



STUDENT and PARENT GUIDEBOOK

2025-2026

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Dear Malesus STEM Innovators and Families,

We are honored to have the opportunity to help facilitate academic success for your Innovative Thinker (student). We cherish the sacred bond between educator and student and have worked hard to continually establish, revisit, and revise our policies, procedures, and guidelines to ensure consistency throughout your learning experience at the Malesus STEM Innovation Center.

Our administrative team is committed to fostering creativity in every student. Every decision we make and every action we take is for the sake of our innovators, for their physical, emotional, and educational well-being. We respectfully request that you read this handbook and review each and every item with all family members, especially our Innovative Thinkers.

If you have additional questions, please visit the Jackson-Madison County Schools web site for a complete and detailed list and explanation of school board policies at www.jmcass.org. We appreciate the support so many of you have shown us our first year of operation through social media, messages, and visits to the Malesus STEM Innovation Center. We appreciate your support and confidence as we strive to cultivate what we believe are the three most important pillars of learning: **Imagination, Inspiration, and Innovation.**

Eagerly Learning & Serving,

Dr. Teresa Littrell McSweeney
Chief Administrator

General Information

The Malesus STEM Innovation Center is the product of a committed community who wanted to see students and families benefit from the Malesus building. To accomplish this goal, JMCSS district and community leaders created a vision for a unique school that would focus on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Innovation.

Our commitment is to establish high academic standards and expectations for all Innovative Thinkers (students) while fostering inspiration, imagination, and innovation.

Malesus Schedule

Morning Session: 8:15am-10:30am

Schools: JCT, JASA, JCM-MS, Community Montessori

Buses depart from the enrolled school at 7:55, Arrive back at school at 10:50

Carpool Transport	Drop Off Times	Pick Up Times
Morning Session:	7:50-8:10	10:40-10:45

Afternoon Session: 11:35am-1:45pm

Schools: NPMS, NEMS, WBMS, RHS, Pope

Buses depart from the enrolled school at 11:05. Arrive back at school at 2:05

Carpool Transport	Drop Off Times	Pick Up Times
Afternoon Session:	11:20-11:35	1:50-2:00

Morning Sessions: 8:15 – 10:35

JCMM – Crenna Lee, Bus 327

JCT – Kiara Dozier, Bus 207 @ 8:15, Shelia Greer, Bus 348 @ 10:30.

CMS – Sisco, Bus 69

JASA –

Afternoon Sessions: 11:35 – 1:45

North Parkway - Danielle Finnell, bus 347

Northeast – Hope McCory, bus 341

West Bemis – Jason Schaeffer, bus 351

Rosehill – Donna Robinson, bus 354 @ 11:00, Mark Murchison, bus 338 @ 1:45

Pope – Angela Fisher, bus 359 @ 11:00, Fanetha Sneed, bus 202 @ 1:45

Motto

Limitless Potential to Inspire, Imagine, and Invent

Mission and Vision

The Malesus STEM Innovation Center mission is to reimagine learning within the context of the 21st Century to meet emerging industry workforce needs.

The Malesus STEM Innovation Center will provide authentic learning experiences where math and science are taught as one discipline within the context of a STEM-related field.

School Colors

JMCSS Blue, Black, and White

Industry Partners

Toyota Manufacturing of Tennessee

Trane Corporation

WOLD Architects

Delta Faucet

Malesus Baptist Church

Parkburg Baptist Church

Malesus Booster Club

If you are interested in joining our Malesus STEM Booster Club, please contact Kim Jones at Kgjones@jmcss.org.

ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

To ensure that all students meet academic goals for success, each student's progress will be reviewed every 2-4 weeks. For students not making academic progress, we will hold a parent meeting by phone or in person to evaluate student progress and place the student on academic probation. Students not making adequate academic progress will return to their enrolled schools.

