



Family Handbook

2021-2022

Goal of this Handbook

To equip parents with the “how to” of daily operations at The Forest School: An Acton Academy so they may support their children’s Hero’s Journeys.

Philosophy of our Operations

There are three underlying values that drive every policy and system created for our community to function and achieve our mission:

- 1) Freedom for families. We believe parents, not schools, are in charge of their families and trust you to make your own choices for your families.
- 2) Sanctity of Studios as learning spaces for learners only. This includes basic safety as well as protection against interruptions, distractions, and the threat of lowering standards of excellence.
- 3) Sanctity of parent/child relationships: We will not come between you and your child.

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Fast Facts

Address: 461 Sandy Creek Rd, Fayetteville, GA 30214

Website address: www.theforest.school

Studio Nicknames: Spark Studio: Spark
Elementary Studio: ES
Middle School Studio: MS
High School Studio: HS

Contact info: Tyler: tyler@theforest.school
Amy (Tyler's assistant): amy@theforest.school
Monica (bookkeeper): admin@theforest.school

Daily Logistics Phone Number
(For Parents Only, Please Keep Private): 678-938-9081

Staff

Denise Ostrowski - Spark Lead Guide
Amber Bryant - ES Lead Guide
Caleb Collier - MS Lead Guide
Brittney Toles - HS Lead Guide
Shamira Carr - ES Guide
Rebecca Ferguson - Administrator & Apprentice Guide
Kristen Epps - Apprentice Guide
Shelly Brown - Art Guide
Fantasia and Austin McGuffie - PE Guides
Joan Thigpen "Gigi" - Reading Specialist

Co-founder and Head

Dr. Tyler Thigpen - Tyler is head of school and CEO of our campus and of our expansion efforts

Admin

Brittney Toles - Administrator and college guidance counselor
Rebecca Ferguson - Administrator & Apprentice Guide
Monica Fullerton - Accountant
Amy Scoggins - Executive Assistant
Giorgiana Barbieri - Facilities

Governing Board

Yvette Cook Darby	Matt Williams
Russ Kiefer	Dr. Tyler Thigpen

The Purpose of The Forest School

Mission Statement

The Forest School: An Acton Academy's mission is to inspire each person who enters our doors to find a calling and change the world.

Our Beliefs

- We believe each child has a gift that can change the world in a profound way.
- We believe in learning to learn, learning to do, learning to be, and learning to live together.
- We believe in a closely connected community of lifelong learners.

Our Promises

We promise your children will:

- Begin a Hero's Journey;
- Learn to learn, learn to do, learn to be, and learn to live together;
- Discover their most precious gifts, along with the dedication it takes to develop real talent;
- Understand the importance of strong character;
- Cherish the arts, the wonders of the physical world and the mystery of life; and,
- Treasure economic, political and religious freedom.



Our Community

Creating a community within our doors

We believe in developing closely connected families of lifelong learners and that clear contracts/covenants between parents and learners make a far more effective learning community.

We believe in transparency between the school and the families we serve. Parent and student feedback surveys will be collected weekly (more details below) as well as more extensive satisfaction surveys at the end of each semester.

Porous Walls

The Forest School is situated in an increasingly beautiful, creative city and in a growing county both of which are full of experts in all fields. We want our learners to have the opportunity to explore their expertise firsthand. We foster an environment in which our learners can learn from local experts in their space and host those experts within our community as well. This allows our learners to create real-world hands-on learning and to build relationships and interests that can turn into student led internships and eventually apprenticeships. When a parent's field of expertise coincides with our learning, we invite them to participate in Studio discussions, pitches, and feedback sessions.



Diversity

We are enthusiastically committed to creating an intentionally diverse school and community because we firmly believe that we all learn better in a diverse environment. We strive to support our learners as they learn how to cultivate empathetic relationships that empower them to intentionally collaborate as they change the world.

Our Signature Learning Experiences

Cultivating awesome humans

One hundred percent of our signature learning experiences are designed to cultivate one or more of the following learner outcomes for heroes at The Forest School:

Learn to Be	Learn to Do	Learn to Learn	Learn to Live Together
• Flourishing • Purpose • Resourcefulness • Growth mindset • Gratitude	• Storytelling • Creativity • Entrepreneurship • Design thinking • Goal setting & reflection	• Learning science • Math • English • Civilization • Science	• Collaboration • Empathy • Trust • Cross-cultural competence • Social capital

Before the beginning of school, please set aside one hour with your family to watch [these videos](#) describing many of The Forest School's signature learning experiences.

