

GPFAA Family FAQ



Welcome to GPFAA! In an effort to have well informed families, we have created this FAQ to help you get started and become well informed families.

What time can my child get in the building in the morning? Supervision starts at **7:00am** in the cafeteria for all students.

What is the latest I can pick up my child after school? Students are required to be picked up by **5:00pm** each day unless in extended Fine Arts rehearsal.

Is GPFAA a public school? Do they graduate with a Texas diploma? Yes. GPFAA is a fully accredited, Texas public school that offers an official Texas high school diploma from Grand Prairie ISD.

What exactly is a “Fine Arts Academy” and how is it different from a traditional school? GPFAA has additional time during the school day to concentrate on the fine art classes - creating a unique schedule based around student interests. We do not offer athletics at GPFAA but focus on the creative fine arts. We are extraordinary by design!

How long are the classes? Each class is 90 minutes long.

How many classes per day? 4 classes per day.

Is there practice time before and/or after school? Yes. Directors schedule and communicate practice times outside the regular school day.

What is a Fine Arts Guild? Can I get involved? Each Fine Art Strand has a parent led, volunteer group who raise money, support the Strands and work with each Director. All parents are invited and encouraged to participate in their child’s Guild.

Is there a GPFAA PTA? Yes, GPFAA also has a PTA that serves the entire campus as a whole. All parents are encouraged to join and are welcome to participate.

Where do I drop off my child and pick up my child on a daily basis? How does that work? Parents are asked to drop off and pick up students at the front doors on the east side of the school. Traffic the first few weeks is a challenge, so please be patient!

How can I get in touch with my child’s teachers? The campus website contains each staff members’ email and biography.

How does lunch work? GPFAA has 4 lunch sections, typically 2 for high school and 2 for middle school. Students are free to sit wherever they like.

What is the dress code so I can send them to school prepared? GPFAA has a dress code that allows for student expression that “generally” follows the GPISD dress code. Violations are dealt with individually.

Will my child struggle with the advanced academic courses? How should we prepare for this? Due to the advanced academic rigor of GPFAA most students must set aside additional time for study, tutoring and homework to remain successful. GPFAA would not be considered an “easy” school to attend.

Are there a lot of performances on the weekends, evenings and at other times during the year? Yes. Each Strand keeps a calendar of upcoming events, performances, exhibits and similar activities. Directors will let parents know what type of communication to expect.

Can I bring lunch to my child during the school day once in a while? Yes. We ask that you only bring lunch for your child. Parents are welcome to visit and have lunch in the cafeteria. Parent only may also deliver lunch! On district and State testing days, there will be no lunch drop-off or visitors due to the varying lunch schedules.

Do they have to wear their ID card, or can they just have it with them? Yes. We ask that all GPFAA students wear their school issued ID card and it should remain visible on the front of their body for safety reasons. ID’s are also needed to ride the bus.

If I need to check out my child for an appointment, how do I do that? Have your ID then visit the Attendance office, which is in the main hallway. You must be listed in Skyward to check out a student. We will call your child down when you arrive. We value

instructional time, so kindly allow us to call the student from class to the office. Thanks!

If my child is absent for a day (or longer) what do I need to do? Please call the Attendance office at: 972.343.6308 to report your child's absence each day. If you have notes from a doctor/dentist or other similar reason, please provide those notes to the Attendance office within 3 days.

What grades get the laptops and how does that work? Can my child bring their own laptop to school? 8th through 12th graders will receive a GPISD laptop/iPad device. A Laptop Agreement is required from the parent prior to issuing a laptop. Yes, students can bring their own laptops or devices.

Will my child receive an iPad? Yes, every student at GPFAA will receive a school issued iPad.

If my child rides the bus, how do I find out about that? The GPISD website has specific information about the bus routes, times, locations of all stops. Please check the district website at: www.gpisd.org for complete bus information. Bus routes commonly change from year to year and all parents are encouraged to check for updated routes. Out of district students need to contact transportation.

