

Updated July 2026

Dr. Mary K. Murphy Middle School

2945 Indian Shoals Rd.
Dacula GA 30019

Main Phone: 470-740-1450
Fax: 678-442-5157

<https://murphymms.gcpsk12.org/>

Parent/Student Handbook 2026-2027

Name: _____

Student Number: _____

Homeroom Teacher: _____

Car Rider #: _____ Bus #: _____ Walker: ____yes ____no

Assigned GCPS Device Serial Number: _____

The information in this handbook was the best available at the time of publishing. Watch for additional information and changes on our website. This book is written for both parents and students.

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Dr. Mary K. Murphy Middle School

Est. 2026

Building Memory, Making Meaning, and Achieving Mastery

Mr. Jeremy Reily, Principal

Jeremy.Reily@gcpsk12.org

Mr. Bob Chase, Assistant Principal

Bob.Chase@gcpsk12.org

Dr. Tom Myers, Assistant Principal

Tom.Myers@gcpsk12.org

Ms. Debbie Trevino, Assistant Principal

Debbie.Trevino@gcpsk12.org

Ms. Jennifer Whitten, Assistant Principal

Jennifer.Whitten@gcpsk12.org

Mr. Calvin Boyd, Counselor

Calvin.Boyd@gcpsk12.org

Ms. Lynn Cook, Counselor

Lynn.Cook@gcpsk12.org

Murphy Middle School Main Office Hours

8:30 AM to 4:30 PM

Gwinnett County Public Schools Transportation:

770-513-6834

Important Information

- Murphy MS behavior expectations and consequences are outlined beginning on page 4. Please read and be familiar with our policies and procedures.
- Students arriving at 8:15 should enter through the main, car rider doors and report to the cafeteria. If the student has a pass to see a teacher, cafeteria supervision will check the pass and then release the student.
- School begins promptly at 9:20 AM. Students arriving later than 9:20 AM are marked tardy.
- Absence notes should be uploaded into ParentVUE
- We are an Away for the Day School. Cell phones should be powered off and put away while on campus. Smart watches, Smart glasses, earbuds, and wireless headphones are not permitted.
- There are several communication tools available to keep up to date with news and events at Murphy Middle School. Visit our website (<https://murphymys.gcpsk12.org/>), our Facebook (Murphy Middle School), and our Instagram (murphy.middle). Current grades, discipline, attendance, and standardized test scores can be found on ParentVUE.
- Students walking to school should enter through the main, car rider entrance. Students walking home must exit the same, main, front doors
- Parents/Guardians transporting their students to and from school must follow car rider procedures. Details can be found on page 7.

Academic Integrity

Academic dishonesty, cheating, plagiarism, and improper use of AI are violations of the GCPS Code of Student Conduct. Students who engage in academic dishonesty will receive disciplinary consequences. Detailed information can be found [HERE](#).

Academic Knowledge and Skills (AKS)

AKS are the content standards covered within each course offered at Murphy MS. You can view all standards for all courses with the GCPS Course Catalog found [HERE](#).

Attendance

School attendance is critical and directly impacts academic achievement, learning habits, skill development, engagement, belonging, social emotional development, and long-term goals such as graduation.

Murphy Middle School will implement attendance protocols compliant to District and State regulations described [HERE](#).

Absences will be marked as unexcused until Murphy MS receives notification from the parent/guardian uploaded in ParentVUE.

Students are responsible for making arrangements and completing make-up work.

Counting Students Present for Partial Day:

To be counted present for the full day, students must attend at least the equivalent of half the school day. This does not have to be continuous time. To be counted as present, students must check in before 12:30 PM. Students who check out before 12:30 PM and do not return to school will be counted as absent. **Check-outs are not allowed after 3:20 PM due to dismissal procedures.**

Murphy Middle School Local Attendance Protocol:

After 7 total unexcused absences, the counselor may convene an Attendance Intervention Meeting with the student's teachers and parents/guardians. This meeting ensures that the school and family are collaborating to provide any needed interventions that will ensure the student attends school. After 10 unexcused absences, the counselor may convene a second Attendance Intervention Meeting. And after 15 unexcused absences, a formal SARC meeting will be held, and the social worker will be included. Additionally, at certain points autogenerated letters could be mailed home.

Before School Arrival

Students may not arrive on campus before 8:15 AM without a pass to permit them to enter the building. All students arriving prior to 8:50 AM must enter the building through the car rider entrance and proceed directly to the cafeteria.

