



PARENT HANDBOOK

2023-24 School Year

compiled by

The Parents' Association

A special note for new-to-Park families: We are pleased to welcome you as new parents and guardians to The Park School of Baltimore. You are now a part of a network of dedicated adults working together to ensure a quality education for our children. Your involvement in the Park School community is important and much appreciated. This handbook will introduce you to the school and share some of the ways in which parents help to meet its present and future needs.

In this handbook, you will find:

- Useful Contacts and Links
- A list of School Publications and Communications
- The Parents' Association Mission
- A list of Parents' Association Board Officers and Grade Representatives
- A list of Parents' Association Initiatives and Events
- The Parents' Association 2023-24 Calendar of Events
- Park Connects Information and Calendar
- Information about Parent Engagement and Volunteer Opportunities
- Information about The Park School Board of Trustees, and
- A description of The Park Fund

If you have any questions, or if the Parents' Association can be of assistance in any way, please do not hesitate to contact us at pa@parkschool.net.

USEFUL CONTACTS AND LINKS

The Park School <https://www.parkschool.net>

Park Bulletins <https://www.parkschool.net/life-at-park/park-bulletins/>

Parents' Association <https://www.parkschool.net/parents-association/>

Summer Mailing

<https://sites.google.com/parkschool.net/parksdigitalcampus/home?authuser=0>

Veracross <https://accounts.veracross.com/park/portals/login>

Lower School <https://www.parkschool.net/academics/lower-school/>

Middle School <https://www.parkschool.net/academics/middle-school/>

Upper School <https://www.parkschool.net/academics/upper-school/>

Magnus Health

<https://secure.magnushealthportal.com/vclogin/login.jsf?schoolID=247264>

FACTS <https://online.factsmgt.com/signin/3QDPP>

Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

<https://www.parkschool.net/life-at-park/diversity-equity-inclusion/>

Civic Engagement and Service Learning

<https://www.parkschool.net/life-at-park/civic-engagement/>

School Store <https://parkstoreonline.square.site/>

The Park Fund <https://www.parkschool.net/giving/the-park-fund/>

Park Community Listserv <http://groups.google.com/group/parkschool>

General Contact Information

<https://www.parkschool.net/about/contact-information-directions/>

SCHOOL PUBLICATIONS & COMMUNICATIONS

The Park Bulletin: <https://www.parkschool.net/life-at-park/park-bulletins/> Each week, parents receive an email with links to the three divisional bulletins, each featuring grade level-specific information, division-specific information, and all-school information. The Bulletins are your go-to place for current information about what's happening on campus. They are published every Thursday, and the content is on the web all week.

Monthly PA Update Email: Although some information is also available through the bulletin, the Monthly PA Update Email includes all the up-to-date information about upcoming grade-level, PA-sponsored, and school-wide events and activities and provides an opportunity for parents to build a more personal connection with their Grade Reps and with the PA.

Veracross: <https://accounts.veracross.com/park/portals/login> This secure parent portal provides access to important information for parents about their student(s), including class lists and directories, student reports, and calendars of school events.

Postscript: <https://www.parkschool.net/news/postscript/> The Upper School student newspaper, is published several times each academic year and is mailed home to all Park families.

Cross Currents: <https://www.parkschool.net/news/cross-currents/> The school magazine, is typically mailed home twice a year.

Brownie: The Park School yearbook, is published in June.

The Park Parent and Community Listserv: <https://groups.google.com/g/parkschool> Not officially affiliated with the school, the listserv provides a forum for current and former Park parents and caregivers, alumni, and other Park community members to connect.

THE PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

The Park School encourages the involvement of parents in school life. The Parents' Association (PA), of which every parent is a member, exists to foster partnership among the Park School's home and school communities by serving as a forum to connect these constituencies. Further, the mission is to support and promote the philosophy of the Park School by providing a vehicle to communicate with, educate, integrate and involve the Park School family. In order to accomplish this mission, the Parents' Association sees as its priorities the following areas: Communication, Parent Education, Community Interaction, Fundraising and Special Projects.

