2024-2025

SCALES ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL HANDBOOK

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This handbook is created specifically for parents of Scales Elementary School. While some district policies are included, parents and guardians should also be familiar with the district's Parent Handbook and Board policies and procedures, which can be found online at cityschools.net.

Murfreesboro City Schools is committed to ensuring that all students and adults are given the opportunity to learn, participate, and work in an environment that is free from discrimination. MCS does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, creed, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, color, age, and/or disability in admission to, access to, or operation of its programs, services, or activities, and provides access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. MCS does not discriminate in its hiring or employment practices.

WELCOME MESSAGE



Andrea Oakley

School Principal

andrea.oakley@cityschools.net

It is an honor to be a part of the Scales Superstar community and serve as Principal. As an educational leader at Scales Elementary School, I strive to focus on building relationships with the school community while guiding emphasis on the whole child in building success and achievement. As a servant leader I genuinely love supporting students, teachers, and the community to ensure a safe and effective environment.

Abbey Thomas

Assistant Principal

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Raeshon Torres

Assistant Principal

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Mrs. Thomas and Mr. Torres both serve as assistant principals for Scales Elementary. Their roles are to support Mrs. Oakley in providing educational leadership and promoting academic success.

Concerns and Conferences

Scales Elementary administration and staff members are ready to discuss any concerns you might have about your child and their experiences at school. If you want to meet with an administrator or teacher, please schedule an appointment through email or through the school office. Please do not expect school staff to meet with you without an appointment. We are glad to meet with our parent partners any time an appointment is scheduled.

Parent teacher conferences are scheduled for INSERT DATES.

CONNECT WITH US!

School Website

Our website, **scaleselementary.net**, contains information on important topics, including academic requirements, school websites, and transportation information.





District Callouts

MCS uses a callout system to share important news and information with families. You will receive recorded calls from the school district and your child's school. If you are not receiving calls, contact your child's school to update your contact information. If your phone number changes, please update with your school to ensure you continue receiving our calls.

Skyward Portal

Skyward is a web-based tool that helps families stay connected to their student's classroom. It lets families see real-time grades, homework, attendance information, discipline information and more. The Family Portal is available online and on mobile devices. Schools will provide instructions to access the Family Portal. Contact your school administrator for questions.

ClassDojo

Many schools use ClassDojo as a communication platform to engage parents. It requires parents to set up an account with ClassDojo.

PeachJar

MCS uses PeachJar to provide information on community resources to parents and staff.

Find Us Online!

We're on Facebook!
facebook.com/scaleselementary

We're on X
https://twitter.com/ScalesElem

We're on Instagram!
@murfreesborocityschools



ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Scales Elementary School opened in 2005. The school colors are red and blue, and the school motto is “Learners Today, Leaders Tomorrow!” Our mascot is a silver star named Starburst. At Scales, staff, students, and families work together to support the growth and development of each of our students to become life-long learners and leaders within our community.

IMPORTANT TIMES

Our school doors open at 7:15 a.m.
Classroom instruction begins promptly at 7:30 a.m.
The school day ends at 2:30 p.m.

DROP OFF/PICK UP LINE INFORMATION

When loading and unloading students in cars, safety is always our primary concern. INSERT INFORMATION. Please follow the directions of the person directing traffic. The “bus loop entrance” will not open until all buses are clear. You must be in the left lane coming towards the school to use this entrance. We do not allow right hand turns into this line.

Please help us ensure the safety of all students by following the guidelines:

- Load/unload children on school property. Observe traffic signs and rules as well as the directions of staff members who have been assigned to assist with loading/unloading.
- All car riders will be given an official Scales Elementary car tag from their teachers. If you lose your tag or need extras, please let your teacher know.
- Car rider tags must be displayed when picking up your child. Children will not be released to anyone with handwritten tags or tags without the official stamp. To ensure the safety of our students, parents without a tag must sign out their children in the front office.
- Parents should not walk up in the car line to pick up. Parents should remain in vehicles during dismissal.
- Instruct children to watch for their ride and walk to the car when directed.
- Avoid blocking bus parking areas and pick up area for other cars.
- As a reminder, State law prohibits any handheld use of cellphone, including talking on the phone, while in a school zone.

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

TARDINESS

The school day begins promptly at 7:30 a.m. Any students arriving after this time are considered tardy to school. These students must be signed in at the front office. Tardies are reported on the attendance report, and excessive tardiness will be reviewed for potential action.