- If students do not have a pass, they will remain in the cafeteria until 8:50 AM
- Students with passes will present their pass to cafeteria supervision and be dismissed
- Students are not allowed to congregate or loiter in any areas inside or outside of the building before, during, or after school hours

Parents/guardians must supervise their children until 8:15 AM and the opening of the building. If students are left unattended prior to 8:15 AM, families will be called to return to the school and supervise their child.

Behavior Management Plan

Discipline Talk – Student Signature and Date:

Discipline Talk – Student Signature and Date:

Through established rules and consequences, Murphy MS hopes to provide a clear set of expectations so that students understand the boundaries of safety and behavior. Every student is responsible for knowing and complying with the rules. All school rules apply to activities within the school and to any school-sponsored activities, whether on school property or not.

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The consequences listed below will assist students and their educational team (parents and teachers) in quickly addressing behaviors that do not meet expectations before these behaviors lead to significant consequences. Students that display continual disruptions to the learning environment may be placed on an alternate behavior management plan. The school reserves the right to modify any behavior management plan to fit and/or address the needs of the school, the classroom, or the student.

Student Behavior Expectations:

- 1.) Keep your hands to yourself – including not touching other people, their things, or their food unless given permission from the other student and the teacher.
- 2.) Follow directions given the first time, immediately, and without complaining.
- 3.) Follow all class procedures set by the teacher for lesson time, independent work time, and transition time.
- 4.) Be respectful with your words, actions, and attitudes toward all people at all times.
- 5.) Follow all Murphy Middle School rules (dress code, gum, cell phones, etc.).

When students are not meeting behavior expectations, teachers have the authority to address minor classroom disruptions and student behavioral incidents. Teachers will document behavior and consequences. Based on the severity of the infraction, teachers may, at their discretion, issue any of the following consequences and steps will be issued (including but not limited to):

- **Step 1:** Reteach + parent contact (step letter/parent square)
- **Step 2:** Reteach + on team time out + parent contact
- **Step 3:** Reteach + after-school detention + parent contact + counselor referral
- **Step 4:** Reteach + Saturday detention + parent contact for conference (teacher/counselor/parent)
- **Step 5:** Reteach + Administrative intervention and consequence + Administrative Office Discipline Referral + parent contact

*Teachers will contact parents by phone or email when consequences are issued.

**A more severe disciplinary action will be given if a student violates behavioral standards while serving a consequence.

Bullying

Bullying will not be tolerated at Murphy MS. Bullying is any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so or any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily injury or harm. OCGA 20-2-751.4 requires a third incident of bullying in a school year to be presented before a disciplinary hearing. Upon finding that a student has committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year, the student shall be assigned to an alternative school.

Bus Transportation

Detailed safety procedures, interventions, and consequences can be found [HERE](#).

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Note: ALL GCPS rules for student conduct apply in route to and from school, on the school bus, and at bus stops

Bus Behavior Management Plan:

Murphy MS implements a Bus Behavior Management Plan. This program is designed to help students and parents understand the importance of bus rules for everyone's safety. It is specifically designed for those students who have difficulty following the bus safety rules.

For minor bus disciplinary offenses, the drivers will use interventions such as seating assignments, verbal reminders, and parent contact.

For major bus disciplinary offenses or repeated minor offenses where driver interventions have not been effective, the consequences may be as follows:

- 1st Bus Disciplinary Referral: 1-3 day suspension from the bus and/or school suspension including in-school or out-of-school suspension
- 2nd Bus Disciplinary Referral: 4-9 day suspension from the bus and/or school suspension including in-school or out-of-school suspension
- 3rd Bus Disciplinary Referral: 10 day suspension from the bus and/or school suspension including in-school or out-of-school suspension
- 4th Bus Disciplinary Referral: Bus suspension for the rest of the semester and/or school suspension including in-school or out-of-school suspension and a possible disciplinary tribunal with GCPS

Bus Change Request – Permanent or Emergency

For student safety, to avoid overcrowding, and for behavior management on the buses, GCPS Transportation Department does not allow students to ride a different bus or to get off at a different bus stop unless there is a permanent bus change or an unexpected family emergency (i.e., serious illness in the family, accidents, a death in the family, etc.).

For an emergency needing a change in bus transportation, the Alternate Transportation Form must be completed by the parent/guardian. Parents/guardians will need to come into the front office of Murphy MS with a valid ID and complete the Alternate Transportation Form. Murphy MS will submit the form for approval to GCPS Transportation. If approved, Murphy MS will contact the parent/guardian and provide a temporary bus pass to the student.

