2026 -2027

MITCHELL-NEILSON ELEMENTARY

SCHOOL HANDBOOK

Primary School Location:
1303 Jones Boulevard
Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37129
615-895-2904
Fax: 615-848-5300

Elementary School Location:
711 West Clark Boulevard
Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37129
615-890-7841
Fax: 615-904-2416

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Welcome Message
- About the School
- Attendance Requirements
- Academic Information
- Code of Conduct Information
- School Nutrition
- Student Property
- Student Transportation
- Frequently Asked Questions

This handbook is created specifically for parents of Mitchell-Neilson Elementary School. While some district policies are included, parents and guardians should also be familiar with the district's Parent Handbook and Board policies and procedures, which can be found online at cityschools.net.

Murfreesboro City Schools is committed to ensuring that all students and adults are given the opportunity to learn, participate, and work in an environment that is free from discrimination. MCS does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, creed, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, color, age, and/or disability in admission to, access to, or operation of its programs, services, or activities, and provides access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. MCS does not discriminate in its hiring or employment practices.

WELCOME MESSAGE

Adam Bryson, School Principal

adam.bryson@cityschools.net

It is with great pride and excitement that I welcome you to our wonderful school. My name is Adam Bryson, and I am the Executive Principal of Mitchell-Neilson Elementary. We are a school with deep roots in the Murfreesboro community, made up of talented educators, supportive parents, amazing community partners, and the best students you can find! Students at Mitchell-Neilson are nurtured and respected, challenged to become lifelong learners, and inspired to be active contributors to our society. I know we have a great year ahead, as our team supports the academic, social, and emotional growth of your child here at Mitchell-Neilson Elementary School.

Melinda Crook

Assistant Principal for Primary School

melinda.crook@cityschools.net

I feel strongly that students learn best when they feel safe, cared for, and respected. I look forward to building upon the great traditions already in place at MNP. It's going to be a great year!

Dr. Alex Keys

Assistant Principal for Elementary School

alex.keys@cityschools.net

I am excited to be part of the Mitchell-Neilson community! I look forward to being with our students each day and finding ways to support our families. We have a great year of learning and fun ahead!

Concerns and Conferences

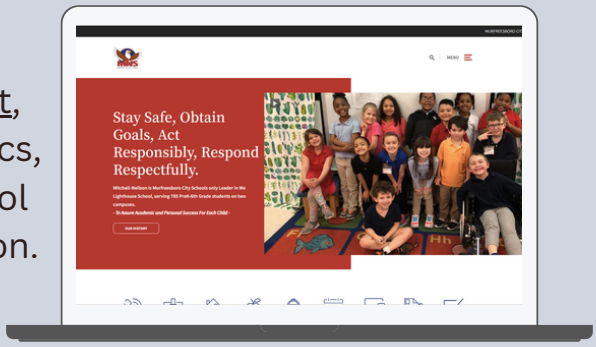
Mitchell-Neilson Elementary administration and staff members are ready to discuss any concerns you might have about your child and their experiences at school. If you want to meet with an administrator or teacher, please schedule an appointment through email or through the school office. Please do not expect school staff to meet with you without an appointment. We are glad to meet with our parent partners any time an appointment is scheduled.

Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled for November 3, 2026 and March 11, 2027.

CONNECT WITH US!

School Website

Our website, mitchellneilsonschools.net, contains information on important topics, including academic requirements, school websites, and transportation information.



District Callouts

MCS uses a callout system to share important news and information with families. You will receive recorded calls from the school district and your child's school. If you are not receiving calls, contact your child's school to update your contact information. If your phone number changes, please update with your school to ensure you continue receiving our calls.

Skyward Portal

Skyward is a web-based tool that helps families stay connected to their student's classroom. It lets families see real-time grades, homework, attendance information, discipline information and more. The Family Portal is available online and on mobile devices. Mitchell-Neilson will provide instructions to access the Family Portal. Contact our front office for questions.

