gym days.

E. P. E. Participation

In the event your child is recovering from an illness, or you have concerns regarding P.E. participation, you may send a written request that your child not participate in P.E. for up to three (3) days. After the third day, a doctor's note is required for exclusion. A note to the P.E. teacher to monitor participation will keep the P.E. teacher informed.

F. Extra Curricular Activities

In the event that intramurals are offered this year, the activities may vary from sports to drama groups. Other activities may include band (5th grade only), orchestra (5th grade only), and chorus (4th and 5th grades only). Please watch for additional information about these activities.

GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Office Hours

The office is open each day from 7:45 a.m. until 4:15 p.m. If you have questions or concerns, please call 428-6900.

B. Visitors

All visitors (even parents) are required by Illinois State Law to report to the office upon entering the building.

1. Everyone must sign in/out and state the purpose of the visit.
2. Each visitor will be issued a visitor's tag to wear while in the building.
3. All school doors will be locked promptly at 9:05 a.m. (9:15 a.m. on Wednesdays), after students have entered the building. A buzzer system has been installed at the front door for visitors who wish to enter the building during school hours. If your child(ren) arrives at school after 9:05 a.m. (9:15 a.m. on Wednesdays), you must bring them in the front doors and sign them in at the office. Please note that this precaution will help to insure the safety of our students.
4. All visitors are required to make proper arrangements before visiting a teacher and/or classroom. It is important that classroom instruction not be interrupted for individual concerns.

C. Visitation/Conferences

Communication with your child's teacher is vital to your child's success in school. Parent-Teacher conference times are scheduled in November and February. If at any other time you feel the need for a conference, please contact the teacher.

School visitations by parents and other non-school personnel are encouraged under the guidelines of board policy #5380. These guidelines include:

1. *Visitors shall pre-arrange visits to the school with the Building Principal at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the visit.*
2. *Absent unusual circumstances previously discussed with the Building Principal, school visits shall be limited to one (1) hour per day.*
3. *School visits shall generally be limited to adults. Parents should avoid visiting the school accompanied by siblings or other children.*
4. *School visits to individual classrooms should generally be made only when the regularly assigned teacher is present.*
5. *School and classroom visits shall not be disruptive or in any way interfere with the instructional program. All visits and visitors shall be subject to the authority of the Building Principal who may restrict or limit visitors, as she considers necessary.*
6. *Visits to school by a student's friends and associates are not permitted except by special permission or for special events.*

Classroom visitations are discouraged during the first/last three weeks of the school year and will not be permitted during testing sessions.

D. Lost and Found

We regret that each year our lost and found bins have many valuable items that are never retrieved by the proper owner. Help us avoid this problem by clearly labeling your child's clothing and other articles with your child's full name. Remind your child to check the lost and found bins located in the lunchroom, and also with the office, for lost items. Feel free to come in to look for the lost items at any time during the year. Though staff members are happy to assist students in finding lost items whenever possible, maintaining personal items is the primary responsibility of students and parents.

COMMUNICATIONS

A. Home/School Communications

Please check your child's book bag on a daily basis. Encourage your child to take responsibility for giving you informational items, community announcements, school schedules, and newsletters that your child may carry home in the book bag. Parent/child communications will be improved through jointly exploring school work and school communications each day.

B. Connect-Ed

Our district has an automated phone system that will be used to share both district and school information. It will also be used to communicate school closings, emergency announcements, and other pertinent information. Be sure to keep your current phone number(s) on file with the office at all times.

C. Indian Prairie District 204 Handbook

Indian Prairie School District #204 provides a parent/student handbook that contains information pertinent to the entire school district organization. This handbook is available on the district website: www.ipSD.org You may also pick up a paper copy in the school office if you choose to do so.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

A. Philosophy

The Graham educational program is built on the premise that regular attendance and punctuality is vital to a student's success in school. Seeing that a student maintains regular attendance requires a cooperative effort by the student, parent(s) or guardian(s), and school personnel. The student who is frequently absent misses social interaction, as well as valuable class instruction and discussion, even though written work is made up.

B. Exceptions

Graham expects parents or guardians to make reasonable efforts to ensure the regular attendance of their child(ren), consistent with Section 26-1 of the Illinois School Code, and to inform the school of any absences and their causes. Graham will monitor each student's attendance and punctuality and inform parents or guardians of any attendance problems or chronic tardiness.

PARENTS MUST REPORT ABSENCES TO THE OFFICE AT 428-6902 BY 9:20 A.M.