My child will be driving to school, what should I know? Drive safely! Park in the student parking lots on campus, or in the other student parking lot next to the soccer field. Parking is free, but a permit must be obtained from the front office to get the permit.

How can I find out about school supplies, and what will be needed to start the year off well? GPISD publishes a standard school supply list on the district website prior to the start of school. If there are Strand specific supplies, we will share that with students once school starts.

What is Phantom Camp and when is that? Phantom Camp tends to be around the first week of August. We host camp at the school, get started on team building within the Strands and welcome all of our new students to the GPFAA family!

We have a need to visit the nurse and let her know about important information. How can I do that? Please visit the clinic, which is at the end of the main entrance hallway, or call the clinic at: 972.343.6306.

What are the primary phone numbers for the school? The most commonly used phone numbers are here:

Attendance Office:	972.343.6308
Receptionist:	972.237.5603
Clinic:	972.343.6306
Cafeteria:	972.343.6312

How can I find out about events, performances, social media and connect with the school? GPFAA has an active social media presence that is updated regularly. Our contact information is here:

Facebook: www.facebook.com/gpfaa13

Website: www.gpisd.org/finearts

Twitter: [@gpfaa102](https://twitter.com/gpfaa102)

Instagram: [@gpfaa102](https://www.instagram.com/gpfaa102)

What are the school colors and mascot? Our colors are black and white/silver. Our mascot is the elusive Phantom! Vision: Extraordinary by Design!

What does the middle school schedule look like? Block schedule. 4 classes on A Day and 4 classes on B Day. They have a total of 8 classes which remain the same all year.

What does the high school schedule look like? Block schedule. 4 classes on A Day and 4 classes on B Day. They have a total of 8 classes per year with electives.

Can my child use their phone during the school day? Phones are allowed before and after school, during lunch and passing periods. Teachers may also allow usage during class – for educational purposes.

What is Skyward and how can I use it to keep up with my child? Skyward is the district main “computer system” where parents can monitor grades and attendance. Skyward is a huge school-to-home link. Skyward is also the enrollment and registration platform for parents to log into.

Does GPFAA have a library? How does that work? Yes. GPFAA has a library on the 2nd floor available to all students. We have a collection of both physical and online books as well as other items in our collection available for check out.

What is the discipline plan at GPFAA? We maintain a fair and firm accountability plan for students. Parents can expect a phone call when there is a problem. We use the GPISD Student Code of Conduct.

“I want to meet with the principal!” We realize that from time to time, parents would like to formally meet with the principal. GPFAA meets the demands of education through a team effort. Quite often meeting with the appropriate dean or assistant principal will yield faster results.

Phone messages from the school, how can I ensure I get them? Please update any phone numbers and email addresses that may change throughout the year by calling the receptionist. Having current phone numbers and address information is critical.

What should I tell my child if they are experiencing problems at school? There is a team ready and willing to help any child experiencing difficulties at school. Encourage your child to speak with a teacher, counselor, or administrator.

How many high school credits does my child need to graduate? 26 credits are needed to graduate. The State of Texas designates the type of classes needed.

My child is in high school. What is the GPA and how can that help or hurt their future? All high school courses taken, even if in middle school, contribute to the Grade Point Average. GPA is cumulative as students complete high school credit courses. GPA is calculated at the end of each semester. Colleges will use this information to determine acceptance.

What is high school class rank? How important is this for college entrance? All high school students are placed “in line” or “ranked” based on their individual GPA. Rank is their “place” in that line from first to last. Yes, many colleges ask for either GPA, rank, or both.

How can GPFAA help my child get into college? Our college and career counselors work with all students on college applications and financial forms. We have a “Go Center” that engages local, state, and national colleges/universities.

How can the campus counselors help me and help my child? We assist students with any type of issue they may be experiencing at any time. We provide resources for families as well. Counselors help with course selection, schedules, college considerations, graduation, post graduation plans, as well as daily social/emotional challenges! All students have access to the counselors all day every day.

What do I need to know about checking in when I come to visit the school? What is the Raptor system? If you are simply checking your child in/out for an appointment, please visit the Attendance Office with your ID. If you plan to stay for any reason – see the receptionist who will ask for your ID. All visitors will be entered in the Raptor System to ensure students safety. All visitors will wear an ID badge while on campus.

