### Blackwood Farm School Fall 2023

**Farm School Mission**

Blackwood's Farm School exists to teach students a strong work ethic as they learn where food comes from while connecting classroom studies to real-world situations.

**Overview**

This experiential program is designed to provide students with an **in-depth, hands-on** look into how a 21st-century farm operates. During their time on the farm, students will live the full cycle of basic **agroecology** and learn the value of preparing **wholesome food.** They will leave better stewards of our greatest resources, excited to make conscientious decisions in all their future pursuits.

We focus on teaching ages 6-13 split into two age groups, 6-10 and 11-13. Lessons incorporate science, writing, math, strategic planning, carpentry, livestock management, and culinary arts.

### Location:

Farm Address: 27144 Rock Island Rd, Hempstead, TX 77445

Look for the Blackwood sign on the entrance to the property.

Website: <https://blackwoodland.org/>

**Staff Directory:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Cath Conlon - Blackwood Founder | [cath@blackwoodland.org](mailto:cath@blackwoodland.org) | 832-721-4711 |
| R. Aaron Flores - Blackwood Creative | [aaron@blackwoodland.org](mailto:aaron@blackwoodland.org) | 832-942-2324 |

To report absences, illnesses, or tardies, please contact [info@blackwoodland.org](mailto:info@blackwoodland.org)

### Dates and Fees:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Fall 2023Option 16 weekly sessions | Fall 2023Option 26 weekly sessions | Fall 2023Option 36 bi-weekly sessions |
| Dates | | |
| September 18 – October 23  * Classes held weekly on Monday * 9:30 – 2:30 | October 30 – December 4  * Classes held weekly on Monday  9:30 – 2:30 | September 19 – December 5thClasses held bi-weeklyFirst and third Tuesday of each month  * 9:30 – 2:30 |
| Tuition | | |
| $350 first child in any age groupSiblings:$50 each sibling in same age group  * $100 first sibling in different age group and $50 per sibling thereafter | $350 first child in any age group Siblings:   * $50 each sibling in same age group * $100 first sibling in different age group and $50 per sibling thereafter | $350 first child in any age group Siblings:   * $50 each sibling in same age group * $100 first sibling in different age group and $50 per sibling thereafter |
| Scholarships are available for tuition and fees so *please* contact Cath Conlon for more information: 832.721.4711 or [cath@blackwoodland.org](mailto:cath@blackwoodland.org) If you would like to sponsor a scholarship for another student, any and all of those donations would be welcome and appreciated! Please go to the DONATE page on our website. | | |
| Fees | | |
| $50 per child to cover materials, books and one daily snack prepared with the on-site chef | $50 per child to cover materials, books and one daily snack prepared with the on-site chef | $50 per child to cover materials, books and one daily snack prepared with the on-site chef |
| Lunch Options | | |
| Students must provide their own lunch | Students must provide their own lunch | Students must provide their own lunch |
| The farmstand will have chef prepared food available for purchase. | | |

### Parent Zone:

We extend a warm invitation for you to join us in a unique and enriching experience while your children are engaged in their lessons. As your children immerse themselves in their studies, you can immerse yourself in the serene landscapes, meandering pathways, and the rustic charm of our farm. Sip coffee on the veranda, wander through the kitchen garden, dive into a good book, take a self-guided tour or just relax indoors.

For your convenience we will have a designated indoor lounge area for you to use, access to WiFi, and complimentary coffee.

**Farmstand**

We're also thrilled to invite you to visit our charming farmstand! Experience the freshest produce and delightful products straight from our fields. From our bountiful harvest to carefully curated selections by fellow farmers, you'll discover a diverse range of flavors and quality that's second to none.

The farmstand will also offer lunch fare prepared with bounty from our farm and other local producers.

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### Sample Curriculum

This is an overview of the material we’ll be covering each week. This schedule is subject to change based on guest speaker availability and what’s growing in the fields.

1. **Week One: March 20**
   1. Theme: The Four Seasons: Celebrating the First Day of Spring
   2. Read: *Farming* by Gail Gibbons;   
      *The Farm that Feeds Us* by Nancy Castaldo
   3. Activities: Flower Dissection, Planting a Raised Bed
   4. Snack: Spring Salad
2. **Week Two: March 27**
   1. Theme: The Chicken and the Egg: Humane Animal Husbandry
   2. Read: *Chickenology* by Sandri, Guibbilini, Pintonato
   3. Activities: Feed Chickens, Harvest & Wash Eggs
   4. Snack: Farm-Fresh Omelet
3. **Week Three: April 3**
   1. Theme: Honey Bees: the Role of Pollinators in our Food System
   2. Read: *The Life and Times of the Honey Bee* by Charles Micucci  
      *Buzz, Bee* by Jennifer Szymanski
   3. Activities: Hive Observation, Worker Bee Observation, Building a Bee Pond
   4. Snack: Honey Tasting
4. **Week Four: April 10**
   1. Theme: Soil & Gut Microbiomes
   2. Read: *A Garden in Your Belly* by Masha D’Yans
   3. Activities: Making Compost & Compost Tea, Collect Soil Samples and Observe Soil Microbes in the Microscope
   4. Snack: Fermented Food Sampler
5. **Week Five: April 17**
   1. Theme: Foraging and Plant Identification
   2. Read: TBD
   3. Activities: Foraging Forest Walk, Nature Sketches
   4. Snack: Foraged Snacks
6. **Week Six: April 24** 
   1. Theme: From Field to Farm Stand: Understanding the Business Side of a Market Garden
   2. Read: *The Farm That Feeds Us*
   3. Activities: Harvest, Process, Bottle, & Sell a Product
   4. Snack: TBD

**Schedule & Daily Rhythms**

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| --- | --- |
| 9:15 – 9:30 | Drop-off |
| 9:30 – 9:45 | Farm Chores / Movement |
| 9:45 – 10:15 | Story & Snack Time |
| 10:15 – 11:45 | Exploration/Farm Project/Ancestral Skills |
| 11:45 – 12:45 | Lunch & Free Play |
| 12:45 – 2:15 | Science-based Project |
| 2:15 – 2:30 | Clean-up & Closing Circle |
| 2:30 – 2:15 | Pick-up |

### Health & Safety Rules

* Students must wear clothes that can get dirty and boots or sturdy closed toe shoes.
* If your student is feeling unwell, we ask that they stay home until they are feeling better.
* Students are welcome to wear a face mask, but they are not required of students or staff. Most instruction will take place outdoors
* Students are only allowed to use tools once they are instructed on their proper use
* Students are not allowed to climb on or operate any heavy machinery such as our tractors, gators, and other farming vehicles
* Students must remain attentive and engaged while in a lesson and during projects

### Supplies To Bring

* Notebook and pen or pencil
* Closed-toe shoes
* Small backpack to carry supplies
* Work or garden gloves
* Hat, rain jacket (if raining), sunscreen
* Refillable water bottle
* Lunch and snacks

### Waiver & Release