ClassDojo

Mitchell-Neilson uses ClassDojo as a communication platform to engage parents. It requires parents to set up an account with ClassDojo.

PeachJar

MCS uses PeachJar to provide information on community resources to parents and staff.

Find Us Online!

We're on Facebook!
facebook.com/MitchellNeilsonSchools

We're on X
twitter.com/MNSLeaders

We're on Instagram!
@murfreesborocityschools

ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Mitchell-Neilson Schools is one of the oldest schools in the school district, giving it a rich history in Murfreesboro's community. Built in the 1950s, the school originally served 1st-8th grades. Over the years, it expanded to add a primary school and a day care center for our staff. This design makes up the unique "one-school-two-campuses" Mitchell-Neilson Schools. Our students are proud Eagles and our school colors are red and blue. We pride ourselves on developing leaders, one child at a time!

IMPORTANT TIMES

MITCHELL-NEILSON PRIMARY

Our school doors open at 8:15 a.m.
Classroom instruction begins promptly at 8:30 a.m.
The school day ends at 3:30 p.m.

MITCHELL-NEILSON ELEMENTARY

Our school doors open at 8:20 a.m.
Classroom instruction begins promptly at 8:35 a.m.
The school day ends at 3:35 p.m.

DROP OFF INFORMATION

Parents driving their children to school may drop them off each morning at the designated drop off points. Students will enter the building and go straight to their classrooms, where breakfast will be provided for them. The parking lot in the front of the building is reserved for parking only and may not be used as a drop off location.

- **Car riders at the Primary Campus must be dropped off in the back of the MNP building. Spots are designated by color.**
- **Car riders at the Elementary Campus must be dropped off in the front of the building or at the 2nd-3rd grade wing coming off of Clark.**

Please help us ensure the safety of all students by following the guidelines:

- Load/unload children on school property. Observe rules as well as the directions of staff who have been assigned to assist with loading/unloading.
- Parents should remain in vehicles during dismissal. Parents may not walk children to class in the morning.
- There will be several students walking among the cars in the car line. For the safety of our students, please make sure you limit distractions.
- ***As a reminder, State law prohibits any handheld use of cellphone, including talking on the phone, while in a school zone.***

DISMISSAL INFORMATION

Dismissal

The instructional day at MNP ends at 3:30 p.m. and MNE ends at 3:35 p.m., following afternoon announcements. Staff members carefully supervise the car rider pick-up areas at all times. Car riders will meet their rides at the carpool loops.

Car Dismissal

Please display your car rider sign in front window. Signs are provided by the school, and families may request additional signs. ***Any parent picking up a child without an official Mitchell-Neilson car rider dismissal sign, will have to park in the lot in the front of the building, sign in, show valid identification, and wait until the conclusion of afternoon dismissal.***

Parents may not walk up in the car rider line to pick up children. If you come inside to pick up a child that is normally a car rider, you will be asked to wait until car dismissal is over before we release your student.

- Car riders at the Primary Campus must be picked up in the back of the building. Spots are designated by color.
- Car riders at the Elementary Campus must picked up in the front of the building or at the 2nd-3rd grade wing coming off of Clark. Second and Third Grade car riders will be dismissed from the 3rd grade wing (far left side of the building) and 4th, 5th, and 6th grade car riders will be dismissed from the front of the building. **Siblings will be dismissed with the youngest sibling.**

Bus Dismissal

Students using bus transportation in the afternoon will be called to the gym following afternoon announcements. Students will line up according to their buses and will be escorted outside and onto buses by staff.

Walker Dismissal

Walkers will be dismissed by staff members to appropriate locations. Students crossing roads must do so where a crossing guard is provided. **Primary students are not allowed to walk to the elementary school. Elementary students may walk to the Primary to meet younger siblings to walk home.**

Arrival and dismissal times at Mitchell-Neilson are busy times. We are asking your help to ensure the safety of our students in the morning and the afternoon. Please review these arrival and dismissal procedures with your children. The procedures have been designed to ensure the safety of all students at our school. Your patience, courtesy, and willingness to work with the school will assist us in well-organized and safe arrival and dismissal. Please contact the school if you have any questions or concerns regarding these procedures.

