Graham Elementary and Middle School
2026.27 Wellness and Success Plan

The mission of The Graham Family of Schools is to help all of our students grow in their academic and social and emotional learning, ongoing. Our aim is to continuously advance students' skills and demonstration of: critical analysis and problem solving; collaborative team work; thoughtful reflection on experiences; and sharing in responsibility for academic success and a safe learning community for all.

All our efforts are toward preparing students to be successful in achieving this mission as they work toward full readiness for the next grade level and ultimately college and careers. At our schools, we will:

- Maintain and promote a growth-mindset toward all students and staff such that everyone has an expectation to grow in their intelligence and its display.
- Foster in students a commitment to: self-direction in their learning; and, the school and wider community in which they live.
- Teach at all grade levels with sensitivity to brain development in children, including course and class lessons that focus on human brain development and its relation to learning and growth academically, socially and emotionally.
- Utilize the community outside the school doors as a resource to advance experiential learning for our students.
- Treat all students and staff with compassion, honesty and respect.
- View academic achievement as a reflection of both student and teacher jointly teaming for success.
- Create, state and display the norms for how people are expected to act at school regarding academic work and behavioral interactions.
- Design an operational strategy at each TGFS school for advancing our work in academic achievement, social and emotional learning, grade advancement, and college and career readiness.

As a member of The Graham Family of Schools, Graham Elementary & Middle School's (GEMS) mission is to provide a rigorous and engaging education while developing a strong sense of character and community among a diverse group of learners.

GEMS is a K-8 school serving students from central Ohio. GEMS is grounded in the principles of experiential, real-world learning, self-direction, and connection to community. It is supported and enriched by technology in all aspects of teaching and learning. GEMS is committed to its three dimensions of student achievement: Mastery of knowledge and skills, character, and high-quality student work. We address the important learning arc that provides the transition from elementary school to success in middle school, and on to success in high school, not only academically but in terms of character development and understanding of the communities in which students live.

Student Wellness and Success
SEL; TREP; MTSS, NYAP, Trained Staff Leaders; Nurse on staff

GEMS is committed to the ongoing social and emotional growth of all of our students. Research shows that there is a significant connection between academic learning and Social and Emotional Learning (SEL). Studies over the past 30 years also connect trauma, including the stressful environment of continuous, pervasive poverty, as a significant factor in many children's school struggles. Therefore, our entire staff receives ongoing training in trauma responsiveness. Our SEL focus incorporates work in the development of daily, small group community advising, the use of Restorative Practices, and the use of mindfulness to equip our students with strategies, skills, experiences and mindsets to enable success both in the classroom and in their lives beyond school. A comprehensive MTSS program is part of this initiative supporting the whole child while also providing academic supports and interventions.

Our primary strategy is to build a relational safe resilient school community in which all members are engaged and invested using structures, routines, predictability, consistency, caring, and compassion. A significant problem being addressed is the pervasive trauma experienced by our students due to poverty, dysfunctional or absent families and communities in chaos.

The team evaluates data including attendance, course performance, discipline, SEL competencies, culture and climate within our school, amongst our staff and parents and maintains a significant commitment to an ongoing focus on Social and Emotional Learning including Trauma Responsiveness.

GEMS will spend funds from the Student Wellness and Success initiative for ongoing professional development planned and delivered by our partners, experts in the field, and our internal PD leaders in the areas of Social and Emotional Learning and Trauma Responsive Educational Practices (TREP). Funds will support SEL curriculum, resources, assessments and experiences implemented in MTSS, student crew, staff crew, and family crew. Partnering with NYAP provides mental health services and funds will support the important work being done by our contracted nurse to encourage and support student physical wellness. In association with our board approved Wellness Policy that thoroughly addresses nutrition and physical fitness, our Student Wellness and Success Plan extends the focus to Social and Emotional health.

GEMS has built a foundational focus on Social and Emotional Learning including implementing school-wide ongoing professional development in Social and Emotional Learning from multiple perspectives and providing multiple tools. Teachers are trained to focus on students individually

and as a whole to establish a positive safe, supportive culture amongst the entire community. The work includes regular walkthroughs, data collection and analysis as well as interim and year-end reporting. Additional monitoring, data collection, and ongoing professional development, support and coaching will be performed by trained staff leaders as well as other identified experts in the field.

Our contracted nurse has been part of our wellness team, supporting initiatives to improve the health and wellness of our school community. Her role will be to lead and support our physical health initiatives in association with our Wellness Policy.

GEMS long-term goal is to create a comprehensive, trauma responsive K-8 Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) program that is sequenced, focused and explicit, and aligned with the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) competencies. Social and emotional learning is defined as the process through which we recognize and manage emotions, establish healthy relationships, set positive goals, behave ethically and responsibly and avoid negative behaviors. The SEL initiative assures that our students are able to build the skills necessary to be behaviorally, emotionally, and academically college and career ready. Student Wellness and Success funds support this goal.

This plan has been formulated in partnership with NYAP, our local partner in mental health services, Trauma Responsiveness and Restorative Practices experts and our fellow Graham Family Schools. All three schools under the umbrella of The Graham Family of Schools are pursuing these initiatives and coordinating together with the same partners.