****Please visit the front office and complete the form at least 24 hours before the temporary change in transportation is needed.**

When calling/emailing Transportation Supervisor please include school name, the child's name, and the reason for your call/email.

- **770-338-4800** -- Regular Ed. Transportation Customer Service
- **770-513-6881** -- Special Needs Transportation Customer Service

Cafeteria: Breakfast, Lunch & Payments

As a partner in education, the school system's School Nutrition Program contributes to a successful academic experience and encourages a lifetime of healthy eating by providing each student with the

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affordable opportunity to consume meals that are nutritious, appealing, and served by caring professionals in a pleasant environment. For detailed information including pricing, MyPaymentsPlus, free and reduced lunch applications, meal charge procedures and much more, click [HERE](#).

Please note: Microwaves are not accessible by students. Teachers will not warm student lunches. Students may only bring bottled water or other clear liquids to consume in classrooms in a leak-proof container. Other drinks such as sports drinks, juice, milk, soda, or caffeinated drinks are not allowed at Murphy MS.

Car Riders

For the safety of students, staff, and parents the following guidelines must be adhered to:

- Car riders must enter the building through the main doors near the front office
- Students enter and exit vehicles on the curb side
- Students should remain with their adults until a member of the Murphy MS staff invites the car riders to exit their vehicles and enter the building
- For the safety of staff and students, all car rider procedures must be followed at all times.

Staff will invite students into the building at 8:15 AM. Doors close at 9:20 AM. Students arriving after 9:20 AM will check in at the front desk. For dismissal in the afternoon, Murphy MS releases all car riders to the cafeteria. Failure to report to the cafeteria will result in AWOL. Car rider numbers must be registered for by completing a form during Open House or through the Murphy MS website.

Cell Phones and Devices

The Distraction Free Education Act (GA HB 340) is designed to reduce classroom distractions and improve student focus, engagement, and academic outcomes. This legislation applies to students in grades K through 8, prohibiting the use of personal electronic devices during the school day.

Grades K-8 (State Law Requirement)

- Devices may not be used (viewing, wearing, or operating) at any time during the school day from the moment that you enter school campus until the moment that you leave Murphy Middle School.
- Devices must be powered off (not on vibrate or silent) and out of sight for the entire school day. At Murphy Middle School, this means that if you choose to bring your device to school, it must be in your backpack the entire time you are on campus.

Personal electronic devices include, but are not limited to:

- Cell phones and/or smartphones
- E-readers
- Earbuds and headphones
- Smartwatches
- Smart eyewear
- Personal laptops or computers (not including GCPS-Issued Chromebooks)
- Any other similar communication or electronic devices with wireless, internet, messaging, video capture, gaming, social networking, sending, receiving, or accessing communication, data, or media.

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The first time a phone or wireless earbuds/headphones are visible, they will be collected, the parent will be contacted, and the student may pick up the item(s) from the grade level office at the end of the school day. Subsequent infractions will result in documented administrative consequences and require parents to pick up the item(s). Murphy MS will not be liable for any lost or stolen cell phones or accessories.

Change of Address/Phone Number

If there is a change of address, parents must submit in person the new address as well as other documentation to the school registrar. Parents should contact our registrar for specific questions. Parents should update their phone numbers in ParentVUE. All information must be current to receive school communications, especially in the case of emergencies.

Check-In/Check-Out

Students arriving after 9:20 AM will be marked tardy and must sign in at the front desk. A note should accompany the student if they are late due to an excused reason.

A student will only be released to a parent or other person listed on the student's emergency contact list. Anyone checking a student out of school must have a current driver's license or picture ID before release.

Students who leave without checking out are considered truant/AWOL. If there are circumstances that make it necessary to deny check-out authority to an adult who would normally have this privilege, it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to inform the school in writing.

Parents may go directly to the front office to request to check-out their students. Checkouts must be completed prior to 3:20 PM ensuring that all dismissal procedures can be conducted in a safe and orderly manner. No check-outs will be permitted after 3:20 PM or during standardized testing.

While checking out your child, park in an available parking space. Please do not block the car rider lane or bus lane traffic flow.

Clinic

The health and welfare of all students is a top priority at Murphy MS. The school clinic worker will not provide a student with any medicine, including aspirin, unless it is provided to the school by the parent in accordance with our school clinic procedures. If a student needs to take medicine (prescribed or over the counter) at school, parents must complete the Administration of Medicine form and bring it with the medication in its original container to the clinic. For any student to be in proper possession of any medication or medical device, proper paperwork should be filed in our clinic.