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

TARDINESS

The school day begins promptly at 8:30 a.m. for MNP students and 8:35 a.m. for MNE students. Any students arriving after this time are considered tardy to school. These students must be signed in at the front office. Tardies are reported on the attendance report, and excessive tardiness will be reviewed for potential action.

ABSENCES

Parents are responsible for providing documentation when a child misses school. Written documentation supporting reasons for absences must be submitted to the school attendance officer within 5 school days. Even though a parent may verbally contact the school, a written notice must also be provided to the school and e-mailed or given to the attendance officer.

For more information on school absences, see the Murfreesboro City School's Parent Handbook.

MAKE-UP WORK

Students who miss schoolwork because of an absence shall be given the opportunity to complete all assignments and tests that can be reasonably provided. As determined by the teacher, the assignments/tests shall be similar, but not necessarily identical to, the assignments/tests missed during the absence. Students will receive full credit for work completed and submitted by the modified due date.

EARLY DISMISSAL

Students must be signed out at the office by the parent for early dismissal. If someone other than the parent is picking up, the parent is to send a written note listing the name of the individual they are requesting to check out their child early. That individual must be prepared to show photo I.D. at pick-up.

ACADEMIC **INFORMATION**

Reporting Student Progress

Parents and teachers working together maximize the potential for success of each student. Therefore, it is necessary that communication be a continuous process between the home and the school. Faculty and staff welcome and encourage open communication. Report cards are distributed on a nine-week basis and sent home with the students. Progress reports are sent home around the midpoint of every quarter. Parents also have access to these reports and can stay up to date on student progress online through Skyward. Parent conferences are scheduled twice a year and at any other time the teacher and/or parent deem necessary.

Field Trips

Field trips are an important part of connecting classroom activities to real-world experiences. Parents must sign a form granting their child permission to participate in these activities before their child is permitted to leave the building for a trip. Funds may be requested for each child's trip. Parents may chaperone pursuant to School Board policy; however, siblings of students will not be allowed on field trips. No refunds can be given for field trips missed due to student absence.

Media Center/Library Access

The media center operates on a combination of scheduled activity, open check out, and research times which are available to enhance curricular concepts. Parents are responsible for paying replacement cost for any lost or damaged material. When a student has an overdue book, no additional materials will be checked out until the late books are returned.

Academic Acknowledgement

Students are constantly rewarded for their hard work and progress at Mitchell-Neilson. To further acknowledge the academic success of students in grades 3-6, there are two distinguished groups that the students may become a member of through their hard work and effort.

- **Honor Roll** - To be on the Honor Roll, a student must earn all A's and B's for that grading period
- **Principal's List** – To be on the Principal's List, a student must earn all A's for that grading period

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

School Counseling

There are many services provided by the Guidance Department, such as: individual counseling, small group counseling, parent consultation, and teacher consultation. Additionally, we will have a social worker on site at scheduled times throughout the week to provide assistance when necessary for students or families. Students can refer themselves for individual counseling or can be referred by teachers, parents, or other staff members. Parents and teachers can ask for assistance from the counselors when conferencing about specific problems which they have not been able to resolve themselves.

Playground Use

Classroom or special area teachers will supervise students who use the playground during the school day. Instruction for safe play will be given. The following is a list of expectations for the playground:

1. Swing alone and use the swing appropriately to remain safe.
2. Slide down the slide seated and avoid climbing up the slide.
3. Climb and play safely only on identified climbing apparatus as they are designed.
4. Play safely on the monkey bars—no leg wrestling, or pulling on students.
5. Play safely and avoid tackle football or aggressive pushing or shoving in basketball, soccer or any other sport.
6. Stay in the designated area within sight of the teacher or supervisor.

