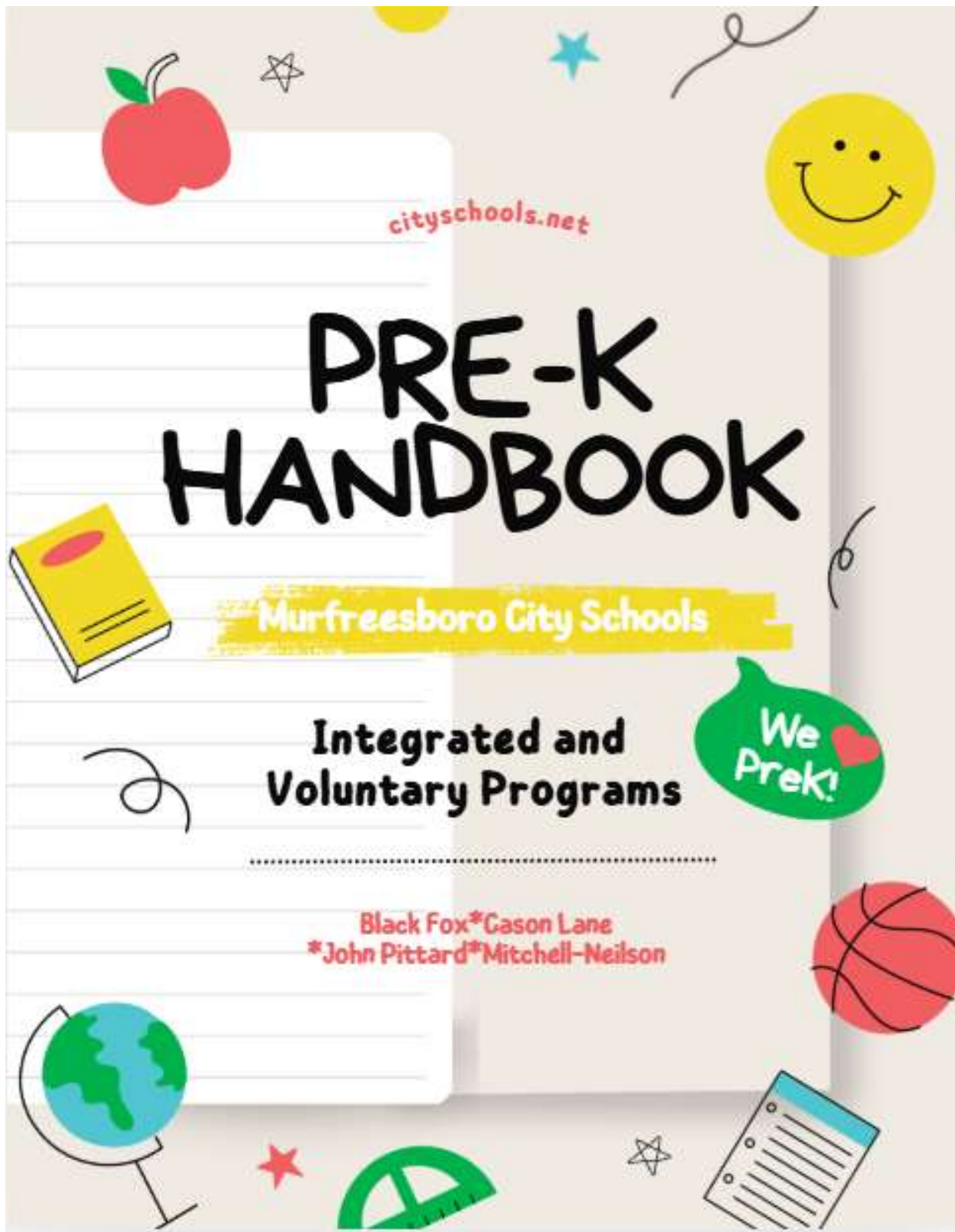




Welcome!

