

# Ball Camp Elementary School



## Student/ Parent Handbook 2025-2026

9801 Middlebrook Pike  
Knoxville, TN 37931  
Phone (865) 539-7888

Principal - Mrs. Sarah Brengle  
Assistant Principal - Mrs. Tammy Madon

## **Principal's Message**

Welcome to the 2024-2025 school year at Ball Camp! We are looking forward to an exciting year of learning and growing as we work with your child/children. Please take a few minutes to read our folder. We encourage you to keep it in a handy spot for a quick reference when you have questions about policies and/or procedures. In a school the size of Ball Camp, we must continually strive to remain consistent with decisions. By following these guidelines, we will be able to do so. We are going to have a wonderful year full of learning, growth, and fun!

## **Morning Arrival/Afternoon Departure**

Traffic is always heavy at arrival and dismissal times. Please do not drop your children off in the parking lot or after the car line has concluded and allow them to walk to the building without an escort. The safety of the students is a primary concern. Cars must yield to buses at all times on school campus. A school staff member will be on duty at 7:10 each morning to supervise children as they arrive. Students are not allowed to be dropped off on school campus prior to 7:10 am. All students arriving by cars will enter the front doors. All families are expected to utilize car line or school bus for arrival to school. Parents are not allowed to park and walk their children to the front doors for arrival. The only exception is to walk students up on the first day of school and safety patrols that need to be dropped off for morning duty. This helps make sure our parking lot is clear for our buses to drop off and staff to park.

The drive that enters the school parking lot from Daybreak Drive for our car line at arrival and dismissal is one way. Cars enter from Middlebrook Pike side and exit to Ball Camp Pike. Cars are expected to alternate entering the parking lot from Daybreak Drive. Our car line ends at 7:45. Once our car line concludes, parents will need to park and come to the front office to sign their child in to school. Do not let your child out of the car and send them to the front door by themselves. School begins at 7:45, and students arriving after that will be considered tardy.

Parents MUST send a note to school any time there is a change in a child's normal dismissal routine. Avoid putting your child in the position of having to change routines each day. This can cause confusion for the child and school staff. Without written documentation from a parent or guardian about a change in dismissal, a student will be sent home the usual way. If your child is going to go home with another student (car rider, bus, or daycare), please send in a note indicating that change. This includes students getting off at a different bus stop.

You will receive 2 pick up signs from the school that must be displayed in the car window if you are picking up your child in the car rider line. Pick up signs must be original school issued signs. Copies or handwritten signs will not be accepted. If you need an additional sign or lose yours, please see the front office and we will get a replacement for you. If you go through the car rider line and do not have the required sign, you will be asked to pull around to the front, go inside to the front office, and show a valid form of ID before picking up your child. Anyone picking up a student must be on the official pick up list in ASPEN. If a parent or guardian wants to add someone to the pick up list, please contact the front office to do so.

When you arrive to pick up students in the car line at dismissal, please pull up as far as you can

when you arrive each afternoon. Students on the playground are not permitted to run to the fence to speak to people in the car line during their recess. Drivers in the car rider line during drop off and pick up are expected to refrain from using a hand held phone while in our arrival and dismissal line. Please have students ready to exit their car in the morning on the passenger side. At dismissal, safety patrols or school staff will open the passenger side door for student entry. Students will not be permitted to be loaded into or exit car doors on the driver's side of the vehicle. If you need to assist your child with seatbelt or car seat, please pull through the line and into a parking lot space to assist them. This will allow for the car line to continue to run smoothly. Student safety is our main concern and a priority at Ball Camp Elementary.

### **Absences**

Knox County Board of Education policy allows students' absences from school to be excused only for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness
2. Illness in the family temporarily requiring help from the child
3. Death in the family
4. Recognized religious holidays regularly observed by persons of the students' faith
5. Verifiable family emergency

Any absence not complying with the above reasons for excused absences will be considered as unexcused. An example of an unexcused absence would be a family vacation taken during the school year.

The policies of the Knox County Board of Education require that written excuses for absences be presented to the child's classroom teacher. This note should be prepared, signed, and dated by the parent or legal guardian. It should state the date(s) and the nature of the absence. A student may be absent, due to illness no more than 10 days per school year with written parent excuses. Beyond 10 days per school year, a medical statement will be required. Failure to provide such a note within 5 days will cause the absence to be considered unexcused. Excessive absences, both excused and unexcused, will be referred to the school social worker and/or juvenile court. Children absent for a doctor or dental appointment must provide the classroom teacher the physician's note within 5 days of the absence(s). No late notes will be accepted. **Notes MUST be submitted within 5 days. Notes turned in after 5 days will not be accepted.**

State law requires children to be present for a minimum of 3 hours and 30 minutes in order to be counted present for the day. State law excuses absences caused by student illness, death in the family, or special religious holidays. The law does not excuse absences caused by early or extended vacations, weekend trips, conferences, weddings or family reunions.

