



The Green School of Baltimore

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School Handbook 2022-2023

Mission Statement

E3 is a nonprofit organization in Baltimore City working to grow an educational community that is committed to improving student achievement and instilling a sense of responsibility for our environment. We do that in three key ways:

- by providing an innovative, elementary education that is based on direct experiences and hands-on activities,
- by providing professional development,
- and by making tangible contributions to the community.

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Exceptional Learners Team:

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Special Educator: Jose Hernandez, jose.hernandez@thegsb.org

Office Manager: Chris Hope, chris.hope@thegsb.org

Assistant Principal: Erin Gunter, erin.gunter@thegsb.org

Principal: Kate Primm, kate.primm@thegsb.org

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN FAMILIES AND THE SCHOOL

Email Communication

- Each teacher has a GSB email address (see the attached list).
- If you have a question about your child's performance or an incident that happened in a specific class, please write to the teacher. It is helpful if you explain what your child has told you about the situation and ask the teacher to fill in any missing information.
- If you have a more general question about your child, please write to the Homeroom Teacher. That teacher will take the lead in sharing your question with your child's other teachers and in following up with you. You can expect to hear back from the Homeroom Teacher by the close of business on Friday.
- If you have a larger question about the school's operations, please write to Kate Primm and Chris Hope.

Take Home Folders

- Every student receives a Take Home Folder, which will be sent home each Friday and should be returned to school each Monday. There is a ***Stay At Home*** pocket and a ***Return to School*** pocket in each folder. Please empty out the ***Stay At Home*** pocket and complete the items in the ***Return to School*** pocket and send them back to school in the folder.

Homeroom Newsletters

- Homeroom teachers will send home electronic newsletters at least twice a month. These newsletters will keep you updated on things that are happening in the classroom, upcoming events, and what your children are studying in the class.

Schoolwide Newsletters

- Letters will be emailed home each week. Please read them every week – they contain a lot of important information.

Back to School Night - *Thursday, September 15 (6:00 – 8:00)*

- What will teaching and learning look like for your child this year?
- Chance to meet with your child's teachers to learn about teaching and learning in each classroom
- Overview of the school's goals for the year
- Overview of Volunteer Opportunities

1st Quarter Conferences

- 30 minutes for each family to sit down with their child's Homeroom Teacher
- Sharing results of assessments and work samples - what we have learned about your child
- Discussion of what your child will be working on this year
- Suggestions for how you can support your child's learning at home

REPORT CARDS AT THE GREEN SCHOOL

We use a standards-based grading system rather than the more traditional number or letter grade system that so many of us are familiar with from our own schooling experiences. In a standards-based system, we measure students' proficiency on well-defined grade level standards, and we report progress over the course of the grading period. This differs from the traditional grading system where assessments are based on a percentage system and assessments record the average work rather than the best work.

The standards-based grading system values the learning process and teaches students that making mistakes and learning from them are a vital part of the learning process. This approach gives students a chance to practice mastery of standards without worrying that each attempt is recorded as a grade that will be factored into the calculation of the overall grade. This in turn supports the development of a growth mindset where students see struggle and effort as an integral part of the learning process rather than an indication that they are not smart.

To support this approach, you will see that we use the following comments, rather than letter or number grades, to indicate student progress on each standard:

Student Progress Terms K-2 nd Grade	3 rd – 5 th
Strong Command (Secure) Moderate Command (Developing) Partial Command (Beginning) Little or No Command	Exceeds grade level standards Proficient at grade level standards Approaching grade level standards Below grade level standards Significantly below grade level standards

2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR

August

Saturday, August 20: Volunteer Day & Ice Cream Social (10:00-1:00)

Monday, August 29: First Day of school for ½ of the students in kindergarten and ½ of the students in 1st grade.

Tuesday, August 30: First Day of school for ½ of the students in kindergarten and ½ of the students in 1st grade.