ABSENCES

Parents are responsible for providing documentation when a child misses school. Written documentation supporting reasons for absences must be submitted to the school attendance officer within 5 school days. Even though a parent may verbally contact the school, a written notice must also be provided to the school and e-mailed or given to the attendance officer.

For more information on school absences, see the Murfreesboro City School's Parent Handbook.

MAKE-UP WORK

Students who miss schoolwork because of an absence shall be given the opportunity to complete all assignments and tests that can be reasonably provided. As determined by the teacher, the assignments/tests shall be similar, but not necessarily identical to, the assignments/tests missed during the absence. Students will receive full credit for work completed and submitted by the modified due date.

EARLY DISMISSAL

Students must be signed out at the office by the parent for early dismissal. If someone other than the parent is picking up, the parent is to send a written note listing the name of the individual they are requesting to check out their child early. That individual must be prepared to show photo I.D. at pick-up.



ACADEMIC **INFORMATION**

Reporting Student Progress

Parents and teachers working together maximize the potential for success of each student. Therefore, it is necessary that communication be a continuous process between the home and the school. Faculty and staff welcome and encourage open communication. Report cards are distributed on a nine weeks basis and sent home with the students. Parents can also access these reports and stay up to date on student progress online through Skyward. Parent conferences are scheduled twice a year and at any other time the teacher and/or parent deem necessary.



Academic Acknowledgement

All students are consistently rewarded for their hard work and progress at Scales. To further acknowledge the academic success of students, there are two distinguished groups that the students may become a member of through their hard work and effort:

- **Honor Roll** - To be on the Honor Roll, a student must earn all A's and B's for that grading period
- **Principal's List** – To be on the Principal's List, a student must earn all A's for that grading period



Field Trips

Field trips are an important part of connecting classroom activities to real-world experiences. Parents must sign a form granting their child permission to participate in these activities before their child is permitted to leave the building for a trip. Funds may be requested for each child's trip. Parents may chaperone pursuant to School Board policy, however siblings of students will not be allowed on field trips.



Media Center/Library Access

The media center operates on a combination of scheduled activity, open check out, and research times which are available to enhance curricular concepts. Classes are scheduled for instructional sessions with the media specialist. Each student is issued a library number and uses this when checking out materials. Students can request to check out books online by accessing Destiny Discovery through Clever. Parents are responsible for paying the replacement cost for any lost or damaged materials. When a student has an overdue book, no additional materials will be checked out until the late books are returned.

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

School Counseling

There are many services provided by the Guidance Department, such as: individual counseling, small group counseling, parent consultation, and teacher consultation. Additionally, we will have a social worker on site at scheduled times throughout the week to provide assistance when necessary for students or families. Students can refer themselves for individual counseling or can be referred by teachers, parents, or other staff members. Parents and teachers can ask for assistance from the counselors when conferencing about specific problems which they have not been able to resolve themselves.

Playground Use

Classroom or special area teachers will supervise students who use the playground during the school day. Instruction for safe play will be given. The following is a list of expectations for the playground:

1. Swing alone and use the swing appropriately to remain safe.
2. Slide down the slide seated and avoid climbing up the slide.
3. Climb and play safely only on identified climbing apparatus as they are designed.
4. Play safely on the monkey bars—no leg wrestling, or pulling on students.
5. Play safely and avoid tackle football or aggressive pushing or shoving in basketball, soccer or any other sport.
6. Stay in the designated area within sight of the teacher or supervisor.

Physical Education

Each child is required by state law to participate in physical education, and every class is scheduled to meet with the physical education teacher. The four major areas taught in physical education include games/sports, gymnastics, physical fitness, and rhythmic activities.

All students will participate in physical education, unless the school is presented with a:

- A parent's written request asking for the child to be excused from one gym class and stating the reason, OR
- A doctor's note that states the length of time needed to not participate in gym class. A doctor's note is required if student will miss more than one gym class.

If a child has any health problems or a chronic illness, the parent should inform the physical education teacher.

Each child must dress properly for physical education classes.

- Students must wear tennis shoes each time they come to gym class. Boots, sandals, crocs, flip flops, hiking shoes, casual shoes, dress shoes, etc. are not acceptable.
  - Students who come to gym time without the appropriate tennis shoes will not be able to participate in the activity.
  - The first time a student does not wear appropriate shoes to gym, the student will be given a verbal warning. The second time the student does not wear gym-appropriate shoes, parents will be contacted.

