

# Welcome Back GMA!

September 11th, 2024

## Note from HOS

Hello GMA Families,

It is a pleasure to be serving another year as your Head of School. I learned many things last year and know that will continue. I hope that you had a wonderful summer and were able to do some fun things as well as had some good learning opportunities! I was able to catch up on some home and school DIY projects as well as riding our horses.

I would like to welcome all of our new families, whether you are joining us from another school or have relocated from another city, state, or country. We are excited to share with you all that Grace Montessori Academy has to offer and believe you will soon feel as we do, that GMA is a special place for *all of God's* children.

Our teachers and staff are eager to meet their new students and begin this year's journey with them. The dedicated staff at GMA has been working tirelessly to finalize classes and schedules, engage in ongoing Love and Logic training, Relational Wisdom 360 training (conflict management), and update each classroom's Freedom and Limits. With our mission of raising disciples of Jesus Christ through Christ-centered Montessori education; our primary goal is to provide students the tools to acquire inner self-discipline and self-esteem; to achieve academic excellence and to develop a love for life-long learning. We also focus on teaching moral and spiritual principles so that each one of them can achieve their highest potential.

Please take part in our GMA community by signing up to help with our Parents for Grace events, such as Movie Night, Barn Dance and teacher appreciation week. Or by helping to obtain a sponsorship for our annual Spring Carnival in May or securing funds for needed items like Chromebooks, carpet for the classrooms or resurfacing the parking lot to name a few. Please email [parentsforgrace@gmamt.org](mailto:parentsforgrace@gmamt.org) to let our President and VP know you are interested in helping. Your support and contributions directly affect your child's education and other students who attend. Last year such sponsorships and donations enabled GMA to provide more scholarships, an AED machine, new washer and dryer, garden beds, a completed library, and a variety of wishlist items for the classrooms.

I am encouraged with the start of the new school year and am looking forward to building relationships with our families. As always, we will look to our families to be positive partners in



their children's educational journey. We strongly believe in collaborating with parents to put forth the best interests of your child.

My door is open and our team welcomes your input so please reach out. Feel free to contact me via email at [headofschool@gmamt.org](mailto:headofschool@gmamt.org) or call to make an appointment to speak with me.

Continued Blessings,  
Regina Griemsman

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## Welcome New Staff

### Trier Forseth

Trier Forseth joined the GMA family in March of 2024. She is a devoted educator who is passionate about helping others discover the joy of lifelong learning through engaging, multifaceted experiences. Having earned degrees in Biology, Special Education, and Science Education she hopes to create inclusive learning opportunities for all students through observation, exploration, and connection within diverse communities. She is continually supported by her husband and four grown children. This is her 10th year teaching, having previously taught in middle school and high school. She is excited to be the Lead teacher for the Middle School program.



### Deb Varnado

Ms. Varnado will be the co-teacher in the Middle School program and will be working with students in the area of writing, grammar, history and reading. She is a Southern Bell from Louisiana who loves the snow. She has 12 year of experience working with children in a learning environment; three and a half of those years have been in a classroom setting and the rest in childcare. She has a Master in Christian Education and additional credits towards a Master in English. She enjoys diagramming sentences as she loves grammar and reading. She has raised two boys and has one beautiful granddaughter here in the Billings area. She is a lifelong learner who is sure to put a smile on your face.

### Jennifer Howard

My name is Jennifer Howard and I am excited to be teaching at Grace Montessori Academy this year, in the Lilac classroom! I have over 20 years teaching experience including substitute teacher, paraprofessional, homeschool mom, and ESL teacher. I was a certified soccer referee for 10 years while my sons played, and a robotics mentor with FIRST for 6 years. My favorite subjects in school were history, geography, and anthropology, hence my love for travel. I have been to 6 of the 7 continents (Australia is the one I have yet to visit), and have fond memories of every country I visited. I enjoy learning about new cultures, meeting local people, and trying quirky regional foods. I love being outdoors riding my bike, hiking and walking, especially with my big black lab, Hody. I





also enjoy gardening, reading, and connecting with friends over coffee and God's word. I have 2 grown sons. Cole lives and works in Bozeman and enjoys riding his bike and gaming; and Austin is in his last year at Asbury Theological Seminary in Kentucky and hopes to return to Montana to pastor when he is finished. I am truly blessed! This year I look forward to building a relationship with your child to guide them into a love of learning and a love for Jesus.



