



## **MURCH PARENT HANDBOOK**

Welcome Murch Mustang Families to SY 2024-25! We look forward to seeing you soon!

### **DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION**

Murch Elementary school is committed to being a Diverse, Equitable, and Inclusive school that cultivates an intrinsic sense of belonging for all members and stakeholders in the school community. This will be a major focus going forward. We will challenge ourselves to do this with courage, empathy, and respect, and we do so in the belief that it will lead to a better future for all our learners and stakeholders within the Murch community.

At Murch, our community is our biggest strength, and it's critical that we affirm and value all aspects of identity, as well as recognize the various individual and collective experiences present within our community.

**The following statements affirm our commitment to take action to become a truly Diverse, Equitable and Inclusive School Community:**

- Murch ES affirms all identities in our community. These include but are not limited to all races, ethnicities, genders, religions, and members of the LGBTQIA+ community, as well as differently abled and neurodiverse individuals.
- We are proudly an anti-discrimination community committed to building a more equitable society through our learning and our actions. We go beyond 'non-discrimination' by developing leaders who have the character and courage to confront injustice and to advocate for themselves and others. We recognize our responsibility in shaping the world around us.
- We believe that everyone has the right to access a learning program in which all identities, backgrounds, and experiences are recognized and where our shared humanity is affirmed.
- We are committed to becoming a fully inclusive school for students of all identities, providing equitable access to all aspects of school life

for students. In addition, we strive to provide equitable access to all aspects of school life for students with physical and learning differences.

- We encourage debate about the complex issues facing society. We provide our learners and the wider community with the platform to challenge limiting beliefs, to support anti-discrimination in all its forms and to ensure that all members within the community feel that they belong at Murch ES.
- We know that we are not born with tendencies to discriminate, we acquire them. We are uniquely placed to help our learners understand and see past superficial and deep-seated barriers that pertain to aspects of identity and belonging.
- We believe that diversity is one of our many strengths at Murch ES and that we are enriched through our differences. We believe that recognizing and appreciating diversity is the key for our learners to be better collaborators, stronger inquirers, braver communicators, more creative innovators, and deeper thinkers.
- We know that our world is becoming more complex and multifaceted when it comes to identity and belonging. Thus, to be successful, learners need to have experienced a dynamic and diverse educational setting that is both inclusive and equitable to best prepare them for the larger world they are currently in and will eventually be a part of.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Email and the HSA website, [www.murchschool.org](http://www.murchschool.org), —are our primary means of communicating with the parent community. Both provide but are not limited to information about school announcements, important dates and events, teacher/staff contact information, reporting student absences and so much more.

To receive the latest information into your email in-box every Friday, sign up for the Murch HSA's e-newsletter. The newsletter includes all new information from our website and is your go-to source for information each week. Sign up for the newsletter by clicking [HERE](#).

Teachers send Friday Folders home every Friday along with email communication about the upcoming school week. The folders include important information regarding school events, field trips, and classroom

assignments. Please check Friday Folders regularly and return any paperwork that needs to be completed.

## **WHO's WHO?**

Murch staff can be contacted directly by visiting our [Murch Staff Page](#) and clicking on the staff member's name to link to staff members' k12.dc.gov email address. Please contact staff via their government-provided email account.

If you have questions/concerns involving classroom/teacher/curriculum, communicate directly with your child's teacher(s). You also have the option to set up a time to discuss your concerns with your child's teacher. If after this discussion you still have questions/concerns, feel free to set up a time to discuss this matter with the appropriate person, either in person, virtually, or by phone, from the chart below.

### **Principal Cebrzynski** ([Chris.Cebrzynski@k12.dc.gov](mailto:Chris.Cebrzynski@k12.dc.gov))

Classroom instruction, Assessments, Supervision, Budget, LSAT, School Culture and Climate, Comprehensive School Plan, Master Schedule.

### **Assistant Principal Hawkins** ([Devario.Hawkins@k12.dc.gov](mailto:Devario.Hawkins@k12.dc.gov))

Classroom instruction, Assessments, Student behavior/DCPS Chapter 25 Discipline code, Inclusion and Self-Contained Special Education Programs, IEP Meetings, Special Education transportation, recess, arrival and dismissal.

### **School Counselor Lauren Miller** ([Lauren.miller@k12.dc.gov](mailto:Lauren.miller@k12.dc.gov))

Social/Emotional Learning and classroom instruction, Counseling, Bullying, Student Support Groups, Transcripts, Attendance, Student Scholarships.

### **Director/Strategy & Logistics Mary Eckstein** ([Mary.Eckstein@k12.dc.gov](mailto:Mary.Eckstein@k12.dc.gov))

Enrollment, procurement and budget management, Facilities, Food and nutrition, Logistics and scheduling, Custodial/office/technology inventory & supply management, School emergency preparedness, Technology, External partnerships, School-based operational systems, Attendance compliance team management, Field trips

### **Coordinator/Strategy & Logistics Rebecca McGraw** ([Rebecca.McGraw2@k12.dc.gov](mailto:Rebecca.McGraw2@k12.dc.gov))

Enrollment POC & School-wide Logistics: Student Classroom placement, School Nurse, Welcome Center, Ride for Free Card distribution.