PA activities are governed by a board of officers comprised of parent volunteers elected at the organization's June meeting. In addition to the Board, PA leaders include at least two appointed Grade Representatives for each grade who serve as liaisons for parent support; Park Connects parent discussion facilitators; and special event committee chairs. The PA is supported in its efforts by the Director of Parent Programs and the Parents' Association Coordinator - who work closely with administrators, PA officers, and volunteers.

2023-24 PARENTS' ASSOCIATION BOARD

PRESIDENT

Missy Rohrbach*

1st VICE PRESIDENT

Stephen Murphy*

VICE PRESIDENTS

GRADE LEVEL SUPPORT

Makia Tabourn (US)

Amanda Shapiro* (MS)

Sally Munemitsu* (LS)

NEW PARENT SUPPORT

Monsurat Bucknor*

Nina Knoche

VOLUNTEER COMMUNICATION SUPPORT

Karla Bunz

Cathy Skinner

DEVELOPMENT & FUNDRAISING - *Year Round*

Amy Highstein-Berman*

Kate Mack*

Special Events

Carla Cooper '03

Emily Ries '01

PROGRAMMING

Emanda Lenet '93*

Jessica Kremen '01

SECRETARY

Lindsey Sachs*

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY

Andrea Downs

TREASURER

Chad Johnson

ASSISTANT TREASURER

Laura Lamb

COMMUNITY LIAISON REPRESENTATIVES

Michelle Feist

Hyeon-Jin Kwon

Sara Nett

PARK CONNECTS CHAIRS

Dori Chait *

Vanessa Pikler

SPECIAL GRANTS CHAIRS

Betsy Hannibal*

Laurie Albo

MEMBERS AT LARGE

Scott Bloomberg

Kuo Pao Lian

Charles Parris

FACULTY REPRESENTATIVE

Megan Brown

NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIR

Stacey Kunar*

DIRECTOR OF PARENT PROGRAMS

Jayme Wood '93

PARENTS' ASSOCIATION COORDINATOR

Lori Isaac '98

* *Continuing Representative*

2023-24 PARENTS' ASSOCIATION GRADE REPRESENTATIVES

Pre-K	Amy Weintraub Moran '04 Molly Coplan '06	6 th	Adena Lerner* Margarita Zubkus* Thais Hudson
K	Amy Akman* Lauren Herschman* Marian Crotty	7 th	Nat Koren* Betsy Plowman* Joe Pabón*
1 st	Deon Provost* Yuri Cianchette Lindsay Bearman	8 th	Laura Lamb* Siddeeqah Fichman Kevin Kostic
2 nd	Hyeon-Jin Kwon* Danielle Nestadt* Vanessa Evans	9 th	Elena Bradley* Danielle Nekimken* Aion Roberts
3 rd	Deetria McCorr* Patricia Anong Jamie Shepard	10 th	Andrea Downs* Liza Hicks '88* Jim Gibbons
4 th	Cathy Skinner* Amber & Eric Waddy* Lucy Leibowitz	11 th	TJ Intner* Dominique Farrow-Ray Amy Anderson
5 th	Scott Bloomberg* Michele Corris Laura Grant	12 th	Mark Kelemen* Shauna Krupnick* Kate Mack

**Continuing Representative*

PARENTS' ASSOCIATION INITIATIVES AND EVENTS

The PA supports community engagement in a wide variety of ways that benefit parents, students and the school, as detailed below. All PA events are open to all Park School families, and many are also open to the greater Park School community and the general public. In addition to these major PA-sponsored events and activities, the Parents' Association and Grade Representatives may add programming and parent engagement activities throughout the year which will be communicated in the Park Bulletin and through monthly emails from Grade Representatives. *Please see calendar following for 2023-24 dates.*

ADMISSION AND NEW PARENT SUPPORT

The PA assists the Admission office with events throughout the year, including Open Houses, receptions and orientations for prospective, newly accepted, and enrolled families, and with phone calls and other outreach to families who are new to Park.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

The PA supports and enhances school efforts related to ongoing, meaningful community service projects and provides parents and families opportunities to engage in community service activities throughout the year.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

The PA Board encourages, supports, and enhances the school's initiatives related to matters of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in partnership with Akira Townes, Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

ELLEN SMALL SPEAKER SERIES

The PA hosts a series of programs and seminars featuring invited guest speakers on topics of parenting, child development, and other topics of interest to parents and caregivers.

