

MURRAY AVENUE SCHOOL



2016-2017

PARENT / STUDENT HANDBOOK

**WWW.MAMKSCHOOLS.ORG/MURRAY
WWW.MAMKSCHOOLSPTA.ORG/MURRAY**

THE MURRAY AVENUE SCHOOL PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

is designed to give you general information about the programs, policies and guidelines at Murray Avenue School as well as in the Mamaroneck Union Free School District. We hope you will find the information helpful as you go through the school year. Every effort is made to keep this resource up-to-date and accurate. Should you find any discrepancies, please contact Courtney Steinberg, Murray PTA Secretary, at cpf20@aol.com.

MAMARONECK UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT GOALS

- Promote intellectual engagement and an appreciation of learning as an inherently rewarding activity.
- Prepare students to function as responsible citizens.
- Prepare students to live in a multicultural world.

WHAT WE EXPECT FROM OUR STUDENTS

- Arrive on time.
- Exhibit appropriate language and behavior at all times.
- Show respect for and sensitivity to the needs and feelings of others.
- Show respect for learning.
- Show respect for our environment.
- Act in ways that promote safety for themselves and others.

MAMARONECK UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

1000 West Boston Post Road, Mamaroneck, NY 10543

Robert I. Shaps, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

*Tel 914 220-3005 *Fax 914 220-3010
rshaps@mamkschools.org



August, 2016

Dear Murray Avenue School Parents:

On behalf of the Mamaroneck Board of Education, faculty and staff, it is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the 2016-2017 school year. As your Superintendent of Schools, I am extremely excited to be part of the Mamaroneck school community.

This handbook provides you with a great deal of vital information pertaining to your child's school and the District. Please read it over carefully and feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

Effective communication between parents and the school district is critical to the academic and social success of every child. When questions and concerns arise throughout the year, they should be addressed promptly and thoroughly to avoid unnecessary situations. Take the following steps, in the order listed, to ensure that problems get resolved appropriately:

1. To the extent possible, have a conversation with your child and empower your child to be able to handle it.
2. E-mail or speak to your child's teacher
3. Speak to the school's principal or assistant principal
4. Speak with the assistant superintendent most directly involved in overseeing the particular issue and then me, the superintendent

I know our teachers at Murray Avenue School are committed to providing as many opportunities as possible for effective communication to take place between home and school, and they will work closely with you to help create the most positive learning experience possible for your child. It is my goal to provide as many opportunities as possible for effective communication to take place between the home and the school. Please work closely with your child's teachers in order to help create the most positive learning experience possible for your child.

It is extremely important that we are able to effectively communicate with you in the event of an emergency. We appreciate your support in making sure that all of our emergency contact information is current.

Communications is an important factor in helping you to have confidence and pride in our schools. We look forward to joining you as your partner as we work together in the weeks and months ahead to benefit your child and provide him/her with the highest quality educational programs possible.

Sincerely,

Robert I Shaps
Superintendent of Schools

MURRAY AVENUE SCHOOL

Jennifer Monaco, Principal
Colleen Melnyk, Assistant Principal

Mamaroneck Schools

250 Murray Avenue
Larchmont, NY 10538 914-220-3701



September 2016

Dear Parents,

Welcome to The Murray Avenue School and a new school year. At Murray, we value the partnership between school and home. We encourage you to become involved with your children's education so that you and your children's teacher can become partners and work together to support your children as they learn to take risks and become capable, independent, responsible, and confident young people. The happy and nurturing environment that exists here is an excellent atmosphere in which your children will learn and grow.

We hope the *Murray Avenue School Handbook* will give you basic information about our school and procedures. We encourage you to give us your ideas and suggestions about ways to make it more useful.

Thank you for your trust, your interest and your support. We all look forward to a wonderful year!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jennifer Monaco". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a clear loop at the end of the name.

Jennifer Monaco
Principal

MAMARONECK UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

SERVING LARCHMONT AND MAMARONECK

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Murray Avenue School
250 Murray Avenue
Larchmont, New York 10538

Jennifer Monaco – Principal
Colleen Melnyk - Assistant Principal

Main Office: 220-3701
Office Staff: Deborah Garriola & **Sue Valenti**
Greeter: Lynne Leone

To report absences: 220-3250 (District Office)
Murray Ave School Nurse: 220-3710

District Website: www.mamkschools.org
Murray Avenue School Website: murray.mamkschools.org
Murray Avenue PTA website: www.mamkschoolspta.org/murray

District Offices: 220-3000
Emergency closings, dismissals or delays: Check district website
(www.mamkschools.org) or call 220-EMER (220-3637)
Board of Education: board@mamkschools.org

FACULTY AND STAFF

Kindergarten

L. Finn
D. Geertgens
J. Opas
C. Mozian
R. Spano
L. Santavicca

Grade 1

A. Cerbone
D. DeLaurentis
C. Dizenzo
B. Nolan
K. Papa
L. McShea
L. Cipolla/J. Scotto

Grade 2

T. Cirolia
L. Geertgens
A. Vieira
A. Goldenberg

Grade 3

S. Alexander
J. Jacobsen/E. Dillon
A. Grippo
B. Mannion
M. Montone
A. Occhiogrosso

Grade 4

M. Arminio
K. Brennan
K. Harris
M. Lipton
C. Moroney

Grade 5

G. Brune
T. Dolan
A. Elkins
M. O'Connell
E. Rivel

Art

A. Stone

Clerical

D. Garriola - office
S. Valenti – office
E. Mandracchia - Library

Custodians

R. Sejko, Head
D. Micalizzi
R. Mingoa
M. Mauricio

ESL

P. Griffin

Greeter

Lynne Leone

Library/Media

P. Tanenbaum

Math

S. Feinberg

Music

J. Brady, General
Music/Chorus
A. Hewitt/
Orchestra
A. Rosen, Orchestra
I. Robinson/D. Melzer, Band

Nurse:

B. Ball

Physical Education

C. Butler
K. Dwyer
K. Zenie

Psychologist

D. Lepofsky

Reading

K. Hartman
L. DeLasho

Speech

M. Pinkas

Special Education

S. Radasch
B. Davis
E. Murray
M. Pietropaolo
J. Minerva
L. Wechsler

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SCHOOL POLICIES/PROCEDURES

DAILY SCHOOL SCHEDULE

8:40 a.m.	Start of the school day
11:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.	Grade 5 Lunch/Recess
11:45 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.	Kindergarten and Grade 3 Lunch/Recess
12:15 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.	Grade 1 Lunch/Recess
12:45 p.m. - 1:45 pm	Grade 2 and Grade 4 Lunch/Recess
3:00 p.m.	Dismissal

ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

A letter outlining each grade's arrival location is sent out in August. The general arrival procedures are as follows:

Kindergarten

- First three days of school—Parents and Students may come into the building at 8:30 a.m. and wait outside the classroom. Supervision by an aide will begin at 8:30 a.m.
- September-June—All kindergarten students will walk into the building on their own and wait outside their classroom. Supervision by an aide will begin at 8:30 a.m.
- On inclement weather days, students will carry out the same procedure.
- If a student has special needs or is having difficulty separating, special accommodations will be made. The parent should contact the classroom teacher.
- Students who are not in the classroom by 8:45 a.m. will be marked late.

