

FAMILY & STUDENT HANDBOOK



Denver Green School

Denver Public Schools

A K-8 Innovation School in Southeast Denver

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Denver, CO 80224

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www.denvergreenschool.org

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GENERAL INFORMATION

This handbook is designed to inform parents/guardians of the protocols and policies that will enhance the success of your student(s) and our entire DGS community. In this book you will find important information regarding the responsibilities of parents/guardians and students. *Please read this book completely and sign a copy of the last page and return it to your child's teacher or the main office at the school.*

DGS Mission

In partnership with our diverse urban community, Denver Green School will provide a hands-on, brains-on experience that includes all students, staff, families and community, preparing all learners to lead the way toward a sustainable, bright green future.

DGS Vision

As a national beacon for real-world learning, the Denver Green School strives to integrate a flexible student-driven approach to curriculum and instruction, where diverse learners of all ages:

- Achieve at a high level academically;
- Partner with their teachers to engage in relevant, student-directed learning;
- Build leadership capacity by embracing a democratic decision-making model;
- Use service-learning as a way to become community stewards;
- Create mind-body connections as well as community connections; and
- Use our school building and our neighborhood as laboratories for the study and implementation of carbon footprint reduction and sustainable living.

Core Values

The Denver Green School is built on a foundation of the following core values:

Community: Organizations, neighbors, teachers and family members are key stakeholders in the education of children. DGS involves these stakeholders to support student learning and to contribute to our community.

Equity: DGS serves every student in our community and creates learning conditions in which all students can achieve their highest potential. The DGS community demonstrates leadership in cultural proficiency in a system that supports diversity.

Engagement: DGS believes that students learn best when they are engaged in a student-centered, standards-based curriculum which emphasizes hand-on, brains-on project-based learning in a real-world setting, thus inspiring natural curiosity and innovation.

Stewardship: DGS takes ownership and responsibility for maintaining, protecting and improving our natural, built and social environment. DGS engages in direct action to address environmental problems and achieve sustainable solutions.

High expectations: DGS students hold the highest expectations for their own achievement and believe in the power of their community. DGS aligns curriculum, instruction and assessments as an accountability tool for continuous learning and improvement.

Relevance: DGS students are enthusiastic learners because they use knowledge to solve real-world problems in their own communities. Focusing on sustainability issues, DGS builds community partnerships to create a more durable future.

Shared leadership: DGS is committed to a vision of distributed leadership that is collaborative, democratic, effective, reflective and courageous. DGS engages all community stakeholders in its decision making process.

DGS will implement a flexible, student-centered, standards-based curriculum that will emphasize hands-on and project-based learning. We will design projects to adapt to a variety of contexts in order to connect learning to the student-driven investigations and service projects. When established curriculum cannot easily connect to the service learning projects, a variety of projects, labs and workshops will provide the necessary content. Students learn best from direct participation in life's events.

What Makes DGS Different?

Learning Families: DGS believes that students work best in a positive classroom community. Every day at DGS students will have a 20 minute Learning Family to build a positive and supporting classroom community.

Service-Learning: Service-learning is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with classroom instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility and strengthen communities. DGS takes ownership and responsibility for improving our natural, built and social environment through service-learning. We engage learners to address real-world problems and achieve sustainable solutions for our school and our community. We believe that students have the power to solve problems and that relevance in their learning will prepare them to be the leaders of the future.

Education for Sustainability: Here at DGS we are focused on the overarching goal of achieving sustainable practices from our students. These practices will be achieved through the Education for Sustainability Standards outlined by The Cloud Institute. We encourage students who are conscious about their relationships with others, their community and the natural world. DGS students make decisions founded on these relationships.

Demonstration Nights: DGS will create a community that celebrates the learning of every learner by organizing three Demonstration Nights. These nights will offer students the opportunity to present to their parents and the DGS community the skills and knowledge they have acquired.

Measuring Progress at DGS

DGS will use Colorado State Content Standards as the framework for what students should know and be able to do in all subjects. Although teachers will have the final word in the determination of student progress, students will gradually take increasing responsibility in tracking and assessing their learning, resulting in a seamless education system from pre-school to college.

