

ALEXANDER GRAHAM SCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK

John C. Nichols, Principal

Victor P. Moore, AP

(773) 535-1308
4436 So. Union Avenue
Chicago, IL 60609

WELCOME

Welcome to Alexander Graham School. At Alexander Graham School, our mission is to provide a challenging curriculum that supports students' literacy, math and science instruction through research-based curricula. We are committed to recognizing and encouraging parental participation and support as key elements in promoting social, emotional and academic growth of students. In order to have a successful year, we need your help and ask that you participate as much as possible. This handbook contains information about our program. Additional information will be sent home with your child during the first few days of school and discussed at the Open House. **School begins on August 30, 2021. Please read all of the information carefully, and save this handbook so that you can refer back to it during the school year.** We look forward to working together to make this an exciting and productive year for our students.

ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCES

The responsibility for daily attendance and prompt arrival to school belongs to the parent. Absences and late arrivals will be recorded by the teacher and will appear on the student's report card and student record. Students must be in school regularly to learn. There are only four acceptable causes of absence. They are:

- illness
- death in the immediate family
- family emergency
- observance of a religious holiday

If your child must be absent, please call the school at (773) 535-1308 (before 8:00 a.m.) to notify us. Whenever a student is absent or arrives after attendance is taken, the family must provide a written note to the teacher explaining the reason for late arrival, $\frac{1}{2}$ day absent or full day absent. **A NOTE MUST BE SENT TO SCHOOL WHEN YOUR CHILD RETURNS OR HE/SHE WILL BE RECORDED AS TRUANT. THE NOTE MUST INCLUDE THE DATE(S), CAUSE OF ABSENCE OR REASON FOR LATE ARRIVAL, A SIGNATURE AND A PHONE NUMBER WHERE THE PARENT OR GUARDIAN CAN BE REACHED IF MORE INFORMATION IS NEEDED BY SCHOOL PERSONNEL.**

STUDENTS WHO ARRIVE AFTER 11:15 OR WHO ARE PICKED-UP BEFORE 11:15 A.M. WILL BE MARKED $\frac{1}{2}$ DAY ABSENT AND MUST ALSO PROVIDE A WRITTEN NOTE. PLEASE MAKE APPOINTMENTS AFTER SCHOOL HOURS.

BELL SCHEDULE & SCHOOL HOURS

School begins on August 30, 2021 School hours are 7:45 a.m.- 2:45 p.m. daily.

When the bell rings, all students will have the option to receive Universal Breakfast. Students will grab and go from the cafeteria with a hot or cold breakfast selection and head to their classrooms. The main building doors will be opened for

students at 7:45 a.m. Grades 2-8 will enter from the TURF DOOR and grab their breakfast bag and go directly to their homeroom.

Grades Pre-K -1 will line up outside the Annex Building in the designated area outside the entrance. At 7:45am students will enter both buildings. All doors will be locked at 8:00 a.m. and students will only be able to enter the building from the main entrance. Any student arriving after 8:00 am will receive an official tardy and must sign the tardy sheet.

Students who are tardy will not be eligible for Perfect Attendance awards. **A NOTE MUST BE SENT IF YOUR CHILD IS TARDY.** Children may not leave the school grounds to go to stores, restaurants, or fast food services.

THERE IS NO SUPERVISION OUTSIDE BEFORE 7:30 a.m. PLEASE HAVE STUDENTS ARRIVE NO EARLIER THAT 5 OR 10 MINUTES PRIOR TO THE 7:45 a.m. ENTRANCE BELL. STUDENTS WILL NOT BE PERMITTED IN THE BUILDING UNLESS THEY ARE PARTICIPATING IN A SPECIFIC ACTIVITY.

PARENTS ARE EXPECTED TO PICK-UP CHILDREN PROMPTLY AT 2:45 p.m. unless they are participating in an authorized activity. **THERE IS NO SUPERVISION AFTER SCHOOL.**

BOOKS

Students will be issued textbooks to use during the school year. Students are responsible for maintaining the books in the condition they received them. Textbooks are very expensive and we ask your support in helping your child develop a respect for books. Students will be required to pay for lost or damaged books.