FACULTY & STAFF APPRECIATION

The Parents' Association provides lunch or treats to Park's faculty and staff on some professional days throughout the year as a thank you.

FUNDRAISING

Bingo, School Pictures, restaurant nights, and sales of Park magnets, stickers, and other items—the PA sponsors all of these activities, and more, to raise money for Park programs and events, the PA Grant Fund, and other contributions to the school.

GRADE LEVEL GATHERINGS AND SOCIAL EVENTS

These events play an important role in building a sense of community and educating families. Socials offer parents and families an opportunity to connect with others who can help them with information, advice, and friendship. Parents enjoy renewing previous acquaintances and making new ones.

GRANT FUND

The PA funds some student- and faculty-driven new initiatives in conjunction with the needs and priorities of the school. For example, initiatives supported by the fund last year included 6th Grade Tech, Jewish Canadian Youth Model United Nations (JCYMUN), the Lower School Organic Garden, new costumes for the Fifth Grade Winter Solstice, and the US Civil Rights Trip.

MAY DAY

The PA assists with the activities included in May Day, a traditional Lower School celebration and school festival. Highlights include a Maypole dance by graduating fifth graders, songs, games, activities, treats, and picnic lunches.

NEW PARENT BREAKFAST

This is an opportunity for parents new to Park to meet each other, PA representatives, administrators, and staff at a social and informational function at the beginning of the academic year.

OPENING MEETING/CLOSING MEETING

The first and last formal meetings of the Parents' Association each year provide an opportunity for parents and caregivers to get to know one another and the PA, and all are encouraged to attend. The opening meeting in the fall includes a budget review and community activity, and in the spring, parents gather for breakfast, vote for the new slate of officers, and participate in a community activity together.

PARENT HAPPY HOURS AND ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

The PA hosts periodic, informal gatherings as a way of building community. These gatherings may be simply for conversation and the exchange of ideas, or may include activities led by interested parents such as hikes, yoga, or community service activities. These gatherings help parents to get to know one another and the PA and help the PA identify interested volunteers.

PARK CONNECTS

A school-wide program designed to promote the well-being of our students and to help reduce the risk factors that contribute to unhealthy behaviors. In Park Connects' Parent Networking Groups, trained parent facilitators lead discussion groups once or twice a year at each grade level. Parents are encouraged to share their ideas, experiences, and concerns to promote better understanding and awareness. The parent chairs of Park Connects sit on the PA Board. The Park Connects program also offers parent education workshops throughout the year hosted by the Park Health and Counseling Team.

RESIDENT SCHOLAR

For over 40 years, the Resident Scholar program has brought distinguished scholars and artists to Park so that Upper School students can explore current ideas relating to academic disciplines. Funded in part by a grant from the PA, the program involves a presentation to the Upper School student body followed by a day of in-depth seminars in the scholar's area of expertise.

SCHOOL PICTURE DAY

Students' pictures are taken individually and by class (for Lower School students) in the fall. Picture packages may be selected and purchased by parents, with proceeds supporting PA initiatives and events.

SATURDAY IN THE PARK

Park School families and friends are invited to a community-wide fall festival on the school campus to build connections and friendships and enjoy a variety of activities, including arts and crafts, music, games, treats, canoeing, moonbounces, and more! Newly-enrolled families are especially encouraged to attend, as this is a great opportunity to engage with the community early in the fall.

