

I am beyond excited to introduce myself as a new faculty member at Greenbriar East Elementary. My name is Fardowsa Tarey and I am thrilled to be returning to the very same school where I spent my own student years! It feels like a full-circle moment, and I am so grateful for the opportunity to give back to a place that shaped me both academically and personally. As a former student at GBE, I know firsthand how special this community is. The teachers, staff, and fellow students created an environment that encouraged my growth, challenged me to think critically, and inspired my passion for learning. Now, as a first-year teacher, I'm eager to pass on that same sense of support and excitement to my own students.

When I was in first grade, my family moved from New York to Virginia, and I joined GBE as a newcomer. I remember how overwhelming it felt to start at a new school in a new place, but from day one, the staff at GBE made me feel welcome and supported. The teachers were kind and patient, taking the time to help me adjust to my new surroundings. I was paired with a buddy in a higher grade to help me navigate the school. That sense of support and encouragement helped me feel like I belonged here, and it made a lasting impact on me. I truly believe because of that positive experience, that I developed a deep love for learning and a strong connection to this school.

Since I was a student here, GBE has transformed into an even more inclusive and dynamic community, with a greater focus on supporting culturally diverse students as they adjust to a new environment. The school now offers a wide range of

enrichment courses, which provide students with opportunities to explore new interests and develop skills outside of the traditional curriculum. These courses are especially important in today's world, where students come from a variety of backgrounds and need outlets to express their unique talents and experiences. One of the most exciting changes is how the school fosters a sense of unity and belonging through regular community events. Throughout the school year, students and staff gather for special activities that allow students from different grade levels to interact, share experiences, and learn from one another. These gatherings help create a stronger sense of community, ensuring that every student feels connected, supported, and part of something bigger.

The strong sense of community, combined with the dedication of the staff, ensures that every student has the resources and support they need to succeed. Whether you're a new student adjusting to a new place or someone who's been here for years, GBE is the kind of school where you feel like you truly belong. That's why I believe it's the perfect place for any student to grow, learn, and make unforgettable memories. It's these kinds of initiatives that make GBE such a special place, and I'm excited to be back to contribute to this vibrant, diverse community.