We are excited you and your child are part of Murfreesboro City Schools (MCS) PreK Program! MCS is proud to offer two high-quality early childhood programs:

- Integrated Preschool (IPK): Inclusive classrooms serving children with disabilities and typically developing peer models
- Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK): State grant-funded classrooms for at-risk four-year-old children residing within the Murfreesboro city limits. “At-risk” is defined as economically disadvantaged according to Tennessee guidelines.

Both programs prepare students for success in kindergarten through developmentally appropriate academic and social-emotional learning opportunities. We value the uniqueness of each child and foster a safe, active learning environment. The classrooms are designed to promote learning through play, structured activities, and interactions with peers and teachers. Both programs follow a curriculum approved by the Tennessee Department of Early Learning, and the Tennessee Early Learning Developmental Standards.

Families play an essential role in their child’s education. We look forward to partnering with you to ensure your child is ready for his/her next steps after PreK! We hope you have a wonderful experience with the MCS PreK Program.

Murfreesboro City Schools

Mission Statement

“To Assure Academic and Personal Success for Each Child”

PreK Vision Statement

Murfreesboro City Schools PreK Programs provide educational opportunities to PreK-aged students. We value the education and uniqueness of each student. It is home to active learners who are engaged in differentiated and authentic learning in a safe environment. Students with disabilities are provided with a continuum of services with necessary support. Our program fosters supportive classrooms where children, families, schools, and communities work together to establish a love of learning.

PreK Values:

- Supported structured environments
- Collaboration with families, professionals, and community
- Engagement of all students in developmentally appropriate activities.
 - Achievement in all developmental areas:
social, adaptive, fine & gross motor, communication, and cognitive

Enrollment

To be eligible for initial enrollment in the Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (“VPK”) program, a child generally must:

1. Be four years old on or before August 15 of the applicable school year;
2. Reside within the geographic area served by Murfreesboro City Schools; and
3. Meet the “at-risk” eligibility requirements established by Tennessee law and the Tennessee Department of Education.

“At-risk” eligibility includes children whose household income meets the applicable state income guidelines and certain dependent children of a parent who was killed, died as a direct result of war-related injuries, is a prisoner of war, or is missing in action.

Enrollment is voluntary, and eligibility does not guarantee placement because the number of available VPK seats is limited. When the number of eligible applicants exceeds available seats, MCS will select students in accordance with Tennessee law, Tennessee Department of Education requirements, and the district’s approved VPK enrollment plan.

After the 30th full school day, if all eligible at-risk children have been served and seats remain available, MCS may enroll additional children who meet other eligibility categories permitted by Tennessee law. Enrollment will continue, subject to available seats, through the enrollment period established by the Tennessee Department of Education.

Children applying to participate as peer models in the Integrated Pre-Kindergarten (“IPK”) program must be four years old on or before August 15 of the applicable school year unless otherwise permitted by district program requirements. Peer-model applicants may reside inside or outside the Murfreesboro city limits. Acceptance into the peer-model program is subject to available space and the district’s peer-model selection criteria.

Families applying for the VPK program must also submit proof of income to determine eligibility for the state-funded program serving economically disadvantaged students. Acceptable income documentation includes one month of current pay stubs, a W2 form, a federal tax return, or verification of public assistance such as SNAP or TANF. Income documentation is not required for families applying solely for the IPK peer model program.

Curriculum

Developmentally appropriate curriculum provides for all areas of child development through an integrated approach. Our teachers provide a variety of language-enriched activities and materials. Our curriculum is based on child developmental principles about how children grow and learn. **Both IPK and VPK classrooms use the following curriculum:**

Connect 4 Learning is an interdisciplinary early childhood curriculum that aims to synthesize research-based approaches in four domains of learning: mathematics, science, literacy, and social-emotional development. The curriculum is comprised of 6 units that focus on supporting

children’s development of ten comprehensive thinking processes, which are applicable across all four domains: cooperating, comparing/classifying, communication, curiosity, imagination, observing, self-regulation, reasoning/problem solving, making sense, and using tools strategically.