PARENTS' ASSOCIATION CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2023-2024

September	8	Welcome Breakfast for New Parents - 8:15 a.m.-9:30 a.m.
	22	PA Opening Meeting & Tour of the New Science + Engineering Wing - 8:15 a.m.
October	7	Saturday in the Park - 11:30 a.m.
	10	School Picture Day - 8 a.m.-4 p.m.
	12	All-Parent S'mores + Pours Bonfire Happy Hour 5:30 p.m.
	24	The Ellen Small Parents' Association Speaker Series - 7 p.m. <i>Belle Liang, PhD - How to Navigate Life: The New Science of Finding Your Way in School, Career, & Beyond</i>
	28	Rain Date: Saturday in the Park
November	TBD	Parent Community Service Event
	8	The Parents' Association Ellen Small Speaker Series (Charles Callahan, DO, FAAP - <i>This is Baltimore. The Impact of Historical Structural Racism on Health</i>)
	14	School Picture Day Make-up Date - 8 a.m. - 1 p.m.
January	12	Parent Community Service Event - 8:15 a.m.
	18	The Parents' Association Ellen Small Speaker Series (tentative)
February	2	All-Parent Happy Hour - 5:30 p.m.
	6	PA/Office of DEI Film Screening and Discussion - 7:00 p.m.
	24	Family Bingo - noon
March	2	Snow Date: Family Bingo
April	5	Parent Community Service Event - 8:15 a.m.
	17	The Parents' Association Ellen Small Speaker Series (tentative)
May	10	May Day - 11 a.m.
	17	Rain Date: May Day
	30	PA Closing Meeting + Activity - 8:15 a.m.

**Please note: All dates are subject to change. Please confirm on the Park School calendar, in the weekly Bulletin, or on the Park School website (parkschool.net) prior to attending.*

PARK CONNECTS 2023-24

This parent program, now in its 24th year, aims to support our students' healthy social and emotional development while at the same time helping to reduce the risk factors that contribute to unhealthy choices and behaviors. Park Connects is structured to promote important dialogue among families and within the school community. You will be invited to Park Connects programs for each grade level. During these events, you will hear grade-level updates, attend workshops sponsored by Park's Health Team, and participate in facilitated discussions with other parents. The full calendar can be found below and will be accessible on the Park School website. Event times will vary depending on the program.

Pre-K and Kindergarten

- 10/10 Workshop and Parent Discussion
6-8 p.m.
- 1/8 Pre-K- 3rd Grade Sexuality Workshop
6:30-7:30 p.m.
- 1/25 Parent Discussion #2
6:30-7:30 p.m.

First Grade

- 10/23 Parent Discussion
6:30-7:30 p.m.
- 1/8 Pre-K- 3rd Grade Sexuality Workshop
6:30-7:30 p.m.
- 2/26 1st-3rd Grade Workshop and Parent Discussion
6-8 p.m.

Second Grade

- 1/8 Pre-K- 3rd Grade Sexuality Workshop
6:30-7:30 p.m.
- 2/26 1st-3rd Grade Workshop and Parent Discussion
6-8 p.m.

Third Grade

- 1/8 Pre-K- 3rd Grade Sexuality Workshop
6:30-7:30 p.m.
- 2/26 1st-3rd Grade Workshop and Parent Discussion
6-8 p.m.

Fourth Grade

- 10/16 4th-6th Grade Sexuality Workshop
6:30-7:30 p.m.
- 3/27 4th and 5th Grade Workshop and Parent Discussion
6-8 p.m.

Fifth Grade

- 10/16 4th-6th Grade Sexuality Workshop
6:30-7:30 p.m.
- 3/27 4th and 5th Grade Workshop and Parent Discussion
6-8 p.m.

Sixth Grade

- 10/16 4th-6th Grade Sexuality Workshop
6:30-7:30 p.m.
- 11/1 6th-8th Grade Workshop and Parent Discussion
6-8 p.m.
- 2/8 Parent Discussion #2
7-8 p.m.

Seventh Grade

- 11/1 6th-8th Grade Workshop and Parent Discussion
6-8 p.m.

Eighth Grade

- 11/1 6th-8th Grade Workshop and Parent Discussion
6-8 p.m.
- 4/18 Parent Discussion #2
7-8 p.m.

Ninth Grade

- 10/18 Parent Discussion
7-8 p.m.
- 1/30 9th and 10th Grade Workshop (parents and students)
6:30-8 p.m.
- 5/9 Parent Discussion #2
7-8 p.m.