Physical Education

Each child is required by state law to participate in physical education, and every class is scheduled to meet with the physical education teacher. We employee games and sports to enhance the five major areas taught in Physical Education

1. Health Related Fitness
2. Rhythmic Activities
3. Locomotor Skills
4. Manipulative Skills
5. Tumbling and Balance

All students will participate in physical education, unless the school is presented with a:

- A parent's written request asking for the child to be excused from one gym class and stating the reason, OR
- A doctor's note that states the length of time needed to not participate in gym class. A doctor's note is required if student will miss more than one gym class.

If a child has any health problems or a chronic illness, the parent should inform the school nurse.

Each child must dress properly for physical education classes.

- Students are encouraged to wear comfortable gym shoes. Boots, sandals, crocs, flip flops, etc. are discouraged.
- Gym-like shoes will not be allowed to be taken off for class.

CODE OF CONDUCT
INFORMATION

At Mitchell-Neilson we strive to maximize learning by providing an atmosphere that is safe, nurturing, and positive for all students. It is our goal for students to take the responsibility in creating a climate that is conducive to academic excellence and civic awareness. To culture a positive learning environment at MNE, our school-wide behavior goal will be to emphasize being safe, on task, accountable, and respectful. We hope to equip our students with characteristics that will aid them in being successful members of society.

We encourage all Eagles be Safe, On Task, Respectful, and Responsible

BULLYING, DISCRIMINATION, AND HARASSMENT

Students shall be provided a learning environment free from sexual, racial, ethnic, and religious discrimination/harassment. It shall be a violation of this policy for anyone to discriminate against or harass a student through conduct or communication that is sexual, racial, ethnic, or religious in nature. For complete details on discrimination and complaint procedures, please refer to the Murfreesboro City Schools Parent Handbook.

DRESS CODE

The following dress code will be enforced by school staff. The school reserves the right to notify parents when student's dress is inappropriate. Parents will be asked to come and get their child or bring appropriate clothes to school for their child. Sagging pants will not be tolerated. Students may be asked to turn shirts inside out if the shirt is inappropriate.

Children are expected to come to school dressed appropriately. Clothing or accessories that disrupt learning and/or teaching are not considered acceptable dress. All shirts and pants should meet even when engaged in physical activity. When raising hands in the classroom, tummies should be covered.
The following items are considered inappropriate and unacceptable for school dress:

- Extremely short skirts/shorts/skorts (should be to one's fingertips when standing straight)
- Fishnet or see-through shirts
- All shirts must be at least 2 fingers length across the shoulders
- Clothing with inappropriate logos, messages, or pictures (alcoholic beverage logos, tobacco logos, profanity, etc.)
- Tights, leggings, yoga pants (must be worn with a top that is fingertip length or under shorts/dress)
- Cleats
- Sagging pants (loose fitting pants must be worn with a belt)
- Hats or caps when worn in the building

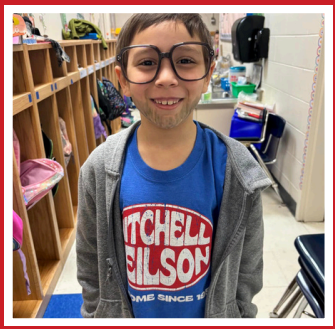
FAMILY **ENGAGEMENT**

Mitchell-Neilson believes that family engagement is essential for student success. As a Title I school, we recognize the importance of building strong partnerships between families, educators, and the community. Title I family engagement activities are designed to involve parents in their child's education, promote communication between home and school, and empower families to support their children's learning. Through workshops, events, and resources, we encourage active participation from parents in their child's educational journey.

