

# Green-Fields Elementary School

## Student/Parent Handbook 2019-2020

### Transfers

Please contact the office as soon as possible when planning to move; they will provide you with information on how to proceed to make the move as smooth as possible.

### Attendance

Green-Fields Elementary School maintains high expectations for attendance and punctuality. Regular attendance and punctuality enables students to benefit from well-planned and well-delivered instructional activities, including classroom discussions, presentations and cooperative activities. These shared academic experiences are integral to the learning process and cannot be re-created or replicated. In order to reach the goal of maximum educational benefits for each child, the process of education requires continuity of instruction, classroom participation, learning experiences and study.

Attendance and punctuality play a significant role in a student's success at school and are essential life skills. However, the overwhelming majority of children become ill at some point during the school year. Given that we do not want to add an additional stressor to those that are sick, ***we no longer recognize students for perfect or near perfect attendance.*** We have found that in many cases, promoting perfect and near perfect attendance results in sick students, who are often contagious, attending school.

**SCHOOL HOURS:** Full day – 8:50 to 3:25. Half Day: 8:50 to 1:10.

**TARDY :** A child not in the classroom by 8:50 AM is considered late. When your child is going to be tardy, please call the Green-Fields absentee line at 845-7929 (select prompt 2). **Students, who are tardy for school, should report to the school office upon arrival with their parent/guardian.** *Please note that playground supervision is not available prior to 8:35 each morning.*

**ABSENCE :** When your child is going to be absent, please call the Green-Fields absentee line at 845-7929 (select prompt 2). It will be necessary for school staff to call home if a note or a phone call from a parent/guardian does not verify a child's absence. **A note with a parent's/guardian's signature explaining the nature of the absence is required upon the first day of return.**

**MAKE-UP WORK FOR ABSENCES :** When your child is out sick, we encourage you to request make-up work and/or homework; however, please make the request as early as possible. Given the time required to organize make-up work, requests received after 11:30 AM cannot be honored.

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### Arrival and Dismissal

The hours at Green-Fields School are 8:50 AM to 3:25 PM. On half-days dismissal is at 1:10. Students begin arriving at 8:35. There is no supervision before 8:35 AM. Any student arriving prior to that time is encouraged to enroll in the Young Eagles morning daycare program.

### Student Drop-off (AM)

In the interests of safety, parents dropping their child off to school during the supervised window of time (8:35-8:50) should drop their child off at the main (front) entrance. Any child arriving after 8:50 AM is considered late and must be escorted, through the main (front) entrance, by a parent to be signed in.

### Student Pickup (PM)

If you plan to pick your child up during dismissal, it is imperative that a note be sent in to the teacher to ensure s/he does not ride the bus. The venue for parent pickup is the All Purpose Room (APR). Parents/guardians are welcome to arrive as early as 3:10 PM. Children being picked up will be dismissed to the APR at 3:20 PM. You will be required to sign your child out; please be prepared to present identification. Please note that students participating in the *Young Eagles Program (YEP)* **must** sign out with the YEP.

### Young Eagles Program

The Young Eagles Program (YEP) operates concurrently with the school calendar and is supervised by qualified staff. The YEP accommodates working parents by providing childcare before and after school within a flexible schedule. Homework help, athletic activities and arts and crafts are offered in an informal setting. For information on registration, cost and space availability, contact Ms. Sue Iraldi, YEP Coordinator, at 848-4300 ext. 3212.

### Early Dismissal

As a general guideline, children should not leave school during school hours, except for an emergency. We do recognize that scheduling a doctor's or dentist's appointment during the school day is sometimes unavoidable. In such cases a note should be sent to the child's teacher on that day and the parent must come to the office to sign the child out of school. For security purposes, we ask that parents be prepared to present identification if requested by the office staff.