Attendance is very important as children lose out on a great deal of instruction and class work during the period of absence. If your child is out of school for an extended period of time due to illness, please notify the office. Please inform us of any surgery or hospitalization for accident, injury, or illness. In the case of a long-term illness, it may be necessary to provide homebound instruction.

### **Make-Up Assignments**

If a student has an absence from school, all work missed must be made up or the grade will be lowered. Students must request make-up assignments within three days after returning from the absence. Teachers may set a reasonable time for the completion of the work. Failure of the student to initiate a request for make-up work within three days will result in lost opportunity for credit for that assignment. Teachers cannot provide assignments in advance of a scheduled absence. While teachers have plans for future instruction, they are not able to predict what assignments or instruction will be completed several days in advance in order to provide your child with work to complete prior to a scheduled absence.

### **Tardiness**

Excessive tardiness is as serious as absenteeism. Children need to be in the building ready to begin the day at 7:45 each morning. Children arriving after 7:45 A.M. must report to the office with a parent to sign in and receive a tardy slip. Excessive tardiness will be referred to the school social worker.

### **Early Dismissal**

Children should be in school every day until normal dismissal time. Repetitive early dismissals impact your child's learning and the teacher's instruction. Please refrain from checking your child out after 2:25. If it is absolutely necessary for a child to leave during the school day, the parent or legal guardian must come to the office to document the time and the reason the child is leaving. Under NO circumstances will students be allowed to leave with anyone other than the parent, guardian or person listed on the pick-up list without a written notice signed and dated by the parent or guardian. Keep in mind that school dismissal is at 2:45. Please make arrangements for your child's dismissal in a timely manner.

### **Early Dismissal-Entire School-Snow, Ice, or Other Emergencies**

We need to know where your child should go or how he/she should get home in the event that bad weather or other emergencies should cause school to be dismissed early. Usually, the quickest and safest method is the regular school bus or day-care provider. If such an emergency should occur, please do not call the school to ask if school will be dismissed early. Our telephone line must be clear for emergency calls and directions from the superintendent. The local radio and television stations and social media will have the information as soon as we do. KCS will communicate closures to families through parent square messages and alerts.

### **Bus Transportation**

Bus transportation is provided for children who reside in the Ball Camp zone and who live at least one mile from the school. Routes and stops are arranged by the Director of Transportation. Transportation may be reached at 594-1550 for questions about bus routes. Transportation also supervises bus drivers. During afternoon dismissal, students will assemble and be dismissed from the front exit according to the bus they ride. Please work with your child to help him/her learn the correct bus number and bus stop. If your child does not get off the bus in the afternoon, please call the school office at (865) 539-7888 as soon as possible. Sometimes the bus picks up a few minutes late from school or students forget to get off at their bus stop.

Occasionally, students may fall asleep and miss their stop or decide on their own to get off at a different stop with friends. Please remind your child they are to only get off at their designated stop. We will work with you and transportation to locate your child as quickly as possible. If your child arrives at home, please reach out to the front office and let us know. Any time a student needs to ride a bus other than his or her assigned bus, call the office to determine if there is space available on the bus. Then, parents must sign and date a note for the day the change is to occur. Front office staff and the bus driver must approve the note prior to the child boarding the bus. Notes are good for one day only.

In the event school is dismissed early because of inclement weather, buses will run, but drivers may follow their pre-arranged "snow routes". If you do not want your child to ride the bus home under these conditions, you should designate that on his/her emergency card. Please do not call the school during an early dismissal. We need to keep the phone line clear for emergency calls.

### **Student Behavior on the Bus**

For the safety of your child, it is imperative that all children riding the bus practice appropriate behavior. Bus riding is a privilege and can be revoked. Bus drivers will issue warnings for behavior in the hope that any misconduct will be stopped. If the problem is not corrected, a school bus misconduct report will be filed with a school administrator. School officials will investigate and determine which consequence(s) to impose. If a student is suspended off the bus for any length of time, it is the parents' responsibility to transport the student to and from school.

### **School Discipline Plan**

The faculty and staff of Ball Camp Elementary School are committed to the education of the whole child. In order to create an environment for maximum learning, we expect children to practice good citizenship and behavior. We believe it is the role of parents, teachers, and school staff working together to help children practice ways of being kind and considerate of others by following rules and respecting the property and feelings of others.