### **Psychologist Sam Fisk** ([samuel.fisk@k12.dc.gov](mailto:samuel.fisk@k12.dc.gov))

Multi-Tiered Student Supports (MTSS) Interventions for struggling students, Psychological Testing for student eligibility for specialized instructional services: Sam Fisk ([samuel.fisk@k12.dc.gov](mailto:samuel.fisk@k12.dc.gov))

**Social Worker Deena Guirguis** ([deena.guirguis@k12.dc.gov](mailto:deena.guirguis@k12.dc.gov))

504 Plans

**Athletic Director Coach Marc Fry** ([marc.fry@k12.dc.gov](mailto:marc.fry@k12.dc.gov))

## **SUPPLY LISTS**

Students in grades Pre-K through 5<sup>th</sup> are asked to bring specific school supplies with them by the first day of school. Updated supply lists can be found by visiting our website.

## **BREAKFAST**

A grab-and-go breakfast will be available for all students as they enter the building. Breakfast is free for all students, begins at 8:40 am, as we begin the day with our STRONG START, and will be eaten in classrooms. Students may also bring breakfast from home to eat in the classroom.

**Students will not be able to enter the building early since breakfast starts at 8:40 am.**

## **PARENT PARKING & DROP OFF**

During the school day, there is 15-minute parking along the school-side of Ellicott Street (between Reno Road and 36<sup>th</sup> Street). The bulk of Davenport Street on the school-side is a NO STANDING OR PARKING ZONE. This is designated for bus loading/unloading and is the KISS AND RIDE AREA for students who are off-loading. Parents should remain in their vehicle if they are utilizing this zone.

Please do not park on the school-side of 36<sup>th</sup> Street (between Davenport and Ellicott Streets). This is designated as staff parking.

Please consider parking on one of the side streets (not immediately adjacent to Murch) to alleviate pressure around the school. We also encourage all our students & families to walk to school, if possible.

## **ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL LINE-UP SPOTS**

Please check the Murch website to view a line-up map with zones marked for each grade to gather in the morning and to dismiss in the afternoon.

**Kdg-5<sup>th</sup>**: During arrival, Kdg-5<sup>th</sup> grade students gather on the **main playground (which runs parallel to Ellicott Street, NW)**:

**Teachers meet Kdg-5<sup>th</sup> grade students, starting at 8:40 AM**, and bring them in for Strong Start, which begins at 8:45 AM. During arrival,

**Pre-K**: Will gather on the **early childhood playground (near the main entrance on Davenport Street, NW)**.

**Teachers meet Pre-K students at 8:30 and begin entering the building at 8:35 AM.**

During the first week of school (grades K-5), teachers will be outside to meet their new students and show both them and you where their arrival/dismissal line will be. They will be holding up signs with their name at the front of the arrival/dismissal line. Students in grades K-5 will begin to enter the building at 8:40 a.m.

### **Grades 1 thru 5:**

Starting the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of school, the day after Labor Day, September 3<sup>rd</sup>, students in grades 1-5 will not line up outside and will enter the building on their own.

### **Kindergarten**

Starting the 5<sup>th</sup> week of school, Monday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>, Kindergarten students will begin to enter the building on their own. Teachers will meet their students at the classroom doorway to greet them and begin the day with our whole child STRONG START. Peer mediators (5<sup>th</sup> grade students) will be in the hallways and entryways to assist our younger students.

## **SAFETY IN EARLY AM**

It will be all hands on deck the first week of school, and all teachers and staff will be outside to assist with new routines. In addition, multiple adults will be assigned morning duty to supervise the grounds as students arrive at school. Please arrive as close to 8:40 AM as possible.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Regular school attendance is critical for academic success. If you need to report a student absence, go to our [Murch Absent Form](#) to report this.

If you have questions related to attendance, email [MurchAbsence4810@gmail.com](mailto:MurchAbsence4810@gmail.com).

## **LATE ARRIVALS**

All students are encouraged to report to school by 8:40 AM to ensure they have access to a full day of instruction, which starts with our STRONG START at 8:45 AM. Habitual tardiness will affect a student's academic progress.

## **SECURITY**

Murch has security guards assigned to our campus. One guard will be posted at all times at the security desk, monitoring cameras and receiving visitors. The other guard will patrol; they will rotate per their post orders.

## **CLASSROOM VISITS & VISITORS**

We support families coming into classrooms to celebrate special events. Please contact your child's teacher to find out what these special events will be for your child's classroom and to confirm your visit.

## **SPECIALS CLASSES**

Art, Music and PE/Health will be held in dedicated classrooms and students will rotate through the offerings on a regular schedule.

