



LEARN  
GROW  
SOAR

FERNBANK  
ELEMENTARY

TO WORLD SCHOOL

# FERNBANK FAMILY HANDBOOK

HELPFUL INFORMATION  
&  
GUIDELINES



A digital version of this handbook is available on our website :  
[fernbankelementary.com](http://fernbankelementary.com)

# WELCOME TO FERNBANK!

## *quick facts*

157 Heaton Park Drive, Atlanta, GA 30307  
678-874-9302

Grades: PreK - 5th

School Hours: 7:30am\* - 2:30pm

\*students are late after 7:40am

School Mascot: Falcon

School Colors: Green & White

Cluster Middle School: Druid Hills Middle School

Cluster High School: Druid Hills High School

## *school communication*

Main Website: **fernbankelementary.com**

Check the website often! A wealth of information can be found here, including our newsletter which is published weekly.

Facebook: "**Fernbank Elementary School**" is our general page. We have a closed parent discussion group called "**Fernbank Parent Group**" which you are encouraged to join. This is a great place to ask or answer questions, share pictures or experiences, etc. You'll be glad you joined!

School communications: We have an email database that you should be a part of. If you are not receiving emails from Fernbank Elementary (**info@fernbankelementary.com**), shoot us an email at **fernbankcommunications@gmail.com!**



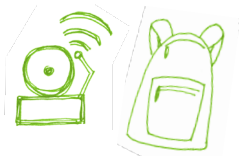
## *a little about our school*

Fernbank Elementary School is a DeKalb County School. It has served the children of Atlanta since 1957 and is located in Druid Hills, a beautiful historic neighborhood in Atlanta.

**Our school is a fully-authorized International Baccalaureate Primary Year Programme school.** The IB program continues through Druid Hills Middle and High School as well. Fernbank is also pursuing Advanced-ED STEM certification.

For more on the IB Programme : **fernbankelementary.com/the-ib-program**

# ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL



## *mornings*

The DeKalb County School System provides bus service to all children who live within the official school attendance zone. Buses pick children up starting as early as 6:30 am to ensure an early arrival for those who choose to eat breakfast at school.

If you are walking or driving to school, **students should arrive between 7:00 am and 7:30 am.** Breakfast may be purchased between 7:00 am-7:30 am. **Students begin the instructional day at 7:40 am. Any student arriving to their classroom after 7:40 am is considered tardy and must be walked in to the front office before being released to their homeroom.**

We encourage parents to drop children off prior to 7:25 am to avoid traffic congestion and stress. **If you are running late, please make every effort to arrive and drop your child off in a safe manner!**

## *dismissal after school*

**If you are driving to school to pick up your child, you must do so via the carpool line which forms from Artwood Rd. (not from Coventry)**

*Please see our carpool map and rules on the following pages*

- Children are dismissed from school at 2:25 pm, in three groups: bus-riders first, carpoolers second, and walkers third.
- Once the buses leave, carpool students are delivered to your car as you pull up to the cafeteria entrance of the school, starting at approximately 2:30 pm.
- Walkers will gather in the front foyer and will be dismissed to their parent or caregiver at 2:30 pm from there.

## IMPORTANT

**Please inform your teacher how you intend for your child to be picked up when your child begins the school year.**

If you ever need to pick your child up early for a doctor appointment or other reason, please be sure to pick them up before 1:30 pm.

Please send a handwritten note to your teacher if your child is switching modes of transportation at any point in the school year, or if they need to change modes for a single day for any reason. Emails may not be received in a timely manner. Call the school for last minute changes.

**THE SAFETY OF EVERY CHILD IS OUR FIRST PRIORITY.**  
**Please read these rules carefully, and allow yourself ample time each day to ensure you follow them.**

## *morning carpool*

- Students arriving by car should be dropped off via one of two carpool routes: in front of the school, if you are approaching from Coventry Rd or by the right side of the school, if you are approaching from Artwood Rd. **DO NOT PASS other cars (or buses!).**
- If you arrive between 7-7:10 am, please use the carpool lane in front of the school. The Artwood carpool lane (on the right side of the school) may be used after 7:10 am once all the buses have dropped their students off.
- **Do not get out of your car in the carpool lane.**  
We will help your child unload and load.
- **Do not talk on cell phones while in the carpool lanes.**
- **Never leave your car unattended** unless you have parked in designated parent parking along Heaton Park Rd. The parking lot in front of the school is reserved for employees.