TN Foundational Skills Curriculum Supplement provides students with many opportunities and ways to discriminate sounds: rhyming, detecting syllable breaks, and identifying phonemes. These exposures are designed to be fun, to build lots of vocabulary and word awareness, and to set students on the track to reading success.

Tennessee Early Developmental Learning Standards (TN-ELDS) These standards are correlated to kindergarten standards and provide a trajectory of developmental skills.

Second STEP: Child Protection Unit All classrooms are mandated to teach a personal safety curriculum / child abuse prevention curriculum every year.

Handwriting without Tears is a researched-based method to make handwriting easy to learn in a developmentally appropriate way. Students are exposed to multi-sensory tools and strategies in an active learning environment.

School Contact Information

Black Fox Elementary

753 S. Rutherford Blvd.
Murfreesboro TN 37128
(615) 893-6395

John Pittard Elementary

745 Dejarnette Lane
Murfreesboro, TN 37130
615-396-0240

Cason Lane Pre-K

930 Cason Lane
Murfreesboro, TN 37128
(615) 898-7148

Mitchell-Neilson Primary

1303 Jones Blvd.
Murfreesboro, TN 37129
615-895-2904

School Hours and Attendance

Voluntary PreK Program Hours: 9:30-3:30

Integrated PreK Program Hours: 9:30-3:30, which includes:

- Morning Class – 9:30-12:30
- Afternoon Class – 12:30-3:30

Peer Models will attend both morning and afternoon sessions (9:30-3:30).

Schedule for students with Individual Education Plans may vary and will be an IEP team decision.

Attendance:

Your child's potential for growth and development is maximized through consistent participation in a high-quality educational environment. Establishing consistent attendance routines in Pre-K will increase chances of success in all future school experiences. Our goal is to establish healthy school habits as soon as school is introduced. Therefore, it is important that your child attends school regularly. Murfreesboro City Schools, in partnership with the Tennessee Department of Education, has adopted a Pre-K attendance policy.

All students are expected to attend school each day. If you must take your child out of school for any length of time, please notify the school office and the classroom teacher. A written note is required stating the reason for the absence.

Absenteeism is defined as an absence for an entire school day, major portion of the school day, or the major portion of any class, study hall, or activity during the school day for which the student is scheduled. Students who are late to school or who leave early also miss part of the instructional day.

Excused Absences:

The following are acceptable reasons for excused absences:

1. Personal illness or injury;
2. Ongoing health related ailments which temporarily prevent attendance;
3. Communicable disease (virus or flu);
4. Religious observances;
5. Death in the family;
6. Limited medical/dental/therapy appointments.

Required Procedures:

1. Please communicate with your child's teacher when your child is absent and send in a written note stating the reason for the absence.
2. Students who have four (4) or more unexcused absences within one (1) month shall be reported to the site-level administrator who will, in turn, contact the parent(s) / guardian(s) of the student and determine the child's participation status in the program. The site-level administrator shall document all communication attempts to contact the parent(s). At five (5) unexcused absences, progressive absenteeism intervention will be implemented.
3. Students who have five (5) or more unexcused absences in a (3) month period shall be reported to the site-level administrator who will, in turn, contact the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student and develop an attendance plan with the help of the parent(s)/guardian(s) and other appropriate school personnel. The attendance plan shall:
 - i. Identify the reasons for the absences

- ii. Include a specific plan and date for establishing regular attendance or alternative services that meet the student's educational goals; and
- iii. Include documentation of services and student outcomes to determine the effectiveness of the attendance plan.