### **Kathryn Eiland**

Kathryn Eiland is a certified Montessori teacher with a MACTE diploma from Prepared Montessorian Institute and a devoted child of God. In 2020, Kathryn discovered the joy of teaching children. Instantly, she became committed to learning everything she could about Montessori's philosophy on child development. Outside of teaching at Grace Montessori Academy, Kathryn and her husband lead the elementary students of their church in weekly bible studies. Determined to make a positive impact in the lives of children, Kathryn strives to bring peace, patience, and a love of the Lord into the classroom. Kathryn is the Co-teacher in the Bitterroot classroom.

### **Ali Floth**

I am excited to start in Daffodil this fall! I enjoy working with children and helping them learn. In my spare time I enjoy being outdoors, photography, and spending time with my family and friends.



### **Tracy Wildung**

Tracey Wildung, comes to us with twenty plus years of experience in education and will be serving as our Helping Hands Interventionist. She has served in multiple teaching positions, from kindergarten to multi level classrooms as well as a special education teacher and title 1 teacher. She has a strong passion for student development coupled with a warm personality. Mrs. Wildung will implement evidence-based programs which include: dyslexic tutoring using the Barton System; reading support using Blast Off Reading; math intervention using EasyCBM and

Montessori material; and handwriting practice using Cursive First for our students assessed and determined to need a higher level of support.



## John Dailey - New Board Member

John is the Training Coordinator for Yellowstone Boys and Girls Ranch and has worked for YBGR for over 20 years serving in a variety of positions including Chaplain. He has a Masters Degree in Organizational Leadership from Northwestern University in St. Paul, MN and previously served as the Chairman Trustee for School District #58 Yellowstone Academy. John Specializes in teaching Trauma Informed Care, Crisis Management and Leadership Development. Often John is called upon to consult

with outside agencies to develop trainings to better equip and prepare staff to encounter crisis situations. John also provides Critical Incident Stress Management Debriefings to staff that have experienced a traumatic event in the line of duty. When John is not working directly with staff he enjoys operating the ropes course providing experiential learning through high ropes with the youth and groups of people wanting to grow themselves.

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## Wishlist

- Donations towards new school van, \$15,000 is still needed
  - Donations towards Helping Hands Program, \$10,000 is needed
  - Books for Middle School, 6th, 7th and 8th grade reading level
  - 25 Chromebook Laptops/Tablet, needed for teacher and students, \$275 per laptop
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## Reminders for September/October



### Mark your calendar

- September 12th Ice Cream Social at 5:30-7:00 pm at GMA in the Activity Center
  - Sept. 16th Fall Love of Learning Raffle begins
  - Oct. 18th No School, Teacher workday
  - Oct. 28th Buffalo Wild Wings fundraiser
  - Nov. 15 Movie Night at GMA
  - Nov. 7-8th Parent Teacher Conferences
  - Nov. 27-29th No School, Thanksgiving Break
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## Yellowstone Elementary Cross Country School Meet

Dear GMA Families,

The 16th Annual **Yellowstone Elementary School Cross Country Meet** will take place **Wednesday, October 9** at Pioneer Park. We hope our school will participate.

If you would like your child to participant, you can REGISTER ONLINE at <https://yescrosscountrymeet.org/>. The races are FREE to participants registered by October 1st and \$10 for registrations after October 1st. **There is NO EVENT DAY registration.** *Please* make sure kids are registered on time.

Grace Montessori Academy will be picking up the bibs for our school and placing them in your child's backpack.

The race distance is one mile for boys and girls in grades 3, 4, and 5 (younger students may participate in the 3rd grade division).

All times are approximate and we ask that you have runners ready to race **30 minutes ahead of listed times.** Following is the schedule:

**3rd grade race begins at 4:15 p.m. with the girls first and then the boys;**

**4th grade race begins at around 4:50 p.m. with the girls first and then the boys**

**5th grade races start around 5:25 p.m. with the girls first and then the boys.**

This is through the Big Sky State Games, contact is Parker Rood, 406-254-7426



**Pick Up and Drop Off 2024-2025 Updated.pdf**

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272.6 KB



**2024-2025 School Calendar Approved.pdf**

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**GMA Dress Code 2024-2025.pdf**

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**Regina Griemsman**

Head of School

[Contact](#)