A parent needs to call the school each day their child will be absent at 428-6902 between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 9:20 a.m. In the case of a known extended

absence of one week or more, only one call to the office is necessary. If we are not contacted by 9:30 a.m., a parent will be called to verify the absence. If any sickness is interpreted to be a contagious disease, readmission to school should be by a back-to-school permit signed by a physician.

C. Excessive Absenteeism

Graham considers absenteeism excessive when it significantly interferes with a student's learning, as reflected in academic performance or social development and/or is more than 10% of the days school has been in session. Excessive absenteeism includes excessive tardiness of 10% or more of the days school has been in session.

D. Tardiness

If students arrive at school after 9:05 a.m. (9:15 a.m. on Wednesdays), they should report to the main office for a pass. Please note that students enter the building at 8:50 a.m. and are in the classroom by 9:05 a.m. to begin the activities of the day (9:15 a.m. on Wednesdays). Please remember that your child is beginning to form life-long habits and we encourage students to be on time every day. Please help instill good habits in your child by insisting that your child arrives promptly at school each day.

E. Homework Policy

The following information supports District 204's Homework Policy 725.03, current research, and the philosophy and practices of elementary school educators.

Please keep in mind as homework is assigned and completed that homework benefits student learning when it connects to, not replaces, direct instruction. It should be used for remediation, meaningful practice, and to expand concepts taught in the classroom.

The following specifics support positive, productive homework as a tool for learning:

- The "Ten Minute Rule" should be applied as a general rule for homework assignment; ten minutes multiplied by the grade level per night (up to 10X1 for kindergarten, 10X1 for first grade, 10X5 for fifth grade, etc.). These minutes represent a total expectation from all teachers with which a child works but do not include independent reading. The time requirements and the frequency of the homework will vary according to each student's abilities, grade level, and the subject matter; however, if a child is consistently devoting time beyond the "Ten Minute Rule", parents should contact the classroom teacher. Workload adjustments, time management improvements, and/or motivation strategies are examples of ways to address such issues.
- Projects assigned as homework should be included in the "Ten Minute Rule."
- Nightly study to include homework assignments should occur on weeknights only. Weekends and vacation periods will be avoided for specific assignments unless students are making up work previously assigned. Independent reading is

encouraged on a routine basis, including over the weekend and during vacation periods.

- Once homework is assigned, the teacher is responsible for appropriate follow through until the assignment is completed with feedback offered in a timely fashion.
- It is appropriate for parents to answer occasional questions or provide guidance regarding an assignment. It is not appropriate for parents to do most of the assignment for their child. It is not appropriate for an assignment to require a parent to be the primary instructor. If parents feel that their child is particularly struggling with an assignment or is confused, parents should contact the classroom teacher.

Make-Up Work:

- Make-up work is determined by the teacher involved. Considerations include length of absence and nature of absence.
- When a student has been absent for three or more days, teachers will provide homework as appropriate given adequate time to prepare. A teacher might advise alternative assignments such as keeping a journal and assigning some reading when appropriate. Parents are asked to keep in mind that much of what happens in class (direct instruction, discussions, activities, informal assessing, group work, etc.) cannot be made up by sending paper/pencil work home.
- Upon return from an absence, students will submit make-up work in a timely fashion, generally within one or two days for every day absent.

Grading:

Assessment of student learning should occur in conjunction with instruction. Grades for that student learning should be based solely on academic achievement that takes place during instructional time. Therefore, although it is appropriate to provide feedback to students on their quality and completion of homework, their effort, behavior, and attendance, this feedback should be kept separate from that provided on academic achievement.

F. Make-Up Work

If a student is unable to attend school for three or less days, your child will receive make-up work upon returning to school and be given an appropriate due date. For extended emergencies/illness, a parent may call the office on the morning of the third day of absence to request make-up work. A parent may then come to the office the following morning to pick up homework. If the extended illness results in an absence of more than two (2) weeks, a homebound tutor will be available.

G. Homework Tips for Parents

Facilitating the learning of your child is the primary factor of the District #204 elementary staff. As a result, we understand the importance of an ongoing partnership

with our parents and students as they attempt schoolwork at home. The following guidelines and tips are offered to assist you and your child to be successful (Vatterot, 2009) (Pandu, 2005):

Parents are encouraged to:

- Ask your children what they are studying in school.
- Ask your child to show you homework assignments.
- Assist your child in organizing homework materials.
- Help your child formulate a plan for completing homework.
- Provide an appropriate space for your child to do homework.

Parents may if they wish.....

- Help your child interpret assignment directions.
- Proofread your child's work, pointing out errors.
- Read aloud required reading to your child.
- Give practice quizzes to your child to help prepare for tests.
- Help your child brainstorm ideas for papers or projects.
- Praise your child for completing homework.