Wednesday, August 31: First Day of school for All Green School students

September

Thursday, September 1: Frank's Pizza Night (PTO Fundraiser)

Monday, September 5: Schools closed for Labor Day

Friday, September 9: Skate Night (PTO Fundraiser)

Thursday, September 15: Back to School Night

October

Tuesday, October 4: Individual Picture Day

Thursday, October 6: Frank's Pizza Night (PTO Fundraiser)

Friday, October 14: Skate Night (PTO Fundraiser)

Friday, October 21: School closed for Teacher Professional Development

Saturday, October 29: Chili Jamboree

November

Tuesday, November 1: End of 1st Quarter

Thursday, November 3: Frank's Pizza (PTO Fundraiser)

Tuesday, November 8: Schools closed for Election Day

Wednesday, November 9: Schools closed for Teacher Professional Development

Friday, November 11: Skate Night (PTO Fundraiser)

Wednesday, November 23 – Friday, November 25: Schools Closed for the Thanksgiving Holiday

December

Thursday, December 1: Frank's Pizza (PTO Fundraiser)

Friday, December 9: Skate Night (PTO Fundraiser)

Friday, December 23 – Monday, January 2: School Closed for the Winter Break

Tuesday, January 3: Return to school after Winter Break

January

Monday, January 3: Return to school after the Winter Break

Thursday, January 5: Frank's Pizza (PTO Fundraiser)

Wednesday, January 11: Early Dismissal at 1:15 (Teacher Wellness Day)

Friday, January 13: Skate Night (PTO Fundraiser)

Monday, January 16: School closed in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Friday, January 20: End of 2nd Quarter

Monday, January 23: Schools closed for Professional Development

February

Thursday, February 2: Frank's Pizza (PTO Fundraiser)

Friday, February 10: Skate Night (PTO Fundraiser)

Friday, February 17: Schools closed for Teacher Professional Development

Monday, February 20: Schools Closed for Presidents' Day

March

Thursday, March 2: Frank's Pizza (PTO Fundraiser)

Friday, March 10: Skate Night (PTO Fundraiser)

Friday, March 17: Schools closed for Professional Development

Thursday, March 31: End of 3rd Quarter

April

Monday, April 3 – Monday, April 10: Spring Break

Thursday, April 6: Frank's Pizza (PTO Fundraiser)

Tuesday, April 11: First day back after Spring Break

Friday, April 14: Skate Night (PTO Fundraiser)

Friday, April 21: Schools closed for Professional Development

May

Thursday, May 4: Class Picture Day

Thursday, May 4: Frank's Pizza (PTO Fundraiser)

Friday, May 12: Skate Night (PTO Fundraiser)

Monday, May 29: School closed for Memorial Day

June

Thursday, June 1: Franks' Pizza (PTO Fundraiser)

Wednesday, June 7: Early Release at 1:15 (Teacher Wellness Day)

Friday, June 9: Skate Night (PTO Fundraiser)

Tuesday, June 13: Last day of school if there have been no snow days

1st DAY OF SCHOOL

We use a staggered start for our kindergarten and 1st grade students to help ease the transition into school and to make it easier to introduce the incoming students to the building, classroom, and routines. This means that the first day of school for kindergarteners and 1st graders will be either Monday, August 29 or Tuesday, August 30. and the first day for 2nd – 5th graders will be Wednesday, August 31.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

The Green School will follow Baltimore City Public School System for school closures, lateness, or early dismissals due to weather. Decisions by the school system's CEO will be made by 5:00 am, and may include school closure, opening 1 hour late, 2 hours late, or dismissal 2 1/2 hours early.

Please watch any Local TV stations, tune in to WBAL radio 1090 am or other stations, or sign up for text alerts to your cell phone to hear about closures.

SCHOOLDAY LOGISTICS

SCHOOL HOURS

8:30 – Doors open for all students.