Check out [this document](#) for our upcoming Storytelling & Civilization calendar.

Accountability: Covenants/Contracts

Creating clear, consistent expectations for The Forest School families is an important part of our school. As such, the parents, learners, and staff will reaffirm this commitment by signing a covenant each year that describes the roles and responsibilities to which we are agreeing.

The purpose of this living document is not to promote rule-following or bureaucracy but rather the opposite: to draw clear boundaries to encourage innovation between children, parents, and Guides who through commitment and action show support for the creation of a world-class school.

Every Fall, each studio creates a new Studio Contract, akin to Rules of Engagement for all learners in that Studio. The heroes lead this process and ultimately decide what goes into the contract. We then host a school wide retreat/bonfire culminating into a Contract Signing Ceremony where learners publicly commit to the promises they made in their contract. This is one of our most important days of the year.

Daily Life: Schedules and Lunch

School Hours

The Forest School's hours are 8:00am until 3:15pm.

Arrival/Dismissal Procedure

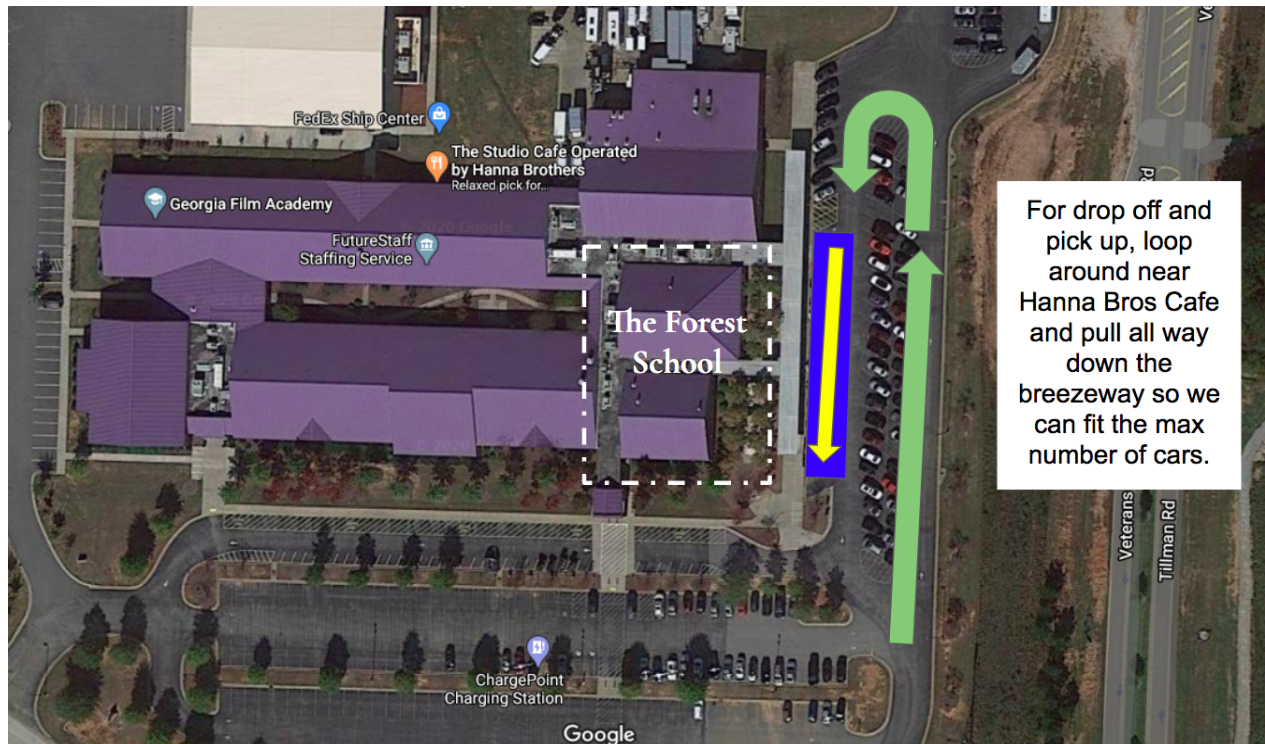
Arrival starts at 8:00am sharp. From 8:00 to 8:25am, learners engage in free time, reading, socializing, and getting organized for the day. When you arrive at school, a greeter will be in the main drive to greet each student with a handshake, greeting, and eye contact, the customary start to our day together.

