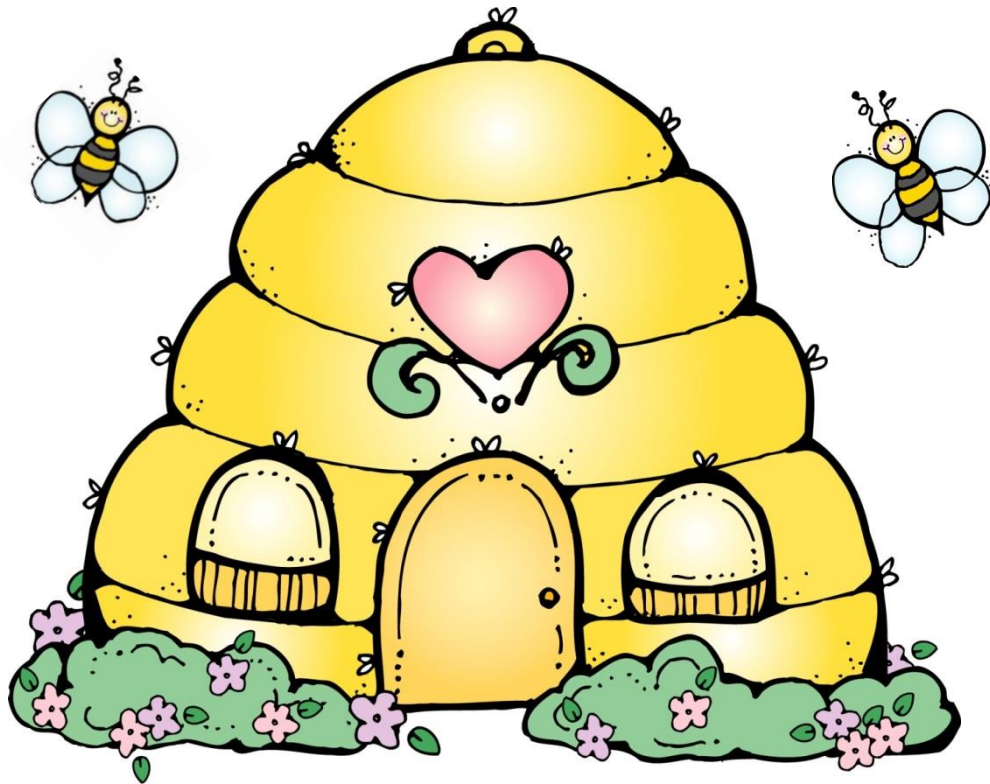


Parent/Guardian Handbook McGaughey Elementary School

2025-2026

A Supplement to the
Mt. Zion District No. 3 Handbook/Calendar



McGaughey Elementary 3 R's
Be the best you can be!

Be Ready!
Be Responsible!
Be Respectful!

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PURPOSE OF PARENT HANDBOOK

Welcome to McGaughy Elementary School! We intend for each of our families to feel a full part of our school community. Part of our responsibility is to provide families with the information needed to smoothly interact with their school. Mt. Zion School District # 3 does an excellent job of providing pertinent information to our families in the Mt. Zion District No. 3 Handbook/Calendar. This information helps our new families transition into our district and helps our present families stay informed on district policies and events. The handbook in hand is not intended to replace that guide but merely to provide information that specifically relates to McGaughy Elementary School. Certain information not found in the district handbook may be found here. Likewise, information not found within this handbook may be accessed through the district handbook, located at www.mtzschools.org or by calling our school office @ 217-864-2711.

SCHOOL DAY

Prekindergarten Schedule

- 8:00 – AM student arrival
- 10:30 – AM student dismissal
- 12:00 – PM student arrival
- 2:30 – PM student dismissal

Kindergarten & 1st Grade Schedule

- 8:00 – student supervision begins (playground or gym)
- 8:20 – students transition to classrooms
- 8:30 – instruction begins (arrival after 8:30 will be considered tardy)
- 10:55-1:15 – lunch & recess
- 3:00 – student dismissal

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

1. Student Arrival and Departure Times
 - No supervision of students is provided before 8:00 AM. Students may be dropped off between 8:00-8:20 AM.
 - All students should be picked up no later than 3:15 PM.
2. Morning Drop-Off Procedures
 - All arrivals provided by parents or guardians occur in the west drive in the front of the building.
 - Please pull forward to the farthest cone.
 - Drop off is only permitted along the sidewalk.
 - All students should exit the vehicle on the driver side only.
 - The east front entrance & driveway is for busses only.
3. After School Pick-Up Procedures
 - First grade students are picked up at the northeast door of the gymnasium at the back of the building off of Westside Drive. Please do not turn around in driveways.
 - Kindergarten & pre-kindergarten students are picked up at the southwest pick up/drop off door using the west drive.