8:30-8:45 - Breakfast is available for all students

8:45 – All students are expected to be in their Homeroom Classes for Morning Routine

3:25 – Dismissal (Monday – Thursday)

1:15 – Dismissal (Friday)

MORNING DROP-OFF

The Green School opens at 8:30 every morning for breakfast, which is available free-of-charge for all Baltimore City Public School students. **All students are expected to be in their classrooms with their things put away by 8:45, so instruction can begin on time.**

Please **do not drop off your child before 8:30** because there is no adult outside to watch students dropped off early. If you arrive before 8:30, you have two options: pay for your child to attend the before-care program or wait outside the front door until 8:30

Students arriving between 8:30 and 8:40 will go directly to the Dining Room if they need to eat breakfast. If they have already eaten breakfast, they will go to the Fitness Room where they will have time for morning games.

DISMISSAL

We dismiss our students at 3:25 Monday through Thursday and at 1:15 on Friday. At dismissal time, each teacher escorts their students outside to the Physical Education space next to the school. We ask our students to wait here for their parents to pick them up because it is the safest place for a large group of elementary school students to wait. Except in case of emergency, students will not be dismissed within 30 minutes before the end of the school day.

We ask our parents to do the following at drop-off and pick-up time:

- Please wait outside for your child, and **do not go into the classrooms at dismissal time**. We want to make sure that teachers can give all of their attention to their students as they pack up at the end of the day.
- If you are conducting business rather than dropping off or picking up (i.e., coming to the school to talk to a teacher), park in one of the GSB spots in our portion of the parking lot, on another street, or on the **school's side** of Kentucky Avenue.

- If you are having someone who is not on your child's Pick-Up Authorization List pick up your child in the afternoon, please send an email to both your child's teacher and Chris Hope (chris.hope@thegsb.org).
- Please call the school at 410-488-5312 or 13 if you have an emergency and are running late for afternoon pick-up.

WHERE TO PARK DURING DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP

We ask families to follow these guidelines, so that our drop-off and dismissal times are safe for our students, run smoothly for our parents, and have a minimal impact on our neighbors.

- Pull into the marked Drop-Off Zone on the school's side of Kentucky Avenue to drop-off or pick-up your kids at drop-off and dismissal. (Staff members are on hand to ensure the safe transfer of the students and to expedite this process).
- If you are walking your child into the building or need to come into the office, park on the school's side of Kentucky Avenue outside of the Drop-Off Zone or on another street (Cardenas, Chesterfield or Brendan).
- DO NOT PARK in the parking lot. The Belair Edison School uses the portion of the parking lot along Kentucky Avenue for their Physical Education classes and for recess. Please be sure not to park or drive through their instructional space.
- DO NOT double-park on Kentucky Avenue.
- DO NOT park on the residents' side of Kentucky Avenue whenever possible.

ABSENCE

The Baltimore City Public School System defines absence or lateness as Excused if it is for sickness or doctors' appointments. If you know ahead of time that your child will be absent or late, please inform his or her teacher; then, send in a written note—signed by parent or guardian—with the date and reason for the absence or please send an email to both your child's teacher and Chris Hope (chris.hope@thegsb.org)

MISSED WORK FOR EXTENDED ABSENCES

If your child will miss school because your family needs to be away for a prolonged period (i.e., family emergency, has chosen to go on vacation), GSB teachers will provide the work your child missed *upon their return to school* as well as a deadline for turning in the missed work.

LATE ARRIVAL

It is important that students arrive at school by 8:45, so they can begin the day with their classmates. In the event that your child has to arrive late, please sign in the Late Arrival section of the binder in the Main Office.

EARLY DISMISSAL

Please let your child's teacher know if you need to pick up your child early for a doctor's appointment, etc. When you come to pick up your child, please sign in the "Early Dismissal" section of the binder in the main office or lobby and let someone in the office know you are here to pick up your child. Students may only be picked up by a person indicated on the Pickup Authorization form unless other permission is given in writing.

