



**Fountain City Elementary School
Parent & Student Handbook
2026-27**

**FOUNTAIN CITY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
PARENT AND STUDENT HANDBOOK
2026-27**

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Office Hours: 7:15 a.m. - 3:15 p.m. (M-F)

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Knoxville, TN 37919
865-689-1445
865-689-1491 (fax)
www.knoxschools.org/fountaincityes

Our Shared Vision

We want to be an exemplary school with the purpose of preparing students, educators, parents, and the community for the future. By fostering a climate of respect, cooperation, and shared expectations, all will be encouraged to develop to their full potential while utilizing problem-solving strategies, modern technology, and value-based decisions.

Our Motto

Pepcats are responsible, respectful, and safe!

Our Mascot

The Pepcat

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Dear **Pepcats**,

Welcome to Fountain City Elementary School! We are delighted to have you join our school family this year. We hope to encourage lifelong learning in every Pepcat, great and small, and to send our Pepcats on to Middle School, ready to succeed in the next step in their K-12 education.

This handbook is designed to answer most questions you may have about our school. There are important policies and rules inside; please review them carefully with your child and keep them for future reference throughout the year. We also encourage you to keep up to date by regularly visiting our website at [knoxschools.org](http://knoxschools.org) as well as downloading the Parent Square app on an electronic device. We also share information on our school's Facebook and Instagram pages.

Let's work together this year to communicate well. It is our pleasure to work with all children in this historic community!

***Kristi Phillips and Meredith Whaley***

### **Accident Insurance**

- This is optional for your student. Information is sent home at the beginning of the school year. Our district does not carry accident insurance for students.

### **After School Care**

- After-school child care is available at our school and is provided by Kids Place, Inc. Enrollment information is available by calling 865-660-7134.
- The following Daycares pick up at FCE: New Fellowship 865-688-1073; Central Baptist 865-687-1411; First Step 865-689-9818.

### **Arrival/Dismissal**

- Remain in the car line. Do not drop off students across the street or in our parking lot where they may encounter moving vehicles.
- Safety Patrol students are on car door duty at 7:20 AM to assist students from vehicles. Adults should remain in vehicles. To avoid traffic congestion, do not park in our car line.
- Please prepare your child to exit the car promptly when a safety patrol opens the car door to avoid unnecessary delay in the car line.
- During both arrival and dismissal, please remain in the car line until all cars pull forward. In the afternoon, a staff member holds a "STOP" and "SLOW" sign to alert drivers when it is safe to move forward.
- Our doors will open at 7:10 AM when our school bus arrives. Students who eat breakfast will report directly to the cafeteria, while all other students report to the gym. At 7:35 AM, the first bell will ring to dismiss students to their classrooms.
- Please allow your child to walk independently into the classroom. If you believe your child needs assistance, a staff member will gladly escort the child to the classroom.
- At 7:45 AM, the tardy bell will ring, and all students who are not in the classroom are considered tardy. After 7:45, students will only be admitted to class with a tardy slip.
- If your student is tardy, he or she must be signed in by the front office. Please do not drop off students who arrive tardy to walk into the school independently.
- School is dismissed at 2:45 PM. Early dismissals are not allowed after 2:15 PM unless there is an emergency.
- Students in grades K-2 (and older siblings) are dismissed from the gym, and cars will pick up students on Montbelle Avenue. Students in grades 3-5 are dismissed from the Kindergarten hallway, and cars will pick up students on Grove Drive.
- Walkers are dismissed from Montbelle Drive and Grove Drive. Parents or guardians must complete a walker permission form yearly for students to be allowed to walk from school.
- A current car rider's tag must be prominently displayed in the front windshield to pick up your child. You will be directed to the office if there is no car tag on display, no exceptions. The car tag allows staff to call for students using two-way radios, as well as ensuring students are being picked up by an authorized adult, not a stranger. If there is no car tag, the adult must go to the office and check out the student, showing ID that will be checked against the emergency list of adults authorized to pick up the child.
- A signed parent note is required each time a student's dismissal pattern is changed. Your child will not be allowed to go home a different way without your written permission.