Neither the school nor its staff can guarantee that any student will take a particular medication correctly. Please notify the school if there is any medical situation that could be potentially dangerous.

All student medications must be picked up from the clinic by the last day of school. No medication will be sent home with students, and medication cannot be held for next year. Any medications not picked up will be destroyed.

If a student becomes ill during the school day, he/she should report to the clinic. If the student needs to be picked up, parents will need to arrange transportation.

In the case of an accident, every effort will be made to render emergency treatment. Because parents are called in any emergency, we must have updated telephone numbers and appropriate emergency numbers on file. Please notify the school immediately when the home, cell, or work phone number has changed.

Communication

In addition to mid-term progress reports, end of term report cards, and parent-teacher conferences, communication between home and school is encouraged through the following:

- Murphy MS Website - <https://murphymms.gcpsk12.org/>
- Email – please be sure to update the school when your email address changes
- ParentVUE access - <https://www.gcpsk12.org/families/parent-vue>
- Murphy MS newsletter from the principal with highlights and important dates
- Murphy Middle School Facebook page (Murphy Middle School)
- Murphy Middle School Instagram (murphy.middle)

Deliveries to Students

If a parent or guardian needs to drop off an item for their student, a valid ID is required. Items may be given to the student later in the day. Students are not allowed to receive deliveries at school. This includes, but is not limited to, floral deliveries, balloons, cupcakes for birthday celebrations, fast food, etc.

Devices

7th and 8th grade students will be issued a Chromebook, bag, and charger. It is the student's responsibility to care for the issued device. Any damage to the device should be reported immediately. Damage will be assessed by the tech team, and liability charges may be posted and charged against the student's MPP account.

6th grade students will have a Chromebook assigned to them, and they will have their individual Chromebook throughout the school day. 6th grade students Chromebooks will be kept at Murphy MS overnight, during weekends and over holiday breaks. They will be able to take Chromebooks home for events such as digital learning days and severe weather.

Murphy MS does not have the inventory to loan out devices for daily use. Students who forget to bring their device to school will call home and ask for the device to be delivered to the school so the student can participate in learning.

Disaster Drill/Procedures

There are disaster drill maps near the door of every classroom and other areas throughout Murphy MS. These maps give the route you must take if a disaster occurs. At the beginning of the school year, teachers will explain these maps and discuss the procedures to follow in case of an emergency. Students will practice disaster drills at various times throughout the school year. It is imperative to remain silent, listen to the teachers, and remain with the group while teachers take role.

Dress Code

At Murphy MS, we strive for excellence and encourage students to present themselves in a way that promotes excellence. Parents are asked to assist the school by regularly monitoring their students' dress.

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Clothing should:

- Cover the chest, stomach, bottoms, upper thighs, and undergarments*
- Be safe and appropriate – no sunglasses, hats, head coverings, or hoods worn up*
- Only display appropriate pictures and words*
- Not distract from teaching and learning*
- Extra shoes MUST be carried in a bag*

*Exceptions may be granted for religious or medical reasons

If a student is dressed in a way that does not promote excellence, administration will assist in dress code violations in the following ways:

- Step 1: Grade level reteach expectation and intervention with option to self-correct or grade level correct.
- Step 2: Grade level reteach expectation and intervention and grade level correction with a note given to the student to inform parents.
- Step 3: Grade level reteach expectation and correction and a counselor call to parents.
- Step 4: Grade level reteach expectation and correction, after school detention, and parent contact.
- Step 5: Grade level reteach expectation and correction, Saturday Detention, and parent contact.
- Step 6 +: Grade level reteach expectation and correction, escalating consequences (ISS/OSS), loss of extracurricular privileges.

Elevator Usage

Any student needing to use the elevator must report to the clinic worker for an elevator pass.

Extracurricular Activities

Clubs and extracurricular activities are offered at Murphy MS. Listen to the announcements for dates, times, and membership qualifications if you are interested in participating. See Murphy MS's website for available activities and clubs. Not all activities are open to all students who apply. Some clubs and activities have applications and/or dues and are limited.

Students must try out for and must meet eligibility requirements to participate in the following activities: Basketball, Soccer, Cheerleading, Volleyball, Cross Country, and Flag Football

- All athletes must have proper documents uploaded to RankOne prior to tryouts and/or participation in any middle school sport

Drinks

Students may only bring bottled water or other clear liquids to consume in classrooms in a leak-proof container. Other drinks such as sports drinks, juice, milk, soda, energy, or caffeinated drinks are not allowed. No glass bottles are permitted.