## *carpool after school*

- REMEMBER: If you need to pick your child up early from school, you must do so before 1:30 pm from the front office.
- Cars line up approaching the school from Artwood Rd. We do not have a carpool lane after school via Coventry Rd.
- Cars should turn off their cars once they line up in the queue.  
**Do not let your car idle!**

After all buses leave, the carpool line will begin moving and students will be brought out to your car.

**Do not get out of your car in the carpool lane** - We will help your child unload and load.

*take your time to put safety first!*



Fernbank

Playground  
Area de Juegos

**Carpool from Dyson Dr & Coventry Rd (MORNING DROPOFF ONLY)**

Area para dejar los niños en la mañana desde las calles Dyson Dr y Coventry Rd  
No hay recogida desde el carro (carpool) en la tarde.

Parents walking students to school  
Padres llevando estudiantes a la escuela caminando

Una Vía  
ONE WAY



**Staff Parking Only**

Parqueo solo para el personal de la escuela

ONE WAY  
Una Vía

**Staff Parking Only**

**Parent Parking**

Parqueo para los Padres

Dyson Drive & Coventry Roads      Heaton Park Road

**Parent Parking**  
Parqueo para los Padres

# Elementary

Cafeteria  
Cafetería

Lugar de recogida para estudiantes  
que caminan a casa en las tardes  
**Afternoon Walker Pick-Up**

