

Blackwood Farm School Session 4: September 9th - October 14th, 2024



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.

Lessons incorporate science, math, farm management, writing, visual arts, critical thinking, and culinary arts. We focus on teaching ages 3-13. Students will be broken into small groups based on their age ranges.



Location:

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

Look for the Blackwood sign on the entrance to the property. Unless otherwise noted, class begins at the Gathering Hall (park and continue down the gravel driveway).

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

Staff Directory:

Cath Conlon - Blackwood Founder	cath@blackwoodland.org	832-721-4711
Erin Satterwhite - Director of Educational Programming	erin@blackwoodland.org	832-834-1763

To report absences, illnesses, or tardies, please contact erin@blackwoodland.org

Tuition:

\$450 per first student

- Scholarships are available for tuition and fees so *please* contact Erin Satterwhite for more information: erin@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.

Lunch/Snack:

Each week, our chefs offer a complimentary snack for students and families to enjoy. Sometimes, the students aid in preparing it themselves! We encourage everyone to bring their own lunches. We offer seasonal farmstand meals available for purchase each week for those who would like it! **Contact erin@blackwoodland.org if you would like to receive these lunches.**

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, or dive into a good book on Baleyfield porch.

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

Session 4 Curriculum/Structure:

This is an overview of the material and activities we'll be covering each week. This schedule is subject to shift based on what is needed most from the farm/land that week and of course the weather! As always, reach out to erin@blackwoodland.org with questions and comments.

At Blackwood, we are inspired by Montessori environments and feel a mixed age range is essential to helping students be exposed to other learning styles and concepts. There will be plenty of opportunity for this blended learning, but some lessons will be broken up into smaller age-based groups so that all students can get the support and level of information that corresponds to their needs.

1. Week One: September 9

- a. Theme: Introduction to the Farm & Gardening
- b. Read: *The Farm That Feeds Us* by Nancy Castaldo
- c. Activities: Assign students native animals and plants that will become their research project over the course of this session. Begin Farm School garden bed preparations - create soil mixture, seed selection, put seedlings in the greenhouse. Discuss growth timeline and requirements of success for seedlings.
- d. Snack: Blackwood supergreen granola bars

2. Week Two: September 16

- a. Theme: Biodiversity
- b. Read: *Tree of Life: The Incredible Biodiversity of Life on Earth* by Rochelle Strauss
- c. Activities: Learn about the importance of biodiversity. Observe and identify the variety of plants/animals in a given area on the farm. Discuss the properties of the three biomes at Blackwood. Tend to last week's seedlings and measure growth.
- d. Snack: Rainbow veggie and hummus plate

3. Week Three: September 23

- a. Theme: Soil Health = Our Health
- b. Read: *A Garden in Your Belly* by Masha D'Yans, *Compost Stew* by Mary Siddals
- c. Activities: Discuss how our bodies are like soil, learn about the different types of composting, create compost tea blend, observe soil microbes in a microscope. Check in on individual projects.
- d. Snack: Fermented food snack plate

4. Week Four: September 30

- a. Theme: Botany

- b. Read: *What's Inside a Flower* by Rachel Ignotofsky, *The Secret World of Plants* by Ben Hoare
- c. Activities: Learn about the life cycles and parts of a plant via three diverse examples on the farm, transplant seedlings from greenhouse to prepped garden bed, plant identification and nature journaling activity.
- d. Snack: TBD

5. Week Five: October 7

- a. Theme: Chickens & Animals on the Farm
- b. Read: *Chickenology* by Sandri, Guibbilini, Pintonato
- c. Activities: Collect and process chicken eggs, learn about how chickens benefit a regenerative farm, check in on garden bed and individual projects
- d. Snack: Omelet

6. Week Six: October 14

- a. Theme: From Farm to Market
- b. Read: *The Farm That Feeds Us* by Nancy Castaldo, *Letters to a Young Farmer* by Stone Barns Center for Food & Agriculture
- c. Activities: Presentations of plant and animal projects & discussion, mini farmers market booth activity, completing garden bed project & take home seedlings
- d. Snack: TBD

Schedule & Daily Rhythms

9:15 – 9:30	Drop-off
9:30 – 10:00	Farm Chores / Movement
10:00 - 10:30	Story & Snack Time
10:30 – 12:00	Exploration/Learning/Ancestral Skills
12:00 – 12:45	Lunch & Free Play
12:45 – 2:15	Project/Activity
2:15 – 2:30	Clean-up & Closing Circle
2:30	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 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 (will alert parents ahead of time if these are needed on a given day)
- Hat, rain jacket/umbrella (if raining), sunscreen
- Refillable water bottle
- Lunch and snacks