

School Traditions

A sampling of traditions at Green Acres that enrich the lives of our students, staff, and families, and bring our community together.

Fall

Welcoming Assembly Students and staff gather in the Gully (our amphitheater) for a low-key and light-hearted welcome to the school year.

Family Picnic The entire community is invited to this fun event held in September.

Halloween Parade Costumed students and staff march in a lively parade around the school.

Grandparents' and Grandest Friends' Day Grandparents and "grandest friends" visit children in classes.

Corporation Meeting This governance-oriented meeting includes all members of the Green Acres Corporation: parents and staff members. In the fall, the emphasis is on our intentional progressive program, often featuring an alumni panel. In the spring, the meeting features ratification of the following year's budget and formal election of new Trustees.

Thanksgiving Lunch All students and staff gather in the Center in mixed groups for a turkey feast. The fourth grade chorus sings, and over pie a staff member shares a personal Thanksgiving memory. All classes participate by making decorations, centerpieces, or napkin rings, or by setting-up, serving or cleaning up.

Book Fair Held at Barnes and Noble in Rockville, the fair raises funds for new library books. It is coordinated by parents and includes student performances and parent coffees.

Family Hayride and Campfire A fall night, with cider and on-the-farm rides and community spirit.

Winter

Winter Choral Concert Fourth and fifth grade choruses present a winter concert for the entire community.

Martin Luther King Assemblies All classes prepare an age-appropriate tribute meaningful to their grade levels and present it during a Lower or Middle School assembly.

Family Heritage Fair This participatory Sunday afternoon invites families to share their cultural backgrounds. The event features multicultural foods, arts, crafts, games, storytelling, dance, and fun.

Family Ice Skating Party Children of all ages have fun at a local rink reserved for the evening.

Spring

The Auction This annual evening fund-raiser is held at School for the adult community.

Spring Choral Concert Fourth and fifth grade choruses present a spring concert for the community.

Musical This production by all students in grades 7 and 8 is presented to other students during a special assembly, and to the community during two evening performances.



Green Acres Olympics The school gathers in the Gully to start the ceremonies with the lighting of the torch, beginning a fun-filled, competitive, two-day field event held the last two days of school in June. All middle school students become members of Argonian, Athenian, Megarian, or Spartan teams and participate in serious and silly Olympic trials. All community members are invited to watch and cheer. For closing ceremonies, all meet again in the Gully to hear the Head of School announce the results of the games, extinguish the torch, and say good-bye for the summer.

Graduation This distinctive event marks the completion of Green Acres careers for eighth graders. In addition to receiving a diploma, each graduating student presents a meaningful expression of his or her strengths and affinities, including poetry, musical performances, photography exhibitions, gymnastics or skating films, and speeches.

Class Traditions

Some special annual events held in each grade.

Pre-K

Fall creek walks
Family sharings and celebrations in the classroom
Pajama Day for students and teachers
Birthday celebrations
Family Book Bags

Kindergarten

One Hundredth Day Celebration—a mathematical event commemorating the hundredth day of school each year
Author's Chair
Spring creek walks
Favorite songs assembly
Kindergarten Store
Stuffed animal day
Birthday celebrations
Wacky Wednesday

Grades 1 and 2

Pumpkin patch trip
Theme studies of Mexico and Japan, including making tortillas by hand and eating rice with chopsticks; culminating in music, drama, and dance assemblies
Raising and releasing monarch butterflies
Birthday celebrations
Counting UNICEF money
Second grade "Kid Talk" on topics suggested by students

Grades 3 and 4

"In Recognition of..." birthday badge/tributes, in which children's strengths are recognized by their peers
Quilt making, world celebration presentations, and Rainforest Picture books: projects to celebrate culmination of social studies units
Outdoor education: Grade 3 spends an evening at Green Acres; Grade 4 spends the night at Hard Bargain Farm in Accokeek, Maryland
Geodesic dome building at the National Building Museum
Weekly gatherings to discuss timely topics and develop cross-grade friendships

Grades 5 and 6

Interschool athletic teams in soccer, cross-country, basketball, and softball
Thematic cross-curricular activities; examples include Campfire Roundups; Science Human Body Expo; Bridge Building projects; Maryland unit with focus on Chesapeake Bay
Outdoor education, single- and multi-day trips, such as Grade 5 to Echo Hill Outdoor School; Grade 6 to Bar-T Mountainside campus
National Geographic Society Geography Bee
Annual *Diplomacy* board game
Intensive Study Week: In alternate years, weeklong study of a single broad topic across all subjects—such as Cuba, the Iditarod, Hawaii, and 1934 (the year of Green Acres' founding)

Grades 7 and 8

Interschool athletic teams in soccer, cross-country, basketball, and softball
High School counseling process for students and parents begins spring of grade 7
Student exchange program with Colegio Leonardo da Vinci, a similar school in Lima, Peru
Annual *Diplomacy* board game
Fall and winter dances
Spring musical
Outdoor education to The Mountain Institute (West Virginia) and Chincoteague Island (Virginia)
Photography contests and Mathcounts competitions
National Geographic Society Geography Bee

Grade 8

Eighth grade vs. staff Thanksgiving soccer game
Production of student magazines
Eighth Grade Ethical Life Project
Model UN
Production of the School yearbook
Outdoor education to New York City
Production of a class banner as a gift to the School
Graduation