- Kindergarten parents are asked NOT to arrive for pickup before 2:45 PM due to Pre-K dismissal. If you do arrive prior to the end of PreK dismissal, please park in the west lot and wait until after all PreK students have been dismissed.
 - Parents/Guardians are asked to remain in their vehicles and wait their turn in line. Parent pick up cards will be provided to you for display in your vehicle. Any adult that will be picking up your child will need a pick up card displayed in his/her windshield. You may request additional pick up cards from your teacher. If an individual comes to pick up a child and does not have a pick up card, he/she will be asked to park and enter the office to confirm pick up of the child. A driver's license or state ID will be required as well.
 - Vehicles should NEVER pass a line of vehicles while pickup or drop off is occurring.
 - Students will only be released to the adults listed on the Parent Contact Form. All adults on the Parent Contact Form should have a pick up card to display in their windshield. Adults who are not authorized to pick up a student will not be allowed to leave with the student unless the office has received verbal or written confirmation from the parent/guardian.
4. Early Dismissal
- Early dismissal occurs at 11:35 AM.
5. Late Arrivals
- All arrivals occurring after 8:25 AM should occur at the front entrance of the building.
 - Parents should park in the front parking lot and walk their student to the front door for students to check in after 8:25 AM.
 - Students are considered tardy after 8:30 AM.
6. Early Departures
- If your child needs to be picked up early, please park in the parking lot, enter through the first set of main doors and buzz in to the office using the intercom system.
 - Any person wishing to sign a student out early will need to provide a driver's license/ID.
7. Transportation changes
- All transportation changes should be given in note form to the teacher or by phone to the office. Please use the green "Note to School" notes provided by the school to provide details of the change. Phone calls should occur before 11:00 AM on early dismissal days or by 2:00PM on regular school days.
 - If your student will be leaving early, please remember that a driver's license or other form of identification will be required prior to releasing any student. Please be sure to share this information with other family members who may be picking students up throughout the day.
 - For safety reasons, our policy is "No note... No phone call... No change."
8. Safety Regulations
- Please be aware that it is illegal to use a handheld cell phone in a school zone during school hours.
 - Please be aware that it is illegal to pass a bus that has its stop arm extended even if it is on school property.

ABSENCES

Attendance is vital to your child's social and academic development. However, there are times when your child may be too sick to attend school. Please review the updated attendance policies below regarding excused & unexcused absences, vacations, and illness.

Excused & Unexcused Absences (Including Vacations)

- Excused absences include illness, and anticipated absences such as appointments and vacations
- Whenever possible, parents should schedule appointments and vacations during non-school hours and days off
- Vacation days will be excused provided the student does not exceed 7 excused absences (illness, etc.) per semester
- An unexcused absence will occur if the child has been absent more than 7 days per semester and does not produce a medical excuse from a physician. Medical excuses should be received in the school office within 48 hours of the student returning to school

Illness

When to Keep Your Child Home

- Fever 100.4 degrees or more (child must be fever free for 24 hours, without fever-reducing medication, before returning to school)
- Lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing
- Diarrhea or vomiting (child must be symptom free for 24 hours before returning to school)
- Mouth sores accompanied by drooling
- Pink eye and or a white/yellow discharge from the eye
- Impetigo (skin infection marked by weepy, scaly, or crusty rash until 24 hours after treatment)
- Strep throat until 24 hours after treatment
- Head lice until the child is free of nits (the school nurse will check the child before he/she can return to school)

Calling in Illness and Other Emergencies

- Please call the school office at 864-2711 prior to 9:00 AM when your child will be absent. You may leave a message prior to 7:30 AM.
- Please notify the office by 10:30 AM, if you wish to pick up your child's homework.

Medical Excuses from Activity

- Parent Request – Students may be kept inside for recess or held out of PE activities for 3 consecutive days with parent's written request.
- Doctor's Orders – Doctor's orders are followed until a medical release is submitted to the office. Students restricted from PE activities are restricted from physical recess activities.

COMMUNICATIONS

1. Contacting Teachers

- Classrooms will not be interrupted during instructional time by phone calls. The office will take a message or transfer your call to voicemail.