If your child arrives after 8:30am due to an unexpected emergency, he or she will need to open the gate to enter the Studio. (You will be given the combination in a separate email).

In order not to interrupt the others who will be focusing on the morning launch discussion, a latecomer is required to wait outside the Studio or at their individual work space until the discussion concludes at 8:45am. In addition to learning the life skill of showing up on time every time, these discussions are critical parts of the daily learning at The Forest School. For this reason, being on time is part of our contract to each other.

If a learner is chronically late, it will impact the quality of his or her learning journey at The Forest School as well as the culture of the Studio community. In the rare case this occurs, we will contact you to discuss a plan to support your family being fully onboard with this commitment.

Drop Off & Pick Up



Dismissal is at **3:15pm sharp**. For your convenience, you can pull in early and wait for your children. Make sure you have the label with your Hero's name displayed prominently in your window. Please wait in your car and follow the line (see above) for efficiency and safety. You are in charge of being clear with your child about who is driving him or her home if it is someone other than yourself. Your child should be confident and knowledgeable about the people who are allowed by you to drive him or her home. This is not a Guide's nor The Forest School's responsibility. It is a family responsibility. If your child is ever confused by who is there to drive home, he or she should go immediately to the Guide to request help.

Dismissal ends at 3:30pm sharp. Please arrive to pick up your child by no later than 3:30pm. A small fee (~\$15) will be assessed to families who pick up their children after 3:30pm.



If you are picking up your child at any time other than dismissal, please park and walk to the Studio to get your child. Please do not ask a Guide to watch for you and send your child out. This is up to you and you are free to come into the Studio at any time to pick up your child. It is most helpful if you inform your child so he or she can be mentally prepared to stop working and leave the group without hesitation.

For divorced or separated parents, it is necessary to share with the head of school (Tyler) your custody arrangement—i.e., the custodial rights regarding the child. Before the first day of school, email the head of school a copy of the order showing when each parent can pick up the child. Update any forms that indicate who is authorized to pick your child up from school. If the child is not to be released to a certain parent, make sure to email those specifics and speak to the school administration to make sure they understand that the child is not to be released to the other parent, if applicable.

Lost & Found

We have Lost & Found tubs at the school. Please remind your child to look in there for any items they are missing. These tubs will be emptied after each session.

Weekly Schedule

In general, the schedule consistently includes the following activities:

- Socratic discussions
- Individual work time—Math, reading, writing, foreign language
- Collaborative work time in Projects/Quests (with deep science learning) and Civilization (our term for History because it includes studying economics, politics, art, geography and philosophy)
- Lunch and free times
- Arts and PE
- Town meetings and running partner/squad meetings

Lunch and Snacks

In order to keep our tuition costs low and support each family's healthy food choices, The Forest School does not provide standardized lunches. Each child brings his or her own lunch, utensils, and water bottle. We have a refrigerator and microwave for use by learners.

Learners choose to eat at their work spaces, outdoor community tables, or picnic-style on blankets inside or outside. Cleaning up after themselves is an important part of our community culture. Snacks and water are also important for healthy refueling. Please pack healthy snacks and a (labeled) water bottle each day for your child.

After-School Programs

A limited number of after-school spots will be offered this year. If you are interested in after-school, email amy@theforest.school.

The Forest School's Property, Chromebooks, and School Supplies

An integral part of our learning program is using technology for learners to learn math, reading, and writing skills at their own pace. The school provides one laptop per child as needed to use during the day on campus. **They are school property. If one is damaged or lost by a student, the family is responsible for reimbursing the school in the amount of ~\$300 that will be added to your tuition bill. For more details, [please read the Chromebook policy in its entirety here](#).**

We do ask that you purchase a protective case/cover for the Chromebook that the school provides. Usually our chromebooks are 11.6", and a case can typically be purchased for \$20-\$30. Before purchasing, please text The Forest School logistics

line at 678-938-9081 to confirm the size of the Chromebook that has been assigned to your child. If a student damages the laptop, they may need to bring a personal device to work on until it is repaired.

In addition, if any part of the school campus is intentionally or unintentionally damaged by a student, he or she will assist in the repair.

Included in your tuition are also the basic necessary [school supplies](#) such as pens, paper, pencils, and project supplies. We do ask that all heroes bring headphones to use during Core Work. For our Spark & Elementary learners, we use a reading fluency program called Amira, and highly recommend [these headphones](#) that work best with that program.