Grades 1-5

- First Day of School – Parents and Students may come into the building at 8:30 a.m.
- The remainder of year, students will go to their designated line-up spot on the small playground (Grades 1 & 2) or large playground (Grades 3,4 & 5) and remain there until the teacher picks them up at 8:40 a.m.
- Parents are welcome to remain with their child, however, please note that this time on the playground is not a recess/play time for the children but rather a social opportunity.
- At 8:30 a.m., the aides will blow the whistle twice; the first whistle requires students to “freeze in their spot”, and the second whistle indicates that students should stop playing and begin to line up.
- At 8:35 a.m., the aides will blow the whistle once indicating that everyone should be at their line up spot.
- At 8:40 a.m., the classroom teacher will proceed with the class to the classroom. Parents who are still on the playground should say goodbye to their child at this time.

On inclement weather days, parents should say goodbye outside the building, and students will go to the following assigned places:

First Grade: to the lunchroom and sit at their assigned table. The teacher will pick up their class from the lunchroom.

Second Grade: to the small gym and sit at their assigned location. The teacher will pick up their class from the small gym.

Third Grade: to the lunchroom and sit at their assigned table. The teacher will pick up their class from the lunchroom.

Fourth and Fifth Grade: students will walk to a specific waiting area. Students will proceed on their own to their classroom after the bell rings.

Students who are not on the line when reaching the classroom will be marked late.

Please Note: In the event of severe weather (e.g., snow storm, ice storm, torrential rain, thunder & lightning), an orange/black flag will be placed outside the school at the main entrance (Murray Avenue), the stairs leading to the 1st grade playground, Daymon Terrace, and the exit door closest to the large playground alerting parents/caregivers that inclement weather day procedures should be followed.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance and punctuality are as important in kindergarten as they are in fifth grade. Teachers have planned programs, and if children are to get the most out of these programs, they should attend school regularly and be on time.

Absences

The New York State Education Law requires a written excuse for every absence. Absences from school fall into two categories: legal and illegal. The only reasons for legal absences are personal illness, illness or death in the family, quarantine, required presence in court, impassable roads, or other educational instruction. Absences for all other reasons are illegal. As you may know, state money is paid to a school district on the basis of pupils' daily attendance.

If your child is to be absent for any reason, please use the following procedures:

- Notify the district attendance office before 8:45 a.m. at 220-3250 (this number has an answering machine so you can call at any time) or via the district website, www.mamkschools.org.
- If your child is absent he/she must, on his/her return to school, bring a written excuse from the parent to the teacher stating the reason for his/her absence, e.g., "Jack was absent the week of September 20 because (state reason)."

- Absences caused by a communicable disease such as chicken pox, strep infection, etc. must be reported to the school nurse as soon as a diagnosis is made. The school nurse can be reached at 220-3710.

If your child is sick and needs to be taken home, his/her parent or designee must sign out the child in the Main Office.

If your child needs to be taken out of school at any time during the day, his/her parent or designee must sign out the child in the Main Office. Upon returning to school, parents/caregivers are required to sign the child back into school.

Lateness

Teaching children the importance of promptness sets a lifelong pattern of timeliness.

Children who arrive late:

- Miss the social, chatty moments that weave a fabric of relationships and friendships.
- Miss the time, in some classes, to choose an activity for the first part of the morning.
- Miss some important instructions that let them know what to do or what to expect.
- **Miss academic work.**
- Disrupt the class, causing them to feel awkward.

It is very important that children arrive promptly and are at their designated line-up spot for teacher pick up. Children who arrive late (after 8:45 a.m.) have missed a very important part of the day. Being late for school can also be hard for children with separation anxiety.

Children who arrive after 9:15 a.m. must have their parent or caregiver report to the nurse's office to have their attendance recorded. This is to ensure that all children are accounted for and, in case of emergency, that their presence has been officially recorded.

Please ensure your children get to school on time. They deserve a full day of school. A child who is routinely 10 minutes late misses the equivalent of five full days over the course of the year.

BEHAVIOR

The district expects the following behavior from both staff and students:

- Arrive on time.
- Exhibit appropriate language and behavior at all times.
- Show respect and sensitivity to the needs and feelings of others.
- Show respect for learning.
- Show respect for our environment.
- Act in ways that promote safety for themselves and others.

Behavior inconsistent with these expectations may result in disciplinary action from the appropriate party (teacher, assistant principal, principal or superintendent).

BICYCLES

According to the Board of Education policy, no child below fourth grade may ride and/or park a bicycle on school grounds during school hours. New York State law requires all bicycle riders under the age of 14 to wear a helmet.

Bicycles parked on school grounds are the owner's responsibility. The school regrets that it cannot be responsible for missing property. All bicycles should be locked to the bike racks. Bike racks are located on the sidewalk on Daymon Terrace near the kindergarten playground.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Birthdays may be celebrated in your child's classroom by talking with his/her teacher to arrange an appropriate time to bring in a special snack.

Building and maintaining an inclusive community is an important commitment for all of us. Therefore, home birthday celebrations should be handled outside of school, in a way that is sensitive to the feelings of all children. Birthday invitations and presents should not be handed out at school. In addition, due to fire regulations, students' cubbies may not be decorated for birthdays.

BULLYING

Our school is committed to providing a supportive learning environment in which children feel safe from all forms of bullying behavior. The school encourages students who believe that they have been subject to bullying to bring it to the attention of the Assistant Principal, Principal or another adult in the school.

CELL PHONE/TELEPHONE USAGE

Cell phones must be turned off during the school day. Telephones in the classrooms and the Main Office are available for students to use to contact parents or caregivers when necessary.

CHILD CARE - CHILDREN'S CORNER – Before -and-After School

Children from Murray, along with children from other Mamaroneck elementary schools, are eligible to participate in Children's Corner, a before-and after-school child care program. Children's Corner (834-0022) is a non-profit program separate from the school system. The before-school program is located at Murray; the after-school program is located at Hommocks Middle School. Children have opportunities for active and quiet, indoor and outdoor, independent and small group play.

Activities include art, reading, doing homework, homework help, cooking, sports, games and special events. The following hours are available:

- Before school from 7:40 a.m. to 8:40 a.m. Quiet games and projects are provided, as well as homework help. This is located at Murray for Murray students.
- Monday through Friday from 3:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Children are bused from Murray to the program at Hommocks.
- The program is also open on conference days, half days and some holidays.

- Children's Corner is not open in the event of an emergency or early dismissal.

CLASS VISITS

Parents should not make deliveries to a classroom or consult with the teacher when school is in session, without checking with the greeter or office staff and following security procedures. This will minimize interruptions in the classroom. If parents need to contact a teacher, they should leave a message in the office and the teacher will respond as soon as possible. Parents may communicate with the teacher using e-mail. All district faculty members have e-mail addresses in the district's network. There is a list of staff e-mail addresses in the school directory and on the district's webpage. It is advisable to check with each teacher how regularly he/she checks e-mail.

DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

A letter outlining each class's dismissal location is sent out in August. The general dismissal procedures are as follows:

All grades will be dismissed from an outside location or from a specific exterior door, rain or shine. K-2 students will not be dismissed without the teacher making a physical connection to a parent, sitter or sibling. In order to foster independence of our second graders, this will shift mid-year. If a second grade parent would like a physical connection to continue to be made after mid-year, parents can make those arrangements with their child's teacher.

Older siblings will walk outside the building to meet their younger siblings, EXCEPT students in grades 1 and 2 who have a younger sibling in kindergarten. Those students will be dismissed by their classroom teacher and permitted to walk through the building to their sibling's kindergarten classroom where they will meet their sibling.

- Students who attend after school clubs will be dismissed to the auditorium where they will be supervised. At 3:10 p.m., the official start time of clubs, the club instructors will pick up their group from the auditorium. Students will sit in the auditorium, organized by club.
- Students who attend Children's Corner will be dismissed by their classroom teacher and will walk through the building to their meeting location.
- Parents are responsible for picking up their child and the friend for a play date. Parents of students in K-2 MUST give a note to their child's teacher in the morning with information about the play date. Play date information should NOT be e-mailed to the teacher and should NOT be called into the office.
- Students in grades K-2 who are not picked up by 3:05 p.m. will be brought to the office.
- In the event of severe weather (e.g., snow storm, ice storm, torrential rain, thunder & lightning), an orange/black flag will be placed outside the school at the main entrance (Murray Avenue), the stairs leading to the first grade playground, Daymon Terrace, and the exit door closest to the large playground alerting parents/caregivers to the change in dismissal.

Door Policy

To ensure a safe school environment for our children, access into the school building is limited and restricted before, during and after school. The following door policy is strictly enforced.

The Main Office door located on Murray Avenue is the only door that will be open all day.

All early arrivals (Children's Corner and our musicians) enter through the Main Office door.

All doors, except the Main Office door, will be locked.

To enter, all visitors must be buzzed in the main entrance and leave a photo ID with the greeter at the welcome desk in order to be admitted to the school.

Handicap parking is located on Daymon Terrace, adjacent to the access ramp near the Kindergarten playground. If access to the building is required during the school day when doors are locked, use the buzzer and our receptionist will assist you.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Parents are asked to update all emergency contact information through the parent portal on the district webpage, and supply all the information necessary in the event of emergency early dismissals, or illness or injuries sustained during the school day, i.e., parents' work and cell phone numbers and designated individuals responsible for your child in your absence.

The Emergency Contact Information is kept in the school nurse's office in the event that your child becomes ill or is injured during the day. When filling out designated individuals who may be called, please be aware that those listed may have to make medical decisions about your child in your absence. It is extremely important to update your emergency contact information prior to the first day of school.

GIFT-GIVING GUIDELINES

In lieu of individual teacher gifts, PTA Room Representatives collect contributions for class gifts: for the December holidays and the end of the year. The suggested donations are: for teachers, \$10 for each gift (\$20 for the year) and for aides, \$5 for each gift (\$10 for the year). All donations up to the suggested amount are welcome and completely optional, although individual gifts are discouraged. Regardless of who contributes to the class gift, the card accompanying the gift will include the names of all the children in the class.

HEAD LICE PREVENTION

Murray Avenue School follows the school district's policy on nits and lice, which can be found on the district's website at www.mamkschools.org. According to that policy, students initially found to have nits or live lice in their hair/scalp (who do not have proof of recent treatment) will be sent home until treatment is provided. The child's family will be given an exposure notice that contains written instructions from the school district regarding head lice. In addition, parents of all children in the child's class will receive an exposure notice, and the school will encourage the family of the child found to have nits or lice to notify families who may have been exposed to the nits/lice. A child found to have nits or live lice is allowed to return to school after he/she has been shampooed with a

pediculicide. Children whose parents choose not to use a pediculicide may not return to school with nits in their hair. Under the school district's policy, students with recent lice infestation are to be examined by the school nurse 14 days after return to school, and periodically thereafter. Children with nits in their hair may be periodically reinspected for live lice by the school nurse.

Parents are encouraged to regularly check their own children's hair for nits and lice throughout the school year. If they find nits or lice, they should inform the school nurse at 220-3710 and provide the names of siblings/siblings' teachers, as well as the method of treatment.

LOST AND FOUND

It is recommended that children come to school with names sewn or marked in all of their personal belongings. This includes all clothing, coats, sneakers, boots, backpacks and lunch boxes. The PTA, with the help of the school's custodial staff, and MHS Transitional Academy students, maintains labeled and sorted Lost and Found bins and hanging racks in the basement of the school. Children and parents are encouraged to check these boxes frequently for any articles of clothing or other personal items lost by the children. At the end of the year, after providing notification in Tiger Talk, unclaimed items in the Lost and Found are donated to an appropriate charity.

LUNCH PROCEDURES

Lunchtime is scheduled as follows:

11:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.	Grade 5 Lunch/Recess
11:45 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.	Kindergarten and Grade 3 Lunch/Recess
12:15 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.	Grade 1 Lunch/Recess
12:45 p.m. - 1:45 pm	Grade 2 and Grade 4 Lunch/Recess

During lunchtime, each respective grade eats lunch and has recess together. Each K-5 class is assigned a set of tables in the lunchroom.

A. Guidelines for students having lunch at school

- It is the responsibility of parents to provide lunch for their children each day.
- If students forget or lose their lunch, they can get a lunch through the lunch program.
- If children eat lunch in school, they must remain on school grounds for the entire lunch hour.
- Children are permitted to go out at lunchtime with a parent or caregiver, and must inform their teacher if they are leaving school grounds. Children must be signed out at the greeter's desk. Upon return, children must be signed in.
- During recess, each grade uses their respective playgrounds:
 - Kindergartners have their own playground on Daymon Terrace that has equipment and games appropriate for their age.
 - First and second grade children use the playground on the corner of Murray Avenue & Forest Avenue.
 - Third, fourth and fifth grade children use the playground bordered by Daymon Terrace, Colonial Avenue and Murray Avenue.

- On days of inclement weather, students remain in the school building for Lunchtime Activities.

B. Role of Teacher Aides

- Each grade is supervised by a number of Teacher Aides who remain with them for the entire lunch period.
- Please discuss the importance of the aides' role with your child. Children should know that the aides are there to help and that they must be respectful of the aides' decisions at all times.

LUNCH PROGRAM

An outside vendor is hired by the district to provide lunch meals which are healthy and affordable. There is a charge of \$2.70 for lunch. To pay for these meals, you may forward a check made out to Mamaroneck Union Free School District to the school with your student's name indicated in the memo section. If you wish, you may also go to www.mynutrikids.com and sign up to pay for your student's meals online. Each student has an identification number to access the account. In the event that there is a balance due, a letter will be sent to the parent requesting reimbursement. Every effort should be made to prepay for your student's meals.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarships are available for PTA and school-sponsored events, including but not limited to after-school clubs and class trips. Please contact Principal Jennifer Monaco for more information. All inquiries and requests are kept confidential.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Our school district is committed to providing a learning and work environment free from all forms of sexual harassment or intimidation. It is our policy to encourage students who feel they have been subject to sexual harassment by adults or other students to bring this to the attention of the Assistant Principal, Principal or to another adult in the school. All complaints will be kept confidential.