**School Entrance** 7:40am-6pm  
Entrada de la Escuela  
Office Oficina

**Artwood Rd Carpool Dropoff**  
Area para dejar los niños en la  
mañana desde la calle Artwood Rd

**ALL AFTERNOON CARPOOL PICKUP**  
Area para recoger los niños  
desde el carro (carpool)  
durante la tarde

← ONE WAY  
Una Via

→ ONE WAY  
Una Via

Staff Parking Only

Staff Parking Only  
Parqueo solo para el personal de la escuela

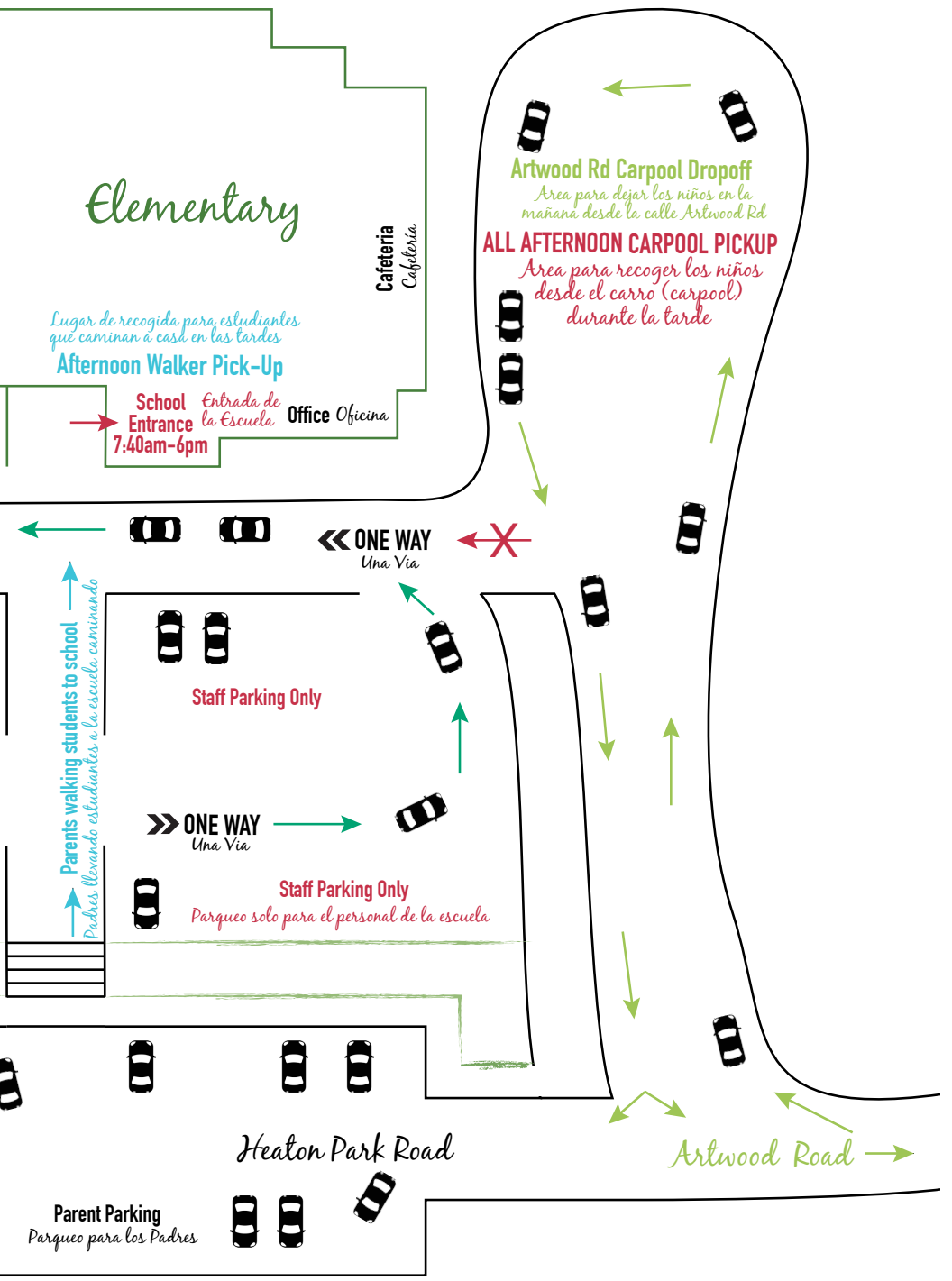
↑ Parents walking students to school  
↑ Padres llevando estudiantes a la escuela caminando

Heaton Park Road

Artwood Road →

Parent Parking

Parqueo para los Padres



# DAY TO DAY AT FERNBANK

## *if your child isn't feeling well*



Fernbank has a clinic near the main office where children will go if they get injured or aren't feeling well. Our nurse will assess the child for anything that requires parent contact and if so, you will receive a call. You may be asked to pick him/her up from school. Please note that our school nurse is not permitted to administer any medications, including over-the-counter medications such as Tylenol, without a doctor's consent.

*See the nurse if your child needs medicine to be administered at school. You will need to fill out a special form and obtain a doctor's signature - even for over-the-counter medications.*



If your child has a fever (100.4 degrees or higher) or a contagious illness, they are not permitted to be in school until the fever has been clear for 24 hours or your child is no longer contagious.

Lice outbreaks do occur from time to time. Please take care to check your child's hair for bugs or nits (eggs) and if any are found, please have them treated immediately. Any child with live lice will be sent home and he/she may return to school after treatment. Please also make sure your children know not to share hats, brushes, etc.

## *inclement weather & emergencies*



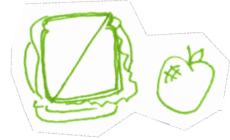
On occasion, inclement weather will force Fernbank to start late, close early, or close for an entire day or longer. The Superintendent of DeKalb County Schools, governs this decision. The decision to close school or delay start is made before 5 am. Check local stations, Facebook or Twitter for school closings.

**In the event that school dismisses early, you will be notified by the school. Please make arrangements for someone to meet your child at the bus or pick them up from school if you are unable to do so.**

There are procedures in place for weather and other emergencies to ensure the safety of students, in the event that an emergency occurs while school is in session. Faculty and students will practice these procedures regularly throughout the school year. Georgia Emergency Management & Homeland Security Agency (GEMHSA) governs these statewide guidelines and procedures.



## meals at school



Children may purchase breakfast and/or lunch in the cafeteria each day. Students may also bring a healthy lunch from home.