Your child is welcome to bring his or her own laptop, tablet, and books to read. He or she is responsible for the care of any personal items brought to school. Please have your child label any item they bring in and would like returned.

Please note: All devices we provide on our campus have safe search installed (currently we use GoGuardian). It is a requirement that all laptops and/or any devices (e.g. phones, iPads, etc) brought into the Studio from home have at least the same level of safety measures enabled. It is up to parents to verify that safe search, or equivalent, is enabled on incoming devices before they arrive at school. A free option is OurPact, while Circle Plus with Disney is a paid option. If you fail to equip your child's devices as such, he or she will lose internet privileges until you have installed protective software.

Health Policies/Absenteeism/Internet Safety and Social Media

Health Forms

Before the first day of school, it is necessary to have a copy of your child's health and immunization records from your pediatrician's office. You may upload this information at <https://www.theforest.school/immunization-form>

Medication

Learners may not carry medicine into the school. Parents must give the medicine and written instructions to a Guide. For prescription medicine, please send the medicine in the original container from the pharmacy with the child's name on it and a dated note listing the times and amounts to be given that day. Include whether or not refrigeration is required. Parents should email Amy@theforest.school and Tyler@theforest.school to give Forest School staff permission to give Tylenol.

Illness Policy

A student with any of the following symptoms must be isolated and the parents notified and asked to remove the student from school as soon as possible:

- Fever of 100.4 F.
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Nausea
- Severe cough
- Unusual yellow color to skin or eyes
- Stiff neck or headache with one or more of the symptoms listed above
- Difficult breathing or wheezing
- Complaints of severe pain.

If your child is not feeling well in the morning, please observe them carefully before sending them to school and risking the health of the others.

Children must be free of symptoms for 24 hours before returning to school.

If your child develops any of these symptoms while at school, we will call you immediately to come pick up your child.

COVID-19 Safety Measures

Read our safety measures [here](#). You can expect the measures to be updated late summer of 2021.

Substance Misuse and Abuse

The Forest School has a zero tolerance for chemical and substance misuse and abuse. Disregarding this policy may result in immediate dismissal.

Internet Safety and Social Media

Internet Safety: Please read the last paragraph under The Forest School's property (above).

At The Forest School, we know excessive gaming, video watching, and social media can have a negative impact on work habits and respect for others in general and in the Studio in particular. As such, an immediate honor code violation (MS/HS) or strike (ES) will likely result for:

- a) Any non-work use of the Internet or texts during the school hours, except at free time. (Parents are often the cause of such violations when they expect their children to answer emails and texts during the school day.)
- b) Searching for or displaying any inappropriate material.
- c) Rude, unkind, belittling, or inappropriate remarks sent through social media or by email or text at any time.

Attendance/Absenteeism

The Forest School does not have an attendance policy that specifies a required number of days that your child must be in school. It is the school's philosophy that traveling with family and engaging in experiences with family is fruitful and educational.

At the same time, consistent attendance will help your child be fully engaged with the community and with the project/Quest learning. In fact, most projects depend on the participation of all team members. If you know in advance that you will be taking your child out of school, it is helpful for the other learners in the Studio to be informed so they can make alternative work plans.

While away from school, your learner will be able to access his or her online programs and the Points Tracker for Studio assignments.

Field Trips

Part of our mission at The Forest School is to learn from our great city and community. In order to do that to the best of our potential, we will have frequent field trips as our community partners and local professionals have exhibitions or spaces that fit with what our learners are learning. A permission slip signed by a parent/caregiver is required for each student to participate in these field trips. One permission slip will be maintained for all field trips in the student's file. Notification of a field trip will be sent home no later than 24 hours in advance of the trip, with the opportunity for a parent/caregiver to let The Forest School staff know if they do not want their child to attend. Any parent wanting to attend a field trip must have a Fayette County background check on file.

Additionally, we will be taking smaller field trips to the police station, fire station, and local businesses in the neighborhood. We will have one waiver for parents to sign for these trips in particular.

School Safety

Fire/Emergency Drills

The Forest School regularly holds announced and unannounced fire and other emergency drills. Learners and adults should follow the directions for exiting the building posted in the Studio.

Emergency or Crisis Situations

In cases where there is a local, state, or national emergency or crisis, the School has procedures in place to handle a variety of situations. Our objective is to ensure the safety, health, and welfare of learners and keep the school community as updated as possible. When possible and relevant, the school's website will provide available information.