SKATEBOARDS, SCOOTERS, DOGS

Please note that for the safety of all concerned, and for the protection of school property, skate boards, scooters and dogs are not allowed in the building or on school grounds. This is district policy and is enforced at all of the six school buildings.

SMOKING/ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONSUMPTION

New York State law forbids smoking or drinking of alcoholic beverages in school buildings and on school grounds.

SNACK

All grades have a snack time at some point in the day. It is the responsibility of the parent/caregiver to provide a snack for his/her child. Healthful snacks are suggested, e.g., fruit, vegetables, yogurt, cheese and a drink. Individual teachers will provide guidelines for handling daily snack—this practice may be different for kindergarten classes. Teachers will communicate with parents if there are any specific food allergies that require restrictions.

TESTING

New York State conducts regularly scheduled testing in third, fourth and fifth grade. More information on testing is found in the “Grade Overview” sections of this Handbook. At test time, make sure your child gets a good night’s sleep and has a good breakfast. Please do not schedule any appointments for your child during the school day at that time. Results of New York State tests are mailed directly to parents. Notice of testing dates is sent home to parents ahead of time; dates are also listed in the District Calendar.

TRAFFIC AND SAFETY GUIDELINES

Safety is a major concern around Murray Avenue School. Therefore, in conjunction with the Town of Mamaroneck Police Department, the following guidelines have been developed to help ensure the safety and well-being of our children:

- When driving around Murray, USE EXTRA CAUTION. The car traffic is very congested and there are many walkers. Drive slowly, never use cell phones, and pull in and out of parking spaces carefully.
- Always follow the parking sign rules. These signs are not random; they were put there to ensure the safety of our children. Make sure anyone who drives your children heeds them.
- **Never double park. Never let your child out in the middle of the road. These actions put your child in danger.**
- Use Daymon Terrace Drop-Off in the mornings. Families are encouraged to take advantage of this safe, organized way to drop your child off at school. (See also p. 43)
- Families are encouraged to walk to and from school to cut down on vehicular traffic.
- Children who walk must cross with one of the four crossing guards stationed on all sides of the school property. Please do not permit children to cross the street anywhere except with these uniformed guards. Adults are encouraged to use the crossing guards, too. Children model their behavior after ours, and it is in our best interest and that of our children to encourage them to follow this important safety rule. The crossing guards for Murray are stationed:
 - Behind the school on Daymon Terrace.
 - At the intersection of Colonial Avenue and Murray Avenue.
 - At the intersection of Weaver Street and Forest Avenue.
 - At the intersection of the Murray Avenue and Forest (traffic light).

Please be aware that the playgrounds around Murray are not staffed prior to 8:20 a.m. or after school. For the safety of our students, all children, including those using the Daymon Terrace Drop-Off, should go directly to their designated line-up spot when they arrive at school. Daymon Terrace volunteers are not responsible for notifying children in the kindergarten playground when it is time to go to their line-up spot or to supervise students in general.

VOTING AND REGISTRATION

In May of each year, registered voters are asked to cast their vote on the School Budget. It is vital to our children’s education that every family member over the age of 18 votes in this annual school

election. You are eligible to vote if you are a U.S. citizen, at least 18 years of age by Election Day, a resident of the district for one month prior to the election and are registered. For a registration form or absentee ballot, call the district clerk's office at 220-3007. Absentee ballots can be obtained several weeks in advance of the vote.

WEAPONS

It is the policy of Mamaroneck Board of Education that no weapons of any kind are tolerated on school grounds at any time. Any violation of this policy results in suspension from school. Possession in school of even the smallest pocketknife would constitute a violation. Parents should be sure that children fully understand this policy.

WELCOME DESK

During the school day, parents and visitors must enter through the Main Office entrance. A Murray Greeter will be at the Murray Welcome Desk, directly across from the Main Office. When visiting Murray, the greeter will ask you for a photo I.D. to sign in and out, and will provide you with a visitor's pass. In case of emergency, this provides us the identity of every person in the school building. Parents and visitors are required to wear their pass while in the school building. Parents and caregivers can greatly help our effort to increase safety by wearing their passes, and by reminding visitors not wearing a pass to stop by the welcome desk to get one.

If dropping off lunch or another item for a child, please leave these with the greeter. The office staff or greeter will contact the child's teacher to arrange for him/her to pick it up.

SCHOOL PROGRAMS/RESOURCES

All students have "SPECIALS" classes; ART, LIBRARY, MUSIC and PHYSICAL EDUCATION:

ART

Students in grades K-5 have art as part of their curriculum. Art experiences provide elementary students with an opportunity to combine reality and fantasy; to make statements about themselves and their world; to examine their environment and express the results of that examination in a variety of media. Art activities are geared to serve the needs of all elementary students and not a select group. The art program consists of an art class once in a six-day cycle for all grades. Children are exposed to areas of drawing, painting, sculpture, construction, collage, printing, crafts and mixed media. Please have children dress in old clothes on art days.

LIBRARY

All children visit the Murray School Library/Media Center once in a six-day cycle. Here they find an inviting space for reading, research and reference work, and are taught these skills by a Library Media Specialist. A stimulating collection of books and databases, as well as Internet access, is available. All

children may check out books. It is the child's responsibility to return books each cycle in good condition. If books are forgotten, the child may not check out any new books that cycle. However, he/she may put a book on reserve for a day and check it out upon return of the overdue books. Parents may also check out books if they obtain a "patron number" from the Librarian. For more grade-specific information on the library, please refer to the "Grade Overview" section of the handbook.

MUSIC

Students in grades K-5 have general music as part of their curriculum. Children participate in a class once per six-day cycle that includes a wide variety of activities including singing, playing classroom instruments, learning music reading skills, creating music and moving to music.

Upper grade students are given the opportunity to participate in Band, Orchestra and Chorus. There is a Winter Concert featuring all three performing groups (beginner instrumental students do not participate in the Winter Concert). In the spring, there is a concert for the Orchestra (grades 3-5), and a separate concert for the Band and Chorus. In addition, there are opportunities to participate in county-wide and state-wide auditions – NYSSMA and All County.

Band: At the end of third grade, children are introduced to a variety of band instruments – trumpet, trombone, clarinet, flute and percussion – and are given the opportunity to try the instruments of their choice and preference three instruments to play for the following school year. Children opting for one of these five band instruments will have a half-hour group lesson during the school day, as well as an 8:00 a.m. band rehearsal once in a six-day cycle. All band instruments are welcome in the band, although instruction is only available for the instruments mentioned above.

Orchestra: At the end of second grade, children are introduced to a variety of string instruments – violin, viola and cello – and may select one to play in third grade. Third graders opting for a string instrument will have a half-hour group lesson once in a six-day cycle during the school day. Fourth and fifth grade string players will have one half-hour group lesson, as well as an 8:00 a.m. orchestra rehearsal once in a six-day cycle. Children opting for a string instrument in the third grade are encouraged to continue with that instrument through fifth grade, and not switch to a band instrument in fourth grade.