In the early years (ECE-3rd grade), DGS will focus on developing reading and writing proficiency and laying the foundations for future success in math. DGS will use research-based models and best practices that support the needs of all students in achieving the content standards. Students will learn to assess their own progress based on setting goals that address their unique learning needs.

In the middle years (4th to 8th grade), students begin to develop their own learning paths. While still adhering to state standards, students will gain increasing autonomy in identifying learning goals and developing a portfolio that demonstrates progress toward achieving them.

Students in grades 3 through 8 are required by the state of Colorado to participate in a number of subject specific assessments throughout the year. Student who are absent on the day of a state exam are administered the test on a designated make-up day. Scores from these assessments are used to monitor the academic program at DGS and are influential in the high school placement process. The dates for these assessments will be listed on the school calendar.

Daily Schedule

Monday-Thursday, 8:00-3:45 (Dynamic after-school programs available through Kaleidoscope Corner, please sign up at the main office)

Friday, 8:00-12:45 (Friday enrichment classes available for small fee)

Yearly Calendar

Please see DGS Calendar in the Appendix section of this handbook.

Common Expectations for All DGS Students:

- Be on time for all classes and school-related activities.
- Be prepared for each lesson/class (i.e. have the proper materials--paper, pens, notebooks)
- Follow instructions of all staff the first time they are given.
- Display the behaviors that are part of good listening and speaking:
 - Maintain a calm body; Look at the speaker; Participate fully in classes
- Greet all members of the community as well as visitors
- Not chew gum, eat candy, or drink any beverages other than those provided by the lunch room, except for water, while on school grounds
- Not bring handheld electronic devices to school, including cellular phones, handheld games and IPODs. These will be confiscated by DGS staff
- Use appropriate language while on school grounds and on field trips
- Abide by the DGS dress code at all times while on school grounds.
- Be safe and considerate while moving through common spaces.

DGS STAFF

Contacting Staff

Parents can call the main office number and leave a message for their student's teachers/staff member. Do not expect to be able to speak with DGS staff members right away, as they will likely be working with children. You may also contact staff via e-mail.

Please call the main office at 720-424-7480 if you would like to schedule an appointment to discuss your child's progress with his/her teacher. You can also reach us via e-mail. All staff e-mails are available at DGS's website: www.denvergreenschool.org.

Important Phone Numbers at Denver Green School

Main Office: 720-424-7480

Attendance Line: Messages only...this line will not be answered 720-424-7499

Lead Partners:

Mimi Diaz- 720-424-7483

Craig Harrer- 720-424-7484

Frank Coyne-720-220-8846

Main Secretary:

Vanessa Ferrel -720-424-7481

School Fax Number-720-424-7537

All Emergencies should be directed to the main office at 720-424-7480

SCHOOL POLICIES

Emergencies

All Emergencies should be directed to the main office at **720-424-7480**

Absences

Parents must alert the school if your child will be absent by calling the **Main Office Attendance Line at 720-424-7499.**

Students will not be dismissed early unless they are leaving in the company of a guardian or other person listed on their emergency contact list. We consider an “occasional” absence/lateness to be once a month. Anything more than this will need to be justified with medical justification and parents can expect to have a follow up from a DGS staff member. If your child is going to miss more than two days, please contact your child’s teacher regarding missed schoolwork.

Late Arrivals

Students must be ready to start class at 8:00. Students arriving after 8:00 a.m. must check in at the office and will be marked tardy.

Make-up Learning

Parents of students who miss assignments for any reason are expected to request the work from teachers and have the student complete it in a timely manner so as to not negatively impact academic progress.

Appointments

Parents are invited and encouraged to be an active part of our learning community, however, we request you make an appointment if you require a meeting. All appointments need to be made in advance. The administrative staff can help you schedule an appointment or you can make it directly with a teacher. The partners are available for appointments but they also must be made in advance. These can be scheduled with the administrative assistant or directly with the partner.

