

# GREENBRIER COMMUNITY SCHOOL



## FAMILY HANDBOOK

# GREENBRIER COMMUNITY SCHOOL

413 OAK STREET LEWISBURG, WV 24901

OFFICE (304) 793-2420

INFO@GREENBRIERCOMMUNITYSCHOOL.ORG

## Family Handbook

<b>Table of Contents</b>	<b>Page #'s</b>
Overview	1-2
Policies and Procedures	3
Enrollment	3
Daily Procedures	4
Arrival, Dismissal and Parking	4
Extended Care and Plus Time	4
Tardiness	5
Communications	5
Conferences and Concerns	5
Observations	6
Admissions Information	6
Student Records/Assessments	6
Standardized Testing	7
Illnesses/Sick Policy	7-8
School Closings	8
Safety	9
Insurance Guidelines	9
Field Trips	9
Food	10
Peanut Free Environment	10
Library	10
Birthdays, Holidays	10
Student Dress	11
Re-Enrollment	12
Tuition Assistance	12
Payment of Tuition	12
Parent Support	13
Volunteerism	13
PAGES	13
Student Responsibilities	14
Toys and Personal Belongings	14
Homework	15
Discipline/Responsive Classroom	15-16
Acceptable Use	16

*Greenbrier Community School does not discriminate in the admission of students or in the operation of the school on the basis of sex, race, creed or ethnic origin.*

## **HISTORY:**

Greenbrier Community School was founded in 1999 as Greenbrier Episcopal School by parents, educators and community members. We are a non-profit educational organization with a Board of Trustees.

We are a vital community of children, families and faculty, all working together to provide the best possible atmosphere for optimum growth of the students. We want to ensure that Greenbrier Community School flourishes for the children of today and for generations to come.

## **MISSION STATEMENT:**

As an independent day school, our mission is to provide students with innovative and challenging educational experiences and curriculum that fosters independent thinking, problem solving, and collaboration. A high priority is to create a thriving, accepting community that supports students as they grow into responsible, confident, and compassionate leaders able to contribute to society. We prepare our students for later education and for life by giving them an appreciation for beauty, a desire for truth and the capacity to love and respect themselves and those around them.

## **VISION:**

GCS provides an exciting learning environment that includes a challenging and progressive curriculum, hands-on and experiential learning, along with rich and meaningful community engagement. GCS supports its teachers to continually challenge themselves to learn and grow as educators, to embody best practices and to initiate innovative methods. GCS recognizes that children are capable of contributing to their education and community and, to that end, provides opportunities for leadership, collaboration and engaging with the challenges of a complex world.

GCS recognizes the profound obligation of parents and educators to provide our next generation with a scholarly foundation based in the ideals of tolerance, resilience, and respect. We view parents as the first teachers of their children and understand the importance of a strong relationship between each family and the school. This relationship is crucial for children to create for themselves a sound, productive and fulfilling life.

GCS believes that students learn best in a safe and caring atmosphere with the clear expectation that each child will strive to be his or her best self. We emphasize respect, responsibility and caring for others. The school recognizes the values of tolerance and diversity within its own community. GCS nurtures a spiritual life within the classroom and school communities through the respectful exchange of ideas, histories, and information from a wide range of perspectives that includes discussion and reflection.

GCS provides an educational program that encourages students to engage in creative problem-solving, become disciplined thinkers, and contribute to their communities. Our school prepares students to continue their education by offering an academically challenging and creative learning environment. Above all, GCS seeks to develop within each student a love for life-long learning, sense of self-worth and a belief in the dignity of every human being.

## **FACULTY:**

Our school is staffed by trained, qualified and caring teachers and administrators. Additional specialists offer art, foreign language and cultures, music, and physical education. We also work with various community organizations to enrich students learning and understanding of the world.

## **COMMUNITY:**

Our philosophy emphasizes regard and respect for the needs of others both within and beyond our immediate school community. Therefore occasionally, we will ask for your support with service in the Greenbrier Valley, the United States, or another country. We use community resources in planning our field trip programs and sometimes share in events with other local schools.

## **ORGANIZATION:**

The Board of Trustees, composed of parents, the Head of School and members of the community, oversees the fiscal management and policies of the school. Administrative responsibility for daily operations rests with the Head of School. Faculty supervises the children's education and care.