- School email is available to contact your child's teacher. A list of all staff email addresses can be found [here](#).
2. Green Notes
 - Each family will receive a packet of green "Note to School" notes that are to be used for transportation changes or appointments.
 - If your student will be leaving early with someone other than their parent/guardian, please indicate the name of the person that will be picking the student up on the green note.
 - i. As a reminder, any person picking a student up is required to present a driver's license, or valid form of identification, to sign any student out.
 3. Principal Newsletter & Calendar
 - The office emails a monthly newsletter containing information about all things McGaughy. Please be sure to keep your email updated so you don't miss out!
 - The McGaughy webpage and Facebook page are valuable resources for information. The principal newsletter & calendar is also available via the webpage.
 - Individual classroom newsletters will also be sent home with your child.
 4. Emergency School Closings
 - Mt. Zion School District uses an automated telephone system to inform all registered families of school closings. We also use several television and radio stations to notify families.
 - Make sure to keep the school updated with any phone number changes to ensure that you receive all communication from the school and the school district.
 5. Privacy of Family Address and Phone
 - To protect the privacy of our families, our staff will not release any parent/student information.
 6. Website & Facebook
 - Mt. Zion CUSD #3 maintains an informative website. The McGaughy Elementary page is updated on a regular basis. You will find grade level information, upcoming events, photos, and much more on our website.
 - McGaughy Elementary also has a Facebook page to highlight the great things that are happening at McGaughy.

VISITING SCHOOL

Please comply with the following procedures and policies to assist us in providing a safe and secure learning environment.

1. If you are visiting the building during school hours, you will be asked to buzz in using the intercom system installed inside the first set of doors of the school's main entrance.
2. If your visit is anticipated and the office staff can easily identify you and are aware of the reason for your visit, you will be buzzed in. If your visit is not anticipated, you will be asked to identify yourself and the reason for your visit.
3. All visitors will be required to provide a driver's license or state identification. Please be sure to have this with you.
4. Once you are buzzed in, you will enter through the handicap door. Upon entry to the building, please report directly to the office to sign in as a visitor.

5. Please coordinate with the teacher to schedule a visit to the classroom. When visiting, please enter the classroom without disruption to teaching.
 - Conversations with the teacher should occur during the teacher's prep time or a time that the teacher deems appropriate.
 - Conferences occur by appointment only.
 - Visitors during the school day, in particular during instructional time, are allowed to visit at the discretion of the administration.
 - When visiting, please do not bring younger siblings. This is a time to spend with your school age child.
 - Please refrain from using your cell phone while at school.
6. Discipline of students during school supervision should be handled by school staff.

VOLUNTEERING AT SCHOOL

We greatly value the time you spend volunteering throughout the building. In order to make your volunteer time most valuable for students, teachers, and yourself, please follow the guidelines below.

1. Teachers will follow a sign-up procedure for volunteers in the classroom at their discretion.
2. Please report during your scheduled time as that is when the teacher has set aside time for you to complete particular duties.
3. Please contact the classroom teacher if you cannot come during your scheduled time.
4. Parent volunteers are not allowed to assist during RtI or Literacy Block time or other confidential times of the school day per classroom schedule.

RECESS

Outside Recess

- Recess will occur before school and during the lunch hour.
- Students will go outside except on days when the wind chill and/or temperature is at or below 25°.
- Students should dress appropriately for outside play and physical activity. Winter coats, hats, and gloves are needed.
 - It is very helpful if items are labeled with student names as they are easily misplaced.
- All students are expected to follow the playground rules at all times
 - Swinging on bottoms only
 - No jumping from bars or equipment
 - Children must slide down the slides on their bottoms, feet first
 - No climbing up the slides
 - No throwing wood chips or rocks
 - Kindergarten students must stay inside the fenced area

Inside Recess

- Students will be kept inside on days of inclement weather.
- Inside recess will occur in the classroom, and will be monitored by the playground supervisors.

PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Support) & DISCIPLINE

PBIS is a proactive approach to school-wide discipline. This initiative is meant to reinforce the positive behaviors of students doing what is expected of them as well as support students who need extra assistance. Our PBIS mission statement is “Teach appropriate behavior before negative behavior occurs; be proactive rather than reactive. Use clear, consistent expectations, language, and routines. Teach behavior like we teach academics”. The staff of McGaughy is focused on working with students and families to promote positive behavior in all school settings. We have adopted the McGaughy 3 R’s as our school-wide expectations. All students will learn and practice the 3 R’s: Be Ready! Be Responsible! Be Respectful!