CODE OF CONDUCT
INFORMATION

All Murfreesboro City Schools students are subject to the school system's Code of Conduct which can be found in the Parent Handbook. In addition, the following information applies to children attending Scales Elementary School:

Scales Elementary is committed to the development and support of the social and behavioral climate of our school. To help ensure this, we implement a positive behavior support system that is designed to assist students and teachers by intentionally meeting the social emotional needs within our school while proactively addressing individual behavioral concerns in an effort to support a school environment that fosters creative, challenging, and excellent academics. Class Dojo will be used school-wide to keep parents informed of the positive behavior and areas of concerns that arise throughout the year. Information on Class Dojo will be available through your child's teacher.

Scales Elementary has school-wide behavior expectations. These will be taught in each classroom throughout the year. To help specify appropriate behaviors, expectations are defined with what the expected behavior looks like in various locations throughout our school.

Our school-wide expectations are to:
Be Respectful.
Be Responsible.
Be Ready to Learn and Achieve.

BULLYING, DISCRIMINATION, AND HARASSMENT

Students shall be provided a learning environment free from sexual, racial, ethnic, and religious discrimination/harassment. It shall be a violation of this policy for anyone to discriminate against or harass a student through conduct or communication that is sexual, racial, ethnic, or religious in nature. For complete details on discrimination and complaint procedures, please refer to the Murfreesboro City Schools Parent Handbook.

DRESS CODE

Children are expected to come to school dressed appropriately. Clothing/accessories/hair, which would disrupt teaching and learning, are not considered appropriate dress. Clothes and shoes must fit appropriately and no undergarments may be visible. The staff reserves the right to call a parent to the school if child's appearance or attire becomes disruptive, unsafe, or distracting. For safety, cleats and roller shoes ("Heelys") may not be worn at any time. Parents, please help us with dress code as learning can be negatively impacted with distractions at school.

PARENT COMMUNICATION

Our website, https://www.scaleselementary.net, is a great communication tool for all to access and learn more about what is happening at Scales. View calendar updates, cafeteria information, announcements, items needing specific attention, and other pertinent information. Please visit this site as often as possible as it is routinely updated with information. We will also utilize Class Dojo and Twitter as a primary form of communication. Please be sure to download the Class Dojo App and be ready to join your child's class. Follow us on Facebook to stay informed. Parents should utilize the Skyward website to check their student's grades and classwork, as well as any discipline reports. A reliable email address should be provided when activating this account. We do not publish or sell this information under any circumstances.



SPECIAL EVENTS & FUNDRAISERS

Scales Elementary will host special events and fundraisers throughout the school year. This allows the Scales community to engage with each other while supporting the school.

School-sponsored fundraising activities provide additional funds for the school. Participation in fundraising activities is voluntary. These activities will not conflict with the instructional program and a child's grade will not be impacted by participation in fundraising. More information on school fundraising can be found in Board Policy 2.601.



Our school fundraisers include:

- Turkey Trot
- INSERT INFO

More information on school fundraisers will be provided to parents on an annual basis.



PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION

Scales Elementary is grateful to have an involved Parent-Teacher Organization! Parents are encouraged to join and attend meetings. Contact the PTO for any information concerning volunteerism at INSERT INFO.

CLUBS AND **ACTIVITIES**

Scales Elementary is excited to offer a number of extracurricular activities to ensure the academic and personal success of our students! Parents will be required to complete a permission form prior to their child's participation in any club or activity.

Insert Info

Insert Info



Invention Convention

The Superstars that are selected for Invention Convention will design a game or invent/improve an item that will make lives easier for our world. Students will build prototypes of their creations. The entries are selected by a committee through MTSU and these prototypes will be presented at a regional Invention Convention at MTSU.



Robotics

INSERT INFO

Clubs and activities may be added throughout the year and will be posted online if added during the school year. Parent permission will be required prior to any child's participation.



CURRICULUM

STEAM-centered education has been our focus since our doors were opened in 2014 . Within the first few weeks of school, students were walking the creek to learn about ecosystems and writing in our outdoor classroom. While we have learned more and grown in our STEAM journey along the years, our direction and our "why" has remained constant. Today, whether we are coding Ozobots to identify historic battle locations on a map, 3D printing our engineered tire treads, using OTTER 1 (our drone) for various activities, or studying erosion by walking the creek, we are on a mission to redefine what learning looks like. After all, #wewerentborntofollow.



HEALTH AND SAFETY INFORMATION

School Safety

Scales Elementary is committed to keeping your child safe while they are in our care. Our school has and will continue to dedicate resources, time, and effort to ensure that our school building is safe and secure. Our school has an incident response plan specifically designed for our school that our staff are trained on throughout the year. Training drills involving all staff and students will be conducted on a monthly basis that include the following: fire, severe weather (tornado), and intruder. All drills are conducted with a preventative focus to be prepared for such emergencies.