Additionally, Board members have made commitments in two primary areas:

1. To take an active role in fundraising for GCS;
2. To be responsible for chairing committees in their areas of interest and expertise.

## **COMMITTEES:**

Various committees assist the Board and administration, such as Development, Public Relations, and Personnel. Parents, staff, community members and trustees comprise the membership.

The school makes many decisions within a committee and Board structure, making recommendations for implementation to the Head of School. This process enhances community participation and welcomes a broad range of options. Feel free to talk with the Head of School regarding your service on a specific committee.

## **PARENTS:**

GCS is an independent school. As such, parents need to participate in our volunteer program and fundraising efforts in order to ensure their success. We look forward to sharing these events with you. Parents are expected to support the school by volunteering their time, expertise, or resources to make GCS the best school possible. A variety of projects and Parents' Association events always need volunteers and teachers can sometimes make use of helpers in the classroom. We recognize that different families will need to help GCS in different ways, yet everyone's support is vital for building a true sense of community. We also expect that all families will contribute whatever they are able to our Annual Fund campaign; the percentage of participation by our families is an important statistic when GCS makes applications for funding to private foundations. We are very appreciative of your participation and commitment to the excellence of our school.

## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **ENROLLMENT:**

#### **Children may be considered for potential enrollment subsequent to:**

- A tour of campus by parents and meeting with Head of School or the Head's designee.
- The submission of an application form, fee and questionnaire.
- Family interview resulting in favorable recommendation by Teacher and Head.
- The submission of previous school information/records, medical and immunization records, fees and contract. (Enrollment occurs only when the tuition agreement and deposit are paid.)

#### **Placement considerations are:**

- Appropriate openings (age, sex and ability balance goals exist for each class) and appropriate placement for child/family;
- GCS may give special consideration to siblings and families relocating to the area;
- Enrollment is limited to 15 per class.
- GCS values diversity and may enroll students with specific needs who are able to be accommodated within our existing classroom, school environment, and available resources.
- GCS reserves the right to assign probationary status to a student's enrollment at any point in the academic year for academic, behavioral or disciplinary issues. Failure to meet school standards may result in suspension or dismissal.
- Students are promoted based on GCS' assessment of academic, social and behavioral readiness.

#### **Enrollment Continuum:**

Experience shows the value of having students participate in multiple years of placement. Placing students who can participate in this full cycle is a goal of our enrollment process.

The first four to six weeks of a new student's placement provide additional time to assess his/her academic and developmental needs and to establish the foundations of a successful partnership among student, family and school. If during that period, or at any time thereafter, the school requests additional evaluation or support to assist the student's success or continued placement, the family is expected to comply in a timely manner. This information will be used to develop an academic plan that will enhance the strengths and remediate weaknesses. On occasion GCS will recommend additional assessments or outside therapists or tutors to facilitate this assessment. The fall parent-teacher conferences are a time for goal setting and initiating strategies that will be employed by the school and supported by the parents.

Continuation through each level at GCS and into the next one presents opportunities for children to be nurtured in supportive environments and a cohesive philosophy from pre-kindergarten through elementary.

Consistency between home and school is vital to student success; suggestions are available through teachers and parent education meetings.

## DAILY PROCEDURES

### Arrival, Dismissal and Parking:

**Arrival:** 8:00 a.m. Classes begin at 8:15.

**Dismissal:** 3:15 p.m. (12:30 pm for Pre-Kindergarten)

All students **MUST** be signed in at the office if arrival is after 8:15AM.

Everyone should use extreme caution during morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up. Designated parking spaces are available for parents who wish to park their car and escort their child into school. During pick-up parents are asked to stay in their vehicles. Children picked up by parents and remaining on school grounds after 3:30 must be supervised by parents and are no longer the responsibility of GCS staff. Parents should not send their children to play on the playground unsupervised if they remain at school beyond 3:15.

### EXTENDED CARE

GCS offers Extended Care for NIDO and Pre-school students enrolled in GCS. Extended Care runs until 3:15 pm each day.

### EARLY DROP-OFF

Early drop off is available beginning at 7:45am.