Students absent five (5) days or more within one month or ten (10) days in one (1) year without adequate excuse may be terminated from the program. The site level administrator shall submit dismissal documentation to the Department of Education's Voluntary Pre-k director for approval. The district shall not dismiss a student without first implementing an attendance plan unless there are extraordinary circumstances approved by the state Voluntary Pre-K director. The student may re-enter the program after a 30-day waiting period and a parent conference if there are any available vacancies.

School Principals:

Robin Newell, MCS PreK Program Administrator/Principal at Cason Lane PreK and Mitchell-Neilson Primary
Adam Bryson, Principal Mitchell Neilson Schools
Melinda Crook, Assistant Principal at Mitchell-Neilson Primary School
Dr. Christy Robinson, Principal John Pittard Elementary
Tiffany Strevel, Principal Black Fox Elementary

Parent Orientation

A parent orientation meeting will be held at the beginning of the school year to provide an overview of the PreK Program and ensure all registration packets are completed and required documents are received. Your child's school and classroom teacher can help you with questions regarding registration. The classroom meeting will also include:

- Curriculum
- Class Schedule
- Arrival / Dismissal
- Meals / Snacks
- Classroom Communication
- Health Precautions
- School / Classroom Policies & Procedures

Policies and Procedures

Dress Code

For safety reasons, tennis shoes are preferred. The footwear should not be flip-flops, dress shoes, or sandals. Clothing should be comfortable for active play and learning. Children are encouraged to wear clothing they can manage as independently as possible during toileting. If your child needs assistance because of a disability, developmental need, medical condition, or emerging toileting skills, please contact the teacher so appropriate supports can be arranged.

- **Unacceptable attire** includes spaghetti straps, halter tops, noticeably short skirts, or shorts (length of clothing should be to one's fingertips – shorts should be worn under skirts), inappropriate logos, clothing that exposes stomach, chest, or back.
- Your child will always need a complete change of clothes (shirt, pants, underwear, and socks) in the classroom. Please label your child's belongings to help ensure all items are returned to the correct child. Dirty clothes will be placed in a bag inside the backpack. Please return a clean complete set of clothes the next day. Remember, these clothes need to follow our school dress code guidelines.
- We will go outside (in suitable weather) if the temperature is between 32 and 90 degrees. Please make sure your child is properly dressed for this activity.
- Reasonable exceptions will be made for disability-related, medical, religious, cultural, or other legally protected needs.

Toileting

MCS recognizes that children develop toileting skills at different rates. Toileting independence is not, by itself, a requirement for enrollment or continued participation in the Pre-K program. Families should inform the teacher of any toileting concerns so that the family and school can develop appropriate and respectful supports.

Toileting assistance will be provided based on the child's individual developmental, disability-related, and health needs and in accordance with applicable district procedures. When necessary, families may be asked to provide diapers, pull-ups, wipes, or other individualized toileting supplies. A child will not be excluded, disciplined, shamed, or denied participation because of toileting accidents or a need for reasonable toileting assistance.

When a child's toileting needs may be related to a disability or developmental delay, MCS will consider whether a referral under its Child Find procedures, an evaluation, an IEP, a Section 504 plan, an individualized health plan, or other reasonable modifications may be appropriate.

Arrival/Dismissal

Children must be signed in/out daily. An adult (18 and older) is required to sign your child in/out daily. PreK students are not allowed to enter/exit the building without an adult. Extended School Program (ESP) staff will sign in/out students enrolled in ESP. Your classroom teacher will discuss school specific arrival/dismissal information with you prior to the first day of school. Children who are late will be required to receive a tardy slip from the office.

All students **MUST** be picked up on time. Per Board policy, students will not be released to friends, grandparents, or other family members unless we receive specific written permission from legal guardian or parents, unless they are on the Pre-K emergency pick-up list.

Meals and Snacks

Meals will be made available in accordance with the Murfreesboro City Schools nutrition program. Families will receive information concerning meal eligibility, meal-account

procedures, and any lawful meal charges through the school or district nutrition program. Families may send a meal from home, subject to classroom allergy and safety procedures.