Chorus: The chorus is all inclusive for our fourth and fifth grade students. The fifth grade students will participate during the fall and perform during the holiday concert. The fourth grade students will participate during the spring and perform at the spring concert. All chorus rehearsals will take place once during the school day as per Murray's six-day cycle.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Students in grades K-5 have physical education as part of their curriculum. Children participate every other day, or 3 times per six-day cycle. The program at Murray is child-centered and focuses on participation in physical activity. The professional staff teaches sport and movement skills, integrating the concepts of health and wellness, fair play, teamwork and personal living skills, thereby nurturing a healthy and active lifestyle. Excuses from Physical Education should be given in writing to the Physical

Education teacher and nurse when the child is to miss a day. Excuses for one week or more must be signed by a doctor and indicate when the child can resume activities. For more grade-specific information on the Physical Education program, please refer to the “Grade Overview” section of the handbook.

The Physical Education Department at Murray sponsors a variety of events throughout the year to promote the importance of physical fitness for both parents and children. Events such as Circus Arts and Healthy Heart Day are some of these. Look for announcements from the teachers sent home in backpacks and in Tiger Talk/“PAWS” for News.

FIELD TRIPS

Trips are scheduled by classroom teachers throughout the year to enrich the school experience. The teacher will send home information regarding the trip with permission forms. The school is not permitted to take children on a trip without written permission from a parent or guardian. Permission by e-mail is NOT acceptable. To avoid disappointment, please be sure to return signed permission slips. Some field trips require transportation, the cost of which is usually assumed by the parents. To help cover this cost, PTA scholarships can be obtained, confidentially, through your child’s teacher or the Principal. Parents/guardians occasionally have the opportunity to chaperone these trips. Contact your Room Representative for information.

ROAR

ROAR was created to address the reality that conflict exists as an ongoing part of our everyday lives. The tenets of ROAR are Respect, Open Communication, Acceptance, and Resolving Conflicts. The philosophy of the ROAR program is to foster growth by teaching students communication and conflict resolution skills that enable them to deal with conflict creatively. For students, the knowledge that conflict exists, that there is not necessarily one right answer to a problem and that with practice they can learn to solve problems on their own, is empowering and will help them not only at Murray, but at camp, at home, in middle school and beyond. The ROAR program is communicated through assemblies, classroom reading, activities and more.

SUPPORT SERVICES

ESL – ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

English as a Second Language is a program for children whose primary language is not English. It offers children English language development and cultural orientation in a small group setting.

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT TEAMS

Instructional Support Teams are available in each school to assist in helping you and your child’s teacher better understand your child. If you feel your child is having academic, social or emotional difficulties, please speak to your child’s classroom teacher. The teacher will make a referral to the building support team, as appropriate.

NURSE

A registered nurse is available during school hours. The nurse's office is located between the main office and the auditorium. The nurse can be contacted at 220-3710.

PSYCHOLOGIST

A school psychologist is available should you have any concerns regarding your child. The psychologist can be contacted at 220-3713.

READING/MATH

A specialist is available to consult with teachers and support children in these areas.

SOCIAL WORKER

A district-wide, elementary school social worker is available, should you have any concerns regarding your child and family. To contact the social worker, please call the Main Office at 220-3701.

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE

Every kindergarten student is screened by the Speech and Language Therapist. If a screening is recommended for students in grades 1-5 by the IST (Instructional Support Team), it can be done in the following areas: articulation, voice, fluency and receptive or expressive language. The Speech and Language Therapist, based on the results of these screenings, may recommend appropriate support services. If you have any concerns, please call the Speech and Language Therapist.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Special Education is a support service for those children who have been identified with specific learning difficulties. This process, guided by law, involves parents, teachers, members of the Instructional Support Team and central administration special education staff. Resources available to special education students include the resource room, teacher consultant model and self-contained classrooms. If you feel your child has special needs, please speak with your classroom teacher or school psychologist.

New York State governs many of the regulations and procedures specific to Special Education. Contact the Special Education office at 220-3060, or the Special Education PTA (SEPTA), for more information.

TECHNOLOGY

In grades K-3 grades, all classrooms are equipped with at least one computer that has Internet and e-mail access. In grades 4 and 5, classrooms have Chromebooks. Computers are also located in the library to help children with research projects. Children in grades K-5 have access to the Murray Computer Lab scheduled throughout the year. Instruction focuses on computer literacy activities at the lower grades. Beginning in third grade, children learn basic keyboarding and word processing skills, use presentation tools, do research on the Internet and use appropriate curriculum-related software. Students in grades 3-5 are also taught coding. Scratch is introduced in grade 5.

VISION AND HEARING SCREENING

The school nurse conducts vision and hearing screenings for all children on an annual basis. Parents are notified of any problem that should be reviewed by a child's physician.

GRADE OVERVIEWS

KINDERGARTEN OVERVIEW

Welcome to kindergarten! This overview has been designed to give you more specific information about kindergarten, and answer any questions you and your child may have about what to expect in the upcoming year.

SCHEDULE

All kindergarten children attend school five full days. During the first two weeks of school, all kindergarten children attend school in the morning only. These afternoons have been reserved for intake conferences with parents. See "Conferences" section below for more details.

Dismissal for all kindergarten classes is from the kindergarten playground. Children are dismissed only to those indicated on their contact form, unless a note is sent to the child's teacher. It is important that whoever is picking up your child be on time. If no one picks up the child, the child will be taken to the Main Office, and a parent will be notified.

SPECIALS

Each kindergarten class attends the following "specials" per six-day cycle. Children leave their classroom and attend the special in its own instructional space (i.e., gym, art room, etc.)

- Art – 30 minutes per six-day cycle. All children should wear appropriate clothing on art days. Aprons are available in the art room.
- Physical Education – (3) 30 minute sessions per six-day cycle. For safety reasons, children need to wear or bring sneakers. Children should not wear Tevas, sandals or hiking boots.
- Music – 30 minutes per six-day cycle.
- Library – 30 minutes per six-day cycle. Kindergarten children can check out books for one cycle at a time.

CONFERENCES

Parents attend three conferences for kindergarten children during the year (without the child present). The first conference is held during the first few weeks of school. This intake conference allows you as parents to share any important information you would like the teacher to know about your child. The second conference, held in the late fall, consists of an oral report of your child's progress. The third conference, held in the spring, gives parents an update on how their child has been doing.

Several afternoons and mornings have been set aside for Parent-Teacher Conferences. The dates and times are listed on the district calendar and the Murray Avenue monthly calendar. More information on scheduling conferences will come from your child's teacher.

CURRICULUM

For a description and explanation of Curriculum, please refer to the District's website or the kindergarten webpage on our school website.

HOLIDAY EVENTS

Kindergarten classes celebrate many holidays during the year. Each teacher can provide more specific details at Back-to-School Night. Many classes have sign-up sheets at Back-to-School Night to volunteer to help with holiday parties. Halloween is celebrated with a special Halloween parade in the morning. It is advised that children come to school with their costumes on and bring a change of clothing to be more comfortable after the parade.