- If a child is riding the bus home with another student, please send the parent note to the office with the student. The office staff alerts the bus driver and other relevant staff that the student will be riding the bus.
- KID'S PLACE is our after-school daycare provider this year. Students enrolled in KID'S PLACE report to the cafeteria at 2:45 PM.
- Walker pick-up parents must have a current car rider sign-in to collect a student. They must also sign a walker form to give permission for the student to be a walker.
- No child may be picked up at the classroom door during the school day. Parents/guardians must come to the office to sign out students, showing proper identification. The child will be called to the office and will meet you there. Students who are on afternoon safety patrols must be collected from the gym, and the adult must display a current orange car rider's tag.
- Our office closes at 3:15 PM daily.
- Students are released only to persons listed on the emergency card with a picture ID. Please ensure all responsible adults are listed on the emergency card to avoid any confusion or delays.

### **Attendance**

- Healthy students must attend school every day. Students in grades K-5 must be in school for 3 hours and 30 minutes to be counted present for the day.
- Knox County Board of Education Policy J-120 excuses student absences for the following reasons:
  1. Personal illness
  2. Illness of an immediate family member
  3. Death in the family
  4. Extreme weather conditions
  5. Religious observances
  6. Military active duty/deployment (an excused absence for one day when the member is deployed; an excused absence for one day when the service member returns from deployment; excused absences for up to ten days for visitation when the member is granted rest and recuperation leave and is stationed out of the country)
  7. Circumstances which, in the judgment of the school leader, create emergencies over which the student has no control.
- Student absences may be excused with a parent note, up to ten (10) days per school year. Beyond day 10, a medical note from the doctor's office is required to excuse the absence.
- Written excuses may be accepted within five (5) days of the student's absence. The absence will remain unexcused after that time period passes.
- An absence not related to any of the above reasons for excused absences will be considered unexcused. Parents may appeal an unexcused absence by communicating with the principal. The principal's decision is final at the school level.
- Any student absent for an extended period of time due to illness or injury (10 or more consecutive days of school) may be eligible for homebound instruction. Parents should contact the school for more information regarding this option.

### **Awards Assemblies**

- At the end of each semester (Fall & Spring), students are recognized for academic excellence, outstanding behavior or citizenship, and perfect attendance. We welcome and encourage their parents/guardians to attend.

### **Bus**

- Transportation is provided for children who reside in the Fountain City school zone and live more than a mile from the school. You may call the Transportation Dept. at 865-594-1550 for information on the bus route and stops, or access the Knox County website.
- An FCE bus assistant rides the bus each morning and afternoon.
- Riding the bus is an extension of the school day, and bus riders must follow all rules and regulations regarding bus riding safety at all bus stop locations. Any student who is cited by the driver or bus assistant for a safety violation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension of bus riding privileges.
- Be aware that the bus route can be shortened or canceled due to flooding, ice, or snow hazards on the road. Parents can receive bus alerts via Parent Square.

### **Cafeteria**

- Students will have the option of bringing lunch from home or selecting the school lunch. Students who bring lunch from home have the option of selecting three (3) items (milk, fruit, and vegetable) to supplement their lunch at no charge.
- Glass bottles and soft drinks are not permitted in the cafeteria. Ice cream is available for a charge of \$1.00. Visitor meal prices: breakfast (\$3.00); lunch (\$5.00). Checks may be made out to the Fountain City Elementary Cafeteria.

### **Civility Code: (KCS Board Policy B-230)\***

- Students, faculty, staff, parents, guardians, and all other members of the community shall:
  1. Treat each other with courtesy and respect at all times.
  2. Take responsibility for one's actions.
  3. Be cooperative, to the greatest extent possible, toward one another and in solving problems based on what is in the best interest of students.
  4. Refrain from behaviors that threaten or attempt to disrupt school or school district operations; physically harm someone; intentionally cause damage; employ loud or offensive language, gestures, or profanity; or inappropriately show a display of temper.