Fernbank is a part of the **Alliance for a Healthier Generation's Healthy Schools Program**. We have a **"no junk food"** policy so please refrain from sending candy, sweets, chips, sodas, etc. in lunches or for snacks. We allow sweets once a year at our holiday parties and encourage parents to send in healthier alternatives like fruit or yogurt to celebrate birthdays. **Sheet cakes, cake pops, cookies, doughnuts, cupcakes, etc. are strictly prohibited.**

All school food and drink purchases are made using a unique pin number assigned to your student. The cost of food purchases is deducted from a special account that you set up for your child. This system allows parents to add money to their children's account using a credit or debit card. Once an account is established, parents can check balances and fund their children's accounts online via a secure website.

To set up an account or register your child(ren) to participate in the Free and Reduced Meal program, you must also do so online. You will need to have your child's student ID number to register. Check with the front office if you have any questions.



[www.dekalbschoolsga.org/school-nutrition](http://www.dekalbschoolsga.org/school-nutrition)

## visiting during the school day



Parents are welcome at Fernbank, and are often around the school either volunteering in classrooms, doing other projects, or even having lunch in the cafeteria with their child. If you are in the building, please take care not to disrupt the instructional day. Please email your teacher if you have any questions or schedule a time to speak with him/her.

To ensure the safety of all students and staff, all outside doors to Fernbank are locked at all times. All visitors must enter through the front door of the school by ringing the intercom bell and identifying themselves. School personnel will allow visitors to enter the building. Upon entering, please proceed to the reception desk in the front office, register your attendance, and obtain a visitor's nametag.

**Visitor's nametags are required at all times while in the building.**

*Please be patient as we balance security needs and hospitality!  
Please remember that our procedures are meant to ensure the safety of our children, faculty, staff, and visitors.*

# OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL DAY

## *after school care*

Fernbank Elementary offers a great after school care program (the After School Education Development Program or ASEDP) that runs from 2:45 - 6:00 pm.

It is operated by teachers and members of our school's staff. The children have the opportunity to participate in outdoor or gym free-play, computer lab, mandatory homework, art, etc. Enrolled children that have also signed up for after-school clubs will transition to after-care when their club is finished meeting.

The ASEDP generally follows the school calendar, but there are a few days during the school year where aftercare is not offered.

**Please note that students must be picked up by 6:00 pm at the latest.**

If you are late picking up your child, a fee of \$2.00 will be assessed for each minute after 6pm.

## *after school clubs*

Fernbank offers a number of after school clubs. Clubs are run and managed by individual vendors who meet Fernbank's requirements and qualifications, or sponsored and led by Fernbank teachers who are assisted by parent volunteers. There is typically a fee associated with our clubs. While some clubs run the whole school year, they are typically offered per semester and are filled on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Go to our website **[fernbankelementary.com/extracurricular](http://fernbankelementary.com/extracurricular)** to read more about after school care and clubs.

## *social events at Fernbank*

Fernbank's PTA and Foundation hold a number of fun events for the school community throughout the year. From our Back to School Picnic and Film at the Fern in the fall, to the International Friends potluck dinner in the winter and the Annual Auction and Book Float Parade in the spring, you'll love the opportunity to get to know other families here at Fernbank. Check our calendar tab on the website for a full list of activities and dates!

**[fernbankelementary.com/calendar](http://fernbankelementary.com/calendar)**

## *getting involved at Fernbank*

All of our social events are planned and run by parent volunteers - we are always looking for extra hands to help! Plus, getting involved also means getting to know other parents and the staff at Fernbank - a win, win for everyone!

Check out our webpage that details the various parent volunteer groups and committees. **[fernbankelementary.com/volunteer-opportunities](http://fernbankelementary.com/volunteer-opportunities)**

# SUSTAINABILITY AT FERNBANK

The Fernbank Sustainability Initiative, including the Fernbank School Garden and the Go Green club, contributes to and supports Fernbank Elementary in becoming environmentally mindful, resource responsible and sustainability integrated.

We have initiated sustainability programs collaborating with the county, students, teachers, custodial and administrative staff and parents and community partners.