Tenth Grade

- 11/7 Parent Discussion
7-8 p.m.
- 1/30 9th and 10th Grade Workshop (parents and students)
6:30-8 p.m.

Eleventh Grade

- 2/22 11th and 12th Grade Workshop and Parent Discussion
6-8 p.m.

Twelfth Grade

- 2/22 11th and 12th Grade Workshop and Parent Discussion
6-8 p.m.

PARENT ENGAGEMENT AND VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES AT PARK

Park School is dependent upon hundreds of volunteer hours to maintain the quality of its programs and facilities. Parental involvement in a broad variety of activities enhances the students' educational experience while fostering the sense of community that makes Park unique. While the school requests volunteers in various ways, parents can also get involved by contacting the Parents' Association at pa@parkschool.net or submitting the Volunteer Survey. Examples of PA volunteer opportunities are:

- Grade Representatives
- Park Connects Parent Discussion Facilitators
- Parent Affinity Group Coordinators (in coordination with the Office of DEI)
- PA Community Events, including:
 - Saturday in the Park
 - School Picture Day
 - Rivalry Day
 - Bingo
 - May Day
 - Parent community service activities

Outside of the Parents' Association, the school also seeks volunteers periodically to help with admission events, athletic events; theatrical, musical and visual arts events and performances; classroom and library activities; chaperoning field trips; service learning projects; assemblies; Middle School Exploratory Learning Week; The Senior Project Internship Program; The Park Fund; Grandparents' and Special Friends' Visiting Days; and the Park Bruin Buddy Program. If you are interested in helping with these activities, feel free to contact the PA office and we will connect you with the appropriate person.

THE ROLE OF THE GRADE REPRESENTATIVE

Each grade level is served by at least two parent representatives who volunteer for a two-year term. Grade representatives assist the Parents' Association with its goals of building community among families and maintaining a support network for families. Your grade representatives act as liaisons between the parent and school communities. They are a resource for you – please reach out to them with any suggestions, questions, or concerns. Among their other duties, grade representatives send a monthly email from the PA that includes all the up-to-date information about upcoming grade-level, PA-sponsored, and school-wide events and activities. They meet regularly with division principals to learn about new developments and to provide feedback from parents. Grade representatives also coordinate summer playground gatherings for lower school and a grade-level parent-only gathering to foster relationships among parents outside of school.

PARK SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees has approximately 30 members who are elected to three-year terms and one *ex-officio* representative each from The Parents' Association, the Alumni Council, the Student Government, and one faculty member. The Head of School, Associate Head of School, Director of Development, and the Business Manager also attend meetings. Kevin Pearson is the current President of the Board of Trustees.

The primary functions of the Board are to:

- *establish general policies and objectives*
- *measure the performance of the school as it relates to policies and school philosophy*
- *appoint the head of school, who serves as the school's chief executive officer; and*
- *encourage financial support of the school's annual and capital fund drives.*

Through its standing committees (Audit and Risk Management, Committee on DEI, Committee on Trustees, Development, Facilities, Finance, and Investment), the Board considers various aspects of the school's business operations (long range planning, development activities, the annual budget, tuition levels, tuition assistance funds and major expenditures for buildings and grounds), and brings recommendations to meetings of the full Board. Through its Executive Committee, the Trustees also advise the Head of School.

THE PARK FUND

The Park Fund <https://www.parkschool.net/giving/the-park-fund/> plays an essential role for every student, every year. Gifts to The Park Fund support all students, faculty, and programs, enabling the school to provide an extraordinary education. As part of the school's operating budget (and separate from the PA budget), The Park Fund contributes to academics, arts, and athletics programming, tuition assistance for a broad range of families, and faculty support.

Throughout the year, Park volunteers and staff reach out to parents, grandparents, alumni, parents of alumni, Park employees, and other friends of Park to raise money for The Park Fund. Please expect a friendly call from a Park volunteer regarding your willingness to support The Park Fund! Gifts of any amount make an immediate impact. This past year the Park community contributed over \$1.9M to The Park Fund.