PBIS focuses on acknowledging students for consistent positive behavior; it does not just focus on misbehavior. Routines and language with respect to appropriate school behavior are consistent throughout the school. All students are rewarded with school-wide celebrations after reaching predetermined goals.

Teachers have individual classroom management plans that manage student misbehavior. All staff issue warnings prior to any consequence. If inappropriate behavior continues, teachers may require that the student take a brief time out. In cases of severe/chronic misbehavior or disruption to the learning environment, students may need to be referred to the principal and a discipline referral form will be completed. Parents are notified of all discipline referrals. The principal will determine appropriate consequences on a case-by-case basis. Please refer to the Mt. Zion District No. 3 Handbook/Calendar for more details on the district’s discipline policies. Parents, teachers, and the principal will work together as a team to manage student behavior.

Family support plays a vital role in the safety and social development of our students. Please talk with your child often about how the McGaughy 3 R’s can be displayed at school, home, and within the community. At the back of the handbook, see the school-wide 3 R’s and the common language our staff uses to teach the 3 R’s.

COMMUNITY CLUB

The Mt. Zion Elementary Schools Community Club is the parent/teacher organization for McGaughy Elementary, Mt. Zion Grade School, and Mt. Zion Intermediate School. All parents with a child in PreK-6th grade are considered valued members of the Community Club. The main purpose of this association is to provide the schools with a volunteer base for events, projects and fundraising; assist teachers and staff as needed; and make the schools an enriching family environment.

Specific details regarding Community Club can be found on the school website or by contacting McGaughy Elementary School.

FUNDRAISING

McGaughy Elementary will participate in fundraising throughout the year. A direct portion of fundraising efforts is given to each teacher to assist them in purchasing supplemental educational materials and supplies. The remaining amount is used for various special events and

projects, such as school assemblies, beautification projects, family nights, and supplementing our professional development resource center for teachers. Family participation in fundraising efforts is greatly appreciated, but always optional. McGaughy may also participate in charitable fundraisers, such as Jump Rope for Heart and United Way Penny Drive.

PARTIES & SPECIAL EVENTS

- Birthday celebrations are welcome in the form of treats provided for all classmates. Board policy prohibits the distribution of treats to all students that are not store/bakery bought. We must refuse any homemade treats and ask that they be taken home. In addition, food allergies may prohibit certain kinds of treats for a classroom.
- Classroom parties occur in December for the Holiday party and February for the Valentine's Day party.
- Deliveries of flowers, candy, balloons, etc. to students will not be accepted at any Mt. Zion School District building.

SNACKS & BIRTHDAY TREATS

Prekindergarten & Kindergarten Snacks

- Prekindergarten & Kindergarten students have a snack daily.
- Only store-bought snacks can be provided.
- Snacks will not contain any nut products due to allergies.
- Snacks will be healthy and easily managed with minimal mess.
- Snack time is an educational opportunity for students to practice table manners, cleaning up after themselves, and appropriate table talk.

Birthday Treats

- Parents are asked to send treats that are fairly healthy and easily managed.
- No red drinks are allowed.
- Cupcakes are discouraged as we find most of our students have difficulty eating these or can only eat a small portion, and the mess can be very difficult to clean up. If your child wants to bring cupcakes, we encourage the mini size for our young students.

FIELD TRIPS

- Each classroom takes field trips that enhance the learning experience.
- Written permission is required to attend any field trip outside the district boundaries.
- Students are required to ride the transportation provided by the district (to and from the field trip).
- Parent requests to transport your child must be provided to the principal in writing 24 hours prior to the trip. Permission for parent transportation can only be granted by the principal.

DRESS CODE

Students at McGaughy should wear clothing that will encourage play, safety, and comfortable learning. Please follow the guidelines below.

- Refrain from wearing items of clothing that reveal backs and midriffs.
- Shorts, skirts, and dresses should be fingertip length.
- Girls should wear skorts or shorts under a skirt/dress. Recess activities will be limited if a student is wearing a skirt/dress without shorts underneath.
- Tennis shoes must be worn for PE every day. Students will be asked to sit out due to safety risks if they do not have tennis shoes.
- Avoid flip flops due to safety risks at recess. Students' recess activities will be limited if they are wearing flip flops.

PERSONAL PROPERTY

- Label your child's backpack and lunch box and all other school supplies.
- Keep all personal entertainment/electronic and other personal items at home unless specifically requested by your student's teacher.

BASAP

The Mt. Zion School District provides the before and after school program, BASAP, to students in grades kindergarten through sixth grade. For details about the program, please contact the BASAP Director, Mrs. Shirley Johnson, at 864-2814.