All dietary restrictions, food allergies, feeding concerns, and disability-related dietary needs should be communicated to the child's teacher and school nurse. MCS will provide reasonable modifications and follow applicable health plans, IEPs, and Section 504 plans.

Classroom Supplies

Families of children enrolled in state-funded VPK seats will not be required or requested to provide classroom supplies, snacks, fundraiser contributions, field-trip fees, or other program fees prohibited by Tennessee VPK requirements.

Families of children enrolled in tuition-supported IPK peer-model seats may receive requests or information specifically applicable to the IPK program. Any such request will be clearly identified as applying to IPK and not to state-funded VPK participation.

Only students with special needs who are not toilet trained need to provide diapers/pull-ups.

Your child will also need a backpack large enough to place a change of clothes and take-home folder inside.

Illness Guidelines

To support a healthy school environment, students who are sick should stay home. If symptoms develop during the school day, the student will be evaluated by the school nurse. If the nurse determines that the student should go home, a parent or emergency contact must pick up the student within one hour. The clinic cannot provide extended care for ill students.

Students should remain home for at least 24 hours unless cleared to return earlier by a medical provider. Written medical documentation is required for a student to return before the 24-hour period has ended.

SYMPTOM OR ILLNESS	STUDENT SHOULD NOT ATTEND SCHOOL WHEN:	STUDENT MAY ATTEND OR RETURN WHEN:
Chickenpox (Varicella)	The student has an itchy rash with small, fluid-filled blisters.	All lesions are scabbed and dry, there are no new lesions, and the student has been fever-free without medication for 24 hours.
Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)	The eye appears infected, with matted eyelashes or drainage.	The student has written documentation from a medical provider and/or has completed 24 hours of eye treatment.
Cough	The student has a frequent, disruptive, or uncontrollable cough.	The cough is no longer disruptive to the classroom setting and the student has no other symptoms.

SYMPTOM OR ILLNESS	STUDENT SHOULD NOT ATTEND SCHOOL WHEN:	STUDENT MAY ATTEND OR RETURN WHEN:
COVID-19	The student has a positive COVID-19 result, a medical provider's diagnosis of COVID-19, or a fever.	Symptoms are improving overall and the student has been fever-free without fever-reducing medication for 24 hours.
Diarrhea or Vomiting	The student has experienced two or more episodes of diarrhea or one episode of vomiting.	The student has been free from diarrhea and vomiting without medication for 24 hours.
Fever	The student has a body temperature above 100.4°F.	The fever has resolved without fever-reducing medication for 24 hours.
Flu	The student has a positive flu test or a medical provider's diagnosis of flu.	Symptoms are improving or a medical provider's note identifies a return date, and the student has been fever-free without medication for 24 hours.
Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease	The student has open or draining blisters or sores on the hands, feet, or mouth; uncontrolled drooling associated with mouth sores; or a fever above 100.4°F.	Blisters and sores are free from drainage or the student has a written release from a medical provider, and the student has been fever-free without medication for 24 hours.
Pediculosis (Head Lice)	Live lice are present on the scalp or body.	Proof of treatment has been provided and the school nurse has confirmed that the student is lice-free.
Rash or Skin Infection	The student has an illness involving a rash or signs of a skin infection that has not been diagnosed by a medical provider.	The rash is improving or the student has a written release from a medical provider.

Staff, volunteers, and children will follow proper handwashing practices to reduce the spread of illness. Students will wash their hands at appropriate times, including after toileting and before meals.

Administration of medication at school will follow Murfreesboro City Schools policies and procedures. The school nurse will provide all required medication forms and instructions. Parents and guardians should contact the school nurse regarding medication, allergies, chronic health conditions, individualized health plans, or other health concerns.