Electronic Devices

The use of cellular phones and electronic devices such as non DGS iPods, CD players, Game Boys, cameras, etc., is **PROHIBITED** at school and at any school events including field trips. Cell phones or other electronic devices that are on and/or being used will be confiscated. Students that bring these items to school should ensure they are off while in the building and stored where they cannot be seen (i.e. bag, pocket, etc.). Parents will then need to call the office to schedule an appointment to retrieve confiscated items. DGS is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

Discipline

DGS has a Discipline Ladder that is in accordance with the district policy. Please ensure that you have a copy of the Discipline Ladder and have reviewed it.

Arrival to School:

- School Day starts promptly at 8:00 am
- Doors will open at 6:30 ONLY for those enrolled in before school programming with Kaleidoscope Corner
- Breakfast starts at 7:30
- Supervision on the playground will start at 7:45. For the safety of the students, unsupervised students are not allowed on the playground before that time.
- Students arriving on the bus/West side will walk on the path through the “gardens” at the Southwest entrance and enter through the doors on the Eastside of the playground.
- All other student drop off/pick up will be on the West and North sides of the building with students entering the building or playground through the Northeast entrance off the parking lot.
- **NO DROP OFF/PICK UP IN THE STREET/STUDENTS MUST BE LET OUT AT THE CURB!**
- Students arriving early for breakfast will remain in cafeteria/or defined area until 7:45
- School bell will ring to signal the start of the school day at 7:55 for students to line up with their class at the designated spot.
- Students will enter the school from the East (back doors off playground) or the Southeast doors (for ECE Kindergarten and First grades)
- All teachers will pick up their kids from outside line or from a designated place on the playground prior to the school day starting.
- Late arrival is anytime after 8:00 a.m.
- Late students need to check in at the office upon arrival-**NO EXCEPTIONS!**

Dismissal/End of the School Day

Parents are responsible for making arrangements so their children are appropriately taken care of at dismissal each day. Parents need to inform classroom teachers before the beginning of the school year about how student pick-up will be handled. (I.e. babysitter picks up student; student goes home by herself, etc).

- Students are expected to leave the school premises immediately following dismissal.
- Students will not be able to loiter in the hallways for more than 15 minutes after dismissal—they will need to get to their after school program or be dismissed
- Please Note: Students will only be dismissed early to a guardian or someone listed on the emergency contact sheet that arrives in person for pick up only — **NO exceptions will be made.**
- Exit and Pick up procedures will be according to the following guidelines:
 - ECE will be outside of classroom on the East side.
 - Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grade and all students who are riding the bus will exit from West entrance/exit.
 - 6th grade will exit from the front (main) exit.

DGS Dress Code

Denver Green School strives to maintain an environment that is safe for all students and is conducive to learning. In order to enhance the learning environment DGS has developed a dress code. We will not have a traditional uniform; however, all students are expected to follow these clothing regulations:

- No open-toed shoes. (This means, no sandals, flip-flops, crocs, high heels or slippers).
- No spaghetti straps or tank top straps less than three fingers wide.
- No short shorts. When child's arm is hanging down they cannot be touching skin on his/her legs.
- No bare midriffs when arms are raised. No low cut shirts/blouses.
- No oversized shirts and no oversized or sagging pants; pants need to ride at the waist line.
- No lycra/spandex, shorts, stretch pants or sweat pants or torn blue jeans.
- No head gear of any kind in the building. (This includes all hats, baseball caps, doo-rags & bandanas).
- No T-shirts that have inappropriate logos, etc.
- No wearing of accessories such as chains, straps, buckles, scarves, arm warmers, etc.

All clothing needs to be size and age appropriate. DGS teachers and partners reserve the right to determine if any clothing is inappropriate.

Acceptable Tops/Shirts: Any DGS top or shirt (purchased at the school) is acceptable and preferable. Other than DGS shirts, the shirt must follow the guidelines above.

Acceptable Bottoms – Pants must follow the guidelines above. Blue jeans or traditional style pants are acceptable. Shorts, capris and skirts are acceptable but they must be knee length or longer.

Dresses must be knee length and must not be spaghetti straps or scoop neck dresses, and must be age appropriate.

