



## PARENT HANDBOOK

2024-25 School Year

compiled by

The Parents' Association

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*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.*

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In this handbook, you will find:

- Useful Contacts and Links
- A list of School Publications and Communications
- Information about the Parents' Association's Mission, Communications, Events and Activities
- A list of Parents' Association Board Officers and Grade Representatives
- A list of Parents' Association Activities and Events
- The Parents' Association 2024-25 Calendar of Events
- Park Connects Information and Calendar
- Information about Parent Engagement and Volunteer Opportunities
- A description of the Parents' Association Grant Program
- 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](mailto: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.factsmgmt.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 Jayme Wood '93 and the Parents' Association Coordinator Lori Isaac '98, who work closely with administrators, PA officers, and volunteers.

## 2024-25 PARENTS' ASSOCIATION BOARD

### **PRESIDENT**

Stephen Murphy

### **1st VICE PRESIDENT**

Cathy Skinner

### **VICE PRESIDENTS**

#### **GRADE LEVEL SUPPORT**

Makia Tabourn\* (US)

Karla Bunz (MS)

Lindsay Bearman (LS)

#### **NEW PARENT SUPPORT**

Nina Knoche\*

Charles Parris

#### **FUNDRAISING**

Carla Cooper '03\*

Emily Ries '01\*

Amy Akman

#### **PROGRAMMING & PARENT**

##### **INITIATIVES**

Jessica Kremen '01

Siddeeqah Fichman

#### **COMMUNICATIONS & SECRETARY**

Dori Chair

### **CORRESPONDING SECRETARY**

Andrea Downs\*

### **TREASURER**

Chad Johnson\*

### **ASSISTANT TREASURER**

Scott Bloomberg

### **COMMUNITY SERVICE + DEI**

Michelle Feist\*

Hyeon-Jin Kwon\*

Sara Nett\*

### **PARK CONNECTS CHAIRS**

Vanessa Pikler\*

Amanda Shapiro

### **SPECIAL GRANTS**

Laurie Albo\*

Kuo Pao Lian

### **MEMBERS AT LARGE**

Betsy Hannibal

Vanessa Evans

Jamie Shepard

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### **FACULTY REPRESENTATIVE**

Megan Brown\*

### **NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIR**

Missy Rohrbach

### **DIRECTOR OF PARENT PROGRAMS**

Jayne Wood '93

### **PARENTS' ASSOCIATION COORDINATOR**

Lori Isaac '98

*\* Continuing Representative*

## 2023-24 PARENTS' ASSOCIATION GRADE REPRESENTATIVES

Pre-K	Carly Levin '03 Nicole Cameron '05	6 <sup>th</sup>	Michele Corris* Laura Grant* Philip Tang
K	Amy Weintraub Moran '04* Molly Coplan '06* She'Tiel Coley-Winder '09	7 <sup>th</sup>	Thais Hudson* Becky Oyewamide Fulya Gursel
1 <sup>st</sup>	Marian Crotty* Kyle Kingsley Brandis Marsh	8 <sup>th</sup>	Neil Alvanzo Lauren Rauseo Nicole Slater
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Yuri Cianchette* Lindsay Bearman* Jay Golon	9 <sup>th</sup>	Siddeeqah Fichman* Tracy Richardson Susie Renninger
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Vanessa Evans* Alan Martinson Carly Ackley	10 <sup>th</sup>	Aion Roberts* Tracee Fruman Lauren Blum '93
4 <sup>th</sup>	Patricia Anong* Jamie Shepard* Jamie Suski	11 <sup>th</sup>	Jim Gibbons* Matthew Hooker Jessica Pfeifer
5 <sup>th</sup>	Lucy Leibowitz* Tyler Caruso Moriah Arthur	12 <sup>th</sup>	Nina Knoche Ellen Katz '91

*\*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 2024-25 dates.*

### **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 '13 , 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. Lower School grade representatives also coordinate holiday and end-of-year gifts.