### General Notes: re: Arrival and Dismissal

- Children should always exit and enter vehicles on the building side-never crossing a lane of traffic or walking around to the far side of the car.
- Please keep the line moving briskly and safely; look before pulling out.
- **Please use extreme caution during arrival and dismissal times.**
- Please do not impede traffic flow. For more than momentary conversations with staff, please call the school office to make an appointment.
- Please notify the office in writing or by phone before 2 PM if your child is to go home with someone who is not on your transportation permission list or if child is staying for the afterschool program.
- If you must be late for dismissal or if an emergency arises, please call the school to let us know.
- If you pick up your child prior to regular dismissal time, you **MUST** stop by the office for sign out. (The sign in-out log is a safety measure for GCS and for parents).

Other adults may take friends' children home with them if:

- the adult is listed on the child's transportation permission list,
- the child's parent writes a note and sends it to the school office,
- the child's parent telephones the office about this arrangement and a record is made.

## TARDINESS AND ATTENDANCE

Prompt arrival aids success for many students and offers special time/greetings with teachers and classmates. Late entries to class create disruption for fellow students and teachers and may raise the level of anxiety of children who miss early morning activities. Morning Meeting begins the day in every classroom at Greenbrier Community School by previewing the day's agenda and is a special and regular activity which sets a tone for the day and helps to build community. Parents need to ensure that their children arrive at school between 8:00 and 8:15 am each day. Late arrivals will be recorded in the teacher's roll book as tardy and reported to the office for inclusion of the student's permanent record. All students arriving after 8:15AM must be signed in by a parent/guardian in the office.

Families should make every effort to schedule holidays and vacations with the school's yearly calendar in mind. Students will be expected to make up as much work as possible which is missed upon their return. Because our curriculum is interactive and personalized some activities which occur in class cannot be re-created. In addition, it should not be expected for teachers to plan lessons far in advance but rather necessary adjustments will be made after the student's return.

## COMMUNICATIONS

- GCS encourages open, supportive communication (child-adult, home-school).
- The office is open from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Our phone number is **304-793-2420**. Our answering machine receives calls when the office staff is unavailable.
- Correspondence from school is often put in your child's backpack or homework folder.
- The school and each individual classroom sends out a newsletter every month. These newsletters are our main source of communication.
- Our *GCS News Bulletin Board* is the primary communication from GCS; please review and respond accordingly. There is also an occasional newsletter with articles and features about the school.
- Child custody decrees must be on file in the office. Most school information (newsletters, conference forms, etc.) is sent only to the parent who has physical custody. A second parent may request being on our mailing list for such information by contacting the office. GCS will share appropriate information requested by the non-custodial parent, unless there is a court order to the contrary on file at the office.

## PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

- Formal conferences are held twice annually supplemented by written reports at other times during the academic year. The school calendar lists the reporting and conference dates.
- Conferences should be attended by both parents whenever possible and usually include the student.
- Teachers are available for other conferences as mutually arranged with parents. Parents should make every effort to maintain the scheduled conference times in the fall and spring.

## PARENTAL CONCERNS

- GCS desires to work with families in mutual understanding and support to benefit the child.
- Behaviors demonstrated at school are best handled/resolved at school, although parents may be notified and called on for support.
- Parents having concerns regarding the class or a student should contact the teacher first. If further resolution is needed, or if the situation is of an administrative, financial or school-wide nature, parents should contact the Head of School.

## OBSERVATIONS

- Classrooms are open to parents and visitors after the first month of school; this delay allows classes to establish their routines. GCS seeks to be an open environment and parents should feel free to share their observations with the classroom teacher.
- Observations should not distract students or teachers from their work. If free, the teacher will seek you out; children will invite conversation if interested.
- Open Houses for the general public are scheduled for late winter/ early spring. Parents are encouraged to invite interested families to Open Houses. This is an excellent way for parents to introduce others to GCS.

## Admissions Information/Public Relations:

Admission information packets are available from the office along with pamphlets and reprints of newspaper articles about the school. Parents are encouraged to refer interested families to GCS and to provide the office with news of their children's extracurricular and community activities outside of school. Parents are the primary ambassadors for the school. By sharing with others your enthusiasm for GCS, you will help the school to grow each year.