School Visitors

Anyone other than a Scales student or staff member is considered to be a **VISITOR** and must enter the building at the front entrance and report to the school office to sign in and receive a visitor's pass. This pass must be worn by the visitor at all times. Scales Elementary uses the *Guardian visitor scanning system*, and government-issued photo identification will be required for scanning. All visitors must adhere to Scales policies and procedures. Before leaving the building, visitors must return to the office to sign out, retrieve their ID, and return the visitor's pass. All exterior doors with the exception of the front door are locked at 7:30 a.m. each day and remain locked throughout the day. Parents may not park cars on the circular drive entrances. Please utilize the provided parking spaces when entering the campus.

School Health

In an effort to keep our students healthy, it is important for students to stay at home and away from others when feeling sick. If your child develops symptoms during the school day, they will be sent to the school nurse for assessment. The nurse will determine if the child must be sent home according to our illness guidelines. The school health clinic cannot provide prolonged care of sick students. You or an emergency contact must pick up your child within an hour of notification. The child should not return for at least 24 hours, unless they have been cleared to return earlier by a medical provider. Medical documentation must be provided if your child returns prior to 24 hours. Please see the Murfreesboro City School's Parent Handbook for Illness Guidelines.

If your child requires medication during the school day, Murfreesboro City School's Parent Handbook for medication guidelines.

SCHOOL NUTRITION

Students are served meals in accordance with the guidelines of the National School Lunch Program. Cafeteria menus may be viewed at www.schoolcafe.com or www.cityschools.net. Please feel free to contact the cafeteria manager with any questions, concerns, or suggestions that you may have.

School Meals

Breakfast and lunch are served daily to all Scales students at no cost to families. Students are also welcome to bring their own lunches and snacks. All children are expected to eat lunch, unless the child has a religious exemption. Students may not bring glass bottles to school as part of their lunch. Healthy snacks are available for students to purchase in addition to school lunch. Money may be added to your child's account in the cafeteria any morning before classes begin. Put all money and checks in sealed envelopes with the child's name, teacher's name, and the purpose of the money on the outside of the envelope. Students will not be allowed to charge extra snacks. Returned checks to any school account will be charged a $15.00 service fee.

All families, regardless of ability to pay, will be asked to complete a demographic statement at the beginning of the school year for federal accountability for the school food program.

Cafeteria prices are set by the school board and are subject to change.





Snack Policy

We encourage healthy snacks from home. Some ideas include apples, raisins, grapes, bananas, pretzels, crackers, celery sticks, carrot sticks, 100-calorie type packs, etc. Your child's teacher may provide guidance or suggestions for individual classrooms. We encourage students to bring bottled water to school. No carbonated drinks should be sent to school. Chewing gum is not permitted at school.

Lunch Visitors

Due to our growing school, we are not able to accommodate visitors for lunch in the cafeteria for the 2024-2025 school year unless we are having a special event. Outside food (excepting packed school lunches) or food deliveries to students are prohibited.



STUDENT PROPERTY

Scales discourages students from bringing personal property onto campus that is not required for instruction. Students bringing personal property onto school campus do so at their own risk. Large sums of money (not to exceed $20.00) may not be brought to school.

The following items are not permitted at Scales Elementary:

- **Toy guns or weapons of any kind**
- **Collector cards**
- **Laser light pointers**
- **Lighters or matches**

Cellphones, MP3 players, laptops, or other personal technology may be stored in backpacks or other carryall. These items must be silenced or turned off unless permission is granted by the teacher. Improper use of these devices may result in confiscation of the device until it can be released directly to a student's parents. A student in violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary action. In addition to the parameters established above, use of any device to bully, harass, or intimidate others will be subject to disciplinary action.

Using any device for any illicit activity including, but not limited to, taking, disseminating, transferring, or sharing obscene, pornographic, lewd, or otherwise illegal images, photographs, or similar material whether by electronic data transfer or otherwise may constitute a crime under State and/or Federal law. Students engaged in any of the above activities will be subject to the disciplinary procedures of the Code of Conduct and reported to law enforcement and other appropriate State or Federal agencies.

These devices shall not be used to record and/or video school staff or students without the principal's/designee's permission. Cell phones or any other devices are not to be used, accessed, or displayed while on any school bus. Possession of a cell phone is a privilege, which may be forfeited by a student who fails to abide by school's policies and procedures.