To meet our obligations under Title I, we will provide the following:

- A fall and spring meeting with families to explain Title I obligations
- An annual needs assessment completed in conjunction with parents
- A parent-school compact that will be updated annually will be available online
- A family engagement policy that will be updated annually will be available online
- School performance reports
- Timely information about Title I, Part A programs
- Student's assessment results and progress reports

For more information on our Title I procedures, please see our Family Engagement Policy located online at:
mitchellneilsonschools.net/parents/school-parent-compact

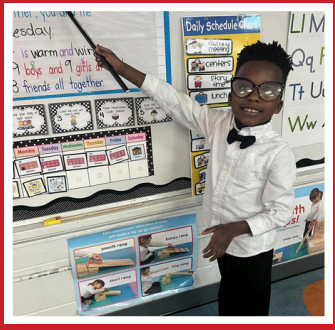


SPECIAL **EVENTS & FUNDRAISERS**

Mitchell-Neilson Elementary will host special events and fundraisers throughout the school year. This allows the Mitchell-Neilson community to engage with each other while supporting the school.

School-sponsored fundraising activities provide additional funds for the school. Participation in fundraising activities is voluntary. These activities will not conflict with the instructional program and a child's grade will not be impacted by participation in fundraising. More information on school fundraising can be found in Board Policy 2.601.

More information on school fundraisers will be provided to parents on an annual basis.



VOLUNTEERING

Parents are expected and encouraged to play an active roll in their child's education. Parents are urged to volunteer to work throughout the school. Classroom teachers and special area personnel need help throughout the year in a variety of ways. We encourage you to get involved. You support is essential to our success!

HEALTH AND SAFETY INFORMATION

School Safety

Mitchell-Neilson is committed to keeping your child safe while they are in our care. Our school has and will continue to dedicate resources, time, and effort to ensure that our school building is safe and secure. Our school has an incident response plan specifically designed for our school that our staff are trained on throughout the year. Training drills involving all staff and students will be conducted on a monthly basis that include the following: fire, severe weather (tornado), and intruder. All drills are conducted with a preventative focus to be prepared for such emergencies.

School Visitors

Anyone other than a Mitchell-Neilson student or staff member is considered to be a **VISITOR** and must enter the building at the front entrance and report to the school office to sign in and receive a visitor's pass sticker. This pass must be worn by the visitor at all times. Mitchell-Neilson Elementary uses the *Guardian visitor scanning system*, and government-issued photo identification will be required for scanning. All visitors must adhere to Mitchell-Neilson policies and procedures. Before leaving the building, visitors must return to the office to sign out and return the visitor's pass. All exterior doors with the exception of the front door are locked at 8:30 a.m. each day and remain locked throughout the day. Parents may not park cars on the circular drive entrances. Please utilize the provided parking spaces when entering the campus.

School Health

In an effort to keep our students healthy, it is important for students to stay at home and away from others when feeling sick. If your child develops symptoms during the school day, they will be sent to the school nurse for assessment. The nurse will determine if the child must be sent home according to our illness guidelines. The school health clinic cannot provide prolonged care of sick students. You or an emergency contact must pick up your child within an hour of notification. The child should not return for at least 24 hours, unless they have been cleared to return earlier by a medical provider. Medical documentation must be provided if your child returns prior to 24 hours. Please see the Murfreesboro City School's Parent Handbook for Illness Guidelines.

If your child requires medication during the school day, Murfreesboro City School's Parent Handbook for medication guidelines.