The Forest School team will make every effort to reach a parent in the event of an emergency. If the school is unable to reach a parent, the person designated as the emergency contact person will be notified. The Forest School requires emergency phone numbers for every student. Using [this online form](#) please make sure the School has current phone numbers for home, office, cell phones and a designated emergency contact person.

In the event of an emergency requiring immediate medical attention, if the school is unable to contact a parent, the School is authorized by the contract to have the child treated by a qualified physician at a nearby hospital.

The Forest School has emergency and crisis procedures in place if needed.

Notification of Emergency School Closure/Early Dismissal

The Forest School will notify families of an emergency school closure or early dismissal via email, phone calls, and/or mass text message. As an independent school, The Forest School may or may not follow Fayette County Schools regarding closings or dismissals, and instead will make decisions on a case-by-case basis.

Aggressive, Threatening, or Bullying Behavior

The Forest School is not equipped to accommodate learners with behavioral or emotional disorders. Aggressive or threatening behavior and bullying are not tolerated. Appropriate disciplinary measures will be taken if these behaviors occur. If this behavior persists, parents will be notified, and a recommendation for outside psychological assistance or a recommendation that the student be placed in a different school may be made by the administration. Such behavior may be grounds for immediate expulsion. The school reserves the right to dismiss or suspend a student if, in the judgment of the school authorities, such action is deemed in the best interest of the school. When the school feels parent dissatisfaction is such that the child's best interests are being harmed, the school may ask the parent to withdraw the child from The Forest School.

Staying Informed: How do I know what is going on and talk with my children about their learning?

SMART Goals and Journey Tracker

We trust parents to take the initiative to understand and support their child's weekly goals and badge plans. This is a large part of your journey as a Forest School parent and takes an intentional effort. Your learner will be able to share login and password information with you so you have access to the online programs as well as the Acton "Journey Tracker." **Ask your child to give you a tour of their work and explain the Tracker to you.** Talking through the programs with your child (with you as "student" and your child as "teacher") is the most effective way for you to feel equipped. **Most importantly, we encourage you to talk with your child about SMART goals every Monday and Friday weekly.** Asking questions about where they are feeling challenged, frustrated, and excited can help you encourage them with growth mindset praise and celebrate achievements with them. Remembering that learning is hard and struggling is part of the journey will help you stress less and share patience with your child.

Note: Please read this article by Acton Co-Founder, Laura Sandefer on [Growth Mindset Praise](#) to be equipped with the language that can best motivate your child toward progress in learning.

Parent Blog

Please note: The Forest School does not give parenting advice and we do not get in between you and your child. We trust your personal choices regarding discipline or

parental authority and have absolutely zero input on your personal family life. Each family is unique and we trust you to make your own best choices.

We do, however, offer you tools to help you incorporate the Acton method of asking questions and offering choices with consequences if you wish to use these at home.

Being a Forest School parent is a unique calling. Your child will bring home new skills and ideas gained from learning in a Socratic way. They will be more independent in their learning and more able to share their ideas and make personal decisions. It is a challenge to be on the other end of this transformation as a parent. [Our Forest School blog](#) is updated regularly and written by the Head of school, Guides, and guest bloggers. It provides weekly reviews and in depth looks at design principles and signature learning experiences at our school. [The Acton blog](#) written by Laura Sandefer, one of Acton Academy's co-founders, is geared to help parents understand what happens in the Studios in order to incorporate the method at home in ways that support the family's mission. Laura comes to the blog as a parent with challenges and struggles and not an expert giving advice.