## Student Records and Information:

The following information must be on file:

- Previous school's academic and behavioral records
- Current Emergency Information form
- **Immunization record showing child is current with immunizations as well as hearing, speech and vision screenings.**
- Student records are confidential and accessible by custodial parent(s), staff or others approved by parents. Non-custodial parents may have access to specific information about the student as authorized by the custodial parent or by custody agreement; a copy of agreement is to be filed with GCS upon the child's enrollment.

Release must be authorized by custodial parent(s) to make records available to others.

Parents have a right to inspect, review and challenge the content of the student's progress reports and standardized tests. GCS maintains student records for at least seven years after the child has left the school.

Recommendations or records of student progress may not be forwarded to other schools nor diplomas issued until tuition balance is paid or current, whichever is applicable. Unless otherwise directed by parents, GCS forwards to other schools only health and immunization records, progress reports, evaluations and standardized test scores.

Greenbrier Community School employs portfolios in order to assist faculty in assessing a student's progress and achievement. Portfolios of student work are part of conferences and are maintained throughout an academic year in the student's classroom. At the conclusion of the year, the student and her primary teacher will choose 4 pieces of work to be placed in the student's permanent portfolio which is stored in the school office. These pieces of work should fairly represent the student's performance and achievement in each of these four domains: (1) creative writing or expository writing, (2) mathematics/problem solving, (3) reading/literary comprehension and (4) another area of the student's own choosing. Upon graduation from GCS, the student's permanent portfolio will be returned to the student.

## Assessments:

Teachers/administration may request that your child receive a vision, hearing, and/or developmental assessment. These assessments provide an objective description of the child's abilities and deficits in order to better understand his or her strengths and needs. These assessment help identify important milestones and provides opportunity for teachers and parents to work together to support children as they grow. Parents agree to schedule the requested assessment within one month of the request. If the assessments are not obtained and shared with GCS teachers/administration, trying to best support the student, your child's enrollment is subject to termination and ineligibility for re-enrollment.

## STANDARDIZED TESTING

Annually students third grade and above undergo standardized testing and results are shared with parents. Test results are kept in the students' cumulative files to be sent to other schools upon transfer or request. The test is administered over several days, and students observe normal test taking rules. Students will practice with preparation materials prior to test week. Tests are scored by teachers. The percentiles compare students to other students of the same grade according to national norms.

## ILLNESSES/SICK POLICY

**Please contact the school office by 8:15 a.m. if your child will be absent on any given day.**

### Illness

Colds, flu and other contagious diseases are a serious issue in a small school environment because they can spread so rapidly. Parents are asked to keep children home when they show symptoms of illness. If your child exhibits any active symptoms of illness, he/she will not be admitted to the school, both for the child's own comfort and to minimize the spread of illness to other children in the school.

### **The following guidelines are to help you determine if your child should be kept home from school:**

If your child has any of these symptoms/conditions, please give them time to rest and recover:

- Fever. If your child has a fever at night, he/she must not attend school the next morning. Temperatures are lower in the morning and a fever may occur again in the afternoon. You are required to wait 24 hours after the fever breaks before sending your child back to school.
- Upset stomach. If your child vomits during the night, do not send him/her to school the next day. You are required to wait 24 hours after a child vomits before sending your child back to school.
- Diarrhea. Loose and frequent stools have many causes. Do not send a child to school until bowel movements are normal.
- Cold. Please help us teach your child how to handle tissues for coughing, sneezing and nose blowing, and practice good hand washing techniques. Your child may go to school as long as he or she does not have a fever or discomfort. If symptoms are severe (e.g., persistent cough or severe runny nose with thick mucous that will consistently interrupt their work or rest time), please keep your child at home so he/she may rest and recover.
- Earache. Never ignore an earache. Contact your physician and keep your child at home.
- Strep Throat. A strep infection requires a doctor's visit and medication. Strep can lead to a more serious illness if not properly treated. The child must be on medication at least 24 hours before returning to school.
- Contagious Condition. Head lice (see below), scabies, impetigo, chicken pox, strep throat, measles, rubella, mumps, whooping cough, meningitis and some forms of conjunctivitis (pink eye) are contagious and must be properly treated and no longer contagious before your child may attend school. Please notify the school if your child has a contagious condition so that other parents can be alerted. Your child may not return to school without permission from your physician and clearance from the office.
- Head lice. Due to the arrangement of student work spaces in the our classrooms and the number of collaborative work spaces and projects, if we find signs of lice (nits/eggs), in order to contain the spread we may ask parents to pick up their student early to begin treatment. If parents detect lice at home, please let the Office know immediately so that we can check the rest of the students in the class. Prior to the student's return to school, we will need to know the specific treatment that s/he will be undergoing and the date that the treatment began, so that we can follow up regarding the second application of the treatment (which typically needs to be applied 7-10 days after the first application). Upon returning to school, before the child enters the classroom, please bring her/him to the Office where he/she will be discreetly checked for nits, and where we can record treatment dates and methods. Students will be allowed to return to class when they are nit-free. Nit removal can take several comb throughs and we ask that parents check the child each day during their treatment. Thorough combing with an egg removal comb each day during the 10-day period following the first treatment is an essential part of eliminating the lice and helping to prevent a lice recurrence. We will follow up, checking students and classes as needed to ensure that all active lice and eggs have been removed.