Campus receptionist, role and responsibilities. Our campus receptionist makes, receives and transfers calls, greets parents and visitors, assists with the Raptor check in/out system, issues visitor badges, and serves on the office team. This is usually the first stop when visiting the campus.

How can I support GPFAA? Get involved in the PTA and the Guilds. Keep your contact information current. Follow us on social media and share our successes with family and friends. Attend your child’s strand activities. Attend other strand activities. Be a team member with your child’s teachers – we have to work together.

When do the high school students get class rings and letter jackets? How does that work? Students order their class rings during the fall of their 11th grade year. Letter jackets cannot be earned until the end of a student’s 10th grade year. There are requirements to be met for fine arts or academics.

How will we be informed about the bad weather days, any make up days, or if school is delayed or cancelled? The GPISD website (www.gpisd.org) , GPFAA Parent Remind, and the local media outlets.

How can I be one of the first ones to know about what is happening at GPFAA? Stay connected with our social media outlets listed in this document (FaceBook, Website, Twitter, Remind, Email).

Does GPFAA have school lockers and if so, how can my child get one? Students will be issued a locker during the first two weeks of school. Students need to provide their own locks: one for their school locker and one for their PE locker.

Where can my child wait if I need to drop them off before school starts? How does that work? The building is open every morning at 7:00am. Students may eat breakfast, work on assignments, practice their instrument, or use their devices as they wait for class to begin in the cafeteria.

Are backpacks required? No. Backpacks are not required but helpful.

Will each student get a textbook for each class? What should I expect to be responsible for? Students will be issued textbooks for selected classes, while other classes use a classroom set or an online feature. This is dependent on the subject matter and the individual teacher.

Will my child need PE clothes? How does PE work at GPFAA? Students will need appropriate attire and footwear for PE classes. Students will be provided an athletic locker in the PE gym to lock their items up, but they will need another lock for the PE locker.

Is the first week of school traffic an issue? What should I prepare for and what tips can you share? Yes. The first couple of weeks the traffic is a hot mess! Traffic will continue to improve as the parents become more familiar with the traffic patterns and pick up plans. There are 3 lanes in which parents can use to pick up their student. The two lanes closest to the building are for pick up and drop off. The 3rd lane (away from the building) is a constant flow lane. This lane is for parents who have their child and are ready to exit. Please do not pick up students in the 3rd constant flow lane!

Should my child be bringing lunch to school? Will there be a way to heat up a lunch if needed? Yes. Your child can bring his/her lunch to school, get a school lunch and/or purchase items from the vending machines. We have a couple of microwaves for students who would like to heat up their lunch.

Can students leave campus during lunch? No. Students are NOT allowed to “run to Sonic or Subway” during their lunch times. GPFAA has a “closed campus” policy and students are not permitted to leave on their own during lunch.

Does GPFAA offer dual credit and AP classes? What do I need to do to enroll my child in these courses? Yes. GPFAA offers both dual credit and AP classes. Students will be able to enroll in both dual credit and Advanced Placement courses during our Spring Course Selection process.

How can my child be more involved at school? Are there clubs and other after school activities? Information about clubs will be available after the start of the school year. Clubs are student generated and student selected. Students can fill out the form to create their own club, have a staff member to sponsor the club, and get it approved by the administration.

Can my child participate in other Strand activities, performances and gain experience across the campus? Yes. GPFAA offers elective classes that enable students to participate in other strands in high school. Students are not permitted to compete with another strand. The only exception is the high school and middle school musical. Students from all strands can audition for the musicals held during the year.

How are report cards and progress reports issued? Skyward! Progress Reports and Report Cards are generated through Skyward Family Access. Parents will create a Skyward account when they register students in GPISD. Parents will be able to access Skyward to monitor student progress throughout the year. Hard copy Report Cards are no longer sent home with students at the end of the grading period.

Remember, it is imperative that GPFAA have current phone numbers and email to ensure communication.