School is a place for learning. Toys or games will only be allowed for special occasions arranged and planned by the classroom teacher. Things brought for "show and tell" or day care must fit in and remain in your child's backpack for the duration of the school day. Clothes, lunch boxes, shoes, backpacks, etc. depicting violence, violent characters, or inappropriate language are not to be worn to school.

AED Machine: Misuse or abuse of any AED device by a student is considered disorderly conduct and the student shall be subject to disciplinary action. TCA 4-2-122 (E) (g).

Our school expectations are:

1. We are kind.
2. We are respectful.
3. We are responsible.
4. We are safe.

By following these broad-based rules, we will be able to eliminate undesirable behaviors such as fighting, use of improper language, disrespect of authority, or destruction of property. Although it is rare at this age to have major offenses such as carrying weapons on school property or drug or alcohol abuse or possession, none of these acts will be tolerated. Specifically, all types of weapons are banned from school property including toys or replicas, ammunition (live or spent), knives (including nail clippers with a blade), or any other object that could be used to cause injury. These items will be taken from children and picked up by a Knox County Security Officer. Any of these offenses may result in suspension from school. Each classroom teacher will post classroom rules in his/her room and discuss appropriate behaviors at the beginning of the year and as often as he/she deems necessary to promote a positive classroom environment. A copy of these rules and expectations will be sent home within the first two weeks of school. Parent concerns should be first addressed with the appropriate teacher to resolve the conflict. Often an incident or concern can be handled swiftly with a conversation between the teacher and parent. **Classroom and school wide behavior expectations will impact student participation in activities including, but not limited to, the track team, safety patrol, Bulldog Award, and class field trips. If a student's behavior has been a problem, administrators have the right to deny the privilege of the student attending or participating in a special event. Office referrals for student behavior in the classroom, cafeteria, hallway, or playground will impact the student's behavior grade.** Under the Tennessee State Board of Education's Unsafe School Choice Policy, any public school student who is the victim of a violent crime as defined under Tennessee Code Annotated 40-38-11(g), or the attempt to commit one of these offenses as defined under Tennessee Code Annotated 39-12-101, shall be provided an opportunity to transfer to another grade-level appropriate school within the district. Additional information regarding this option may be obtained by contacting the KCS Transfer Department at 594-1502.

### **School Dress Code Policy**

The following standards for student dress must be observed in all Knox County Elementary Schools:

1. Pants must not sag below the waist and must be at a safe length.
2. Head apparel, except for religious or medical reasons, must not be worn inside the school building.
3. Footwear is required and must be safe and appropriate for indoor or outdoor physical activity. Flip flops are not allowed.
4. Clothing or accessories may not display offensive, vulgar language or images and must not advertise products which students may not legally purchase.
5. For students in grades 3-5, "short shorts", mini skirts, and skin-tight outer materials such as spandex are not allowed.
6. For students in grades 3-5, shirts, blouses, and dresses must completely cover the waistband of pants, shorts, or skirts with no midriff visible.
7. Students' personal appearance should not be a distraction to the structure of the

school day or the learning of others.

School administration reserves the right to determine whether the student's attire and appearance are within acceptable limits. The principal may allow exceptions for school-wide programs or special classroom activities. The principal will administer appropriate consequences for policy infractions which can include calling the parents to bring the students clothing or footwear that is appropriate for school. For the complete dress code policy, please refer to Knox County Board of Education policy found on the website at [www.knoxschools.org](http://www.knoxschools.org).

### **School Breakfast and Lunch Program**

Both breakfast and lunch are offered at Ball Camp Elementary. Children eating breakfast at school should arrive between 7:10-7:35 and proceed directly to the cafeteria to allow time to eat before school begins. Extra milk may be purchased at breakfast or lunch. Some a la carte items are available for children to purchase. A complete list is posted in the cafeteria and monthly breakfast and lunch menus are posted on our school website. Children may bring lunch from home, but students are not permitted to have carbonated drinks at lunch.

Students may prepay in person or online. Information regarding applications for free/reduced meals is given to each family as a part of registration. Parents must complete the application and return it to school to receive the free or reduced meal. Students are issued a pin number when they enroll at school. They use that number to purchase breakfast and/or lunch daily and will keep the same pin number through high school. Parents may send in lunch money daily, weekly, or however is most convenient. Parents may add money to their student's account via LinqConnect.com. Parents are welcome to eat lunch at school with their child. Visitors that come for lunch must check in with the front office and sign in before eating lunch. The visitor eating area is outside in our courtyard. Please do not eat at tables in the hallway. Those are designated for classroom use throughout the day. When visitors come to eat lunch, they may only take their student to eat. We do not allow additional friends to accompany the visitor lunch.