The Malesus STEM Innovation Center is a school-within-a-school model that offers an instructional curriculum integrating science, technology, and math standards through design thinking and problem solving in an authentic learning environment. This model is unique in offering middle school students' options for Career Technical Education (CTE) courses that include direct instruction for science, technology, and math with a cross-curricular platform that focuses on inquiry-based teaching strategies.

ACTIVITIES

An especially important part of the development of young people comes from their participation in activities other than academic classes. We encourage students to take advantage of the social experiences available in the wide variety of interests represented in the activities and athletics at their enrolled school and at the Malesus STEM Innovation Center.

IMPORTANT: Students who attend the Malesus STEM Innovation Center may not be able to participate in activities at their enrolled school. These activities may include but are not limited to assemblies, pep sessions, band, chorus, athletics, other elective classes, etc. The enrolled school principal will determine if the Malesus schedule interferes with a student participating in school-based activities.

MALESUS ACTIVITIES

The Malesus STEM Innovation Center may offer after school or before school activities. Transportation for before or after school activities will not be provided by JMCSS. Parents/guardians will be responsible for transportation for before or after school activities.

ARRIVAL TO MALESUS

Buses will be provided at every middle school to transport students to and from the Malesus STEM Innovation Center in the morning and afternoon.

Parents may choose to transport their students to and from the Malesus STEM Innovation Center. The doors open at 7:45 a.m. for car riders for the morning session. All students must be picked up by 2:00 for the Afternoon Session.

ASSESSMENTS/TESTING

Students at the Malesus STEM Innovation Center will take the same State and Local Assessments as the other JMCSS schools. The Malesus STEM Innovation Center teacher will be the Teacher of Record for Math, Science, and the STEM Elective Course.

While we encourage an atmosphere of exploration based on the three foundations for Inspiration, Imagination, and Invention, math and science courses will follow grade level Tennessee Department of Education standards. We recognize that students come to us on different levels and learn at different speeds, so we work to personalize instruction for each student.

ATTENDANCE (See Board Policy 6.200)/TARDINESS

[6200.docx - Microsoft Word Online \(live.com\)](#)

Every minute that your child is absent from school, your child will miss valuable instruction necessary for his/her academic progression and educational success.

Students are expected to attend school each day that school is in session.

Students should remain in their assigned session for the entire duration of the session. Doctor appointments should be scheduled after school hours and on school holidays whenever possible. If a student has a scheduled appointment that must occur during the school day, parents are to send a written excuse and/or a doctor's statement to the enrolled school. The attendance secretary will share the information with the Malesus secretary if applicable.

Students absent from school must bring notes from parent/guardian explaining the reason for being absent. Note(s) should be brought on the first day present after being absent. Students should bring notes to the classroom teacher. Notes are kept on file by the attendance secretary.

Any student who reports to the Malesus STEM Innovation Center after being turned in as absent at their enrolled school must come by the office and receive an admit slip. If they do not come to the office, they will be counted as absent for the day.

TARDY: If a student misses the bus to the Malesus STEM Innovation Center, the student will be marked absent from their Malesus classes. Parents/Guardians should make arrangements to drive students to Malesus to ensure their student does not miss important instruction.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

Please review the school board policies for bus transportation.

The school bus is an extension of school activity; therefore, students shall conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with the established standards for safety and classroom behavior. Students are under the supervision and control of the bus driver while on his/her bus, and all reasonable directions given by his/her driver or assigned aide shall be followed.

CAFETERIA/FOOD SERVICES

All meals will be provided by the enrolled school. Students should report to school in time to eat breakfast and board the bus to Malesus. Students have access to a water bottle refill station.

CELL PHONES & OTHER PERSONAL COMMUNICATION AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Students are expected to follow the JMCSS policy [6.312 regarding personal communication devices and electronic devices](#) at Malesus and on the bus.

Unauthorized use or improper storage of a device will result in confiscation until such time as it may be released to the student's parent(s)/guardian(s). A student in violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary action.