Parent-Teacher Conferences and Communication

During the school year, teachers will have two conferences to meet individually with parents/guardians of each child. Conferences are scheduled in the fall and spring. Written progress reports are also provided during the school year as well. Parents/guardians may request additional conferences if the need arises. You may communicate any questions or

concerns you have with the teacher through email or telephone. Parents who wish to contact their child's teacher should call the school office and leave a message. The teacher will return the call as soon as possible. (Teachers will not receive calls during the instructional day unless it is an emergency.)

Students will have a "take home" folder, and parents will receive daily communication about their child's day from classroom teachers. Parents and teachers can use this folder to communicate needs or concerns. Any changes in telephone numbers, address, emergency contact information, etc. should be communicated with the classroom teacher as soon as possible.

Teachers may also communicate with families through Class Dojo, school website, school Facebook page, or newsletters.

Transportation

Transportation is provided when a child's IEP team determines that transportation is required as a related service. Transportation needs, supports, equipment, and safety procedures will be addressed through the IEP process.

When MCS transportation is provided, Pre-K children will be transferred directly between authorized adults. A parent, guardian, or other authorized adult must be present at the designated location and time unless an alternative arrangement has been expressly approved by MCS. Transportation staff and school personnel responsible for receiving or releasing children will follow district identification, authorization, and sign-in/sign-out procedures.

Extended School Program (ESP)

ESP will be available for students 4 years and older in the morning and in the afternoon. ESP will not be provided during school hours. Please contact the school's ESP office for additional information.

Behavior Management and Discipline

One of the primary objectives of Pre-K is to support the social and emotional development of every child. The overall goal of any behavioral intervention is to help children manage their own emotions and behavior. Positive behavioral interventions and supports will be utilized by classroom teacher, such as modeling, encouraging expected behavior, redirection, establishing clear and consistent expectations and teaching expectations, implementing preventative strategies, and teaching replacement skills for unacceptable or harmful behavior. MCS will use a multi-tiered intervention system to allow all children to develop healthy social, emotional, and behavioral skills. Discipline will not be related to food, rest, or toileting. **The use of physical or corporal punishment is never permitted.**

When a child displays repeated unsafe or significantly challenging behavior, MCS will develop and document an individualized restorative discipline intervention plan in collaboration with the family and appropriate school personnel. The plan will identify the behavior of concern,

possible contributing factors, prevention strategies, skills to be taught, adult responses, and methods for monitoring progress.

MCS will also consider whether:

- The child may have a disability or developmental delay requiring a Child Find referral;
- An evaluation or reevaluation is appropriate;
- The child's IEP, Section 504 plan, health plan, or existing supports should be reviewed; or,
- Additional related services, behavioral supports, or reasonable modifications are needed.

Suspension, exclusion, shortened days, and other removals will be used only in compliance with applicable law and district policy. A child's schedule will not be informally shortened because of behavior. When MCS seeks a behavior-based modified schedule or permanent dismissal, it will complete the required interventions and documentation and obtain any review or approval required by the Tennessee Department of Education.

For a child with an IEP, any proposed change in placement or services must be considered by the IEP team in accordance with the IDEA. The team will determine the placement, services, supports, and behavioral interventions necessary for the child to receive a free appropriate public education.

Withdrawal and Dismissal

Participation in the Pre-K program is voluntary, and a parent or guardian may withdraw a child at any time by notifying the school. A school-initiated withdrawal, behavior-based schedule modification, or dismissal is not automatic. Before pursuing such action, MCS will:

1. Communicate and collaborate with the child's family;
2. Identify the reasons for the attendance or behavioral concern;
3. Implement and document required restorative interventions;
4. Consider the child's developmental, disability-related, health, and family circumstances;
5. Consider whether a Child Find referral, evaluation, IEP meeting, Section 504 review, or reasonable modification is needed; and
6. Submit required documentation to the Tennessee Department of Education and complete any required review process.

A child receiving services through an IEP will not be removed from the child's program or have the child's placement or services materially changed unless the IEP team convenes and determines an appropriate placement and services in accordance with the IDEA.