TEACHER AIDES

Every kindergarten class has a teacher aide from 8:30-3:00. Teacher aides provide meaningful support to the classroom teachers. Teacher aides are also responsible for supervising the lunchtime period; they work to provide a safe and orderly atmosphere. This is done with care and concern for the children in their charge.

GRADES 1 - 5 OVERVIEW

CHORUS

Chorus is all inclusive for our fourth grade students during the spring semester of the school year and is all inclusive for our fifth grade students during the fall semester of the school year. All chorus rehearsals will take place during the school day once per six-day cycle.

GRADUATION

On one of the last days of school, 5th graders proudly graduate from Murray Avenue School. Attended by their families, graduates receive a diploma, watch a video containing photographs from the year, and present gifts to the school and to their teachers. Following the ceremony, there is a reception on the school lawn.

To celebrate their completion of Elementary School, the PTA hosts an event. This event is for graduates only. Upon the recommendation of Ms. Monaco, because of the potential for hurt feelings, private graduation parties are discouraged.

HEALTH EDUCATION

This program begins in the 5th grade and is taught by a Health teacher. In 5th grade, the emphasis is on human development and growth. A parent meeting is held prior to the beginning of instruction to educate parents about the program and answer any questions they may have. A letter will be sent home informing parents of the meeting.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC PROGRAM

Children who have selected a string instrument at the end of second grade begin string instrument instruction in third grade. These children will have one half-hour group lesson during the school day per six-day cycle. In late spring, the band teacher introduces each third grade class to a variety of band instruments. Third graders may sign up to learn an instrument and participate in the band program beginning in the fourth grade. Children opting for a string instrument in the third grade are encouraged to continue with that instrument through fifth grade, and not switch to a band instrument in fourth grade. (See also Music section, pp. 24-25) All interested fourth graders can participate in the string or band program. They have group rehearsals one morning per six-day cycle before school (8:00 a.m.) and small group lessons one day per six-day cycle. The students in orchestra and band perform in school concerts during the year. (See also Music section, pp. 24-25)

ORAL HISTORY

In the early Spring, Murray Avenue fifth graders cap off their work in Social Studies with a fun and unique experience: acting as historians by conducting interviews with historical informants - grandparents, neighbors, parents, friends and community members who share their experiences, history and life lessons.

SCHEDULE

All children attend school from 8:40 until 3:00 Monday through Friday and have Specials as per the six-day cycle. Classroom teachers dismiss the children as per parental instructions on the dismissal form. Children not picked up by 3:05, will be taken to the main office and a parent will be notified.

SPECIALS

Each 1st – 5th grade class attends the following “specials” per six-day cycle. Children leave their classroom and attend the special in its own instructional space (i.e., art room, music room, etc.):

- Art – 40 minutes per six-day cycle. All children should wear appropriate clothing on art days. Aprons are available in the art room.
- Physical Education – (3) 40 minute sessions per six-day cycle. For safety reasons, children need to wear or bring sneakers. Children should not wear Texas, sandals or hiking boots.
- Music – 40 minutes per six-day cycle.
- Library – 40 minutes per six-day cycle.

SQUARE DANCE

A fun event for the 5th grade students is the annual Square Dance, usually held in March at Mamaroneck High School. A square dance “caller” plays country tunes and runs the dance floor, while students and parents kick up their heels. Refreshments are served.

TEACHER AIDES

Every 1st grade class has a teacher aide for part of each day. Teacher aides provide meaningful support to the classroom teachers and are introduced to 1st graders within the first week of school. Teacher aides are also responsible for supervising the lunch period under the direction of the principal and

assistant principal; they work to provide a safe and orderly atmosphere. This is done with care and concern for the children in their charge.

TESTING

Third, fourth and fifth grade students take New York State-mandated standardized tests in English Language Arts and Mathematics. Test dates will be included on the District monthly calendar. Results are mailed directly to parents. At test time, make sure your child gets a good night's sleep and has a good breakfast. Please do not schedule any appointments for your child during the school day at that time.

COMMUNICATION RESOURCES: HOW TO STAY INFORMED

Communication between parents and the school is vitally important. Below is a list of the many vehicles the school and the PTA use to foster open communication and positive problem-solving. At a minimum, you are encouraged to read the electronic newsletters published by the school (“PAWS” for News) and PTA (Tiger Talk) in order to stay informed about events and programs taking place in the school. In an effort to go paperless, these and other publications are distributed via email. You can subscribe to Tiger Talk by logging onto the PTA Website at

www.mamkschoolspta.org/murray/ptacommunication.shtml and filling in the “Sign Up Today” box on the right.

BACK-TO-SCHOOL NIGHTS

Back-to-School Nights are held in the early fall. They offer parents the opportunity to meet and get-to-know their child’s teacher and to learn about the curriculum for the coming year. You will also meet your Room Reps that evening, who act as liaisons between parents and the teacher, help organize class activities, and collect yearly PTA dues. Refer to the district calendar and “PAWS” for News (the school’s bi-monthly bulletin) for specific dates and times for your child’s grade.

Please note: Children do not attend Back-to-School Nights.

DIRECTORY

This invaluable online resource is provided free to all families in the fall by the PTA via the A to Z app. It includes class lists with names of parents, phone numbers, and street and e-mail addresses. If you are new to the school and haven’t yet completed the PTA Directory Information Form (part of the registration packet), which gives us permission to include you in the directory, please pick up a form in the Main Office.

GRADE LEVEL REPRESENTATIVES

PTA Grade Level Reps are responsible for relating your grade-specific or school-wide concerns anonymously to the administration through meetings that take place approximately 6 times during the school year. You will meet your representative at a Grade Level coffee in the fall.

MURRAY AVENUE SCHOOL WEBSITE & MURRAY PTA WEBSITE

Information about Murray Avenue School can be accessed on the Internet through the Mamaroneck School District website, www.mamkschools.org/murray. The Murray PTA also has its own web address at www.mamkschoolspta.org/murray.

Highlights of the Murray Avenue School website include:

- Overview of our school
- School calendar

- Special programs and services offered at our school
- Classroom news
- Links to other educational sites

Highlights of the Murray PTA website include:

- Lists of PTA officers and committee chairs
- Calendar of and information about PTA events
- Tiger Talk archive

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Twice a year Parent-Teacher Conferences provide the opportunity to meet with your child’s teacher to discuss how your child has been doing during the year and any concerns you might have. They are scheduled in the fall and again in the spring. Conferences benefit your child by providing you the information needed to help maximize your child’s learning and help strengthen the parent/teacher relationship. In grades 1-5, in addition to the fall and spring conferences, you will receive two written progress reports each year. In kindergarten, you will have an additional intake conference near the start of school and receive one written progress report at the end of the school year. District conference dates are listed on the district calendar and are usually scheduled to occur in November and April. Specific information regarding scheduling conferences will come directly from your child’s teacher. Please note: Children do not attend Parent-Teacher Conferences.

PTA BULLETIN BOARD

The PTA regularly posts information about PTA activities, and copies of articles about Murray that have appeared in the local papers, on a dedicated bulletin board across from the Library.