SCHOOL
NUTRITION

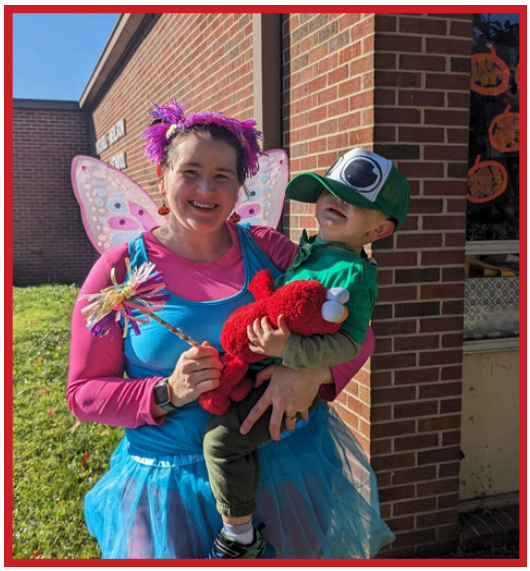
Students are served meals in accordance with the guidelines of the National School Lunch Program. Cafeteria menus may be viewed at www.schoolcafe.com or www.cityschools.net. Please feel free to contact the cafeteria manager with any questions, concerns, or suggestions that you may have.

School Meals

Breakfast and lunch are served daily to all Mitchell-Neilson students at no cost to families. Students are also welcome to bring their own lunches and snacks. All children are expected to eat lunch, unless the child has a religious exemption. Students may not bring glass bottles to school as part of their lunch. Healthy snacks are available for students to purchase in addition to school lunch. Money may be added to your child's account in the cafeteria any morning before classes begin. Put all money and checks in sealed envelopes with the child's name, teacher's name, and the purpose of the money on the outside of the envelope. Students will not be allowed to charge extra snacks. Returned checks to any school account will be charged a $15.00 service fee.

All families, regardless of ability to pay, will be asked to complete a demographic statement at the beginning of the school year for federal accountability for the school food program.

Cafeteria prices are set by the school board and are subject to change.



Snack Policy

We encourage healthy snacks from home. Some ideas include apples, raisins, grapes, bananas, pretzels, crackers, celery sticks, carrot sticks, 100-calorie type packs, etc. Your child's teacher may provide guidance or suggestions for individual classrooms. We encourage students to bring bottled water to school. No carbonated drinks should be sent to school. Chewing gum is not permitted at school.

Lunch Visitors

Mitchell-Neilson encourages parents, guardians, and grandparents to visit with their child at lunch. Please contact the front office for lunch times and more information about lunch visitation.

STUDENT PROPERTY

Mitchell-Neilson discourages students from bringing personal property onto campus that is not required for instruction. Students bringing personal property onto school campus do so at their own risk. Large sums of money (not to exceed $20.00) may not be brought to school. **The following items are not permitted at Mitchell-Neilson Elementary:**

- **Toy guns or weapons of any kind**
- **Collector cards**
- **Laser light pointers**
- **Lighters or matches**

In accordance with MCS Board Policy 6.312, cellphones, MP3 players, laptops, or other personal technology must be stored in backpacks or other carryall. These items must be silenced or turned off unless permission is granted by the teacher. They should be kept in the student's backpack from the time they arrive at school until they arrive at home. Improper use of these devices may result in confiscation of the device until it can be released directly to a student's parents. A student in violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary action. In addition to the parameters established above, use of any device to bully, harass, or intimidate others will be subject to disciplinary action.

Using any device for any illicit activity including, but not limited to, taking, disseminating, transferring, or sharing obscene, pornographic, lewd, or otherwise illegal images, photographs, or similar material whether by electronic data transfer or otherwise may constitute a crime under State and/or Federal law. Students engaged in any of the above activities will be subject to the disciplinary procedures of the Code of Conduct and reported to law enforcement and other appropriate State or Federal agencies.

These devices shall not be used to record and/or video school staff or students without the principal's/designee's permission. Cell phones or any other devices are not to be used, accessed, or displayed while on any school bus. Possession of a cell phone is a privilege, which may be forfeited by a student who fails to abide by school's policies and procedures.

The Murfreesboro City Schools Board, its schools, and its employees do not assume any responsibility or liability for the loss of or damage to any student's personal communication device, or for the unauthorized use of a student's personal communication device.