### **School-Home Communication**

Each week your child will bring home important information. Please take the time to check with your child on the designated day for any special notes you may receive. You will also receive important school information and announcements through Parent Square from Administrators and teachers. Please read it carefully for important announcements, calendar dates, and notices. If you have a classroom concern, please reach out to your child's teacher. It is the KCS expectation that staff respond to emails within a timely manner. However, we are creating "quiet hours" for staff between 7:00 P.M. and 7:30 A.M. If you email a parent during our quiet hours, please understand that you may not receive a response until the following day. We will also not send school wide emails during those hours unless there is an emergency that we need to communicate to families.

### **KCS Board Policy B-230-Civility Code**

It is our expectation at Ball Camp that all students, staff, parents, and community members interact with each other according to the KCS Board Policy B-230-Civility Code. This

includes, but is not limited to, all in person interactions, emails, phone calls, etc. We want to make sure that we treat each other with courtesy and respect at all times, take responsibility for our actions, be cooperative toward one another and in solving problems, and refrain from behavior that threatens or attempts to disrupt school operations.

### **KCS Board Policy J-240-Use of Personal Communication Devices in School**

Students in grades K-5 may have PCDs at school such as cell phones or smart watches. However, according to board policy, cell phones must be turned off and kept in the backpack and smart watches need to be kept in the airplane mode while at school. Students should not have their phones out on the school bus. Students who possess a PCD, in violation of the policy, are subject to related disciplinary action.

### **Visitors**

All visitors to school, including lunch guests, are required to sign in at the front office. Please wear the visitor sticker you are given at all times while in the building. We love to have visitors, but the safety of our children is always our prime focus. Please do not attempt to visit your child's classroom without an appointment and/or signing in as a visitor.

### **Off Campus Trips**

A couple of times each year, most classes will take trips away from the school campus. These trips are in conjunction with a unit of study or for enrichment. Before a child can participate in a field trip, the teacher will send home a parent permission slip that will list the destination and require the parent's signature. Student behavior also impacts participation in field trips. If behavior has been a problem at school, administrators have the right to deny the privilege of the student attending the field trip.

Field trips are a part of our instructional program. Volunteers are often needed to help provide for the safety and security of the children. If you volunteer as a chaperone, please do not plan to bring other children. It may be necessary to limit the number of chaperones per trip. In accordance with Knox County School Board Policy IFCD, chaperones must have appropriate clearance before participating in supervision of or contact with students. If you are cleared and selected as a chaperone, please understand that you are making a commitment to participate and supervise a small group of students. Please do not volunteer to chaperone if there is a chance that you will need to cancel. Our field trips are approved by KCS officials based on specific ratios of chaperones to students and last-minute changes require additional submissions and approvals. Deadlines that are presented for permission slips, fees, and chaperone requests are firm. Please adhere to the dates and policies that are presented in communication from the teacher. Parents and guardians that pay chaperone fees through the school will be expected to accept chaperone duties and supervision. If you do not wish to perform chaperone duties, please do not volunteer as a chaperone for your child's field trip.

Cooperation and good discipline are extremely important during field trips for the safety and security of all children. Misbehavior during a field trip will not be tolerated. Serious misbehavior could result in a lower behavior grade and/or exclusion from future field trips. Chaperones must follow teachers' directions and expectations.

Parents serving as chaperones will provide their own transportation for field trips. Drivers need to be aware that they must assume the responsibility for their own liability when driving their own cars. No refunds will be issued for payments made for field trips unless the trip is cancelled by the school.

### **Clinic**

Children cannot be at school with fever, vomiting, diarrhea, severe cough, or rashes. A child must be 24 hours free of vomiting, diarrhea and/or fever before returning to school after an illness. In case your child becomes ill at school, you will be notified. Children must be picked up when you are called. If at any time during the year your telephone number(s) and/or address change, you must notify the school office. Also, please be sure to submit doctor's orders to the clinic if your child has a new cast, boot, crutches, etc. Call the clinic if there are any changes with your child's mobility or if there are any activity restrictions.

### **Medication**

It is imperative that children not have any medicine, over the counter products, or drugs in their possession. If your child needs to take medicine at school for any reason, please contact the school nurse so that the proper forms and documentation can be completed by the doctor and submitted to the school. No medication will be administered at school without following procedures from KCS health services and submitting the proper documentation.