If your child has been out of school due to illness, we ask that you consider whether he or she is well enough to be outdoors before you send him or her back to school. The outdoors is part of our program and we do not have the staff to supervise students indoors and outdoors simultaneously.

### **Illness or Injury at School**

If a child becomes ill at school, he or she will be taken to the office. A parent/guardian will be contacted and will be expected to pick up the child as soon as possible. If a child is injured at school, first aid will be administered if the injury is minor. An accident report will be filed for injuries which require medical attention, including first aid. Parents will be asked to sign the accident report when they pick up their child and will be notified immediately if there are any questions concerning the severity of the injury. The student's emergency contacts and physicians will be called if the parents are unavailable. All classroom teachers are CPR/First Aid certified. Paramedics will be called when necessary.

Prescription medications must be stored in the office, where office staff can assist and monitor appropriate dispensing. **Please do not send medication in your child's lunch box.**

### **SCHOOL CLOSINGS**

GCS will close for conference days, and holidays as noted annually on the School's calendar.

GCS may close in the event of inclement weather. Updates will be made by 6 a.m. Determination of school closings will be made independently of decisions made by local county schools. If weather conditions make travel dangerous in the morning, school will be closed. Additionally, GCS will have an early dismissal only under the most adverse circumstances. Should parents become anxious about weather forecasts, they may always pick their children up at school and sign them out in the school office.

## **SAFETY**

Most staff members are trained in first aid and C.P.R.

We treat injuries with soap and water only unless a parent or guardian has given permission to apply medication, ointment, etc.

Fire drills are held throughout the year.

**If parents or emergency contacts cannot be reached and staff determines your child needs medical attention, your child will be transported to the medical facility designated on his emergency card, either by staff vehicle or ambulance. Parents assume any resulting expense and hold harmless staff and volunteers assisting in such an instance.**

GCS is required to report to Child Protective Services any suspected child abuse or neglect.

## **INSURANCE GUIDELINES**

Our liability insurance contains guidelines to which we must adhere in order to ensure the safety of students, parents, and staff. GCS insurance does not cover any private, personal child-related services agreement entered into between GCS and any family, including one with a child or children attending GCS or any other school. Accordingly, any such arrangement is exclusively private in nature and deemed to be excluded from any GCS insurance coverage whatsoever. GCS will not accept any liability from such child-related service agreements between GCS staff and any family.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

All classes take field trips during the year to provide a link between the classroom and community. Field trips may be taken on foot or by car with staff or parent volunteers as drivers. GCS will make every effort to contract with professional transportation providers in order to provide the safest mode of transportation possible.

Students must have on file a general field trip consent form that covers most field trips. Longer trips require separate consent forms. Notification is made in advance of trips.

Proper restraint is required for all children who attend school-sponsored field trips. Parents may drive on field trips if:

- The office is notified in advance by faculty and approves the written field trip plan
- Notification has been made to parents
- Drivers have appropriate liability coverage and medical coverage for passengers

## FOOD

Children bring their own lunches. Healthy mid-morning snacks are provided for the first week of the school year. After this initial period of school-provided snacks, parents are asked to provide a nutritious mid-morning snack and lunch each day. Recommended snacks would include raisins, small bags of cheerios, crackers, cheese, a small piece of fresh fruit, etc. Children's snacks and lunches are not to include candy, gum, sodas or sugary cakes/ cupcakes, etc. Snack time and lunches are both community events of each school day. Table manners as well as appropriate conversation and decorum are emphasized.