### **Communication**

- Friday Folders provide important weekly communication between home and school, including notes about work habits, behavior, academic progress, upcoming events, newsletters, etc. You will also find important information updates on the school website: [www.knoxschools.org/fountaincityes](http://www.knoxschools.org/fountaincityes) and on Parent Square. We will also share updates and reminders on our Facebook and Instagram pages.

### **Conferences**

- Our teachers check their emails daily. To schedule a parent/teacher conference anytime during the school year, please submit the request in writing to the teacher. Most conferences will take place either before or after the school day. Our teachers will reach out to you to schedule after-school conferences.

### **Dress Code (KCS Board Policy J-260)\***

- The school administration reserves the right to determine whether the student's attire and appearance are within the acceptable limits. If a student is found in violation of the dress code, the student will report to the office, and parents will be notified. The student may return to class once the problem is resolved. In matters of opinion, the judgment of the principal/designee shall prevail. The teachers and the principal will administer appropriate consequences for policy infractions, if necessary.
- To help create the best learning environment for elementary students, 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.
  4. Clothing or accessories may not create disruption or display vulgar language or images, and must not advertise products that students may not legally purchase. For students in Grades 3-5, "short shorts", mini-skirts, and skin-tight outer materials without proper coverage are inappropriate attire.
  5. For students in Grades 3-5, shirts, blouses, and dresses must completely cover the abdomen, back, and shoulders, and shirts or tops must cover the waistband of pants, shorts, or skirts with no midriff visible. Skin-tight outer materials are prohibited without appropriate coverage.

### **Emergency Contacts**

- We require current emergency contact information for each student. It is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to notify the school office when information changes.

### **Emergency School Closing**

- When schools close for weather-related issues, you will be notified by a phone message. Local radio and TV stations will also broadcast this information, and it will be posted on the district website and communicated via Parent Square.
- Be sure you keep all emergency contact information current and notify the teacher or our office with any changes.
- KIDS' PLACE after-school care does not operate when schools are closed.

### **English Language Learners**

- KCS provides specialized programs for students who have a non-English language background and are also limited in English language proficiency. FCE has two full-time English as a Second Language teachers who work daily with students identified as ELL. For more information, please call the school.

### **Fees**

- The school fee for each child enrolled at FCE is \$25, payable within the first nine weeks of school. Pay school fees online at [www.Givebacks.com](http://www.Givebacks.com). Information is available on our website.

### **Field Trips**

- Grade-level appropriate field trips are incorporated into the educational program.
- The cost of each field trip is calculated based on the number of students participating. For this reason, if your child is unable to participate at the last minute, we may not be able to refund your money.
- Detailed information is sent home for every field trip.
- Children must have a signed permission slip in order to attend any trip off campus.
- Students who have disciplinary problems at the school will not be allowed to participate in field trips due to safety concerns.
- We are limited to the number of adult chaperones, so consult with the teacher if you are interested in being a chaperone. If you chaperone a field trip, siblings are not allowed to go on the trip. Chaperones must remain part of the field trip party (riding on the bus or following the bus in a personal vehicle) for the entire field trip (until buses arrive back at school). Students may not be checked out of a field trip at the field trip site unless there is an emergency approved by the principal.

### **Grades**

- Students will be graded at their instructional levels. Interim reports are sent home during the fourth week of a nine-week grading cycle. Report cards are issued after every nine-week grading period. Kindergarten students will not receive an interim report for the first grading period.
- In first and second grade, students will earn E (excellent), S (satisfactory), or N (needs improvement) for academics and work habits. They will receive letter grades A, B, C, D, U for behavior. The reading grade will be 50% writing (which can include spelling, grammar, and handwriting) and 50% reading.
  - **The 1st-2nd Grading Scale is as follows:**
    - E = Exceptional (93-100%)
    - S = Satisfactory (75-92%)
    - N = Needs Improvement (74% and below)
- Students in grades 3-5 receive letter grades A, B, C, D, U for all subjects except work habits, which earn an E, S, or N. The reading grade will be 50% writing (which can include spelling, grammar, and handwriting) and 50% reading.