NOTE: Students at DGS will be engaged in discussions about what constitutes appropriate attire and why. Any item or apparel that interferes with the learning environment or students' safety will not be allowed and it is up to the discretion of the teacher or partners to ask a student to change clothing to fit the acceptable DGS dress code.

Consequences for not adhering to the dress code

A teacher or staff member will send the student to the office where we can find an acceptable substitute for the student. If there is not an acceptable substitute, a phone call will be made to the parent/guardian and the parent/guardian will have to bring the appropriate attire to the school for their child. The student may not attend classes without the proper school attire. If the parent/guardian cannot bring the appropriate uniform to school, the student may be sent home. If a student does not wear appropriate school attire on a regular basis, the parent/guardian will be required to attend a conference set by the teacher or partner before the student is readmitted to classes. All students must enter the building in the proper dress code every day. There are no exceptions for birthdays, holidays, warm weather, etc.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a Federal law, requires that DGS School, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, DGS may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised the school to the contrary in accordance with school procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow DGS to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain school publications. Examples include:

- A playbill, showing your student's role in a drama production;
- The annual yearbook;
- Honor roll or other recognition lists;
- Graduation programs; and
- Sports activity sheets, such as for basketball, showing weight & height of team members.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require local education agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three directory information categories -- names, addresses and telephone listings -- unless parents have advised the LEA that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent.¹

If you do not want DGS School to disclose information from your child's education record without your prior written consent, you must notify the school in writing by September 1, 2010. DGS has designated the following information as directory information:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student's name• Address• Telephone listing• Electronic mail address• Photographs• Date and place of birth• Major field of study• Dates of attendance• Grade level	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participation in officially recognized activities and sports• Weight and height of members of athletic teams• Degrees, honors, and awards received• The most recent educational agency or institution attended
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¹ These laws are: Section 9528 of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. 7908), as amended by the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (P.L. 107-110), the education bill, and 10 U.S.C. 503, as amended by section 544, the *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002* (P.L. 107-107), the legislation that provides funding for the Nation's armed forces.

Field Trips

Students will be taking many field trips this year. In order to be able to attend trips, students must be able to follow the directions of *all* adults, who are responsible for their safety. If we do not feel that your child can do this, he/she will not be permitted to attend trips.

If you are a trip chaperone, please understand that your child/group must meet the same behavioral/work expectations on the trip as all DGS students, and should not have special privileges, including trips to gift shops, food vendors, etc.

Homework

Homework at DGS is designed to reinforce the learning in the classroom and provides teachers with an opportunity to assess students' independent mastery of material that has been previously taught in class. It can also provide students with an opportunity to preview material that will be addressed in class in order to help them build background knowledge prior to learning. Due to this, homework is an essential part of the teaching and learning at DGS. Our expectations for homework are outlined below:

Student's Responsibilities:

- To complete all assignments on time
- To ask teachers for help when needed
- To make your best effort to complete the assignment fully and correctly
- To read independently every night

Parent/Guardian's Responsibilities:

- Ask daily to see homework assignments and reinforce that the assignments be completed
- Encourage students to read on a daily basis
- Ensure that there is a quiet time and place where your student can work on their homework
- Contact the school when you have questions or to check on your child's progress

Illness, Medication and School Nurse

Students who are not feeling well can notify their teacher and may be sent to the office or school nurse if they appear ill. Students may be allowed to rest and return to class. If they are seriously ill, parents will be called to pick the child up from school. A child may not come to school if they have an illness that may be contagious. Students may not call a parent/guardian instead of using the nurse and must NOT leave school without authorization.

Students are not allowed to have medication with them at school. If a student has a prescription or other medication that needs to be administered during the day, parents/guardians need to send a note with the medication, which must be turned over to the office upon entering the building. This includes prescription inhalers and non-prescription medications such as cough drops.

Lost and Found

Due to an overwhelming amount of clothing items in our lost and found that never get claimed and that we simply cannot store, we will donate all lost and found items to charity every 2 weeks. To help avoid this issue, please label your child's clothing. If your child has lost an article of clothing at school, come in to check for it the same day or the next day at the latest.