If your child has any food restrictions or allergies, please notify the office and the classroom.

We encourage use of recyclable containers that your child can manage independently, rather than foil, baggies or juice boxes; please label lunch boxes, thermoses, etc. with your child's name. Please peel or cut fruit if your child requires this help. Please avoid lunchboxes or containers with violent or armaments-related motifs.

## PEANUT & CASHEW FREE ENVIRONMENT

Due to the severity of nut allergies, we ask that you support us in reading labels, and sending items that do not contain peanuts, cashews or nut oils to school. We also ask that parents be vigilant of washing student's hands, etc. if they have had nut products before coming to school.

We have students with severe nut allergies. If your child is bringing a homemade or store bought item to share with his/her class, please ensure that the ingredients are clearly labeled. In addition, please contact the school if unsure about any food products before sending them.

## LIBRARY

Currently, our library is for school use only. Each class has a weekly library period when students should return books and may check out reading books. Replacement costs may apply for books damaged by students' loss, neglect, or abuse. Students who fail to return books may have their borrowing privileges limited. Parents are asked to assist the school by seeing that books are sent back to school on the students' library day.

## BIRTHDAYS / HOLIDAYS

If your child wishes to acknowledge his birthday or a special holiday at school, please contact your child's teacher to make arrangements. **We encourage families planning a birthday party outside of school to invite all members of class.**

GCS uses personal, cultural and religious holidays as educational opportunities to broaden and deepen the student's understanding of himself, his peers and his society and of other cultures and beliefs. Cultural and religious holidays focus on celebrations as a part of life, either natural or societal. Group presentations, individual activities or cultural/geographic topics may focus on the holiday, and children may choose related work projects. These celebrations' goals are to aid the child's awareness, understanding and appreciation of the rich and vital heritage of many lands and beliefs and allow him to respond to such events individually.

## STUDENT DRESS

**Purpose:** The student dress policy is designed to maintain a respectful, safe, and positive learning environment and to model good citizenship at Greenbrier Community School. It is also intended to support a sense of school pride and identity within the community. Students' dressing alike promotes a more cooperative and less competitive environment. The dress code helps ensure that students define their identity not by a statement made through their appearance, but through the substance of their thoughts, ideas, and actions.

**Guidelines:** Established around comfort and play

Item	Acceptable	Not Acceptable
Shirts/Sweaters/Sweatshirts	Solid Color	Tanks Shirts with graphics or patterns or stripes
Pants/shorts/Skirts/Skortts/Dresses	Solid Color	Cut offs, tears or holes
Socks/tights	Anything goes but solid colors are preferred	
Shoes	Must be closed toed for play Heels no higher than 1.5 inches	Opened toed sandals Shoes inappropriate for play
Hats	May be brought to wear outside of school	Hats within the building

**Enforcement:** The GCS dress code applies to all students. The provisions above explain the school's policies regarding dress and grooming for GCS students. Both parents and students share the responsibility for an individual student's attire. Observance of the dress code must begin at home with each school family. School responses to issues with student dress will be age-appropriate and may range from gentle, quiet reminders by classroom teachers to parents being asked to bring suitable attire to the school office for habitual and/or severe infractions.

**\*Please also ensure your child's name is written inside their coats, sweaters and sweatshirts\***

## **RE-ENROLLMENT:**

Re-enrollment for the next academic year begins in January. Enrollment priority is offered to families and children who support our philosophy and who make good use of our school's opportunities.

Families are ineligible for re-enrollment until documented tuition and fee balances are paid or current, whichever is applicable. No recommendation, transcript of a student's academic work or diploma will be issued until all financial commitments have been met.

Families re-enrolling their children (with contract and deposit submitted) by the deadline may be eligible to receive a small reduction on the total cost of tuition. Look for further information when re-enrollment contracts are mailed.

## **TUITION ASSISTANCE:**

Our tuition assistance program is supported by some fundraising, direct donations to Tuition Assistance and GCS' commitment to providing assistance to the degree possible within the budget. Contact the office for the SSS application form and for additional information.