PTA MEETINGS

Come to a PTA meeting and you will meet new people, enjoy refreshments and learn about the school, the district or topics of interest to parents. All are welcome. Refer to the district calendar and Tiger Talk for dates of scheduled meetings. Please note that Grade Level Meetings are only open to appointed representatives.

PUBLICATIONS

Various forms of communication are issued by the school and the PTA via email and (except for Murray Minute) are also posted to the school or PTA websites. These communications are Murray Minute, Paws for News, Tiger Talk, and Tiger Talk In-Depth, as more fully described below.

FACEBOOK

Murray Avenue School is on Facebook! “Like us” for school information and school events/happenings. <https://m.facebook.com/murrayavepta>

“PAWS” FOR NEWS

The Principal publishes a bulletin which is distributed on every other Friday via email and is also posted on the school website, www.mamkschools.org/murray. “PAWS” for News is a vehicle for the administration to communicate school-related news and for the faculty to share a snapshot of what is going on in the classrooms. “PAWS” for News also contains school district and community announcements.

TIGER TALK

The PTA publishes a weekly bulletin. Tiger Talk provides information on PTA activities. It is distributed via e-mail every Sunday evening and is posted to the Murray PTA website, www.mamkschoolspta.org/murray. Please read this entire bulletin carefully, as it contains important dates and information which affect all students, every week.

To sign up to receive Tiger Talk or to change your contact e-mail address, go to the Murray PTA website or email murrayavetigertalk@gmail.com.

ROOM REPRESENTATIVES/CLASS PARENTS

The PTA organizes two room reps for each class to act as the information liaisons between parents, the PTA and your child’s classroom teacher. Room reps assist all year long in building community amongst parents in the classroom, fielding parent questions, sending PTA-related emails, collecting for and buying teacher and aide gifts and also assisting their teacher with organizing field trips, class parties and special events.

COMMUNICATION AND PROBLEM RESOLUTION

Ongoing communication between parents and school is crucial to help solve problems before they become serious, and to validate or dispel rumors. Please do not hesitate to call the school. Whenever possible, speak first to the person closest to the situation. If unable to help you, that person will refer you to the correct individual. If you have a general question about the district, and don’t know whom to ask, call the public information office at (914) 220-3000.

If your child has a problem in class:

1. As much as possible, let your child handle it.
2. If necessary, first speak to the teacher.
3. If necessary, speak to the principal or assistant principal.
4. As a last resort, speak to the superintendent.

If you have a question about instruction, materials, programs, operations:

1. Speak to the teacher.

2. If unresolved, speak to the principal.
3. If necessary, write to the superintendent.

If you have a concern that pertains to the grade (not your individual child or his/her teacher), and it is not of an urgent nature, contact your Grade Level Chair. She/he will raise it anonymously at the next Grade Level Meeting held with Principal Jennifer Monaco, Assistant Principal Colleen Melnyk, and the PTA President and President-Elect.

MURRAY AVENUE SCHOOL PTA

OVERVIEW

The PTA (Parent Teacher Association) is a national organization dedicated to improving educational services and quality of life for all children. The Murray Avenue PTA is affiliated with both the New York State PTA and the National PTA. It is also part of a district-wide group—the Mamaroneck-Larchmont Council of PTAs (PT Council)—which includes representatives from all four elementary schools, Hommocks Middle School, Mamaroneck High School, and SEPTA. Our PTA President and President-Elect represent Murray.

Your active membership in the Murray Avenue PTA not only ensures the continuation of a strong lobbying force for diverse children’s issues both in Washington, D.C., and Albany, it guarantees that programs the PTA sponsors and facilitates here at Murray will continue to enrich your children’s school experience. After-school activities, grants to teachers, cultural arts programs, a yearbook, an oral history program with local senior citizens, and a science fair are only a few of the many examples of the PTA’s school involvement. The Murray PTA also provides opportunities for parents, teachers and administrators to discuss a wide range of topics, such as curriculum, social issues, safety and the school district’s annual budget.

Please make use of the PTA’s offerings for yourself and your children, and give generously of your time. The PTA provides volunteer opportunities to fit every schedule and interest. Please take a few minutes to read the descriptions, on the following pages, of the programs we offer. And remember, we can only provide the level of service we do because of the participation of parents like you.

PTA MISSION

The mission of the Parent Teacher Association is:

- To support and speak on behalf of children and youth in the schools, in the community and before governmental bodies and other organizations that make decisions affecting children;
- To assist parents in developing the skills they need to raise and protect their children;
- To encourage parent and public involvement in the public schools of this nation.

As an elementary school PTA, we should “promote quality education, strive to expand the arts, encourage community involvement, and work for a healthy environment and safe neighborhoods” (from the National PTA website, www.PTA.org).

GETTING INVOLVED IN THE MURRAY PTA

To help you understand the structure of Murray Avenue's PTA, and how you can be involved in its important work, below is a breakdown of the three levels of volunteer opportunities.

COMMITTEE VOLUNTEERS

Committee volunteers help any number of our 45+ committees. Time commitment for each committee varies from a one-time event to regularly throughout the school year. A listing of all PTA Committees follows in this handbook. Simply choose which committee interests you and fits into your schedule. To volunteer for a committee, call or e-mail the respective Committee Chairperson any time, or contact the PTA Volunteer Coordinator. Contact information for all chairs and the Volunteer Coordinator is listed on the PTA website: www.mamkschoolspta.org/murray. Any and all effort is greatly appreciated.

COMMITTEE CHAIRS / CO-CHAIRS

Committee chairs are responsible for all aspects of their committee—planning, budgeting and executing. They also generate or update a planning guide for new chairs. Some committees require intense work during a concentrated time period, while others are year-long commitments. Some committees consist of a large number of volunteers to schedule and oversee; some have few or none. All chairs have direct support from an Executive Committee VP, and most have one or more co-chairs. Chairs make a two-year commitment. If you are interested in a position, contact the PTA's Volunteer Coordinator.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee oversees all of the PTA's activities and makes all PTA policy decisions. The Executive Committee consists of the officers of the association: a President, a President-Elect, a Secretary, a Treasurer, six Vice Presidents, two Teacher Representatives and a SEPTA Representative(s). Each VP guides the activities of 5-10 committees, as well as co-chair one major committee. Familiarity with Murray Avenue School and the PTA is beneficial. Executive Committee positions require a two-year commitment. The Principal is also a member of the committee, and the teachers appoint the two Teacher Representatives; similarly, the SEPTA Representative(s) are selected by SEPTA.

A request for volunteers to serve on the Nominating Committee is announced in Tiger Talk in December and members are elected at the general membership meeting in January. This committee convenes in February/March to select one candidate for each

Executive Committee position being vacated. Nominations are announced before, and then voted upon at a spring PTA general membership meeting.

The PTA Executive Committee meets once per month. Please contact the President or President-Elect for the dates and times of the meetings or if you wish to be placed on the agenda. Minutes from each meeting are posted on our PTA website.