***Please note:** Except in emergency, no student will be dismissed less than 30 minutes before the end of the school day.*

BEFORE-CARE/AFTER-CARE

Before-care and after-care are being provided by All 4 One. Before-care will run from 7:00 – 8:30 each morning and after-care will run from 3:25 – 6:00 Monday – Thursday and 1:15 – 6:00 on Fridays. Please visit the All 4 One website:

(<http://www.all4onecreativearts.com>) for registration forms and details about the program.

Jill O'Neal, the director of All 4 One, can be reached at all4onemaryland@gmail.com.

Please address any concerns about before-care or after-care directly to Ms. O'Neal.

FOOD/MEALS

Breakfast: The Green School, as a Baltimore City Public School, offers **FREE** breakfast for all children from 8:30 – 8:45 each morning. Breakfast usually consists of cold cereal with milk, juice, and graham crackers.

Lunch: Students have 30 minutes to eat lunch each day. It is part of our mission that students enjoy a healthful meal in a relaxed atmosphere, so that lunchtime is similar to a family meal at home. We have a microwave in the dining room, and we are happy to **warm up** food for your child at lunch provided that it is in a microwaveable container (not aluminum foil) and will take **1 minute or less to warm up**. City Schools is providing free lunches for all students this year.

Water: Please send in a water bottle—with a lid—for your child to use at school. Your child’s teacher will send this bottle home regularly for cleaning. In order to reduce waste at our school, we will not be providing disposable cups for students.

Gum, Soda, and Candy: Students are **not allowed** to bring gum or soda to school (even as part of their lunch). Please leave these items at home. They are allowed to bring 2-3 small pieces of candy as part of their lunch.

CELEBRATING BIRTHDAYS

At The Green School, we love being a part of your children’s birthday celebrations! We have worked hard over the years to find fun ways of celebrating birthdays without causing disruption to the important work happening in classrooms.

In this spirit, we have created a special way to celebrate birthdays at The Green School. On the last Friday of each month, we celebrate all of the birthdays from that month rather than doing individual birthday celebrations throughout the month in the dining rooms.

How it works?

- The last Friday of each month, we will celebrate ALL of the birthdays for that month in the dining room by singing Happy Birthday to all of the students who have had a birthday that month; then we will share a treat with all of the students in each lunch.
- The school will purchase butterscotch crunch and chocolate chip cookies from *Ricardo the Bakersman*, a locally owned business run by Ricardo Andrews, our Health & Safety Coordinator.
- For students with summer birthdays, we will include them in our June birthday celebration.
- In lieu of making or buying treats, families will be asked to contribute \$5.00 to the birthday celebration pool.

When you factor in your time and cash outlay this should be quite an attractive deal. Please note, that all students will be included in these celebrations regardless of whether or not their families are able to contribute \$5.00.

If your child has a food allergy and is unable to have one of the birthday cookies the school provides, please talk to us about sending in an alternative treat so they can be part of the celebration.

DRESS CODE

An essential part of The Green School’s mission is that students spend time outdoors each day to investigate the local environment and to keep their bodies active. We have decided on the following Dress Code to support this outdoor, active work. The chart below summarizes the GSB Dress Code.

GSB Dress Code for Tops	GSB Dress Code for Bottoms	GSB Dress Code for Shoes
PART OF THE DRESS CODE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green School logo t-shirt (any color) • Green School logo polo shirt (any color) • Plain solid color polo shirt or t-shirt (without a logo) • Arlington Echo shirts • Sweatshirts or sweaters without designs or logos (any color) 	PART OF THE DRESS CODE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Khaki-style pants, shorts, skirts, or jumpers in navy, black, dark green, grey, or khaki • Corduroy pants, shorts, skirts, or jumpers in navy, black, dark green, grey, or khaki • Loose-fitting, plain yoga-style pants • Plain, solid color sweatpants • Plain, solid color athletic pants • Plain, solid color skirts • Plain, solid color shorts • Plain, solid color jumpers • Opaque, plain, solid color leggings 	PART OF THE DRESS CODE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sneakers or other closed-toe shoes appropriate for daily P.E. and outdoor activities
NOT PART OF THE DRESS CODE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Striped shirts • Shirts with designs, logos, or words • Sweatshirts or sweaters with designs or logos 	NOT PART OF THE DRESS CODE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jeans 	NOT PART OF THE DRESS CODE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open-toed shoes • Crocs • Flip flips • Shoes that light-up • Shoes with glitter or gems

