

GRANT SCHOOL ~ SANTA MONICA

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CHRISTIAN FUHRER - PRINCIPAL

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Dear Grant Parents and Guardians,

It is my honor and a pleasure to welcome you to the 2020 – 2021 school year! I hope you all are doing well and staying healthy during this challenging time for our community. It seems so long ago that we were last together. Yet, just over five months on we find ourselves continuing to navigate the complexities of this global pandemic. The entire Grant staff longs for the day we will all be together again on our campus. We have been reminded that there is no replacement for an in-person smile, affirmation of success, a sympathetic ear that understands disappointment, a high five or a hug, or the special bonds and teamwork that physical proximity creates between classmates. Let us never again take for granted the in-person collaboration that fosters strong connections between students, teachers, and parents. With that said, the Grant staff is ready to kick this year off in true Gecko fashion!

Our dedicated staff has worked tirelessly over the summer break, and especially during the last few weeks, to finalize instructional schedules, class routines and expectations, and organize important relevant materials and supplies, all of which we believe will foster academic success during distance learning. While distance learning is not an ideal way to start the school year, we believe we will provide a rigorous, structured, and engaging school experience that will meet the needs of all of our students. We have made a commitment to delivering daily instruction in English/Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies while putting an emphasis on the social and emotional learning needs of every child at Grant. In addition, Grant educators have engaged in multiple days of important professional development with a focus on remote learning strategies in the effective delivery of lessons in core academic areas, and the integration of the Social Justice standards, Responsive Classroom community-building techniques, Restorative Justice practices, anti-racist philosophy, and other social and emotional methods of support. We will work together to create a solid foundation for our students so that they can become self-directed learners, collaborative teammates, critical thinkers, and responsible citizens. Finally, we will continue to offer intervention services through Special Education, counseling sessions, and Tier II and III programs, as necessary.

We would like to thank you for “attending” our Back to School Night last Thursday. Our staff felt it was important to connect with families *before* the start of this unique school year. You should have received an overview of the instructional program, including initial schedules and expectations, for the start of the year. It was fun to visit all of the virtual classrooms and see our parents’ and students’ getting to know their new learning community! As a reminder, regular communication between teachers and parents is a critical component to the success of the distance learning program and ultimately our students’ success. The Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District has created a very useful Distance Learning Guidebook which will answer many questions you may have regarding the instructional program, learning outcomes, digital platforms, attendance requirements, and other important topics. You can access this document by visiting: <https://www.smmusd.org/Page/6106>.



SANTA MONICA-MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Grant's outstanding teachers create the foundation for your children's academic success. In addition, a large part of Grant's success is attributed to its active and engaged PTA. Please consider contributing to the Grant PTA so that we can continue to fund stimulating enrichment programs, assemblies, and much needed supplemental equipment and supplies that will support distance learning this year. Your donations directly affect your child's education. Last year alone your contributions enabled us to provide digital learning resources in literacy, math, and science, musical instruments, field trips, new library furniture and books, and outdoor equipment. Please visit the Grant PTA website at <https://www.grantpta.org/> to become a PTA member and to learn of the many opportunities available to volunteer at Grant. In addition, we hope you consider donating to the Santa Monica Education Foundation. Donations to SMEF enable us to provide our students a well-rounded and world-class education through music, visual arts, instructional assistants, and our science enrichment program. Please visit <https://www.smedfoundation.org/> to donate today!

I look forward to the start of the new school year and to continuing our collaboration to provide our students with a quality education. We will look to our families to be positive partners in this year's journey. We understand the daily complexities and challenges you are facing at this time. We understand because we *are* you. The Grant staff has made a priority of working together as a caring and confident learning community, to tackling the challenges we all will face with professionalism, teamwork, compassion, and to always putting the students' best interests at the center of our purpose. We hold our hands out to you in partnership, friendship, and good will. I wish you all a smooth start to this school year! Stay healthy, stay positive, and stay connected.

As always, my "door" is open to you and I welcome your valuable input. Please feel free to contact me via email at the address below or call to make an appointment to speak with me via phone call or Zoom to discuss any ideas you feel will make this the best year yet!

GO GECKOS!

Best regards,




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