Nothing in this section limits MCS's ability to take immediate, temporary action necessary to respond to an imminent and serious safety threat. Any temporary removal will be limited to what is necessary, documented, and followed promptly by family communication, appropriate intervention planning, and compliance with applicable disability and disciplinary protections.

Tobacco-Free Schools

All uses of tobacco and tobacco products, including smokeless tobacco, electronic cigarettes, and personal vaporizers are prohibited in all school district buildings. District employees will not be permitted to use tobacco or tobacco products, including smokeless tobacco, while they are participating in any class or activity in which they represent the school district. Signs will be posted throughout district facilities to notify students, employees and all other persons visiting the school that the use of tobacco and tobacco products is forbidden.

IPK Tuition Payment

Tuition is required for families of students enrolled as peer models in the IPK program. The current tuition rate is \$300 per month and is determined annually by the Special Education Department. Monthly payments are due by the first of each month and may be submitted directly to the child's assigned school. MCS Employees who have children enrolled in the IPK program may elect to have tuition payments deducted from their salary.

In the event a tuition payment is not received by the due date, the family will be issued a written notice of nonpayment. The outstanding balance must be paid in full by the following scheduled due date. Failure to resolve the balance by that time will result in the student's withdrawal from the program, and the vacancy may be offered to a child on the waiting list. Families who require additional time to make payment may submit a written request for a deadline extension. One-month extensions may be approved by the Special Education Director. Any request resulting in over one month of unpaid tuition must receive joint approval from the Special Education Director and the Director of Finance.

Child Find and Disability Services

Pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and Board Policy 4.202, Murfreesboro City Schools has an ongoing obligation to identify, locate, and evaluate children who may have disabilities and need special education or related services. This responsibility is commonly referred to as "Child Find."

If a parent, guardian, teacher, or other person suspects that a child may have a disability or developmental delay, a referral may be made to the MCS Special Education Department or the child's school. Concerns may involve communication, learning, social-emotional development, behavior, mobility, motor development, hearing, vision, health, adaptive functioning, or another area of development.

After receiving a referral, MCS will respond and proceed in accordance with applicable evaluation timelines and procedural requirements. A referral does not automatically mean that a child has a disability or will receive special education services. Eligibility and needed services are determined through an individualized evaluation and team process.

Children with disabilities may be protected by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act. MCS will provide

eligible children with appropriate services, supports, and reasonable modifications and will not discriminate based on disability in enrollment, attendance, toileting, discipline, transportation, or participation in program activities.

Parents may contact the child's school or the MCS Special Education Department for information about referrals, evaluations, procedural safeguards, IEPs, Section 504 plans, or related services.

Non-Discrimination Statement

Murfreesboro City Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, creed, pregnancy, genetic information, veteran status, or any other basis protected by applicable federal or state law in the provision of services, programs, or activities, or in employment opportunities or benefits. For purposes of District policies and procedures, and consistent with State law, references to a person's sex or gender are defined as the immutable characteristics of the person's reproductive system that identify the person as male or female, as determined by anatomy and genetics existing at the time of birth. Nothing in this notice shall be interpreted to require or permit the District to violate federal law. The District provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in educational programs. Translation services are available at each school and at the Central Office.

Inquiries concerning Title VI or Title IX of the Civil Rights Acts should be directed to Dr. Maria Johnson or Ken Rocha at 615-893-2313. Inquiries concerning Section 504 and IDEA should be directed to Angela Fairchild at 615-893-2313. Inquiries concerning the Americans with Disabilities Act should be directed to Dr. Maria Johnson at 615-893-2313.

USDA Non-Discrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and USDA civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the State or local Agency that administers the program or contact USDA through the Telecommunications Relay Service at 711 (voice and TTY). Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and

at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

Mail:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Mail Stop 9410
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

Fax:

(202) 690-7442; or

E-mail:

program.intake@usda.gov

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