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### Emergency School Closing/2 Hour Delayed Opening

- ▶ If adverse weather conditions cause a cancellation of school, School Messenger, the district emergency phone system, will be activated to provide automated phone messages. (Please inform the office of any changes to your phone numbers.) Word of the closing will also be sent to local, Philadelphia radio (KYW 1060) and television stations for announcement. Each school district is assigned a code number; West Deptford's code number is **804**.
- ▶ Closing school early due to inclement weather is avoided as much as possible. However, please discuss your family's emergency plan with your children just in case safety dictates early dismissal. We will attempt to make contact with our School Messenger telephone service. (Please notify the office of any new phone numbers to assure that you receive the call.)

### Academic Program

Differentiated instruction is integral to the way the West Deptford School District “does business.” Differentiation is an instructional approach for each elementary grade level without “walls or ceilings” for students, ensuring that each student is challenged by a variety of instructional strategies suited to his/her achievement and ability levels, learning styles and interests. All students in every classroom at every grade level are nurtured and encouraged to learn and grow to their full potential.

The elementary curriculum emphasizes total child development—cognitive, affective, social and physical. The curriculum is directed by a five-year plan, which ensures that all programs are reviewed and updated cyclically. This plan considers the Core Curriculum Standards approved by the New Jersey Department of Education. It is developed and implemented through input from teachers and administrators, ensuring that all programs represent current theory and practice and reflect high expectations of students.

Copies of the curriculum—including the “Family Life Topics” portions of the Health Curriculum—are available for your review in the principal's office.

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### Classroom Assignments

The West Deptford School District cannot honor requests from parents for placement with a particular teacher or in a particular class. However, each spring, parents are encouraged to provide the principal with written feedback outlining their child's strengths, areas of need as well as the optimal classroom environment (e.g., structured, nurturing, etc.).

### Reporting Student Progress

Report cards, interim progress reports (via conference or written report) and parent-teacher conferences are the primary means by which to inform parents of a child's progress in school.

Green-Fields Elementary is committed to effective communications between students, teachers and parents. Conferences will be held twice a year. Additional conferences may be initiated, as needed, by parents or teachers throughout the year. If you think your child is experiencing academic, social or emotional issues, please do not wait for the regularly scheduled conferences—call your child's teacher as soon as possible.

Report cards are issued three times per year.

### Homework

Homework is the opportunity for students to practice specific skills, to extend learning, to remediate learning, to provide enrichment and to complete assignments not completed in class. Furthermore, it is important for students to develop a sense of responsibility for their learning. Teachers and parents are important partners in helping students learn this responsibility. Taking into consideration the benefits of regular homework and how it can enhance the children's education, Green-Fields Elementary is committed to setting clear expectations for homework and communicating those expectations to students and their families.

**MAKE-UP HOMEWORK FOR ABSENCES:** When your child is out sick, we encourage you to request make-up work and/or homework; however, please make the request as early as possible. Given the time required to organize make-up work, requests received after 11:30 AM cannot be honored. The request for make-up work can be left on the absentee line when calling your child out.

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### Character Education

Character Education is a lifelong developmental process by which children learn about and apply core ethical or shared values to their lives. The New Jersey Department of Education has identified the following Six Pillars of Character Education—*Responsibility, Fairness, Citizenship, Caring, Trustworthiness and Respect*—which are interwoven throughout the core content curriculum. Many of our school activities and special events will have the Six Pillars of Character Education themes embedded.

### Art

Creative expression is a universal component of human culture. Art education addresses the needs of the whole child. Exposing children to rich and artistic works will enable them to celebrate and appreciate cultural differences and similarities. The art program at Green-Fields will encourage problem solving, concentration, self-discipline, cooperation and individuality and afford children both verbal and nonverbal avenues for communication allowing them choices for self-expression.

### Music

Music classes at Green-Fields expose every child to a musical learning environment that is positive and encourages creativity. Students receive age appropriate lessons that consist of kinesthetic, visual and aural experiences. Through the playing of instruments, reading of music and other multi-tasking abilities, students learn to work together as a team to achieve a common goal. These experiences provide our children with an enriching appreciation for the arts as well as a positive outlet for individual growth.