### **School Volunteers/PTA**

Parent involvement in the school helps a child have a successful year. We need your help and support of our school activities. By joining our Parent Teacher Association (PTA), you will be a parent of an organization that fosters the welfare of all children and works toward providing an excellent education for our students. Our PTA helps to organize volunteer activities and opportunities. Information on how you can help will be sent home at the beginning of the year. If you are interested in volunteering at our school, we would love to have you. In accordance with Knox County School Board Policy IFCD, volunteers must have appropriate clearance before participating in supervision of or contact with students. Please contact the office for information about obtaining a background check, signing the confidentiality agreement, and getting volunteer clearance. When you come to school to volunteer, please stop in the office first so we may greet you. We will sign you in through the KCS computer system and print a visitor badge for you. This badge will show adults and children you come into contact with that you have permission to help them with directions or activities, etc. Classroom volunteer opportunities are up to the professional judgement and need of the individual teacher. Some volunteer opportunities vary between grade levels and teachers.

### **After School Care**

Several day care centers provide transportation for Ball Camp students. Please see the front office for a current list of daycares picking up at Ball Camp. The YMCA of East Tennessee offers an on site after school program at Ball Camp. Contact [www.ymcaknoxville.org](http://www.ymcaknoxville.org) for more information. It is the responsibility of each individual daycare to inform parents of special

events, openings, closings, and hours of operations. Please check with your child's individual day care to double check if they are picking up at Ball Camp on early dismissal days, inclement weather dismissals, and early release days.

### **Lost and Found**

Each year we accumulate a large assortment of items belonging to children. If you will label your child's belongings, you can help us get things returned to the owner. Please take the time to label your child's name in coats, jackets, sweaters, sweatshirts, hats, lunch boxes, coin purses, billfolds, etc. Please write your child's name on the inside of articles, even clothing, so that your child's name will be unavailable to a stranger. If your child loses something at school, please check our Lost and Found area by the gym.

### **Moving/Changes in Address**

If at any time during the school year, you have a change of address or telephone number, please notify the office and your child's teacher. This is very important if there is an emergency or your child becomes ill at school. Students that move out of the Ball Camp Zone must apply for a transfer through the KCS transfer department during the open transfer window. Applications for transfer will be notified from the transfer office if they were approved or denied.

### **Parties and Other Special Occasions**

Although we spend the major portion of our time at school on instructional matters, there are times when we pause for celebrations. Each class can have two parties each year. Other celebrations or special treats will be left to the professional judgment of the individual classroom teacher and not interfere with instructional time. Birthdays are very special. Each child will receive a birthday treat from the office and have his/her name announced on the morning announcements. If you wish to arrange a special treat for your child's birthday, please consider purchasing ice cream from the cafeteria for the class or sending in a non-food treat. Please do not send in cupcakes, candy, drinks, etc. to celebrate your child's birthday. We want to make sure we are allergy aware and maintain safety for all our students. Do not send in or bring balloons to school for any celebration. Balloons are also not allowed on the bus. Invitations for private celebrations should only be brought to school to distribute unless there is one for each student in the classroom. Invitation distribution can cause classroom disruption and may hurt feelings for those students not included.

### **Interim Reports and Report Cards**

Interim reports will be sent home every four and a half weeks. The report card will come home at the end of each nine weeks. These reports will give you an indication of your child's academic achievement, work habits, behavior, and attendance for the grading period.

## **SCHOOL CALENDAR**

August 8 (Thursday) First Day for Students (1/2 day for students)

August 14 (Wednesday).....Early release day (12:30 dismissal)

September 2 (Monday) Labor Day – Holiday

September 18 (Wednesday).....Early release day (12:30 dismissal)

October 7-11 (Monday-Friday) Fall Break

November 5 (Tuesday) In-service Day (Student Holiday) November

20 (Wednesday).....Early release day (12:30 dismissal)

November 27-29 (Wednesday-Friday) Thanksgiving Holidays

December 20 (Friday) ½ day for students

December 23 – January 2 Winter Holidays

January 3 (Friday) In-service Day (Student Holiday) January 6

(Monday) First Day for Students after Winter Holidays

January 20 (Monday) Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – Holiday January 22

(Wednesday).....Early release day (12:30 dismissal) February 12

(Wednesday).....Early release day (12:30 dismissal) February 17

(Monday) In-service (Student Holiday) March 17-21 (Monday-Friday)

Spring Break

March 26 (Wednesday).....Early release day (12:30

dismissal) April 18 (Friday) Holiday

April 21 (Monday) In-service Day (Student Holiday) **MAY 22**

**(THURSDAY) LAST DAY FOR STUDENTS (1/2 DAY FOR STUDENTS)**