



## **MURCH PARENT HANDBOOK**

Welcome, Mustangs, to the upcoming school year!

If you have questions or need assistance at any time, please reach out to us via the Murch Welcome Center at 202-282-0130.

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**

Our school website— [www.murchschool.org](http://www.murchschool.org)—provides school announcements, important dates and events, messages from Principal C (posted quarterly) and all the latest news about students and teachers.

To receive the latest information in 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 also send Friday Folders home every Friday. 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.

Finally, please follow Murch on Twitter (@murchschool) for regular updates about school events, news and activities.

## **WHO's WHO?**

You may contact any staff member 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.

The administration at Murch Elementary School has an open-door policy and is happy to schedule a time to speak/meet with parents/guardians/stakeholders who have concerns/questions. Stefanie Berger in the Welcome Center can assist with scheduling a time for us to meet/talk.

If your concerns involve your child's classroom/teacher/curriculum, we ask that you first set up a time to discuss your concerns with your child's teacher. If after this discussion you are not satisfied with the outcome, please feel free to set up a time to discuss this matter with the appropriate person from the list below.

For any category or circumstance that is not listed below, feel free to reach out to the Principal/Assistant Principal.

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

Classroom instruction, Assessments, Supervision, Budget, LSAT, School Culture and Climate, School Policy, Vision/Mission, Comprehensive School Plan, Volunteers, Classroom Visits, Family Communication, Master Schedule for Instruction, Programmatic Questions, Concerns regarding after school matters, General Expectations

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

Classroom instruction, Assessments, Discipline, Inclusion and Self-Contained Special Education Programs, IEP Meetings, Special Education Transportation, Recess, Before-school Matters

Guidance 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 of Strategy and Logistics, Mary Eckstein  
([Mary.Eckstein@k12.dc.gov](mailto:Mary.Eckstein@k12.dc.gov))

School-wide operations, Custodians, Panorama Surveys,  
Athletics/Teams, Field Trips, School-wide Schedules, Special  
Projects, Logistics, Facilities and Facility Usage, Food Services,  
Student Technology, Calendar, etc.

School 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

Coordinator of Strategy and Logistics, Rebecca McGraw  
([Rebecca.McGraw2@k12.dc.gov](mailto:Rebecca.McGraw2@k12.dc.gov))

Enrollment POC & School-wide Logistics: Classroom  
Placement, Liaison with School Nurse, Report Cards

Assistant of Strategy and Logistics, Stefanie Berger  
([Stefanie.berger@k12.dc.gov](mailto:Stefanie.berger@k12.dc.gov))

Murch Plus, Teacher Substitutes, Early Dismissal of Students,  
Lost and Found, Spirit Wear, HSA

Social Worker, Kimberly Ward ([Kimberly.ward@k12.dc.gov](mailto:Kimberly.ward@k12.dc.gov))  
504 plans

## **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**

Breakfast is free for all students and begins at 8:15am. Breakfast for students in grades 1-5 will be served in the cafeteria. Breakfast for Kdg. Students will be served in the commons and supervised by the instructional

aide for kindergarten. Pre-K students will eat breakfast in their classrooms and will be supervised by the instructional aide of each classroom.

All students eating breakfast should enter through the Davenport doors where they will be directed by or escorted to breakfast by teachers who are assigned this duty.

## **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.

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

**Teachers meet Pre-K students at 8:40 AM.**

**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 8:30 AM,** and bring them in for instruction, which begins at 8:45 AM.

We are considering continuing a practice we started last year. Starting on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, students in grades 1-5 will enter the building independently starting at 8:30 AM, to be personally greeted by their teacher as they enter their classroom. Kdg will continue to line up outside to wait to be picked up by their teacher until Thanksgiving break. Post break they will enter the

building with the students in grades 1-5. A decision will be made prior to October 3<sup>rd</sup> and communicated with families well in advance.

## **SAFETY IN EARLY AM**

Extra staff will be on hand the first week to assist with new routines. Adults will be assigned morning duty to supervise the grounds as students arrive to school.

## **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 **8:30 AM to ensure they have access to a full day of instruction, which starts at 8:45**. Habitual tardiness will affect a student's academic progress. You can expect a call from a Murch staff member if a student is tardy/absent for two consecutive days.

## **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 family coming into classrooms to celebrate special events, for publishing parties, and being a guest reader to name a few. Please contact your child's teacher to confirm your visit.

## **RESOURCE 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 purchase their lunch. If you would like your child to purchase a school lunch, please visit [www.myschoolbucks.com](http://www.myschoolbucks.com) to set up an account. You will need your child's student ID number, as well as the student's date of birth. Please call the Murch Welcome Center at 202-282-0130 if you need your child's student ID number.

It takes 5 business days for money to show up in your child's account, so please allow time for this process.

If there is trouble with your account during the school year, please contact [www.myschoolbucks.com](http://www.myschoolbucks.com) at 1-855-832-5226.

## **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 mid-morning snack. 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.

## 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](#).

## **MURCH SPIRIT WEAR**

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