### Physical Education

Physical education is an integral part of Green-Fields' instructional program. All students are afforded the opportunity to participate in physical and health-related activities on a weekly basis that improve health, fitness, motor skill development, safety practices, positive social skills, team building and sportsmanship—just to name a few areas of emphasis!

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### Library, STEM and Media Center

The Green-Fields Media Center is an exciting haven where books and media come alive! Children are encouraged to explore the library independently, use research skills to answer questions about the world around them and appreciate different genres of literature. Information literate individuals are responsible, independent, lifelong users of information, capable of accessing, organizing, evaluating, synthesizing and communicating information in all its forms.

### Technology

The West Deptford School District is committed to the infusion of technology into all aspects of the educational program, making the use of technology natural to the educational experience and inherent to the way students work and think, in and beyond the classroom. It is in that spirit that—effective this year. All students will participate in a specialized Science, Technology, Engineering and Math period each week.

### After School Activities

Building a life-long love of learning, through a climate of support and encouragement, is an on-going goal at Green-Fields. Activities are planned to support our core curriculum, character education and citizenship skills. Many clubs target specific grade levels, and they are scheduled throughout the year.

### Students First Committee

Green-Fields Elementary School operates a multidisciplinary Students First Committee comprised of a cross-section of professional staff members. The Students First Committee offers teachers and parents with a means of drawing on the resources of both the individual school and the larger district in an effort to assist students experiencing academic, behavioral, social, or emotional difficulty. Any staff member or parent may request that a child's needs be considered by the Students First Committee. This process is the mechanism by which district educational support services can be accessed to assist in providing success for all students.

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### Gifted Program

Gifted academic programming is based on student needs, beginning in third grade. In general, many of our students have an elevated achievement level, so most of their needs are met within the regular classroom. A variety of adaptations and modifications are made by the classroom teacher, including tiered assignments, differentiated expectations and flexible ability grouping and enrichment opportunities.

Children that qualify for the gifted program spend one day each week outside their regular classroom. In addition to providing pullout groups to those that qualify, the responsibilities and role of the gifted teacher are to serve as a resource for classroom teachers in providing the above-listed needs. The gifted teacher also provides enrichment to all second grade students.

### Child Study Team Services

The Child Study Team (CST) is a group of specialists employed by the West Deptford School District to provide consultative, evaluative and prescriptive services to teachers, parents and students. The CST, along with the school principal and the Students First Committee, makes recommendations for programs and placements that best address the needs of students who experience school-related difficulties.

### Counseling Services

Not too long ago, school guidance services were provided only to children experiencing serious issues or problems. Today, we have a full time counselor who provides a broad spectrum of services that are an integral part of the educational process for every child. Our counselor, Mrs. Hansbury, implements a comprehensive developmental program that focuses on educating the whole child—living in family, school and community systems—to produce positive educational outcomes.

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### Health Services

Mrs. Budd, our school nurse, is available if your child becomes sick or injured during the school day. Parents will be notified if the situation cannot be remedied by simple first aid. It is very important that all the information on the student data sheets are correct so that parents can be contacted promptly in an emergency. If any of the contact information changes, particularly parents' work numbers, please notify the school nurse of the new number so that we may reach you when you are needed.

**Any medication, including over-the-counter medications, that need to be taken during the school hours must be in its original container and requires written authorization from the parent/guardian and a physician. All medication must be delivered to the nurse by a parent or guardian.**

Physical exams are required of all new enrollees as well as students in preschool. Physicals must be completed by the student's family physician.

Your child will be screened yearly in height, weight, blood pressure, sight and hearing. Deviations from the norm will be screened a second time. If deviation is noted again, the parent will be notified. All 10 year olds will also be screened for scoliosis.

### Child Abuse or Neglect

Any knowledge or suspicion of child abuse and/or neglect must be reported immediately to the Division of Child Protection and Permanency. Failure of a staff member to make a report is a violation of the law. All information is kept confidential. The building principal, school nurse and school counselor have further information relating to this process.