- **The 3rd-5th Grading Scale is as follows:**

- A = Exceptional (93-100%)

- B = Above Average (85-92%)

- C = Average (75-84%)

- D = Below Average (70-74%)

- U = Unsatisfactory (Below 70%)

- Parents can expect approximately 2 grades per subject per week entered in Aspen.

**Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying or Cyberbullying (KCS Board Policy J-211)\***

- “Knox County Schools prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation, bullying, and cyber-bullying. A safe and courteous environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve. Harassment, intimidation or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a student’s ability to learn and a school’s ability to educate students in a safe and orderly environment; and since students learn by example, administrators, faculty, staff and volunteers should be positive role models in demonstrating appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment, intimidation or bullying. All Knox County Schools teachers and administrative personnel are responsible for ensuring this policy is faithfully implemented in all areas under their purview or direct supervision.”

**Illegal/Inappropriate Items**

- It is a rule of thumb that anything not required for class should be left at home.
- Electronic devices such as cell phones and smart watches must be turned off or in airplane mode and stored in a student’s backpack during the school day unless included in an IEP or 504 plan.
- Items that violate safety or disrupt the learning environment will be confiscated, and students may face disciplinary action.
- No weapon of any kind may be in a student’s possession, including toys that may resemble weapons (water guns, knives, etc.) or common items that can be used to harm or injure oneself or others (nails, tacks, pills, etc.). Knox County Schools practice strict “zero tolerance” procedures concerning student possession of weapons or drugs. Students who violate these rules may be subject to disciplinary action, including the possibility of long-term suspension from school.

**Illness**

- For the safety and well-being of staff and students, a child with a contagious medical condition cannot remain at school. This includes symptoms of pink eye, nausea, rashes, or fevers. Per district guidelines, students who vomit, have diarrhea, or display a fever at school may not return to school until they are symptom-free for 24 hours.

### **Injuries at School**

- Parents will be notified in the case of an accident, a bump on the head, or an injury. We will put band-aids on cuts and scrapes and ice on bumps. Any student involved in an accident or injury at school must report it to the teacher as soon as it happens.

### **Internet Safety**

- “Students will receive instruction on the safe and responsible use of the Internet as a part of any instruction using devices that provide access to the Internet. Internet Safety instruction for students will include, but not be limited to, appropriate online behavior, interaction with others while using social networking websites or chat rooms, and awareness of the impact and consequences of cyberbullying. Students must abide by all laws, the Acceptable Use Policy, and all district security policies when using the district network.” (KCS Board Policy I-222)

### **Lost and Found**

- We maintain a lost and found area, but we do not keep the items indefinitely. Please check the area often. To avoid loss of personal items, please label all clothing and belongings.

### **Make-Up Work:**

- If your child is absent for three consecutive days, your teacher will have a plan for making up missed assignments in a reasonable time frame. If parents wish to pick up assignments, please call the school *before* 9:00 AM. The teacher will have assignments ready for pickup at 3:00 PM. The office closes at 3:15, and make-up assignments not collected that day will have to be picked up the next day.

### **Medication at School**

- As a general policy, medicine is not administered at school. However, under certain circumstances it may be necessary. A KCS Medical Information Form must be on file in the office. You may request this form from the office and take it to your physician for completion. Once that is done, an adult must bring the medicine to school along with the form. Medication must be in the original packaging or prescription bottle. Under NO circumstances should a student transport medication to school.

### **No Smoking Policy**

- The Knox County Board of Education, in compliance with Public Chapter 410, known as the “Non-Smoker Protection Act,” prohibits smoking by staff, visitors, and guests on ALL school property. This includes all forms of tobacco, including all smokeless and chewing tobacco products, cigars, cigarettes, and pipes. Vaping is also prohibited.