Mitchell-Neilson respects the right of privacy for all students. However, students do have conditional privacy while on campus. Student lockers, desks, and cubbies must have only school-related items in them. Lockers, desks, backpacks, and other places within the school are subject to search by teachers and/or administration at any time of reasonable suspicion or concern.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

City school buses transport children who live in the Mitchell-Neilson Elementary zone to and from school. Please be advised that large projects or packages cannot be carried onto the bus, as there must be adequate room for three children in each seat. Assigned school personnel will be on duty to meet the buses in the morning and to monitor boarding of the buses at dismissal time. Bus riders are expected to follow the rules and regulations regarding safety and behavior on the bus and at bus stop locations.

Established bus riders wanting to ride another bus home with a friend must provide a signed note from the parent informing the school of the change in the student's bus stop for the day. This note must be signed by the principal and faxed to the Transportation Department. If the Transportation Department determines that the bus is already at maximum student capacity, the request will not be honored. The school will notify the parent and other arrangements must be made.

For non-established bus riders wanting to ride the bus home with a friend parents must come to the Mitchell-Neilson office and complete the "Special Request for Transportation" form for non-established bus riders; this can also be faxed if necessary. This form MUST be received in the Mitchell-Neilson office prior to 10:00 a.m. and then faxed to the Department of Transportation for approval. If the Transportation Department determines that the bus is already at maximum student capacity, the request will not be honored. The school will notify the parent and other arrangements must be made. *A new permission form must be completed each time this occurs.*

Transportation Changes

Students who will have a transportation change for the day must have a note signed by their guardians along with a telephone number where they may be reached for verification of the note. The note must be signed by the school administration or designated office staff. The school will not make transportation changes or permit students to make arrangements by telephone. Changes in transportation must be made prior to 2:00 p.m. each day to ensure there is adequate time to notify all parties involved. At no time during the school day will students be called to the office until the parent is in the office to sign them out.

LOST AND FOUND

Parents are encouraged to put names on students' coats, sweaters, jackets, etc. Lost items that are found should be placed in Lost and Found. Students who have lost items should check in Lost and Found, which is located in the front hall between the library and cafeteria. After 30 days, unclaimed items are donated to charitable organizations.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT IF A PARENT HAS A CONCERN, COMPLAINT, OR QUESTION?

If you experience concerns or issues that need to be addressed, contact the teacher or appropriate instructor first to attempt to resolve the situation. If this same situation continues to be an issue and you believe another meeting with the teacher would not bring resolution, you may request a meeting with the teacher and/or administrator or counselor. If that meeting is needed, we are hopeful that a positive resolution will be reached.

CAN I SEND MY CHILD'S PARTY INVITATION TO THEIR CLASS?

Invitations to and/or reminders regarding personal parties will not be distributed at school unless they are given to every child in the class.

CAN I SEND DELIVERIES TO MY CHILD DURING THE SCHOOL DAY?

Due to safety concerns, flower and balloon deliveries are not to be sent to school, and will be returned to the florist/vendor.

CAN I SEND FOOD OR OTHER ITEMS FOR MY CHILD'S BIRTHDAY?

No, birthday parties cannot be accommodated due to scheduling and in order to maximize instructional time. Teachers will make sure students are recognized in class on their birthdays.

CAN I VISIT MY CHILD'S CLASSROOM?

To protect instructional time, parents will only have access to classrooms during school hours when the classroom teacher provides permission to the office. Please schedule visits with the teacher or front office staff ahead of time.

DOES MITCHELL-NEILSON HAVE AN EXTENDED SCHOOL PROGRAM?

Before and after school childcare is available through our ESP program from 6:00 until 8:20 in the morning and from 3:30 to 6:00 in the afternoon, Monday through Friday. Children may stay for both sessions or only attend one session, either morning or afternoon. Information regarding fees, class options, and attendance options is available from our Mitchell-Neilson ESP office. You may contact the Mitchell-Neilson ESP Director for enrollment information.