



Great Valley Middle School Frequently Asked Questions

1. Is the orientation on the 21st of August for parents and students or just students?

The program on August 21st is an orientation for incoming 6th graders. Parents are encouraged to drop students off prior to 9:00 AM and return at 11:00 AM to pick them up after the orientation has concluded. The event is for students only.

2. What is the earliest drop-off time for the August 21st orientation?

Students should not be dropped off before 8:40 AM.

3. Do the students have a reading assignment to be completed over the summer?

Summer reading lists will be provided to current students before the end of the school year. Students entering 6th grade will also be required to read over the summer. The summer reading list and specific titles for incoming 6th graders will be posted to our website in the coming weeks.

4. Can you explain the teams (A, B, and C)?

There are three teams in 6th grade. The team concept is designed to provide a smaller learning community for our students and teachers. Students assigned to teams will then progress through the school year with the same group of teachers and students.

5. Is there a smaller team for grade 6?

No, the teams in 6th grade are very close in number.

6. If my student leaves something at home, are we able to bring the item in for them?

Yes, any item left at home can be brought into school. We ask that the item be labeled with the student's name and grade and dropped off at the table by the main office. It is the student's responsibility to check the table during the day for items that are dropped off. We cannot interrupt classes and call students down for their items.

7. Can a student be involved in both band and orchestra? Is this a good idea?

Yes, students can be involved in both. This is a decision that is best left to the student and family to decide. There are students who are involved in both programs and are able to find a balance, but the choice should take into consideration all the expectations students will encounter at the middle level.

8. Are showers required after gym class?

No, we do not require students to take showers, but showers are available for students who choose to use them after physical education class.

9. Please describe the morning traffic pattern.

We ask our parents to please respect our Safety Patrol officer and follow the designated traffic patterns when dropping off and/or picking up your children before or after school.

- Please keep your speed to **5 MPH or less** in the drop off loop and adhere to all road signs and our safety officer.
- Please avoid using the road between the HS & MS during student drop off hours. In addition, curbside drop offs should try to be avoided to prevent traffic backups, and remember to make a full stop at the corner of the main road.
- Be mindful of pedestrians walking through the parking lot; remember, **pedestrians have the right of way!**
- If you are a visitor, please park in a visitor spot. Our visitor spots are clearly labeled. **All** of the numbered spots are assigned to our faculty members.
- Please **refrain** from dropping any students off in areas other than the drop-off loop.
- Always be patient and courteous to others and remember to always keep in mind that safety is of the utmost importance.

10. How many hours of homework are typical per day?

The average student will have homework every night of the school week. The amount of homework will vary, but, as a guideline, students should expect an hour of homework each evening.

11. What is the book bag policy during school hours?

Students may use book bags to bring items to and from school. Once a student visits his or her locker in the morning, the book bag is to be placed in the locker. Students are not permitted to carry book bags during the school day.

12. Does the middle school have one counselor per grade?

Yes, each grade has a counselor that stays with them over their three years at the middle school. Mrs. Illig will be the counselor working with the incoming 6th grade students. She will guide and support this group of students until they exit the middle school at the end of eighth grade.

13. Will information be sent home on how to use/access Skyward?

We will not send home information on how to use/access Skyward. Skyward assistance is available at any time during school hours. It is the same system currently being used at the elementary level. Your user name and login will remain unchanged. If you are in need of assistance, we encourage you to call the main office.

14. Until a grade is entered into Skyward by a teacher, is there a zero in the place of the grade which is then calculated into the whole grade?

No, zeros are not used as place holders in the skyward system. The system has placeholders built in that take into consideration assignments not graded at the time the assignment is posted to the electronic grade book.

15. Do students have time to go to their lockers between classes?

Yes, students do have time to go to their lockers between classes. However, students are encouraged to plan for the day and use their time between classes wisely. Students should not visit their lockers every period.

16. Do the lockers have enough room for a winter coat?

Yes, but students will need to keep their lockers in an orderly manner. If “stuff” begins to accumulate, the space inside can quickly be taken up by non-essential items.

17. What is the amount of parent volunteerism?

The PTO is a great resource for volunteer opportunities in the middle school. Please visit their webpage: <http://www.gvmspto.org/>

18. What should be done if our child has a doctor’s appointment in the morning before school?

Any student having a medical or dental appointment before or during school should notify the office in advance of the appointment when possible. Students arriving to school after being seen by a doctor should bring in a note from the

doctor. Those leaving during the school day should also bring in a note from their parent indicating the time of the necessary early dismissal.

19. Do we send in notes for an early dismissal?

Yes, we ask that a note from the parent or guardian be provided if a student plans on leaving school early for any reason.

20. If a student participates in GVMS activities/athletics, do they have to be picked up after school?

Yes. Note that the pickup times vary according to the activity. The times and duration of the activities are located under the activities tab on our website.

21. Can students arrive before 7:10am?

No, we prefer that no student arrive prior to 7:10 AM.

22. If a student's parents live in two different homes, will all school information be sent to both addresses so that both parents are equally informed?

Yes, we will send home information to both parents when we are aware of the situation. It is important to note that the contact information in Skyward must be up to date for this to occur.

23. Why are students not allowed to seek out teachers before school?

Our teacher day does not officially begin until 7:30. We do our best to preserve this time for our teachers to prepare for their instructional day. If a student has made arrangements to work with a teacher prior to school beginning, they will be permitted to see the teacher.

24. Could a current list of teachers by team be re-added to the website as it has been posted in previous years?

Once the teams are finalized after the scheduling process is complete, we will add the teams to our website.

25. Are there any opportunities for students to stay after school until 3:15?

Other than the activities listed on the website there are no other supervised opportunities for students to stay after school.

26. Does the MS offer after-school care?

We do not offer after-school care, but your child's guidance counselor may be able to assist in providing information about local after school care programs.

27. Can a student start playing an instrument in the 6th grade or do they need prior instruction?

Students can begin playing an instrument at any time while at the middle school.

28. If my child will be absent or late, what is the procedure to alert the school?

Please call the attendance hot line to report an absence or a late arrival @ 610-644-6442 and hit option #6. This is a 24-hour line so you can place your call the night before an absence. Please note: any calls after 9:00 AM may result in an automated call regarding your child's absence.

29. Are students allowed to bring cell phones to school?

Cell phones may be brought to school, but are not allowed to be used in the school building during the course of the day. Phones must be left in their lockers. If a student is caught using a cell phone at an inappropriate time a detention may be issued. If you need to reach your child, please contact the main office.

30. Can a parent come into school to meet with a teacher?

Meeting with teachers is always acceptable and encouraged. The best way to do this is to schedule an appointment in advance, so everyone involved in the meeting can be prepared. The best way to schedule an appointment would be to email the teacher(s) so that a date and time can be arranged.