BUSING

We have been told that parents whose children receive transportation will be notified of the arrangements by mail. The telephone number for the CPS Department of Transportation is (773) 553-2860. All children who ride the bus in the morning **MUST** return home on the bus in the afternoon unless the office has been notified IN ADVANCE, IN WRITING - NOT BY TELEPHONE of the change of plans. If you have indicated that you will pick the student up after school, you must be here at dismissal time (**2:45 p.m.**) **or the student will be put on the bus.** Anytime the child does not ride the bus for two consecutive days, service is terminated until you phone the bus company to reinstate the service. If there are any problems, please notify Mrs. Sheehan in the main office. Students are expected to follow the driver's instructions. Students who cause problems on the bus will be taken off the bus permanently.

Cell Phones

1. THE USE OF CELL PHONES (OUT-GOING OR IN-COMING CALLS AND MESSAGES) AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES IN THE SCHOOL BUILDING IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED. SUCH USE WILL RESULT IN CONFISCATION OF THE PHONE OR ELECTRONIC DEVICE. PHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES CONFISCATED BY SCHOOL PERSONNEL WILL BE RETURNED ONLY TO THE PARENT OR GUARDIAN.
2. Parents should call the school for any emergency situation. **We** will contact your son/daughter. DO NOT TRY TO CONTACT THEM BY CELL PHONE.
3. Cell phones and other electronic devices are to be **turned off** and kept in the student's backpack or locker. At no time is it to be exposed on clothing or on the book bag.
4. **The school will not be responsible for any lost, misplaced, or stolen cell phones or other electronic devices.**

CODE of CONDUCT

Students will receive a copy of the Student Code of Conduct on the first day of school. Please review it carefully with your child. Inappropriate behavior may result in parent contact/conference, detention, in-school suspension, or out of school suspension. Alexander Graham is committed to providing the highest level of academic achievement.

Student expectations are:

1. Attend school and each class every day.
2. Arrive on time every day with all required materials.
3. Follow the student dress code every day.
4. Not to use ipods, cell phones, or other electronic devices at school.
5. Not mark up or dirty any wall, desk, or other part of the school building.
6. Not chew gum anywhere.
7. Not eat anywhere outside the lunchroom.
8. Follow classroom rules.
9. Do homework nightly.
10. Do your own work on tests, quizzes, and homework.
11. Speak softly in the hallways and classrooms.
12. Do not use foul language at any time.
13. Do not fight or engage in any unwanted physical contact and negative verbal harassment.
14. Show respect to adults who work at the school and all visitors.
15. Accept responsibility for their positive or negative behavior.

DRESS CODE

Alexander Graham School **recommends** uniforms. Students are expected to wear black or navy blue bottoms and maroon or gray polo shirts. Parents have the option of ordering polo shirts with the Alexander Graham School logo the first two weeks of school.. Each shirt will have "Graham Elementary School", and the Graham Lion mascot screened over the left breast side of the shirt. We ask that students dress appropriately for school. Students may not wear jeans, flip-flops or hooded sweatshirts. Due to heat concerns black or navy blue knee length shorts are optional from the first day of school until September 30th and then from May 1st until the last day of the school year.

We encourage our parents to purchase the shirts. The cost of the shirts will be posted on the order form. In addition, Gym t-shirts are required and should be worn on gym days only with black jogging pants. Gym shirts are also available for order in the main office.

EARLY DISMISSAL

Students will only receive early dismissals if they are ill. Students will be released only to the parent, guardian or designated adult. PLEASE BE AWARE that students leaving before 11:30 will be marked absent for the full day; students leaving after 11:30 will be marked $\frac{1}{2}$ day absent. Please schedule appointments after school hours. Students with early dismissals are **not** eligible for Perfect Attendance.