APPENDIX A

MCGAUGHEY FACULTY & STAFF

PRINCIPAL: Mrs. Heather Ethell

SECRETARY: Mrs. Kaye Moran

ATTENDANCE SECRETARY: Mrs. Alicia Berg

PRE-KINDERGARTEN: Ms. Gracey Reynolds, Mrs. Jennifer Taylor, Mrs. Tonya Freeland, Mrs. Melissa Hilton, Mrs. Amanda Richardson

KINDERGARTEN: Mrs. Courtney Barter, Mrs. Mandi Ditty, Mrs. Angie Hamrick, Mrs. Amber Larkins, Mrs. Taylor Larrison, Ms. Dana Perry, Mrs. Alysa Peters, Mrs. Brittany Reatherford

FIRST GRADE: Ms. Angelina Adams, Mrs. Rachel Cravatta, Ms. Lori Hanson, Mrs. Kathryn Holtfreter, Mrs. Christine Koehn, Mrs. Sarah Nichols, Mrs. Katie Patrick, Mrs. Dianna Weirman

NURSE: Mrs. Carley Morey

SOCIAL WORKER: Mrs. Marie Baker

REMEDIAL READING: Mrs. Rachel Orris

MUSIC: Mrs. Jamie Sill

ART: Mrs. Jenny Cowgill

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATOR: Mrs. Renea Smith

SPEECH: Mrs. Allison Hammer

SPECIAL EDUCATION: Mrs. Allison Behrends, Mrs. Jill Driscoll, Mrs. Kristen Bollhorst, Mrs. Andrea Gensler, Ms. Addison Orris

PHYSICAL EDUCATION: Mr. Mike Patrick, Mrs. Jenny Moore

LIBRARY RESOURCE:

BASAP DIRECTOR: Mrs. Shirley Johnson

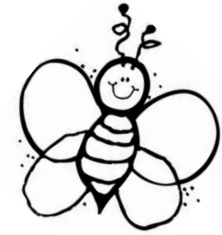
CUSTODIANS: Mrs. Kristina McKean

PLAYGROUND SUPERVISORS: Mrs. Brittany Cochran, Ms. Carey Flesch, Mr. Chance Mendenall, Ms. Samantha Niana



McGaughey Elementary 3 R's

Be Ready! Be Responsible! Be Respectful!



Expectations	Classroom	Cafeteria	Playground	Hallway	Bathroom	Bus
Be Ready	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Be on time *Eyes on speaker *Materials ready *Quiet mouth & body *Be seated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Wait patiently *Be quick *Be seated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Whistle, watch, walk *Line up by teacher *Wear appropriate clothing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Face forward *Hallway hands *Walking feet *Wait patiently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Be quick *Wait patiently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Look & listen for your bus *Face forward *Be seated
Be Responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Follow directions *Do your job *Try your best *Accept consequences *Clean up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Follow directions *Accept consequences *Ask permission *Stay seated *Clean up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Follow directions *Play safe *Use equipment properly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Follow directions *Look & listen *Do your job 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Use paper properly *Flush toilet *Wash hands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Walk to your seat *Stay seated *Keep the bus clean
Be Respectful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Use inside voice *Raise your hand *Use kind words *Work as a team *Use tools properly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Use inside voice *Raise your hand *Use table manners *Honor others' space and food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Use kind words *Honor others' space & things *Be a good sport *Take turns *Include others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Use inside voice *Walk on the right side *Honor others' space *Respect decorations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Use inside voice *Honor others' space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Use inside voice *Greet your Driver *Use kind words *Honor others' space

APPENDIX C



McGaughey Elementary 3 R's Building-Wide Common Language & Routines Be Ready! Be Responsible! Be Respectful!



Settings	
Bathroom	Go, Wash, Leave
Hallway	Watch and Walk, Hallway Hands, Voices Off
Cafeteria	Calm, Clean, Caring
Playground	Safe, Caring, Sharing
Bus & Bus Lines	Back, Bottom, Be Quiet
Classroom	Look, Listen, Learn
Routines	
Lining Up Outside	Whistle, Watch, Wait
Good Morning Greeting	Look, Greet, Smile
Ready to Learn	Cool, Calm, Quiet
Problem Solving	Stop, Think, Talk
Voice Volume	0 (silent), 1 (whisper), 2 (talking)

The key is 3♥!! 3 R's, 3 key words/phrases,
3 fingers as a reminder