Parents should not....

- Attempt to teach your child concepts or skills the child is unfamiliar with.
- Complete assignments for your child.
- Allow your child to sacrifice sleep to complete homework.

Contact the teacher if....

- Your child refuses to do the assignment.
- Instructions for the assignment are unclear.
- Your child can't get organized to finish the assignment.
- You can't provide the materials or supplies necessary to complete the assignment.
- Neither you nor your child, understand the purpose of the assignment.

H. Medical Documentation

Under certain circumstances, parents or guardians may be required to present medical documentation of physical or emotional conditions causing a student's absence.

I. Early Dismissal

Parents are asked to make every effort to schedule appointments for children during non-school times. Early dismissal requests for emergency situations and medical appointments should be sent to the classroom teacher prior to the dismissal. Board of

Education policy #5060 states that students will not be released from school on a regular basis.

A request to have a child dismissed early should be sent in writing with the child on the morning of the dismissal. Parents must come to the school office. We will send for the child as you sign them out for dismissal. A child will only be released to their parents/guardians unless other arrangements have been made.

J. Vacations

Every effort should be made to have students in school when it is in session. When absence must occur due to a vacation, students will not receive homework in advance. Upon returning to school, students will receive make-up work and an appropriate due date.

TRANSPORTATION

During arrival and dismissal, doors 1, 8, 10 and 11 are available for use.

A. Private Vehicle Transportation

Please avoid calling the school after 2:00 p.m. to change transportation arrangements previously arranged with your child(ren). Last minute transportation changes can lead to confusion and are a serious safety concern.

Students are able to be dropped off and picked up by a car in the circle drive beginning the first day of school. Student safety is our primary concern. Please observe the following rules when picking up or dropping off students.

Students who arrive or leave by private vehicle should be dropped off and picked up in the circle drive at the west end of the school. During drop-off, students may exit on any portion of the circle drive that is connected to the sidewalk. Please pull as far forward as the car line permits. At the conclusion of the school day, students will be released from exits in back of the school building, and they will walk to the sidewalk portion of the circle drive.

Students may exit or enter your vehicle from the curbside only after you have pulled over to the right side of the drive. Do not stop on the left side of the drive to pick up students since it is a drive-through lane. Traffic flow is enhanced when all vehicles pull up as far as possible in the circle drive. Please do not leave your vehicle to meet your child. Graham staff members will supervise your child meeting you as you pull forward in the car line.

Please note, that regardless of the weather, the parking lot in front of the building is reserved for buses both before and after school (8:30 - 9:20 a.m.; 3:15 - 3:45 p.m.).

Bus transportation, for students who will regularly ride the bus, will be available beginning the first day of school.

B. Bicycles

Students have the opportunity to ride bicycles to school. Bikes are to be walked on school property and locked in the bike racks during the school day. Children should obey all traffic rules when traveling to and from school. Safety helmets are strongly suggested. The riding of bikes to school is reserved only for students that follow the above stated rules.

C. SKATEBOARDS - WALKMAN RADIOS/CD PLAYERS

Skateboards and Walkman radios/cd players are not allowed at school.

D. Bus Transportation

Your child's bus stop and time may be found under the transportation link on the district website. If you do not have access to a computer or have difficulty, please contact the school office for assistance.

Reminder: Bus routes will run 10 minutes later on Wednesday mornings due to Professional Development Wednesdays.

In order to provide the safest and most efficient transportation, the district has developed certain rules and expectations that will be enforced. We ask that students and parents familiarize themselves with the following information and encourage observance of these guidelines and regulations.

1. Remain in your seat. (K-5 students will be assigned a seat within the first weeks of school. Changes will be allowed for second semester.)
2. Do not throw objects on or from the bus.
3. Keep head and hands inside the bus.
4. Do not eat or drink on the bus.
5. Obey the driver.
6. Be at your bus stop five (5) minutes before the scheduled time.
7. Be courteous to classmates and neighbors at bus stops and while traveling on the bus.

If a student violates a safety regulation, the following disciplinary action may be taken:

1. Disciplinary referral filed and parent notified.
2. Disciplinary action recommended:
 - 1st offense - warning form which parent signs and returns to school.
 - 2nd offense - warning form which parent signs and returns to school and bus privileges may be suspended for up to five (5) days.

- 3rd offense - bus privileges may be suspended for up to ten (10) days.
3. If it is deemed in the interest of the school and the safety of the students riding the bus, an immediate bus suspension may be imposed without the 1st offense warning.