FEES

Students in grades 6-8 who are assigned a locker must purchase a school-issued lock. The fee is a one-time charge of \$10.00. All fees should be paid to the homeroom teacher. NO STUDENT WILL BE EXCLUDED DUE TO INABILITY TO PAY. Waiver forms are available in the office and must be completed at the start of the school year. Waivers do not cover the cost of lost or damaged books.

FOOD SERVICE

Breakfast and lunch are served daily. All students will receive breakfast and lunch free of charge. Students in Kindergarten 1st, & 2nd grades will have lunch/recess from 10:35 a.m. - 11:20 a.m. Students in 3rd, 4th, & 5th grades will have lunch/recess from 1:05 p.m. - 1:50 p.m. Students in 6th, 7th, & 8th grades will have lunch/recess from 11:30 p.m.- 12:15 p.m.or 12:15 p.m. -1:00 p.m. Breakfast will be served beginning at 7:45 a.m.

HOLIDAYS, INSERVICE DAYS, AND OTHER NON-ATTENDANCE DAYS FOR STUDENTS

STUDENTS DO NOT ATTEND SCHOOL ON THE FOLLOWING DAYS:

9/6/21 (Labor Day)
10/11/21 (Columbus Day)
11/5/21(Staff Development)
11/11/21 (Veteran's Day)
11/17/21 (Report Card Pick-up Day)
11/24/21, 11/25/21 & 11/26/21 (Thanksgiving Days)
12/20/21 - 12/31/21 (Winter Break)
1/17/22 (Dr. M.L King's Birthday)
1/28/22 (Professional Development Day)
2/21/22 (President's Birthday)
4/8/22 (Professional Development)
4/20/22 (Report Card Pick-up Day)
4/11/22 - 4/15/22 (Spring Break)
5/30/22 (Memorial Day)

HONOR ROLL AND OTHER AWARDS

Students are eligible for the academic honor roll if they receive grades of A's and/or B's in all subjects. Students who earn straight A's will receive special recognition as a Principal Scholar. Students will be recognized for their positive Citizenship. Students who are never absent or tardy will be recognized for Perfect Attendance. Students who improve in at least one subject without going down in any other subject will be recognized for Academic Improvement. Certificates and/or trophies (pending funding) are awarded at the end of each school year to acknowledge those students with success.

IMMUNIZATIONS, PHYSICAL and DENTAL EXAMINATIONS

Those students whose immunizations and physical examinations are not up to date will not be allowed to begin school. Please cooperate with the school nurse if you are contacted. ALL CHILDREN IN KINDERGARTEN AND 6TH GRADE NEED NEW PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS. The law now requires all students in grades kindergarten, second and sixth to have proof of a dental exam. All new students entering CPS will need physical and dental exams.

LOCAL SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETINGS

Click the [LSC](#) link on the Graham School website for meeting dates and times.

LOCAL SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETINGS will be held on the 2nd Thursday of the Month at 3:00 p.m. in the virtually or in Main Building.

Our first meeting is on Thursday, September 9, 2021 at 3:15 p.m.

LOCKERS

Students with a first floor Homeroom in grades 6-8 will be assigned a locker. All current 7th and 8th graders who attended Alexander Graham last year will receive their same lock without charge. The lock will be the same but the locker assignment will be different. New students to Alexander Graham and 6th graders are required to

purchase a lock from the school at a cost of \$10.00. Students may not use any other lock purchased outside of school. Unauthorized locks will be cut and removed from the lockers. Students must maintain a clean locker free from food, markings, or damage. Students may not glue staple or tape pictures inside of their locker. Only magnetic attachments are allowed. Board policy states that lockers can be searched at any time.

OPEN HOUSE

Our Open House/Back to School night is Wednesday, September 15th. Notices will be distributed please plan to attend. This is an important event. You will meet your child's teacher and learn about curriculum, grade level expectations and general information about Graham School.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parents are always welcome at our school. Parents, as well as all visitors, are required to sign in and receive a Visitor's Pass. Please do not proceed directly to the room; come to the office first. If you would like to talk to your child's teacher, we ask that you schedule an appointment during the teacher's preparation periods or at mutually agreed upon time. Instruction time cannot be used for conferences.