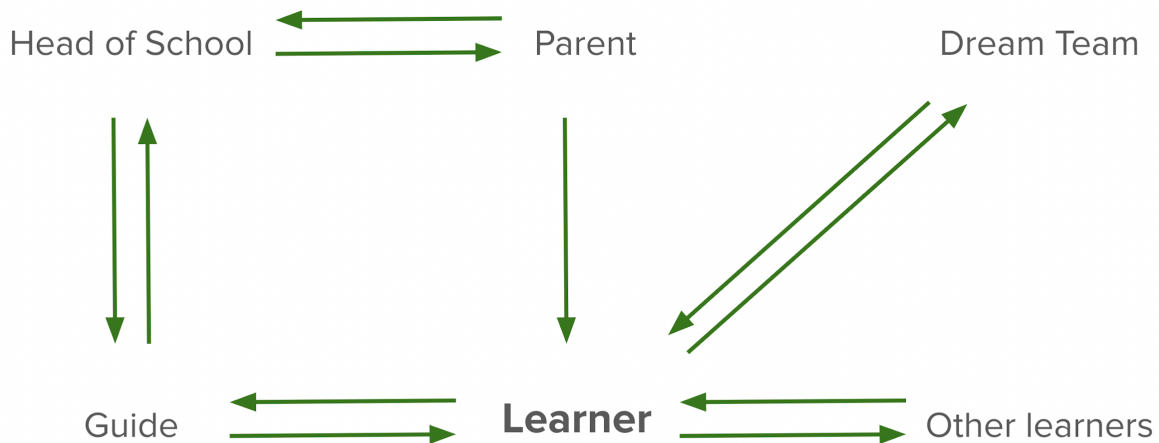
Weekly Surveys

As part of our commitment to families, each family will receive a survey via email each week. This is *the* primary way to provide constructive feedback to Forest School team members. Your responses will be kept anonymous. We ask that you guide your child to provide helpful input rather than anything personal about another student. The summary of these surveys will be shared with Forest School families and Guides each week. By sharing the results, we uphold our shared value of transparency and accountability to you. The survey is a place for constructive input.

Contacting Guides

Our general philosophy is that Guides must not come between a parent and child. You are the main authority and shepherd of your child's education and we are here to support you, but with limitations. To keep learners at the center and responsible for their learning, we try to minimize conversations between adults (i.e. Guides and parents) where the learner is not present and/or leading the conversation. Anytime adults have a conversation without the learner present, the learner loses an opportunity to self-advocate, reflect, and shoulder responsibility. Additionally, we minimize the amount of time Guides spend on email so that Guides can maximize time spent guiding, designing, and delivering signature learning experiences:

Communications that keep learners at the center



Though the Head of School usually fields parent emails, sometimes Guides are looped in to respond. Because Guides move between Studios and have contact with all learners, communication with parents is through a common email address. If you wish to direct your email to a particular Guide, simply address your note to him or her but use the common email address. The information on the emails is kept strictly confidential between the Guides and Head of School. Be prepared: The Head of School and Guides are Socratic, and rather than answering questions they may ask you questions and refer you to resources to help you.

Guides or the Head of School will preemptively reach out to parents when any of the following red flags occur for a learner:

- Falling so far behind that it threatens them graduating from their Studio on their planned time frame
- Disrespecting others
- Ignoring freedom levels and/or boundaries
- Reporting feeling unsafe
- Having a general sense of victimhood
- Regularly being distracted from work because of devices, video games, or web surfing
- Having a clear and serious interpersonal conflict that goes unresolved
- (Some Studios) Bucks being ignored or used to punish

Benefits to this Communications approach include:

- Responsibility stays on the learner to communicate clearly with parents and Guides

- Learners learn how to communicate effectively
- Learners deepen their reflection on their learning experiences
- Improved quality of work life for Guides

Downsides to this approach include:

- Parents sometimes feel disconnected and frustrated for not being able to speak directly to a Guide, or feeling their child isn't communicating fully
- Younger heroes have a harder time explaining their learning to parents
- Turn around time can be slower
- Sometimes information is inaccurate when relayed by learner
- Parents don't know the Guides as well
- This is something parents have to get used to because it is different than teacher-led learning environments

Ways we try to mitigate the downsides to this approach include:

- Guides attending Welcome and Closing parties and sometimes attending parent coffees
- Bi-annual parent-Guide conferences
- Parents are invited to sit in on a learner-Guide check in (you can schedule this with your hero!)
- Sometimes pairing new families with returning families to learn more about the school's processes and systems
- Daily communication between Guides and the Head of School to stay abreast and discern when and how to guide heroes and/or to reach out to parents
- Keeping our [blog](#) and [video library](#) up to date to show what happens at school
- Sometimes setting up parent-Guide meetings when authorized by the Head of School
- Interrogating the effectiveness of this approach yearly and making tweaks for improvement

Please understand that we will not be available to talk with you during the morning drop-off, during school, or afternoon pick-up times; and will respond to messages within 48 hours.

Email is the most effective communication. Guides have phones only for emergencies and are not able to take calls or texts during the day.

Spark, ES, MS, or HS Guides may be reached at: guides@theforest.school

For logistics needs (e.g., Chromebook pick-up) or emergencies, parents can text the private school phone at (678) 938-9081. (Thank you for not sharing this number publicly!).

In case of an emergency at school, you will receive a group text as well as a group email with instructions.