We encourage Fernbank to create environmentally sustainable practices and habits and to be mindful of the environment, at school, in our community and the world.

- **Be resource responsible when planning school events and class parties.**
- **Use Reusables in place of single-use plastics**  
(cutlery, plates, cups, water bottles)
- **Use Recycling bins for recyclables**  
Cardboard, paper, plastic bottles, cans
- **Use Compost Bins for compost**  
(food waste and certified compostable items like trays, cups, napkins, plates)
- **NO Idling** on and near school grounds
- **NO Styrofoam**

## *sustainability goals*



Recycle milk containers

Expand student involvement, incorporate garden into every grade curriculum



Integrate education and learning as part of cafeteria experience

Replace Cafeteria Grab N Go containers with compostables.



Secure dishwasher and reusable trays to more significantly reduce waste

Introduce energy, water and air programming for Sustainable School - 2021

[fernbankelementary.com/fernbank-sustainability-initiative](http://fernbankelementary.com/fernbank-sustainability-initiative)

# PARENT VOLUNTEER GROUPS

## *Parent Teacher Association*

We ask that all parents join our PTA. It is our mission to advocate on behalf of our students, and to make their experience and our teachers' jobs more enjoyable, enriching, and rewarding. We also encourage a sense of community among our Fernbank families.

Fernbank's PTA also provides our school with extra support to make sure it runs smoothly and always makes sure our teachers and staff know they are appreciated!

## *Fernbank Foundation*

The Fernbank Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that raises funds for additional instructional programming and support at Fernbank. The group raises and manages funds to support Fernbank's current and future needs, including academic enrichment, faculty development, facility and classroom improvements, and targeted instructional program support.

## *Principal Advisory Council*

Our Principal Advisory Council, also known as the Fernbank School Council, includes the principal, staff representatives appointed by the principal, and parent representatives who are elected by parents in the fall. This group may advise and make recommendations on any matter related to school improvement and student achievement. The mission of the council is to bring communities and schools closer together in a spirit of cooperation to solve difficult education problems by bringing parents into the school-based decision-making process.

## *Room Parents*

Room parents are the main liaison between your child's teacher and the families in the classroom and the PTA. As a room parent, your job is to assist the teacher as needed in disseminating important information from the teacher and PTA, and organize selected classroom events, such as the winter holiday party and the book float parade.

*Read more about each group or about volunteer opportunities on our website:*  
**[fernbankelementary.com/get-involved](http://fernbankelementary.com/get-involved)**

# GIVING AT FERNBANK

## *Why should I give?*

Fernbank Elementary's success as a school is due in large part to extra financial support outside of funding from DeKalb County School District's budget.

## *When should I give?*

**We have two major fundraisers during the year when we raise the majority of money to support our school: Fund the Fern in the fall and the Annual Auction in the spring.**

**Fund the Fern is a joint annual fundraising campaign designed to support** the operational and programming budgets of both the Fernbank Foundation and the PTA. Although families can contribute at any time, we hold our main fundraising drive in the fall. Families that contribute over \$250 will get a leaf to display on our Family Donor Wall in the school's lobby.

The Fernbank Foundation's **Annual Auction** is an adults-only event held in the spring. It is the largest fundraiser for our school. We ask parents to support the auction by making contributions to grade-level gifts, giving a family donation for us to auction off, and by bidding!

We also raise funds in smaller ways throughout the year, at things like Spirit Nights (a portion of proceeds from dining out come back to Fernbank), yearbook sales and more.

## *How can local businesses & corporations help?*

We are very grateful for the local businesses that support Fernbank through our **Community Investor program**. In return for their donations, investors receive a wide variety of advertising - at the school on our huge Community Sponsor wall, on our website, in our online directory and on signage at our annual auction. Larger companies often provide donation matches to non-profits that their employees support. Check to see if your company offers **corporate matching**, this amazing way to often double your personal donation!

*See what our fundraising will support this year and read more details at:*  
**[fernbankelementary.com/fund-the-fern](http://fernbankelementary.com/fund-the-fern)**



## **IT'S GOING TO BE A GREAT YEAR!!**

*We're so excited to have you here and to get to know your family!*