OUTDOOR RECESS & PHYSICAL EDUCATION

GSB students have recess for 30 minutes each day and PE for 50 minutes a day (M-Th). We go by the old adage that there is no such thing as bad weather, only inappropriate clothing, so we want to go outside for recess every day.

Of course, sometimes the weather does get in the way, and we have to stay inside for indoor recess on occasion. Here are our guidelines for determining when we will not go outside for recess:

- When the temperature or the temperature with the wind chill is below 20 degrees.
- When there is significant falling moisture.
- When the playground is unsafe because it is too wet or icy.

PHONES, SMART WATCHES, AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES

It is our preference that GSB students do not bring their cell phones, smart watches, or other electronics to school. If a student does bring these items to school, they must turn in the device to the Main Office, upon arriving at school and retrieve the device at the end of the school day. It is the student's responsibility to pick up their device from the office at the end of the day. Any student who brings their device but does not bring it to the Main Office when they arrive, will have their device taken and held in the office until a family member comes to pick it up.

ITEMS FROM HOME

Please ensure that your child leaves all toys, trading cards, games, and fidgets at home or in your car. Students who bring these items to school will have them taken by a staff member and held until a family member comes to pick it up.

HOMEWORK AT THE GREEN SCHOOL

One of our essential beliefs at The Green School is that students learn well when they are engaged in meaningful work. That's why children in all grades here investigate topics that help them answer questions about the world around them. It is just as important to us that your children have meaningful time with you when they're not in school, and that any home assignments we give to your children be useful and worthwhile. We know that for many families, traditional and mandatory homework produces a great deal of stress. We lead busy lives, and your children already work very hard during the school day. If we are going to ask them to do homework, we want to make sure that it is beneficial rather than just an extra burden.

Our approach to homework has evolved through the years and is informed by our review of the research about the effectiveness of homework. What we found was surprising: In all of the studies that have been done about the effects of homework, there is NO EVIDENCE that homework of any kind helps elementary students perform better academically. In fact, in the early grades (up to 3rd grade), the evidence shows that students with more homework actually performed worse in school. In addition, there is no evidence that supports the commonly held belief that homework yields nonacademic benefits for students (such as self-discipline and independence).

We know this sounds strange because homework is something that most of us grew up doing, and it is something that is part of the traditional school experience. Despite the prevalence of homework in schools, however, the research is clear that homework does not

produce academic gains; instead, it often produces stress, frustration, family conflict, loss of time for other activities, and a decrease in a student's interest in learning.

Based on this research, we have asked ourselves what role home assignments should play at The Green School, and we have developed the following principles to guide our thinking:

- We do not want homework to introduce stress around learning to the home environment; instead, we want home assignments to provide meaningful conversations and interactions between you and your child around what they are learning in school.
- We believe that home assignments can be a useful tool for communication between the school and families about what students are learning in school.
- We believe that homework completion should **not** be factored into students' grades.
- We believe that home assignments can be helpful if they are carefully crafted to fit the needs of individual students particularly students who are receiving extra support in reading or mathematics. This does not mean that Green School students will never bring work home, but you can expect that it may look different from what many of us are used to based on our own school experiences. It will also look a bit different across the subject areas and across the grades. Here are some examples of At Home activities that you may see from your child's teacher:
 - ✓ Asking you to set aside time each evening where you read to your child, your child reads to you or your child reads independently.
 - ✓ Suggesting types of questions to ask you children while you read with them, such as making predictions or inferences.
 - ✓ Playing a math game with your children that uses new math skills learned in class.
 - ✓ Looking for different types of plants or living creatures around your neighborhood