Tuition assistance decisions are made by the Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees. Decisions are based on family financial reporting which is processed through the School and Student Service for Financial Aid in Princeton, NJ. **Financial assistance will only be considered for those families who have filled out the required form.**

Families are ineligible for financial aid application until documented tuition and fee balances are paid or current, whichever is applicable. No recommendations, records of a student's progress, or diploma will be issued until all financial commitments have been met.

## **PAYMENT OF TUITION:**

GCS is a private, non-profit corporation supported by tuition revenues and donations. We appreciate your prompt payment on the payment plan you have chosen.

Tuition and Book and Material fees include consumable classroom supplies and most field trips. **A non-refundable deposit must be paid when the tuition agreement is signed as part of the enrollment process.**

**If a child is withdrawn or dismissed from the school, the family is still responsible for tuition.**

## **DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS:**

- Delinquent accounts (30 days or more) may result in suspension of students unless an alternative payment plan exists.
- All accounts (tuition and non-tuition) must be paid or current before students may re-enroll, graduate or have scholastic records released.
- Delinquent accounts (30 days or more) may result in the family being required to pay 50% of the coming year's tuition in advance.
- Any outstanding payments remain due, despite withdrawal or dismissal.

## **PARENT SUPPORT**

### **CONTINUITY**

Continuity between home and school is probably the greatest support parents can offer children in this school experience.

Since families choosing GCS generally share values, goals and attitudes compatible with the School's philosophy, we can build a growing relationship to enhance the child's development. Mutual education and communication are the primary components of such progress. Similar home and school expectations, responses and goals help children understand why abusive, manipulative behavior is not appropriate whatever the setting.

Through educational programs and opportunities for communication, GCS hopes families will create a consistency furthering the child's intellectual, emotional, and spiritual growth.

GCS anticipates families will commit to the educational continuity afforded by the School where a child can be guided in a consistent method over several years. GCS encourages families to visit classes at the succeeding levels and see the wonderful possibilities awaiting the child.

### **VOLUNTEERISM**

Tuition alone does not cover all expenses therefore additional support--in time and money-- is necessary to offer this quality of education.

GCS expects that every family give volunteer service each school year. Tasks may range from class projects to committee work to consultation services to helping with building and grounds repair and maintenance or helping with Admissions Open Houses.

Participation in fund-raising efforts and sharing of your time, materials and/or skills will help defray our expenses and enrich our resources. This is especially true of the annual **Auction** and the school's **Annual Fund**.

### **PAGES**

The Parents' Association of GCS (PAGES) meets several times a year. The Association is designed to be an organization that supports the work, mission and vision of the school. The Parents' Association helps to plan school functions, social events, and fundraising; and Association officers have regular meetings with The Head to discuss parent-related issues and activities. The Parents' Association is also one of the schools' chief liaisons with the local community. PAGES works throughout every school year on fundraising events that ultimately benefit the entire school. We welcome parental interest and involvement in the Parents' Association.

## **THE STUDENT:**

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

A young child has the intuitive aim of self-development. Children want to develop their inner resources and ability to cope with a strange, complex world. They want to see and learn for themselves through their senses and growing intellect, not through the eyes of an adult. The child who accomplishes this becomes a full person. We believe in the value of such experience that results in the self-mastery, self-discipline and love of learning characteristic of the GCS educated child.

Children at GCS are to follow the life-skills listed below based on respect to others and to self. These skills are used as a basis for problem solving and as our model for discipline. We are a community based on trustworthiness, active listening, truthfulness, no “put-downs” and the achievement of our personal best.

### **GCS LIFE-SKILLS**

These life skills help students to evaluate their own performance and to guide them individually and in groups to an understanding of which social behaviors will enhance their life-long success:

- Caring: to feel and show concern for others
- Common Sense: To use good judgment
- Cooperation: To work together toward a common goal or purpose
- Courage: To act according to one’s beliefs despite fear of consequences
- Curiosity: A desire to investigate and seek understanding of one’s world
- Effort: To do one’s best
- Flexibility: To be willing to alter plans when necessary
- Friendship: To make and keep a friend through mutual trust and caring
- Initiative: To do something, of one’s own free will, because it needs to be done
- Integrity: To act according to a sense of what’s right and wrong
- Organization: To plan, arrange, and implement in an orderly way; keep things orderly and ready to use
- Patience: To wait calmly for someone or something
- Perseverance: To keep at it
- Pride: Satisfaction from doing one’s personal best
- Problem Solving: To create solutions to difficult situations and everyday problems
- Resourcefulness: To respond to challenges and opportunities in innovative and creative ways
- Responsibility: To respond when appropriate; to be accountable for one’s actions
- Sense of Humor: To laugh and be playful without hurting others

### **TOYS AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

Explain to your child that toys including electronic entertainment devices do not come to school. Toys appearing at school during the academic day will be taken and returned to parents. Children are welcome to bring books, show and share or other special items which relate to class activities. Label any items sent to school. GCS regrets it cannot be responsible for loss or damage. If a child deliberately damages material or the environment, he will be asked to repair or replace the damage or provide some other appropriate restitution.

## **HOMEWORK**

Effective homework must be balanced among the multiple dimensions of children's lives and learning just like a teeter-totter on a school playground works by balancing children. At Greenbrier Community School we believe homework should connect children's experiences at school with their daily lives at home. We structure our learning activities in school to be collaborative and interactive such that work away from school can never fully replace what goes on in the classroom.

Yet homework can be valuable in different disciplines to reinforce procedures and to expand learning. We believe further that various assignments at different grade levels will vary greatly, gradually increasing in length and complexity as children move on in their years of schooling. At the same time we fully understand that the children at GCS must have valuable social and family time outside of school. Homework should neither preclude out of school activities nor should it viewed as busy work. Rather, it must be purposefully connected to school lessons and limited in duration.

Help at home with assignments can be beneficial when children and parents work collaboratively and creatively. However, children must be encouraged to develop independence in their learning and every assignment should not require parents' help. It is best to monitor the time and place for homework to be completed and to respond to requests for assistance. Accountability for the accurate and timely completion of assignments is shared jointly by faculty, student, and parent. This encourages children to learn how to be responsible and how to manage time.

## **DISCIPLINE & RESPONSIVE CLASSROOM**

GCS believes discipline is a process in which students are supported in developing self-control, responsible choice-making, respect, citizenship and scholarship. This approach should help the child learn s/he is responsible for what s/he does and that actions have consequences.

Responsive Classroom approach is a way of teaching that creates a safe, challenging and joyful classroom and schoolwide climate for all children. Teachers who use the Responsive classroom approach understand that all of children's needs – academic, social emotional and physical – are important. The teacher creates an environment that responds to all of those needs so that your child can do his or her best learning.

Children learn best when they have strong academic and social-emotional skills. That's why teachers using the Responsive Classroom approach focus on teaching all of the skills needed for academic excellence. They teach children reading, writing and math skills and also teach them how to take turns, listen respectfully and work effectively with a partner or a group.

Teachers also think carefully about everything from classroom setup to how they speak to their students. All of these things put together determine how well children learn.

### **Responsive Classroom Practices**

- Morning Meeting
- Rule Creation
- Interactive Modeling
- Positive Teacher Language
- Logical Consequences
- Guided Discovery
- Academic Choice
- Classroom Organization
- Working with Families
- Collaborative Problem Solving

We try to resolve problems in the context of the setting and people involved in a way that is appropriate for the developmental level of the child or children involved. However, if a teacher's efforts at redirecting inappropriate behavior are not met with success, parents and the Head of School will be notified. GCS will document repeated disruptive behavior or physical aggression. Students will be suspended or dismissed from the school if the Head of School deems their behavior unacceptable or detrimental to the School's standards or other students or if the family declines the School's requests for additional evaluation or support to assist the student's success.

## **ACCEPTABLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY**

Greenbrier Community School recognizes the rapid advancement of technology in this age brings potential for great benefit as well as pitfall. Students are expected to use school provided and their own technology devices for appropriate educational and communicative purposes. GCS provides access to the internet for research purposes under specific teacher instruction. Use of the internet for alternate purposes may result in serious disciplinary response. Student cell phones may not be used during school hours (8:15-3:15) except to contact parents or in an emergency situation with direct teacher permission and must be set to a silent/vibrate mode when in school. These are not to be used as entertainment devices.