### School Citizenship

The goal of our school discipline system is to help children learn to regulate their own behavior. We try to take into account the developmental level of students and explicitly teach certain behaviors to our younger students. Mistakes are an opportunity for children to learn more about themselves and their place in the world; positive behavior is an opportunity for recognition. By the time our students reach fourth grade, personal responsibility for good behavior should be ingrained.



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### School Citizenship (cont.)

We seek to develop in students a sense of responsibility that causes them to interact appropriately with one another in a way that provides a safe environment for all. A safe environment, in turn, creates a climate that is conducive to learning. Our concern for safety is not limited to the physical environment, but includes caring for others and fostering social competency, positive values and a positive identity.

While we don't have a formal dress code at the elementary level, we do require students to wear clothes that are appropriate, modest and safe. Examples of inappropriate and/or unsafe dress include hats, open sandals, shoes without heel straps, bare midriffs and t-shirts with provocative images or slogans.

As a general rule, personal property that exceeds \$20 in value should remain at home. These items include—but are not limited to—Game Boys, Nintendo DSs and iPods. Too often, this personal property is damaged or lost, which can create a significant distraction from the learning process.

### Transportation/Bus Safety

Bus transportation is provided for all students where walking conditions have been determined to be hazardous. Transportation provided by West Deptford Board of Ed. is a privilege, and as such, proper bus behavior is expected and required. Two bus evacuation drills are scheduled during the school year.

**Students must ride the bus to which they have been assigned.** Likewise, students are required to be picked up and dropped off at the same location each day. If an *emergency* arises and a student needs to be dropped off at a different location of his/her bus' route, the steps that follow must be taken.

**Please note that it must be the same bus route; riding on another bus is not permitted.**

- Send in a note making a request to switch the bus drop off location for a specific date; please be sure to state the reason/s
- Secure a note from the adult whose home is the child's destination
- Submit **both** notes to the principal for approval
- Give **both** notes—with the principal's signature—to the bus driver when boarding

Please note that given the coordination required for a permanent bus change, 48 hours notice is required.

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### Bicycles

No bicycles may be ridden on the school grounds during school hours. A bicycle rack, which is provided in the front of the building, is reserved for fourth grade students. Board policy requires students to wear helmets when riding a bicycle to and from school. A fourth grade child may ride his/her bicycle to school only if a parent/guardian submitted a permission form.

### Pupil Records

Your child's records contain only information that is relevant to their education and is objectively based on personal observation or knowledge of the originator of the record. Parents and children have a right to individual privacy and the right to know concerning information gathered by the school. If you wish to see your child's records, you may do so by making an appointment with the principal's office.

### Breakfast and Lunch

The kitchen serves a cold breakfast and a complete hot lunch program; however, students who prefer may bring a lunch from home. Milk may be purchased separately. Pricing is as follows:

**Breakfast — \$2.05 • Lunch — \$2.85 • Milk — \$.65**

If your child has forgotten his/her lunch, they may charge one. *It is important that he/she repay the charge on the next school day.*

**Pay Schools Central**, the Secure Online Payment System, will be offered again this year to our parents to fund student lunch accounts & pay student fees online. Funds will be deducted from the account through the use of a student ID card complete with a barcode unique to each student. These cards will be kept by your child's teacher and distributed each day prior to lunch.

Children who are in need will be provided a lunch at reduced price or at no charge to the student. Students in need of such assistance will be determined by the criteria issued by the state of New Jersey. Eligibility requirements and application for free and reduced price meals are found on the district web page under the District Information tab... Cafeteria Information. This form must be completed each school year.

Lunch will be served every school day, including half days. A small snack time will be provided on full days of school only.

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### Birthday Celebrations

Special (non-food) treats for your child's birthday may be brought into school. Treats brought in by parents must be dropped off in the main office. Parents are always welcome at Green-Fields; however, we prefer to keep birthday celebrations "low-key," so we ask that you refrain from sending in special visitors, balloons and presents.

