



Grant Christian Parents,

Happy summer! We hope all is well for all of you and you are enjoying some of the special time with family and friends that the summer months provide! My son got married on July 12, so that major event of my summer is in the books.

It is that time of the summer when we are beginning to ramp up for the start of the school year, so we wanted to take a minute to share some important information with you.

1. **IT'S A TAILGATE PARTY! ... AND YOU'RE INVITED!** SAVE THE DATE... Tuesday, August 20, 6:00 pm.

On Tuesday, August 20, at 6:00 pm we would like to celebrate Grant Christian School, our families, and the start of our 73rd school year. We will provide the burgers, dogs, and chips, we would like you to provide the grills, salads, deserts, and smiles! More details coming soon!

FAMILY PICTURES- This year we would like to post pictures of our school families (with your permission, of course) on our tree mural in the hallway. This will give all of us an easy way to get to know everyone better, figure out who goes with who, etc. We will try to take as many of those pictures as possible at the tailgate party, so please be there and bring your smiles.

2. **NEW FACES IN NEW PLACES!** We are pleased to be adding some quality individuals to our educational team for the coming year. Some of these folks are brand new to the GCS community, and others are familiar faces in new places around here. These folks include the following:

1st/2nd Grade

7th/8th Grade

Physical Education/ Computers/S.T.E.M.

Instructional Assistant

Preschool Assistant

Ms. Hannah Kregel

Mr. Isaac DeBoer

Mrs. Lauren Courtney

Mrs. Carol Curtis

Mrs. Angela Vander Meulen

3. **WELCOME BACK, MEET YOUR TEACHERS, AND FIRST "OFFICIAL" SCHOOL DAY!** - **Wednesday, August 21.** Yes, we have added one more "school day" to meet the state-mandated 180 days of school. If we hold this event during school hours, and our teachers take attendance, hand out some materials, etc., we can call this an official school day. Therefore...please set-aside a few minutes the morning of the 21st, from 9-11:30 am, to stop by, meet your child's teacher, say hello, get information, etc. (This **IS NOT** a 8:00 am-2:45 pm school day.)
4. **CAMP SCOTTIE RETREAT-** On August 28th all of our K-8th graders will be spending the day at Camp Scottie on Newcosta Road, just North of M-82. If possible, please be prepared to help provide transportation for your child's class that day. Our 5th-8th graders will also stay overnight on the 28th, and spend the 29th focusing on school leadership, setting the stage for our school

year. We are excited to offer this opportunity for our students and look forward to promoting unity among our students through this event.

- 5. CURRICULUM CHANGES** One of our school-wide goals is to engage in continuous school improvement. We are striving to be a Christ-centered school of excellence, and to attract others to this place because of the good things we are doing here. With that goal in mind, there are a few curriculum changes that will be happening for the coming school year that I would like you to be aware of.
 - a. **Math Curriculum Change-** After taking the past year to examine our math curriculum, we have made the decision to begin the use of a new math curriculum in the coming year. You will be receiving more detailed information about this change before the start of the school year, but we are excited about this opportunity to help our students learn to “think” more mathematically as we use a more task and problem-solving approach to mathematics rather than a skill and drill approach. This decision came about as a result of the year-long examination of our math curriculum led by a math education expert from Calvin College. Over the course of the coming year, that expert will continue to work with us to implement this change most effectively. More information coming soon.
 - b. **Vocal Music in the Middle School-** We will be adding vocal music to our middle school music/fine arts curriculum this year. Our 5th-8th graders, along with one of their teachers, will be joining Mrs. Mack for 40-50 minutes once each week to sing and make beautiful music together!
 - c. **S.T.E.M. Education-** We are pleased to announce that we will begin to build and integrate a S.T.E.M. component (Science, Technology, Engineering, & Math) to our curriculum this year. S.T.E.M. does not replace the “normal” science and math components of our curriculum, but rather takes an integrated approach to those subjects as students learn to work together to investigate and create solutions to real-world problems, and explore new knowledge in challenging ways. This program will also strategically include the nature-based component we are building on our campus.
- 6. Grant Funding & a Grant Writing Professional.** The board recently made the decision to contract with a professional grant writer to assist with the pursuit and acquisition of grant funding opportunities to support a wide variety of current and future initiatives that will make GCS a stronger school. Trisha Smith-Mulder works with many private faith-based organizations, and after a recent “brainstorming” session with board members and other community stakeholders, is eager to begin her work with us. Areas of focus included grant funding to support the S.T.E.M. Program identified above, as well as looking at grant-funded opportunities to better utilize the 35 acres of property owned by GCS; including both the nature-based component and the possible development of our athletic fields for both school and community use.



7. OUR THEME FOR THE YEAR- “Get Strong, Stay Strong, Stand Strong!”

Our theme for the coming school year will be “Get Strong, Stay Strong, Stand Strong!” This year we would like to focus our attention on what it means to develop a “strong faith”, a faith that can stand up against some of the temptations that the world offers and face our kids each and every day. Mike Gruppen, a member of “The Conquerors Strength Team,” and a former middle school student of mine, will be joining us throughout the year to encourage our students to live out our theme. I also hope to work with Tom Frey, director of the “Upwards Basketball Program” to find a night to bring “The Conquerors Strength Team” to our community for a night to witness amazing feats of strength and hear the gospel presented in a way that captures the attention of the youth in this community.

8. CLASSROOM SUPPLY LISTS ATTACHED AND INFORMATION TO COME

All parent letters and supply lists are attached along with the school calendar!

There will be several documents handed out to you at the tailgate party that will need to be filled-out, signed and returned to school. Please return these documents the first day of school. Your attention to these details will make our lives so much easier. Thank you in advance for your cooperation!

9. STOP IN SOON!

Reminders:

- **School Year Start Date & End Date for 2019/2020:** August 22 & June 3
- **School Start/End Time:** 8:00 a.m. – 2:45 p.m.
(The first bell will ring at 7:50 a.m. to enter and class will begin promptly at 8:00 a.m.)
- **Bus Transportation:** If you plan to have your child(ren) ride the Grant Public School bus please contact the bus garage before school begins @231-834-5964.
- **Hot Lunch:** Hot lunch will begin in **October** and be offered on M, W, and F. Hot lunch forms will be sent home with your students in September. Please send forms back in on the designated date as late forms will not be counted, thank you for your cooperation and understanding.