## **RECESS**

The Early Childhood Playground (closest to Davenport Street, NW) will be utilized by our Pre-K and K students, who may have multiple outdoor learning times (for 20-30 minutes at a time)

The Main playground (running parallel to Ellicott Street, NW) will be utilized by our 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade students, who will have recess once a day for a minimum of 30 minutes.

## **LUNCH PROCEDURES**

Pre-K students will eat lunch in their classrooms.

K students will eat lunch in the early childhood commons.

1st-5<sup>th</sup> grade students will eat lunch in the main cafeteria.

Students either bring their nut-free lunch from home or receive school lunch.

For information regarding school meals, including information on how to set up a lunch account or apply for free or reduced meals, please visit the DCPS Food and Nutrition website at <http://dcps.dc.gov/page/meal-prices-and-payment>.

Per the DCPS Local Wellness Policy, third-party meal delivery services (i.e. UberEATS, Door Dash, etc.) are prohibited. Specifically, “schools will encourage teachers and families to bring food and beverages that meet the nutritional standards of Section III.K on school grounds, including in student lunches from home and prohibit third-party meal delivery services.” Please visit [DCPS Local Wellness Policy 2022\\_FINAL\\_0.pdf](#) for more information.

## **PEANUT AND TREE NUT FREE**

Murch will continue to be peanut and tree-nut free this year. Please check the Murch website for more information and an FAQ, which will also be available at back-to-school night.

## **SNACKS**

Students in grades Pre-K through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade typically have a snack prior to lunch. Please check with your child’s teacher directly regarding snacks and plan to pack an extra nut-free snack for your child during snack time.

## **HEALTH SUITE & EMERGENCIES**

Murch’s health suite is located on the main floor in the Admin Wing. It is accessible to students during the school day. If it becomes necessary for your child to take a form of medication at school, parents must see the school nurse and fill out the appropriate forms. No student medication is allowed on school grounds without proper documentation via the Health Suite. If medication is found in a student’s possession without paperwork, it will be taken to the Health Suite. Parents will be notified to come and complete paperwork.

We will make every attempt to contact parents in the event of an emergency. 911 will be called at the **discretion of the nurse**. If students need medical attention, the DC Fire Department Emergency Unit will transport students to Children’s Hospital or to the nearest hospital providing pediatric care.

## **EARLY DISMISSAL**

If you need to pick up your child early, make sure to sign them out in the early dismissal book at the Security Desk. This will ensure the safe accounting of all

Murch students. The office will call your child to the Welcome Center once they are officially signed out. If your child is at recess when you pick them up early, they must still be signed out in the Early Dismissal Book for accounting purposes. To be able to sign out a child, the person must be an adult 18 years or older and must be listed as a parent or emergency contact in our system, unless permission is given.

Due to the movement of students at the end of the day (as they pack up or transition back to classrooms), it is **strongly recommended** that early dismissal requests end by 3:05 PM.

## **CHANGES TO DISMISSAL ROUTINE**

If your child's normal dismissal plan will change for any given day, please let your child's teacher know **no later than noon on the day of the change** (except in the case of an emergency). This will ensure that your child's teacher sees the notification.

To communicate a change, please follow the following steps:

Before Noon on the Day of the Change: Email your child's teacher if your child's dismissal plan will change.

After Noon on the Day of the Change (only in the case of an emergency): Call the Murch Welcome Center (202-282-0130) so the change can be communicated directly to your child's teacher. Please use this sparingly, as it can be difficult to communicate changes last minute.

## **DISMISSAL—NORMAL**

At 3:05 PM, Pre-K students are walked to the **early childhood playground** and dismiss from their line-up lines. The dismissal line will be in the same spot as the morning line-up line.

At 3:15 PM, Kdg-5<sup>th</sup> grade students are walked to the **main playground** and dismiss from their line-up lines. The dismissal line will be in the same spot as the morning line-up line.

At 3:15 PM, students who participate in after care programs will dismiss to the appropriate locations. Staff from those programs will take attendance and provide supervision.



## **DISMISSAL PROCEDURES: WALKERS**

Parents may give permission for students to self-dismiss (i.e. walk home) by clicking [HERE](#).

## **Lost & Found and Pick-Up Table**

Murch maintains a lost and found, which is just past the health suite (at the exit by 36<sup>th</sup> Street). Please check it for any missing or forgotten items.

If your child forgets an item for the day, there will be a pick-up table located behind the security table in the main lobby. Parents may leave items there for students who have forgotten them. Please label the items with your student's name and teacher's name. Then send a message to your child's teacher, so the student can retrieve their item.

## **MURCH SPIRIT WEAR**

If you wish to purchase Murch t-shirts or other apparel, click [HERE](#). Items are shipped directly to your home address.

We are looking forward to a great school year. Thank you to all Murch parents for your support of our school community. Go Mustangs!