The Murfreesboro City Schools Board, its schools, and its employees do not assume any responsibility or liability for the loss of or damage to any student's personal communication device, or for the unauthorized use of a student's personal communication device.

Scales respects the right of privacy for all students. However, students do have conditional privacy while on campus. Student lockers, desks, and cubbies must have only school-related items in them. Lockers, desks, backpacks, and other places within the school are subject to search by teachers and/or administration at any time of reasonable suspicion or concern.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

City school buses transport children who live in the Scales Elementary zone to and from school. Please be advised that large projects or packages cannot be carried onto the bus, as there must be adequate room for at least three children in each seat. Assigned school personnel will be on duty to meet the buses in the morning and to monitor boarding of the buses at dismissal time. Bus riders are expected to follow the rules and regulations regarding safety and behavior on the bus and at bus stop locations.

Established bus riders wanting to ride another bus home with a friend must provide a signed note from the parent informing the school of the change in the student's bus stop for the day. This note must be signed by the principal and faxed to the Transportation Department. If the Transportation Department determines that the bus is already at maximum student capacity, the request will not be honored. The school will notify the parent and other arrangements must be made.

For non-established bus riders wanting to ride the bus home with a friend parents must come to the Scales office and complete the "Special Request for Transportation" form for non-established bus riders; this can also be faxed if necessary. This form MUST be received in the Scales office prior to 10:00 a.m. and then faxed to the Department of Transportation for approval. If the Transportation Department determines that the bus is already at maximum student capacity, the request will not be honored. The school will notify the parent and other arrangements must be made. *A new permission form must be completed each time this occurs*.

Transportation Changes

Students who will have a transportation change for the day must have a note signed by their guardians along with a telephone number where they may be reached for verification of the note. The note must be signed by the school administration or designated office staff. The school will not make transportation changes or permit students to make arrangements by telephone. Changes in transportation must be made prior to 2:00 p.m. each day to ensure there is adequate time to notify all parties involved.

WALKERS AND BIKE RIDERS

Only 2nd – 6th grade students may be walkers or bike riders. This choice must be noted by parents on the student's registration form under the "Transportation" section. Approval from the office must be granted. Students in Kindergarten or 1st grade will not be allowed to walk or bike home unless escorted by an older sibling in 3rd – 6th grade. A student's route home must have access to sidewalks and may not cross major roadways where crossing guards are not present. Students shall exit the building immediately upon dismissal with the designated teacher who will walk them to the edge of the school property.

Students may ride their bicycles to school. Locks are recommended. Bike riders shall follow all safety and traffic rules. Students must wear helmets when riding their bikes to school. Bike riders shall leave the campus promptly after dismissal and follow the directions of the crossing guard. Bike riders shall walk their bikes across the intersection at the direction of the crossing guard. The school is not responsible for students' bicycles. Skateboards, Rollerblades, and/or Scooters may not be ridden to or from school.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT IF A PARENT HAS A CONCERN, COMPLAINT, OR QUESTION?

If you experience concerns or issues that need to be addressed, contact the teacher or appropriate instructor first to attempt to resolve the situation. If this same situation continues to be an issue and you believe another meeting with the teacher would not bring resolution, you may request a meeting with the teacher and/or administrator or counselor. If that meeting is needed, we are hopeful that a positive resolution will be reached.

CAN I SEND MY CHILD'S PARTY INVITATION TO THEIR CLASS?

Invitations to and/or reminders regarding personal parties will not be distributed at school unless they are given to every child in the class.

CAN I SEND DELIVERIES TO MY CHILD WHILE THEIR AT SCHOOL?

Due to safety concerns, flower and balloon deliveries are not to be sent to school, and will be returned to the florist/vendor.

CAN I SEND FOOD OR OTHER ITEMS FOR MY CHILD'S BIRTHDAY?

No, birthday parties cannot be accommodated due to scheduling and in order to maximize instructional time.

CAN I VISIT MY CHILD'S CLASSROOM?

To protect instructional time, parents will only have access to classrooms during school hours when the classroom teacher provides permission to the office. Please schedule visits with the teacher or front office staff ahead of time.

DOES SCALES HAVE AN EXTENDED SCHOOL PROGRAM?

Before and after school childcare is available through our ESP program from 6:00 until 7:15 in the morning and from 2:30 to 6:00 in the afternoon, Monday through Friday. Children may stay for both sessions or only attend one session, either morning or afternoon. Information regarding fees, class options, and attendance options is available from our Scales ESP office. You may contact the Scales ESP Director for enrollment information.