### **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.

## **GRANTS PROGRAM**

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 EVENTS/CLOSING MEETING**

The opening events and last formal meeting 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 events in the fall include Rivalry Day, Saturday in the Park, and the All-Parent Happy Hour, 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 in partnership with the Park Health and Counseling Team, designed to create, strengthen, and support the connections between and among students and adults in our community and to help reduce the risk factors that contribute to unhealthy behaviors and strengthen the protective factors that foster young people's healthy development and physical, social, and emotional well-being. In Park Connects' Parent Facilitated Discussions, these grade level parent-to-parent events allow for relationships to develop, experience to be gathered, and an ethos of a connected community to be built. For over 20 years, these discussion groups led by trained parent facilitators, have created a culture of conversation and connectivity among Park parents. As decades of research confirm, there's no question that a more connected community provides a healthier and safer environment for all of our children. The parent chairs of Park Connects sit on the PA Board.

## **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 2024-2025

September	6	Welcome Breakfast for New Parents - 8:15 a.m.-9:30 a.m.
	27	School Spirit + Pep Rally – 3:15-5 p.m.
October	5	Bruins Run – 11 a.m.
	5	Saturday in the Park – 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
	8	School Picture Day (MS/US) – 8 a.m.-4 p.m.
	9	School Picture Day (LS) – 8 a.m.-4 p.m.
	18	Community Service Event: Art with a Heart – 10 a.m.-Noon
	23	PA Fundraiser: California Pizza Kitchen – 11 a.m.-10 p.m.
	25	New Parent Coffee (Pre-K + K) – 8:30 a.m.
	26	Bruins Run
	26	Rain Date: Saturday in the Park
	31	Coffee + Donuts Pre-Halloween Parade – 8:30 a.m.
November	8	New Parent Coffee (Lower School) – 8:30 a.m.
	13	All School Picture Make-up Day (Retakes + Siblings) – 8 a.m.-1 p.m.
	14	All Parent Bonfire + New Parent Welcome – 5:30-7:30 p.m.
	20	PA Fundraiser: Pizza Blitz – 4-8 p.m.
	21	Parent Programming – 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m.
	22	New Parent Coffee (Middle School) – 8:30 a.m.
December	4	PA Fundraiser: La Food Market – Noon-8 p.m.
	5	Community Service Event: Weekend Backpacks – 9-11 a.m.
	6	New Parent Coffee (Upper School) – 8:30 a.m.
	8	Gingerbread House Making – 1-4 p.m.
January	23	Parent Programming – 7-8:30 p.m.
February	4	Community Service Event – 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m.
	22	Family Bingo - noon
March	1	Snow Date: Family Bingo
	4	Parent Programming – 6:30-8:30 p.m.
	11	Parent Programming – 6:30-8:30 p.m.
April	24	Community Service Event – 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m.
	27	Community Service Event – 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m.
May	2	Parent Programming – 6:30-8:30 p.m.
	9	May Day – 11 a.m.
	16	Rain Date: May Day

*\*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 2024-25

Our Park Connects programming invites parents to gather, share, and hear from Park’s Health Team about the latest and most salient developmental topics for raising healthy children and adolescents today. We eagerly look forward to leading the Park Connects Parent Discussions and Health Team Happy Hours – new this year! – throughout the school year. Each division (Lower, Middle, and Upper School) has their own Park Connects nights. The full calendar can be found below and will be accessible on the Park School website. Please refer to this link for more information and your divisional Park Connects dates: <https://parkschool.net/park-connects/>.

### PARK CONNECTS CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2024-2025

October	1	Pre-K – Grade 2 Parent Discussion – 6:30 p.m.
	9	Health Team Happy Hour – 6:30 p.m.
	15	Grades 4-6 Human Sexuality with Debbie – 6:30 p.m.
November	13	Grades 9-10 Parent/Student Workshop – 6:30 p.m.
December	4	Grades 6-8 – 7 p.m.
January	8	Pre-K – Grade 3 Human Sexuality with Debbie – 6:30 p.m.
March	6	Grades 9-12 – 7p.m.
	10	Grades 3-5 – 6:30 p.m.
April	30	Health Team Happy Hour – 6:30 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](mailto:pa@parkschool.net). Some examples of PA volunteer opportunities are:

- Grade Representatives
- Park Connects Parent Discussion Facilitators
- Parent Affinity Group Facilitators (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. Lower School grade representatives also coordinate holiday and end-of-year gifts.

## 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. Georgia Smith 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 \$1.6M to The Park Fund.