Progress Reports and Parent/Teacher Conferences

Progress reports are issued three times each year, at the end of each term. Progress reports are designed to provide parents and guardians with a detailed picture of their child's progress in all areas taught as well as their progress toward DGS's Core Values.

School Closings and Delays

DGS will follow all Denver Public Schools decisions on school closings and delays unless otherwise notified. Please monitor local media outlets for school closings/delays information. In addition to providing you with DGS's yearly school calendar, reminders will be sent home when upcoming off-days for students are nearing.

Special Education

We strive to educate every child. DGS will work to educate students with learning differences by providing a comprehensive Special Education Program that addresses each student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) while creating a flexible learning environment to allow all students access to DGS' unique programs and opportunities. The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) requires appropriate services to be administered in the "least restrictive environment." Students with IEPs are included in the classroom to the fullest extent possible and teachers are obligated to make accommodations and modifications to meet the needs of the child. Additionally, students with 504 Accommodation Plans which detail specific accommodations for the regular education classroom are included in this process.

The responsibilities of all teachers in this regard are:

- To be aware of which students have IEP's or 504 plans
- To be familiar with the accommodations listed in IEP's and 504 plans
- To provide the appropriate modifications and accommodations.
- Attend and be an active participant in IEP meetings.

Students can only be referred for special education testing after staff has attempted to provide intensive differentiated instruction within the regular education program. Because staff can individualize instruction for students, DGS has a design that helps meet all student needs, including struggling learners. Before referring a child for special education testing, teachers are required to meet with the Student Intervention Team in order to develop an intervention plan. The intervention plan must be followed for at least 3 months. At the end of this period, if the student has not shown improvement, the child may be referred for special education testing.

Telephone Use

Students may only use the classroom phones with teacher permission. Teachers will use their discretion when allowing students to make calls. Parents/Guardians will only be allowed to talk

to students in emergency situations. Otherwise, a message will be taken and given to the child via an e-mail to the child's teacher(s). Students are not allowed to use cellular phones at any time in the school building.

Visitors

For safety reasons, no visitors are allowed to go to any room other than DGS's main office at any time after 8:00 a.m. without a pass obtained in the main office.

School Supplies

Each grade level will have their own supply list available from their teacher.

Bicycles

Students are encouraged to ride bicycles when age appropriate and where safe routes are available to and from school. Students are required to park bikes in the designated parking racks outside of the school and lock the bikes with a sturdy lock. DGS is not responsible for lost or stolen bicycles.

Books, Binders and Planners

Textbooks are issued free of charge. Once a student accepts a textbook/book or checks out a textbook/book from the Library Media Center (LMC), he/she is responsible for that book. Students are expected to pay for damaged or lost books before they withdraw or before the end of the school year.

Sixth grade students will purchase a DGS binder at the beginning of each school year. Binders will cost \$10.00 each for every 6th grader. DGS will not be responsible for lost or stolen binders/planners. Replacement for the entire binder is \$10.00. However, students must pick and choose what binder supplies they need and pay accordingly – this ensures ownership. It is the students and parents/guardians responsibility to ensure that all binder supplies are in place and replenished on a regular basis, which ensures that our students are ready to learn. If a student loses his/her binder then they must replace it with all the needed supplies. DGS truly believes in binders and organized students. Binder checks will be made at the beginning of each and every class. Planners must be kept inside the DGS binder. A replacement cost for a Planner is \$10.00. Planners are designed for students and parents to review the school-related calendar, homework assignments, etc. Students may NOT attend classes without a DGS binder and planner.

Student Fees

Families should be prepared to pay the following student fees to ensure the success of our students and school programs this year.

Student Activity Fee: \$10.00

Technology Fee: \$5.00

**Denver Green School Family Handbook
Parent/Guardian Signature Page**

Please sign below to acknowledge that you received a copy of the Family Handbook, you have read it and that you agree with your roles and responsibilities for the year.

Student Name (Printed)

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed)

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date