

GREEN WOODS CHARTER SCHOOL

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is a Charter School?

Charter Schools are public schools. They are funded by tax dollars. Green Woods Charter School is chartered by the School District of Philadelphia. Charter Schools are mandated to be "innovative" in their approach to teaching and learning while also accountable to the local, state, and federal governments. Green Woods is held accountable to the District and the State to ensure that students are being taught a standards-based curriculum by qualified teachers. Charter schools are self-managed, public schools but must function within the guidelines of Charter School Law established by the State of Pennsylvania.

When did Green Woods open?

Green Woods opened in 2002 and is now in its 8th year of operation. Our charter was renewed in 2007 for five years. We have achieved AYP each year; been awarded "Exemplary Status" for our curriculum; awarded the 2007 Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence; in 2008 we were presented with a "Best Practices Award" from the School District of Philadelphia and in 2009 we received the Program of the Year Award from the Pennsylvania Council of Social Studies. These awards indicate the level of exemplary teaching and learning that is happening each day at Green Woods.

What is the grade structure and current enrollment of the school?

Green Woods currently serves just over 200 students in grades K through 8. Currently we have one class per grade.

Is transportation provided to students?

Transportation services are not provided for kindergarten students. Green Woods students in grades 1 through 8 receive transportation to and from school through the School District of Philadelphia. Our school is not located within safe walking distance of public transportation. Public transportation is about a mile and a half from our front door. There are no sidewalks for most of that distance.

Are there school uniforms?

Green Woods students are required to wear school uniforms which consist of a hunter green polo shirt and khaki pants or skirt. Please see the student handbook for a full explanation of our dress code. Parents are required to purchase uniform shirts for their children from GWCS.

Does Green Woods provide breakfast and/or lunch?

Green Woods does not serve breakfast or lunch. Students must pack lunch and a snack each day.



What is the length of the school day?

Our school day begins promptly at 8:15AM and ends at 3:20PM. Parents driving children to school may not drop off students before 7:55AM.

Does Green Woods have a before-school and/or after-school program?

Green Woods does not provide before-school care or after-school care. The Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education hosts an after school program for a fee. Arrangements for this program must be made through the Schuylkill Center.

How are students selected for admission?

Students are selected by lottery. For a full description of our admissions process, please go to the "Admissions Process" section on this website under "About Us."

Where can I find the GWCS Parent/Student Handbook and Discipline Policy?



You can download the GWCS Parent/Student Handbook and Discipline Policy from our website.



Does Green Woods provide Special Education Services and, if so, what services does it provide?

The purpose of the special education department at Green Woods Charter School is to provide Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) to students with disabilities. At Green Woods, we want to ensure that students with disabilities find success in a regular education setting. A student may receive additional services if the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team determines that related services are required for that student to make adequate academic progress in the general curriculum. These services include but are not limited to speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, remedial reading, and counseling.

Green Woods Charter School Child Find Policy

Policy and Procedures for Students with Disabilities

Green Woods Charter School will ensure that all students with disabilities who are eligible to enroll in the school will have available to them free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. The rights of children with disabilities and their parents will be protected in accordance with federal laws.

As part of this child find responsibility, GWCS seeks to ensure that all students with disabilities who are eligible to enroll in the school are identified, located and evaluated. This Child Find responsibility shall be accomplished through a process which, while not a definitive or final judgment of a student's capabilities or disability, is a possible indicator of special education needs.

The Child Find Process shall include obtaining data on each student, through direct assessment or by indirect means of the student's academic performance, gross and fine motor skills, receptive and expressive language skills, vision, hearing and cognitive skills.

School staff, parents or agency representatives may refer students to the multi-disciplinary team if they believe that the student, because of a disability, may be in need of special education and supportive services in order to benefit from regular education. GWCS shall ensure that an appropriately certified school psychologist participates in the initial evaluation and all subsequent re-evaluations of the student.

Final identification of students with disabilities and programming for such students occurs only after an appropriate evaluation and a determination by the multi-disciplinary team. If it is determined that the child requires special education and supportive services in order to benefit from regular education, an Individual Education Plan shall be developed for the student in accordance with federal law.

If you know someone or have a child at Green Woods with a disability and may be in need of special education and related services, you can initiate a referral through the school by contacting Melinda Coughlin, Special Education Coordinator, at (215) 482-6337 or mcoughlin@greenwoodscharter.org.

What is the focus of Green Woods Curriculum?

Green Woods Charter School uses an approach to learning known as EIC which stands for using the Environment as an Integrated Context for learning. Our students spend a good deal of time hiking outdoors in all kinds of weather. Our partnership with the Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education allows our students to be immersed in learning experiences that expand their knowledge base while having them actively observing, questioning, and discovering how the environment works.



What kind of student would enjoy learning at Green Woods?

Green Woods cannot discriminate in our admissions policy; however, we do encourage parents applying to Green Woods to please consider the many potential allergy triggers that exist within our nature center building as well as how your child reacts to seasonal changes while being outdoors and hiking. Our mission includes a goal to create active young stewards of the natural world. Children who enjoy being outdoors and actively engaged in their learning thrive as their learning evolves in our unique setting.

How many openings are anticipated for the 2010-2011 school year?

Green Woods charter school has a sibling preference clause in our Admissions Policy. As such we have 14 siblings currently signed up for Kindergarten for September 2010. This leaves 10 openings for Kindergarten from the public lottery. Keep in mind that there is a possibility that students might be retained in Kindergarten. This will mean even less openings for the public lottery. At present, there is one opening for 6th grade for the 2010-2011 school year; however, the possibility also exists that a student might be retained for that grade next year leaving no openings in grades 1-6 for the coming year. Green Woods does not accept new students into 7th or 8th grade.

If you have any additional questions concerning our school, curriculum, or admissions process, please contact our front desk at (215) 482-6337.