### **Parent Visit to Observe a Classroom**

- Parent visits are limited to thirty (30) minutes and must be scheduled in advance with the principal. Knox County policy prohibits the use of audio or video recording while visiting a classroom.

### **Parties**

- Classrooms are limited to two parties per school year. There is one party before winter break and one at the end of the school year.
- Birthday parties are not permitted, but with PRIOR teacher consent, parents may send in a treat to be shared with the class at snack time. Parents may also choose to purchase ice cream for the classroom ahead of time through the FCE cafeteria.
- It is important to check with your child's teacher before bringing in any food or drink items to share with the class. Students can have various food allergies and religious dietary restrictions, and we must be sensitive to those concerns.

### **Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS)**

- PBIS is a tiered framework that creates a school climate where all students can be successful, both in academics and behavior. When necessary, interventions are implemented to replace undesired behaviors with desired behaviors.
- Our PBIS expectations are for every student in every setting. We show our students how to achieve these expectations and acknowledge students who are displaying appropriate, positive behaviors.
- Our school has three (3) clearly developed expectations for all Pepecats and staff: Be Responsible, Be Respectful, Be Safe. We teach our students these expectations the same way we teach academic skills: we explain, we model, and we practice, practice, practice. Look for the PBIS behavior matrices posted around the school building.
- If a student exhibits a problem behavior, teachers or administrators handle disciplinary issues. Consideration is given to the following:
  1. The student's side of the story
  2. A witness's support of the story
  3. The nature of the offense
  4. The number of previous discipline issues.
- Parents will be notified when a student exhibits a problem behavior and the consequences of the behavior. A conference may be requested by the parent or the school official, the goal being to come up with a plan to replace the problem behavior with a positive behavior.
- Teachers often have additional expectations specific to the classroom, and those will be communicated to you at the beginning of the year.

### **Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)**

- Recognizing that parent and family involvement increases the chances for student success at school, the PTO is an effective way for parents and teachers to support the students and programs at Fountain City. This organization plays a vital role in fundraising

and organizing parent volunteers. Over the years, many funds were generated for our students and programming through the efforts of the PTO. The PTO Board meets monthly, and days and times are indicated in the newsletter. You are invited to attend. Please join the organization and volunteer your support. You may find more information on the Fountain City Elementary PTO Facebook page.

#### **Personal Accountability Class (PAC)**

- This class is available to students when time away from the classroom environment is warranted. When students need to complete work with the assistance of an adult or require a space to calm down and reset behaviors, PAC will be assigned. The administrators make PAC assignments.

#### **Related Arts Schedule**

- Every four days, students will rotate between Library, Art, Music, and PE.

#### **Safety Patrol**

- Fifth-grade students who meet the criteria for Safety Patrol provide a daily service during arrival and dismissal. Safety Patrol members are held to the highest standards of conduct, both academically and behaviorally. Students can be dismissed from Safety Patrol due to teacher or administrator concerns about behavior or falling grades. Students who are assigned to work cones at dismissal must have a completed walker form filled out each year, as they may be dismissed after the normal dismissal process is complete.

#### **School Day**

- Hours are from 7:45-2:45. Supervision of students begins at 7:10 a.m. and ends when students are dismissed from the bus or collected by an adult at the school. Our doors open for students at 7:10 a.m. For your child's safety, do not drop off your students, leaving them unattended, in the morning to wait *unsupervised* by the locked doors.

#### **School Security**

- Our priority is to maintain a safe and secure learning environment for all students and adults at Fountain City. The following guidelines are in place to keep all persons safe and to protect instructional time from interruptions and distractions.
  1. All Knox County Schools are controlled-access facilities.
  2. Our exterior doors remain locked during the day.
  3. Visitor entrance is permitted through the buzzer system at the main entrance. When you push the buzzer, a staff member will speak to you on the intercom. You will be asked to state the reason for your visit and show a picture ID for our camera. Once the door lock is released, you may enter the building.
  4. All visitors must report directly to the office. All visitors will sign in and wear a visitor's sticker on their clothing.
  5. All visitors must report to the office to sign out of the building. We must know who is in the building at all times.