**Please Note: All birthday treats are to be non-food items.**

Invitations to birthday parties may only be distributed in school if all the children in a given class are being invited to avoid hurt feelings and the resulting distractions from the education process.

### General Safety

A safety committee meets on a regular basis to discuss security and safety issues. Any staff member, student or parent is invited and encouraged to bring concerns to our attention.

### Visitors

As mentioned above, parents are always welcome to visit Green-Fields, but as a matter of courtesy, the classroom teacher should be notified in advance. All Green-Fields visitors must register in the main office and receive a self-adhesive visitor's pass. The pass must be worn at all times while in the building and returned to the office at the conclusion of the visit.

### Emergency Telephone Numbers

It is essential for your child's health and safety that the school has a local telephone number of someone who is to be contacted, and who is available to pick up your child in the event of illness, injury, or early dismissal. Parents/guardians are reminded that if at any time they change their home, work, or emergency phone numbers the school nurse and main office should be notified immediately.

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### Drills: Fire Drills, Evacuation & Lockdown

There will be two emergency drills conducted per month as required by the updated state statute; one fire drill and one school security drill (evacuations, lockdowns, etc.).

An auditory and visual alarm will signal the need to evacuate the building. Students will follow the directions given to them by their teachers or other staff members. A map indicating the nearest exit is posted in every room. Fire and evacuation drills are concluded when the principal or his designee indicates the drill is completed.

Lock down drills will also be scheduled throughout the year. The purpose is to account for all the students and faculty and move them to a safe place in case of an emergency. They will be tactfully and sensitively discussed with the children prior to the drills.

### Parent Information

#### ▶ Parent/Teacher Conferences

The educational welfare of our children is best served when there is mutual understanding and cooperation between home and school. Parent teacher conferences are scheduled twice during the school year—once in the fall and again in the spring. Additional conferences may be initiated, as needed, by parents or teachers throughout the year. If you think your child is having a problem or you have a concern about his or her progress, please do not wait for the regularly scheduled conferences—call your child’s teacher or the school counselor as soon as possible. Parents are urged to utilize parent conferences to establish an active communication that will assist in the progress of their child.

#### ▶ Monthly Calendar

Please refer to the Green-Field’s Monthly calendars will be posted on the school website by the last Wednesday of each month for the most current information for the following month. Paper copies are available in the main office upon request.

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### Parent Information (cont.)

#### ▶ Weekly Wednesday Folder

The school and the PTO will communicate with parents regularly by sending notices home with your child. We will provide each child with a special “Wednesday Folder” for this purpose. Although some notices are “time sensitive,” and in rare cases, emergencies, the majority of school-to-home communication will arrive in the Wednesday school folder. Please ask your child for the folder each Wednesday afternoon.

#### ▶ Parent Teacher Organization

The mission of the West Deptford Elementary PTO—which includes membership from all three elementary schools—is to enhance and enrich our children’s academic experience by inspiring parents and teachers to work together to build a strong school community. Parental involvement is critical to a child’s success in school, and we encourage all parents to show their support for their children by getting involved in the PTO. While many PTO programs require parental participation during school hours, there are many committees and activities that support the children, the school and the PTO that are flexible and can be managed after hours, at your convenience, and do not require parental involvement during the school day. We want every child at Green-Fields to have the opportunity to benefit from a sense a pride in his/her parents’ involvement in the school, and we have plenty of opportunities for parents to show their support. Please join us as we work together for the benefit of our children. For additional information, please refer to the PTO website, which is linked off of the Green-Fields homepage (web address is below).

### Website

Green-Fields Elementary School has an extensive website that can be accessed at [www.wdeptford.k12.nj.us/Green\\_Fields](http://www.wdeptford.k12.nj.us/Green_Fields). We encourage you to visit often for information about our students and staff, including an individual web presence for each teacher that includes daily homework assignments, special announcements, reminders, etc.