If your child will not be riding the bus on any particular day, please send a note stating that your child will not be riding the bus and who will be responsible for picking him/her up from school. Students who do not have a note will be asked to ride the bus home. If your child is eligible for bus service, but you will be driving him/her to school every day, please write a note that states that you will be providing transportation every day. You will then not need to write a note each day. It is district procedure that students may ride only their assigned bus. For bus transportation procedures to and from permanent, in-home day care providers, please call the school or refer to the district handbook.

DISCIPLINE/SCHOOL RULES

We believe and expect that all students can behave appropriately at school. We continually promote positive approaches by recognizing the students who behave appropriately. Our goal is to provide an organized and positive learning climate for all students and staff.

The teacher establishes classroom expectations, with rules and consequences. Please watch for this plan and review it with your child. Parental support is an important component of the success of these established expectations. As a guideline, parents will be called as an intervention for support and cooperation prior to scheduling a detention before or after school.

Severe disruptions or infractions will be referred to the school principal. Any activity which jeopardizes the safety of any student will be handled as a serious offense and may result in an out of school suspension. (i.e. Having, displaying, or transmitting any type of weapon or other dangerous instrument or object.)

A. General School Rules

1. Students should walk on the right side of the hallway, no running is permitted in our hallways.
2. Normal voices and tones should be used at all times.
3. Students should not be disruptive in the halls, stairs, or washrooms.
4. Hats/caps are to be removed when entering the building.
5. Dress and appearance should be tasteful and not be a health or safety concern or disruptive to the classroom. (See Board of Education Policy #5402 for minimum standards.)
6. Students will treat each other and staff members with respect.
7. Students may only bring personal items to school (i.e. radios and balls) when it has been authorized by a staff member.

B. Lunch and Lunchroom Rules

We will have a forty (40) minute lunch/recess period for grades K-5. Hot lunch will be offered on a daily basis, and information on this program will be provided. Milk is also available on a daily basis, and may be paid for by the year. Of course, students may bring a sack lunch if so desired.

We expect students in the lunchroom to respect the rights and property of others. Good manners are essential. Please review the following lunch and playground rules with your child:

1. Use proper table manners.
2. Walk in the lunchroom.
3. Maintain quiet voices.
4. Raise your hand and wait for help.
5. Never throw food.
6. Properly discard your food and waste, clearing the tables and floor in your area.
7. Recycle or reuse lunch containers and any other recyclable materials.

C. Recess/Playground Rules

1. Play in designated areas only.
2. Follow directions of supervisors.
3. Fighting, tackling, or rough play will not be allowed.
4. Throw nothing on the playground except authorized equipment.
5. Play games that are not dangerous or that do not cause a safety issue.
6. Respect the rights and property of others.

During lunch recess students will be able to enjoy the playground, except for days of extreme weather. Our goal is to provide our students with a daily opportunity for exercise, socialization, and fresh air with their peers. Please make sure your child is always dressed appropriately for outdoor activity. Students will be going outside daily unless there is precipitation or the temperature/ wind chill is extremely low.

STUDENT BIRTHDAYS AND PARTIES

Special celebrations are sponsored by the Graham PTA. (Food must be store bought.) Other treats, birthday parties, and favors are not part of our school program. No birthday treats or gifts for students are permitted in grades K-5.

Invitations to birthday parties are to be handled by parents. Invitations will not be handed out at school. This is to avoid hurt feelings which can result for those children who do not receive an invitation. It also helps teachers to meet our board goals of maximizing instructional time. The PTA directory is an excellent tool to use for addressing such invitations. If you need a PTA directory, please contact the Graham Office. PTA directories are free when you sign up for PTA membership.

Parents will receive communication regarding any food that will be served in classrooms. This is done in an effort to ensure health safety, promote nutrition, and be respectful of religious and cultural customs. Please do not send or bring in any food items to be distributed to students without first checking with the classroom teacher or school principal.

MESSAGES, TELEPHONE USE, AND CELL PHONES

Our primary goal is to educate students. To help accomplish this goal, it is important to avoid classroom disruptions. It is for this reason that parent cooperation is requested in helping students be aware of dismissal procedures, after school events, and other special arrangements before coming to school in the morning. Please note the following:

1. Students should not expect to use the telephone.
2. Students will not be called from class to answer the telephone.
3. Messages will not be delivered unless it is an emergency situation.
4. Plans for after school should be made before school.
5. Teachers will not be called from class.
6. Cell phones may be brought to school for emergency use only. Cell phones must be turned off and not interfere with classroom instruction or school routines.

SAFETY AND HEALTH

A. Emergency Information

It is of the utmost importance that your emergency telephone numbers listed on the registration and health forms be current. As changes occur during the year, please contact the office to revise information.