Feedback/Assessing Learning

Parent Involvement in Tracking Learning

We encourage parents to find a healthy involvement in their child's learning that works for their family.

You have many tools available. (See below). **Documentation weekly goal achievement is available for children to share with their parents at any time.** Your child can show you how to log into the Tracker to see the work accomplished and in progress. In addition, you are encouraged to become familiar with your child's online learning sites. Simply ask your child to teach you how to log in and to give you a "tour."

As a minimum, we encourage parents to ask their children about their goal setting at the beginning of the week; and follow up at the end of the week. It is helpful to ask: What would you do differently? Do you feel that your work this week was the best you can do? Where are you feeling most challenged? What was your greatest achievement this week? What was your greatest failure? When did you have the most energy today? When did you serve as a guide to someone? Who guided you? Everyone has an off-week now and then. Is there something you need a break from to get back to a strong start for next week? How is your badge compiling going? Do you save time to compile badges? Where do you feel behind? Is there a way I can support you?

Tools to measure learning:

- **Points:** Weekly points measure time/effort on task.
- **Badges:** Badges represent several weeks of work compiled and reviewed. They are similar to "courses" completed in a traditional school. Badges are significant milestones of learning and represent excellence and progress in learning. View badge plans here:
 - [Spark](#)
 - [Elementary](#)
 - [Middle](#)
 - [High](#)

- **360 Reviews/Full Circle Feedback:** Given each session, these surveys measure growth in learners' leadership and citizenship in the Studio. Warm and cool feedback, also called “warm-hearted” and “tough-minded” feedback helps learners grow in their character and relationships to others. Learners “own” their scores and we encourage them to share with their parents.



- **Public Exhibitions of Learning:** Each session concludes with a public exhibition for parents on a particular area of learning. Learners demonstrate their learning through debates, speeches, presentations and demonstrations. They discuss their lessons learned and show their portfolios of work. Each session's exhibition date and time can be found on the calendar on [The Forest School website](#).



- **Standardized Tests:** Given once or twice a year, these tests measure where learners are in comparison to national norms. You will be notified in advance of testing dates.
- **Mid- and After-Action Reviews:** These reflection activities contain learning goals, achievements, reflections, and experiences over a period of months. Learners will share these with parents and caregivers twice per year.
- **Parent-Guide Conferences:** Twice per year parents and caregivers of learners will be offered the chance to connect with Guides to discuss learner progress.

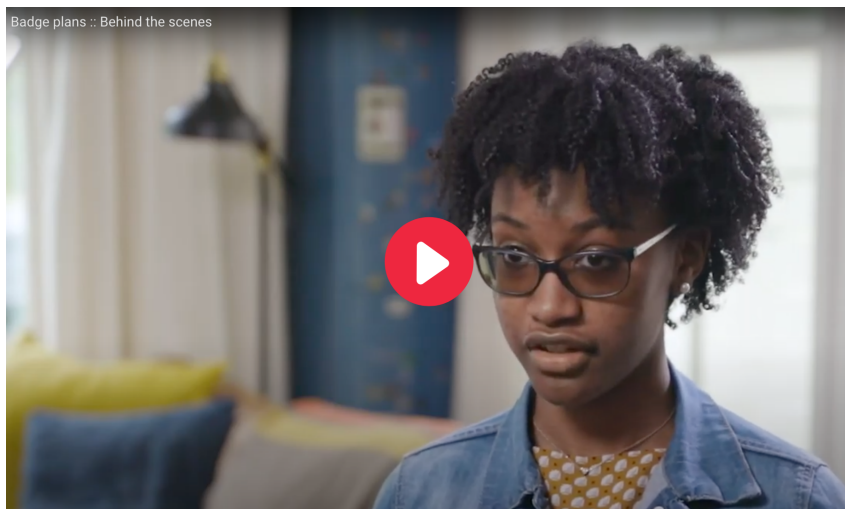
Badges versus Grades

Each learner has a badge plan for the year. At the beginning of the year, you will receive this as well as details about the Freedom Levels in each Studio. Freedom is earned by work produced and citizenship in the Studio. Your Guides will give you a detailed plan so you can see what is required to progress through the Studios and to earn more freedom. At The Forest School, we do not use letter grades nor do we give written reports from a Guide. Learners will receive feedback on the work they produce from their peers, Guides, and from other sources as appropriate. Their progress will be documented through their achievement and mastery of badges in the Core Skills of writing, language arts, Civilization, math, reading, and Socratic discussions. The software programs in language and math track the progress of learning and can be accessed by parents at any time. Simply ask your child to walk you through their programs and to share their passwords with you.