Grading

Student grades reflect the progress towards mastery of the GCPS AKS. The following grading scale is used:

90% and above	A	Excellent progress
80% - 89%	B	Above average progress

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70% - 79%	C	Average progress
0% - 69%	U/F	Unsatisfactory/Failure of acceptable progress

Guidance and Counseling

Guidance and counseling are an ongoing process of assisting students in discovering, understanding, and using their potential fully. Our counselors are highly qualified and competent. They are eager to help with educational, vocational, and personal problems. The counselors are available to students, parents, teachers, and administrators to discuss grades, test scores, and other problems or concerns.

Gum

Chewing gum is not allowed at Murphy MS. We have a brand-new building and must work to keep it in pristine condition.

Hall Passes

The first and last ten minutes of class will be restricted time where hall passes are issued rarely, and only at the teacher's discretion. Students are not permitted out of class without a hall pass.

Harassment

The administration will handle harassment complaints very sternly and with the utmost confidentiality. Students and parents should contact their grade-level administrator for assistance.

Help Day

Help Day is by appointment only, please discuss with your teacher.

ParentVUE

Parents can monitor student grades, attendance, and discipline history through the GCPS ParentVUE. Please visit our school with your ID or call for more information on how to gain access to ParentVUE. Parents will receive a reminder email to log into ParentVUE for updated grade information several times throughout both semesters.

Parent – Teacher Conferences

Murphy Middle School staff welcomes the opportunity to meet with parents. In addition to regularly scheduled conference opportunities for all parents, please email your child's homeroom teacher to make a conference appointment. Your conference will be scheduled for the earliest available opportunity. Teachers are not available for conferences when they are scheduled to teach.

Early release days, two days in the fall and in the spring, are provided to conduct parent conferences to discuss student progress. Homeroom teachers will offer parents an opportunity to schedule a conference. Conferences will generally be held via Teams (virtually).

Personal Property/Lost and Found

Murphy Middle School has a lost and found. Please know that all items are donated or discarded each Friday.

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Recess

According to research, recess is beneficial at the middle school level as it improves student attention, memory, and on-task behavior. Students are expected to follow all directions at all times.

- If students bring any personal equipment (football, basketball, etc.) they must work with their lunch period teacher to ensure there are no disruptions and that the equipment is only accessed and used while outside. Additionally, lost or damaged equipment will not be the school's responsibility.

Report Cards & Midterm Progress Reports

Report cards will be available through ParentVUE. Using ParentVUE, parents have 24/7 access to their students' grades and much more. Parents are encouraged to check grades on ParentVUE regularly.

School Closings

If it becomes necessary to close school due to inclement weather or other conditions, it is a district-wide decision, and parents and students may obtain accurate information by visiting <https://www.gcpsk12.org/> and/or watching local news outlets.

School Hours

Faculty and Staff: 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM

Student Hours: 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM*

Attendance is taken at 9:20 AM in homeroom

*Students should never be left unattended. Students should wait with their parents until the door is opened by a school employee.

Student Accident Insurance

Student accident insurance is available through an independent agency. All information can be found [HERE](#).

Student Records

Under the Family and Educational Rights to Privacy Act of 1974, parents have several rights regarding student records. Murphy MS adheres to District guidance which can be reviewed [HERE](#).

Tardy

Students are expected to be in class and ready for learning when class begins. Students are considered tardy if they arrive at school or class after the designated start time of each class. All students late to school are to report directly to the front office to sign in.

Telephone Use

Students can see their counselor or administrator if they need assistance in calling their parents. If parents need to communicate with a student during school hours, call the main school number (470-740-1450).

Visitors

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Visitors should ring the button located on the outside left of the front entrance doors. Once permission is granted into the building, all visitors must show a valid ID at the front office desk.

All visitors must sign in at the front desk. An identification badge will be issued to that person and must be worn while on school property. Upon completion of the visit, visitors must also sign out.

To ensure the safety and confidentiality of students, Gwinnett Public Schools defines and limits classroom visitors during school hours as follows:

- The parents/guardians (or court-appointed guardians) of current students;
- Other family members of current students who are approved by the student's parent/guardian; and
- Those persons were invited by Gwinnett County Public Schools for official business

Walkers

Walkers will be dismissed through the front entrance near the front office. Students will cross the front parking lot by using the crosswalk, and then use the sidewalk that leads out of the campus towards Indian Shoals Rd.