CHECK-OUT PROCEDURES

Parents/Guardians wishing to pick their child up during a Malesus morning or afternoon session must come to the office and sign them out at the front counter. Office personnel will help with this. Anyone other than a parent/guardian needing to sign a student out must have written permission from the parent/guardian and a phone number to verify this pick up. All persons signing a student out will be asked for picture identification – **NO EXCEPTIONS**. Students miss valuable instructional time when they leave school early, so we ask that you limit appointments during school as much as possible. Thank you for your cooperation.

CONFERENCES

We welcome your requests for conferences to help keep you informed and involved in your child's education. Conferences with an administrator may be scheduled between 8:30-2:30. Teachers are available to communicate with parents between 2:00-3:00pm Monday-Friday.

DEVICES/STUDENT COMPUTERS

Students may bring their enrolled school-issued laptop to Malesus each day. However, each teacher has access to laptops for students to use at Malesus.

Students are expected to follow the JMCSS policy [6.312 regarding personal communication devices and electronic devices](#) at Malesus and on the bus.

DISCIPLINE AND BEHAVIOR

Students will follow the JMCSS Code of Conduct for discipline and behavior. It is important for students and parents to know that failure to follow the Code of Conduct can result in consequences and could constitute a change of placement to the enrolled school. Minor infractions will follow a tiered discipline system.

1st Offense: Verbal Warning

2nd Offense: Parent Contact

3rd Offense: Limited Privileges

4th Offense: In Person Parent Conference, plan for returning to enrolled school

5th Offense: Student returned to enrolled school

Major Infractions will follow the JMCSS Code of Conduct.

DRESS CODE

Students will wear the uniform that they are required to wear at their enrolled school. Students should remain in dress code at the Malesus STEM Innovation Center. Exceptions to dress code will be determined by the enrolled school administration and permitted by the Malesus

Leadership Team. JASA students are encouraged to wear clothing that aligns with expectations for students who attend in-person schools.

EARLY DISMISSAL (WEATHER RELATED/EMERGENCIES)

No student will be released during school hours to anyone other than parents or their properly identified contacts. The Malesus STEM Innovation Center will follow the JMCSS district schedule regarding early dismissals for weather/emergencies.

E-MAIL

Teachers will use school email to communicate with students and parents. We will ensure that all students learn how to access their email during the first week of school.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Please ensure that all PowerSchool information is accurate. Parents will receive communications through the PowerSchool School Messenger system. In the event of a school emergency, we will notify parents immediately and provide details for reuniting with students. If evacuation is necessary, all students and staff will relocate to Malesus Baptist Church at 480 Old Malesus Rd.

HOMEWORK

“Homework” as Support for *At Home Academics (A-ha Activity)*

All students benefit from academic support from parents/guardians. We refer to homework assignments as “Aha Activity.” We believe homework is a positive support and that all students benefit from academic support at home.

MEDICATIONS

School Board Policy requires a doctor’s written explanation before authorized school personnel can administer any medication to students. A form to be completed by your doctor is available in the school office which is placed in the child’s file. The medicine can be administered from the office or by the school nurse or authorized personnel. We do not provide students with any over-the-counter medications.

PROFANITY

Profanity is strictly prohibited at school or on the bus.

RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RTI²)

RTI is both a process of helping struggling students succeed and model used to determine eligibility for special education services (Specific Learning Disability). RTI focuses on how a student responds to a specific intervention. Tier I interventions are delivered to the full class and is an assurance that a research-validated core curriculum and differentiated instruction is used to meet individual learning needs. Tier II interventions are delivered to students who are not progressing in Tier I. Specific interventions are provided to a small group of students with similar skill deficiencies and progress monitoring is provided frequently to determine if interventions are working. Tier III interventions provide interventions with greater intensity with either more time or in a smaller group setting. Progress monitoring is performed for each tier. Tier III progress monitoring is provided weekly to determine if interventions are working and progress is documented. RTI² is mandated in the State of Tennessee.

ROLE OF OUR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Parents/guardians are expected to take an equal responsibility with the teacher for their child's achievement academically as well as for their behavior; be active participant in school events and activities; work with the faculty and staff to support student learning at school and home environment.