B. Emergency School Closings

In cases of bad weather or dangerous road conditions, school closings or early dismissals may be announced over local radio stations. Do not call the school office. Parents will be notified by the district automated Connect-Ed phone system. In addition, parents may tune into one of the following radio stations:

WKKD 96 FM
WGN 720 AM
WMAQ 670 AM
WYSY 1280 AM

C. Emergency Delayed Dismissal

If severe weather conditions (tornado warning, high winds, severe thunderstorm and lightning) exist during the dismissal times (3:20 - 3:35 p.m.) consideration is given to announcing an **Emergency Delayed Dismissal**. If this occurs, students will remain in school until the dangerous weather conditions subside and parents will be contacted by the district Connect-Ed automated phone system. Do not call the school office. The decision will be based upon weather conditions, warning systems, First Student Transportation, and District 204 communication.

D. Procedure:

1. Announce to students and staff that there will be a delayed dismissal.
2. Students and staff are instructed to remain in classrooms or designated safety areas until the all clear signal is given.
3. Parents who wish to pick up students during this time are required to sign them out prior to their release. Parents should enter and assemble in the office hall for instructions. Please sign students out in the office and we will call the students from their classrooms or emergency positions.
4. Parents may only sign out their own child unless they have written permission from another parent.
5. No buses or vans will be released until the all clear is given.
6. An all clear announcement will be given to signal release time.
7. Directions given over the PA system will provide a smooth flow for release.
8. Graham staff will monitor and assist parents and students during this emergency delayed dismissal.

E. Fire and Disaster Drills

Fire drills and severe weather drills are practiced routinely throughout the school year to familiarize the students with the alarm sound and procedures. Fire and tornado exit guidelines are posted in all school areas.

F. Student Insurance

Student insurance is available for purchase during the time of registration. Follow the instructions provided on the insurance envelope.

G. Medication Policy

Administering medication to a child is the responsibility of the parent/guardian. If it becomes necessary for medication to be given at school, only medications prescribed by a physician and under outlined procedures, will be administered. Please contact the school health office for procedures and details.

H. School Nurse Suggestions

The following are some health policies practiced at Graham Elementary School to maintain a healthy and safe school environment:

- If your child is running a fever, the health department recommends the child's temperature be normal (98.6) for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Do not send your child with a consistent cough or running nose, as this infects other children.
- Keep children home for 24 hours after vomiting and flu symptoms subside. This helps to ensure a healthy reentry into the classroom.
- Please report all cases of strep throat and strep related infections to the school nurse or health aide.
- All communicable diseases (chicken pox, head lice, impetigo, mumps, measles, etc.) are required to be reported to the school nurse. There are specific requirements and regulations for readmission to school after communicable diseases.
- Please do not send children to school with diarrhea or vomiting.
- A student who has been absent from school for more than five (5) school days or who has a communicable disease must present a physician's release for readmission to school.
- If a rash is present, it needs to be evaluated by a physician. A diagnosis of the underlying cause (doctor's note) must be elicited before re-admittance to school.
- If there are signs of conjunctivitis ("pink eye") with matter/drainage in one or both eyes, itching, redness, or crust on the eyelid, the child needs to be evaluated by a physician. Antibiotic therapy needs to be maintained for at least 24 hours before re-admittance to school.

If you have any questions regarding your child's health or when to and when not to send him/her to school, please feel free to call the School Nurse. Your help and cooperation in maintaining a healthy school environment is most appreciated.

I. Money

Any money sent to school for lunch, milk, field trips, book orders, or other appropriate reasons must be put in a sealed envelope marked with the child's name, teacher's name, purpose of the money, and the amount enclosed. Cash is highly discouraged.

LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER (LMC)

Our LMC is integrated into the curriculum and is central to the learning process. The LMC is a service center for all students and includes a computer lab which is used by all students at

various times of the week. Students will have the opportunity to learn about and effectively use the resources available in the LMC, as well as choose personal reading books.

Book Fines

Students who lose or misuse textbooks or library books will be charged an additional fee based on the decreased life of the book. Reasonable wear is accepted, but fines will be imposed for excessive wear, damage, or if lost.

VIOLENT THREATS AND/OR POSSESSION OF "WEAPONS"

IMPORTANT!

Please share with your children that, due to the current climate in which we live, Graham School will not tolerate violent threats or the bringing of “weapons” to school. The District #204 Policy Guide and Parent-Student Handbook covers this in much greater detail. However, Graham School will take seriously any matters involving threats of violence or the bringing of a “weapon” on Graham School property. Thank you for your support in this matter.