PERSONAL PHONE MESSAGES FOR STUDENTS

WE WILL **NOT** INTERRUPT CLASSES TO GIVE STUDENTS PHONE MESSAGES UNLESS IT IS A SERIOUS EMERGENCY. THESE INTERRUPTIONS ARE VERY DISRUPTIVE. **PLEASE TAKE CARE OF TRANSPORTATION ARRANGEMENTS BEFORE THE STUDENT ARRIVES AT SCHOOL.** THIS POLICY WILL BE STRICTLY ADHERED TO.

Title I/PAC

Parent Advisory Council (PAC) will send notices of their meetings. We strongly encourage you to join and become an active member. We are always looking for parents to fill key roles. The PAC meets monthly. The annual information meeting will be held on September 15th at Open House.

The October meeting will be open for parents to be nominated for leadership roles in the PAC for the upcoming year.

READING MATH PROGRAMS

The reading program at Alexander Graham is a balanced literacy program. In addition, students in grades K-8 will use Freckle, Lexia, IXL, and Study Island to enhance their Reading and Math skills. Our students use Google Suite linked to their cps email to implement common core reading and writing strategies online. Students will have access to an online curriculum. Please contact their teachers for more information.

REPORT CARDS

Students will receive mid-term progress reports during the fifth week of each quarter. Report cards are distributed every quarter. Parents must pick-up report cards for the 10th week on November 17, 2021 and the 30th week on April 20, 2022.

SECURITY

All visitors are to enter and exit through the main entrance. Visitors (including parents) must sign in at the main office and obtain a Visitor Pass. **PARENTS MAY NOT ENTER THE BUILDING WITHOUT OFFICE APPROVAL.** During the day, the doors will be locked from the outside, and you must ring the bell to gain admittance. It is important that you cooperate with this policy for the safety and security of all of our students.

SUPPLIES

A supply list for each grade will be distributed on the first day of school and posted on the school website (www.grahames.org) look under the Parent drop down link . As you will notice, there are specific items requested at different grade levels. If you have any questions regarding supplies, please direct them to the homeroom teacher.

TRAFFIC SAFETY

The safety of students is a prime concern. Please be extremely careful as you drive your car near the school. **The west side of Union Ave in front of the Main Building is reserved for buses.** Do not double park. Please be alert for children crossing and darting in front of cars. Please do not use the parking lot as a pick-up point. Please do not use alleys as a shortcut. Please do not block driveways and alleyways. Violators will be ticketed by the Chicago Police Department.

STUDENT CODE of CONDUCT

Your child received a copy of the Student Code of Conduct during the first week of school. It is important that you read through this document with your child. There are some new items addressing bullying and proper conduct using social networking media. In addition to that, there is a form that should be signed and returned signifying that you have received and read the document. The Student Code of Conduct can also be found on the Internet at <http://www.cps.edu>.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

We depend on your participation in the school. **We expect all parents to volunteer at least five hours of time or services to the school during the year.** There is power in your children knowing we are all in this together.

All volunteers (including parents) must complete a volunteer application form and submit to a background check conducted by the CPS Office of Safety and Security before they can work with students in a classroom. Here is link to volunteer website <https://www.cps.edu/services-and-supports/parent-engagement/volunteer-programs/>

We are sorry for the inconvenience this causes, but it is a CPS policy that has been implemented for the safety and security of students and staff. Please fill out your forms as soon as possible, since it takes time to receive clearance. Forms are available on the CPS website link above. For more information, please contact the Main Office.

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Alexander Graham offers after-school sports teams depending on the season and student interest, as well as, All-Stars for students in grades 4-8 which includes after-school band, student council, computers, art, and gym. More information about these programs will be available at the appropriate time. Let's have a great year. Go Lions!