Large milestones of achievement at The Forest School are the Servant Leader Badges which prove success in completing a long-term series of leadership challenges. These Badges will document the entire learning journey at The Forest School.

High School and Middle School Studio Badges can be translated into traditional transcript requirements for college applications, Curriculum Vitae, and to celebrate authentic accomplishments of each Forest School graduate. (Completion of a badge equals mastery of a subject area and usually translates into a traditional A+). Check out this [Behind the Scenes](#) for our High School Studio.

We send out Pacing Updates a few times a year to inform you of your learners progress on their badge plan.



Studio Observation

We welcome parents to visit and observe the Studio experience to gain further understanding of the learning journey. The Studio, however, is a very special environment for the learners and we want to protect their personal space and privacy. The following guidelines will help ensure that the Studio experience does not become diluted by interruptions.

Please inform Tyler 24 hours before you hope to observe. Include the time of your arrival and your expected length of stay. Please inform your child that you will be visiting to observe and that you will just be watching the group at work.

During your observation time, you may quietly greet your child, and then find a comfortable place to sit. Enjoy taking it all in and then depart quietly.

Tuition

Our tuition totals \$10,390 per person for the 2021-2022 school year for K-12. For half-day 4 year old learners, tuition is \$6,250 per person for the year. The tuition terms and schedule can be viewed [here](#). **If you have any questions about your tuition bills or payments, you may contact our accountant, Monica Fullerton at admin@theforest.school.**

Special Events – Mark your Calendars

Forest School Google Calendar for events each month

For Exhibitions, Parent Coffees, Celebrations, and other special events, you will be sent Google calendar invites during the year.

Parent Coffees

Roughly once per month we host Parent Coffees, usually on Friday mornings from 8:30-9:30am. Part of the Parent Contract includes the commitment for one parent from each family to attend at least two of these Parent Coffees each year.

The purpose of these meetings is a far cry from a typical “P.T.A.” meeting. Rather, they are created to inspire you to find your own calling and to be better equipped to help your child maneuver the landscape of his or her own, unique journey. The meeting dates are TBD and will be emailed to you by Tyler over the course of the year.

For this year, the remaining Parent Coffees will be held at 8:45am on:
March 5th, April 2nd, and April 30th.

Other Details for your enjoyment

- You will have a copy of the school roster shared with you as a Google document.
- Please plan to attend our Welcome to The Forest School Party on Friday, July 30, 2021. This kicks off the school year before the first day of school on August 2, 2021.
- Keep reading the suggested books (See “Foundational Books” below). The more you learn about why we created The Forest School and why our systems work, the more enjoyable this journey will be for you.

Foundational Books

- Courage to Grow by Laura Sandefer
- UnSchooling Rules by Clark Aldrich
- Work Rules by Laszlo Bock
- Choice Words: How Our Language Affects Children's Learning by Peter Johnston
- Mastery: The Keys to Success and Long-Term Fulfillment by GB Leonard
- The Talent Code by Daniel Coyle
- An Ethic of Excellence by Ron Berger
- Montessori: The Science Behind the Genius by Angeline Stoll Lillard Fires in the Mind by Kathleen Cushman
- A Thomas Jefferson Education: Teaching a Generation of Leaders for the Twenty-First Century by Oliver DeMille

Setting Up Email

Once we set up your learner’s email address, we will send you their school email address and temporary password. We use the Google Suite at school. To set up email, go to gmail.com or [click this link](#) and enter the email address and then follow prompts to login and change password. We will send additional information for Onboarding and logins to other platforms to that email.

Birthday Celebrations - Spark Studio

Birthdays are a special time and we love to celebrate life. We celebrate during morning group time (11:00-11:30). Please schedule a day by emailing guides@theforest.school

using Spark Studio as the subject for your child's Celebration. On the day of the scheduled Celebration, please send in one picture for each year of life. We will have your child walk around the circle to share their life story one picture at a time. We will then have your child walk around the sun for each year as we sing our special birthday song. You may send in a healthy snack (preferably gluten free and/or low or no sugar) for your child to share. Once the Celebration is over we will create a timeline to hang on the wall for 1 month. Your pictures will be returned. Family is welcome to join.

Please acknowledge that you have read and accept the handbook on [this form](#).