SCHOOL PROPERTY

Students should not mark school furniture, walls, ceilings, floors or equipment with pen, pencil, paint or any other instrument. They are not to tamper with fire alarms, fire extinguishers, or any electrical systems. Anyone who willfully destroys school property through vandalism, arson, or larceny, or who creates a hazard to the safety of our students, will be referred to the proper law enforcement agency.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Teachers will provide a list of supplies that students will need throughout the school year. Parents are expected to provide basic school supplies for their child such as paper, notebook, pen/pencil, folders, etc.

SOCIAL MEDIA

In accordance with JMCSS policies and practices, Malesus faculty and staff will post "bright spots" on our social media outlets. We will adhere to the permission to photograph preference

marked in PowerSchool regarding student images. Please check your preference in PowerSchool to ensure its accuracy.

TRANSPORTATION

JMCSS provides transportation to the Malesus SI Center to and from the student's enrolled middle school. Students riding the school bus must follow all school and district rules, policies, and procedures when riding the bus. Please refer to the district web site for policies specific to bus transportation.

We appreciate your patience as we work through bus route timing. Because we must run a very tight schedule to meet all instructional learning requirements, buses cannot wait for tardy students. Students who miss the Malesus bus will be considered absent from the class and will need to make up the work from that class. Parents will need to transport students to Malesus to meet the daily requirements for instruction and attendance.

Bus drivers will take attendance on the bus. This information will be shared with the staff at Malesus and the enrolled school to ensure that all students arrive to their destination safely.

Bus Assignments

Morning Sessions: 8:15 – 10:35

JCMM – Crenna Lee, Bus 327

JCT – Kiara Dozier, Bus 207 @ 8:15, Shelia Greer, Bus 348 @ 10:30.

CMS – Sisco, Bus 69

JASA –

Afternoon Sessions: 11:35 – 1:45

North Parkway - Danielle Finnell, bus 347

Northeast – Hope McCory, bus 341

West Bemis – Jason Schaeffer, bus 351

Rosehill – Donna Robinson, bus 354 @ 11:00, Mark Murchison, bus 338 @ 1:45

Pope – Angela Fisher, bus 359 @ 11:00, Fanetha Sneed, bus 202 @ 1:45

*****These bus assignments and drivers are subject to change.**

VISITORS

All visitors to the Malesus STEM Innovation Center must check in at the front office immediately upon entering the building to sign in to obtain a printed visitor's pass. No visitor is allowed in any part of the building outside of the main office without a Visitor's Pass. The visitor's pass must be worn at all times inside the building. Visitors are not allowed in classrooms or instructional areas without administrator approval.

VOLUNTEER HOURS REQUIREMENTS

Students are encouraged to complete 8 hours of community service each semester. These hours can be earned by volunteering at school events such as E-sports games, Green Power races, and Robotics tournaments and by giving guided tours to community visitors at the Center. Students may also earn hours by participating in events at their enrolled school. Additionally, volunteer hours can be accumulated through community service organizations like the Salvation Army, RIFA, etc.

Volunteer log sheets can be obtained from a teacher or the office. Students must submit their community service hours each semester, and they are eligible to earn hours during the summer.

WEAPONS

The possession of a weapon on school property or a school bus is strictly forbidden. Violation of this rule will cause immediate expulsion and will be reported to appropriate law enforcement agencies. State law considers possession of a weapon on school property a felony and prescribes a maximum penalty of six years imprisonment and a fine not to exceed \$3,000.00.

WEBSITE

Please visit jmcss.org, click on "Programs and Services," then click "Malesus STEM Innovation Center" for additional information.



2025-2026

Statement of Acknowledgment and Acceptance

With my signature below, I acknowledge that I have read the Malesus STEM Innovation Handbook and will comply with all Malesus STEM Innovation Center and JMCSS protocols, policies, procedures, and applicable practices.

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Student Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____