6. We will not interrupt instruction to call a student to the office unless it is an emergency. If you are delivering something for your child, we will keep it at the counter and deliver it to the classroom when it is appropriate.
7. Under normal circumstances, we will not call students for early dismissal after 2:15 p.m. Our staff is working diligently to ensure all students are dismissed in a safe and timely manner. Please make necessary arrangements to get your child before 2:15, if circumstances require that. When students are signed out for early dismissal, they are missing instruction. This is reflected on their report cards as early withdrawal and is considered a “tardy”.
8. Our school safety plan is in place, and all staff are aware of what to do in emergencies. Details of these plans are not shared with the community at large to ensure a high level of security.
9. A Knox County School Resource Officer is on site to assist staff and students during our school day.

#### **Social Services**

- If your child is in need of resources necessary to attend school, please notify the office. We have a school counselor, social worker, and nurse to help guide you to the proper services.

#### **Special Education Services**

- Our district provides a full continuum of services for students qualifying for special education under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA). If you believe your child might require Special Education or other services, please notify your child’s teacher or the principal.

#### **Tardies**

- Students who enter their classroom after 7:45 a.m. (according to the school clock) are marked tardy. Parents will accompany students to the office to sign in and receive a tardy slip for admittance to the classroom. Students who are habitually late are considered excessively tardy and will be referred to the social worker/attendance officer. Students must arrive on time so as not to miss instruction.

#### **Telephone Calls**

- To protect instructional time, staff members will not be called to the office to speak to parents during the school day. We will take a message and deliver it to the teacher.
- Children will not be allowed to call home without permission from the teacher or administration.

#### **Textbooks/Library Books**

- Textbooks and library books are provided to our students by the taxpayers of Knox County. Students are fully responsible for the care of these books. Parents are responsible for lost or damaged textbooks and library books.

### **Toys, Games, Electronic Devices, Cell Phones**

- Any item that could distract from learning should not be brought to school. The use of personal electronic devices, including but not limited to cell phones and smart watches, during school is strictly prohibited. Use of or improper storage of the personal electronic device will result in confiscation of the device until such time as it can be released to the parent or guardian. Students may have cell phones at school. However, they must be turned off and stored in backpacks during the school day. Riding the bus is considered an extension of the school day; therefore, cell phones are not allowed to be out of backpacks while on the bus.
- Fountain City Elementary School is not responsible for lost, broken, or stolen items.

### **Volunteers and Visitors**

- We believe parent and community participation in school life is a critical element in providing all students an excellent education - you are genuinely welcomed here!
- During the school day and immediately before and after the school day, all volunteers and visitors must sign in at the office and wear an FCE badge while on school property. Please be prepared to show your I.D.
- Confidentiality forms are available in the office and must be completed by the volunteer.
- Volunteers in the classroom are at the invitation and discretion of the classroom teacher based on classroom and student needs.
- KCS Board Policy I-260 states, "Depending on the type of volunteer activity proposed, volunteers must submit to a background check and/or provide information about themselves."
- The administration has the authority to exclude from the school premises any visitor disrupting the educational programs in the classroom or in the school, disturbing the teachers or students on the premises, or on the premises for the purpose of committing an illegal act. (KCS Board Policy C-210)

### **Wrongful Enrollment**

- Any out-of-zone student found to be enrolled in or attending a school other than their base school without an approved transfer shall be returned to the appropriate base school at the end of the semester in which the violation is discovered, unless the Director of Schools determines it is in the best interests of the student and/or the school system to do otherwise. If the wrongful transfer or enrollment is believed to have been a willful action on the part of a parent or guardian, the Director of Schools may pursue action under the provisions of the Tennessee Code Annotated." (KCS Board Policy J-152)
- For further guidance on obtaining official transfers from one school to another, view the entire KCS Board Policy J-152, "Student Transfers Within the System", or consult with the principal.