PTA PROGRAMS & COMMITTEES

This list of PTA programs and committees is designed to help you understand the depth of the PTA's commitment to enriching the Murray Avenue experience. Volunteers run all of these programs. We hope you'll want to be involved with a committee or two and with school-wide events. For details and to volunteer, contact Michele Metsch, PTA Volunteer Coordinator, at michele@metschnet.com, or the relevant PTA Chair listed in the Murray Avenue Directory and on our website, www.mamkschoolspta.org/murray.

AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS

These convenient and fun after-school activities add much to your child's school experience. Offered in the winter/spring, clubs last for ten weeks, one hour once a week. We offer a wide range of clubs, which may include Art, STEM, Drama, Magic, Music and Cooking, depending on the session. A summary of club offerings is sent home prior to each session, and full descriptions are available on the Club website: www.murrayasc.org. Confidential scholarships are available through the administration. PTA volunteers develop the club options, coordinate with instructors, and manage enrollment.

Please note: It is each child's responsibility to find their way to the auditorium, where all clubs meet immediately following the school day. Please consider this when signing your child up for clubs. It is the parent's responsibility to arrange for the timely pickup of his/her children from an After School Club. It is not the responsibility of the school, PTA or club teacher to arrange a child's transportation home. Children are dismissed directly by the club instructor.

Please also note: Tiger Paw Sports, Murray after school sports programs offered for students by grade, are not PTA Programs. All registration and organization is run by our Physical Education Department.

ART APPRECIATION

Children learn to look at and recognize important artists through this popular in-class program led by parents. The committee chairs select two artists or cultures each year, representing a variety of time periods, styles and mediums. They prepare presentations and hands-on project materials for parent volunteers to teach and lead in the classrooms. Each class needs several "art parents." Artists are selected in consultation with the teachers and the administration.

BOOK FAIR

This important week-long November event fosters a love of books and reading in students, and it contributes greatly to the funds the PTA has for other programs. Children visit the fair during school hours and complete a “wish list.” Parents are able to contribute books to their child’s classroom by purchasing books on the teacher’s “wish list.” The fair, staffed by parent volunteers, is open for browsing and buying during and after school and on two evenings. Great for holiday shopping!

BUILDING BRIDGES

This week-long program in October increases students' knowledge and acceptance of people with different abilities. The program allows students to experience what it might be like to live with various disabilities through in-class, grade specific simulation activities led by parent volunteers. Later in the week, there is a Building Bridges curriculum-driven speaker presentation or series for each grade level. This is a great program to reinforce the idea that all people, including those with different abilities, have the same social needs and feelings.

CLASS PHOTOGRAPHS

In early fall, professional photographers come to Murray. Individual and class photos are taken during the day. Photos are purchased through PayPal and delivered a week after they’re taken. Chairs are responsible for coordinating with the photographer, staffing and running the photo day and distributing photos to students.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

This committee coordinates and implements school-wide and grade-specific community service programs, providing children with an invaluable opportunity to help those in need.

CULTURAL ARTS

Cultural Arts is one of the PTA’s largest areas of enrichment. This committee arranges artistic programs and workshops for each grade that further the cultural experience of students. A wide variety of artists have been brought to Murray by this committee in the past—Native American storytellers, drama instructors, master puppeteers, Latin American musicians and much more. Programs are selected in consultation with the teachers and the administration.

DAYMON TERRACE DROP-OFF

A great convenience at Murray is the Daymon Terrace Drop-Off. Each morning PTA volunteers—rain, snow or shine—keep children safe and cut down on the parking crunch by directing cars and assisting children out of vehicles. Please follow the rules you will receive and the directions of the volunteers; and, if you use drop-off, volunteer to help out one morning a month. Safety is of the utmost importance to all of us!

DIRECTORY

PTA volunteers produce this invaluable online publication, which includes class lists and a student directory. The directory is provided free to all families in the fall via the A to Z app, after every family has "verified" their information. Printed mini-directories can be purchased as a fundraiser for the Fifth Grade.

FALL SOCIAL

This social event is held near the beginning of the school year on the large playground. It is an opportunity for Murray families and teachers to get acquainted in a relaxed, festive atmosphere. A committee of parent volunteers plans and orchestrates the arrangements, invitations and refreshments for this fun-filled event.

GRANTS LIAISON

This committee assists teachers/staff with Grant Applications, which are submitted to the Mamaroneck Schools Foundation and to the Murray PTA Grants Committee.

GREEN TIGERS

This committee develops, promotes and organizes environmental awareness efforts, recycling, composting and educational programs for the Murray community. They publish a weekly Green Tip in Tiger Talk (our weekly newsletter) and plan events to raise awareness and take action on Earth Day.

INCOMING KINDERGARTEN

Parents of incoming kindergartners are invited to an orientation session before their children arrive at Murray and then to a welcome coffee on the first day of school. The orientation session is for parents only and offers an opportunity to meet the teachers and administration and to get an overview of the school, curriculum and what to expect during the year. In June, in order to familiarize incoming kindergarten students with their new school, students have an opportunity to meet in small groups with a kindergarten teacher in his/her classroom. The PTA helps the administration organize these events.

INTERNATIONAL PARENTS

We celebrate Murray's diverse and global community with this committee. Activities include: International Week, social gatherings and our International Food booth at the Spring Fair.

LOST AND FOUND

The PTA and students from MHS's Transitional Academy, maintain Lost and Found boxes in the basement. Children and parents are encouraged to check them frequently for any articles of clothing or other personal items lost by the children. At the end of the year, after providing notice in Tiger Talk, unclaimed clothing is donated to an appropriate charity.

MEMBERSHIP

This committee coordinates the collection of PTA membership dues on Back-to-School nights. Family membership is \$10; teacher membership is \$5. A portion of these funds is remitted to the New York State PTA for helpful resources, advocacy efforts and insurance.

MURRAY FARMS

Murray Farms is a place for students to learn and grow by planting and harvesting edible plants and flowers. Student activities are woven into the curriculum in a collaborative effort with teachers and all grades participate. Our garden is also a place for children to write, draw or sit quietly and observe. It is also where our Lunchtime Garden Club meets to nurture the garden and learn about our natural world. Parents are encouraged to volunteer for plantings, harvesting, and general maintenance; time commitment will vary seasonally.

MURRAY MEADOW

In partnership with our Principal, Murray Meadow will start construction in Fall 2016. The Murray Meadow and Greenhouse will provide all Murray students with a year round outdoor classroom directly tied to varied aspects of the curriculum. It will include a pollinator garden, migratory bird section, amphitheatre, compost area and greenhouse, where students will study weather patterns, start seedlings in the winter months and much, much more.

NEW FAMILY LIAISON

We welcome all new families to Murray! When you register your child as a new student, our main office notifies our New Family Liaison, who will contact you to organize a family playdate or activity to introduce you to families at Murray. They will also be available for any helpful information and answering questions as you get settled in your new community.

NUTRITION AND WELLNESS

This committee organizes fun educational activities and programs throughout the school year to raise awareness about good nutrition and healthy habits. Past programs have included Halloween Candy Returns, Crunchy Carnival and Fit Fridays.

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM (5th GRADE)

In the early Spring, Murray Avenue fifth graders cap off their work in Social Studies with a fun and unique experience: acting as historians by conducting interviews with historical informants - grandparents, neighbors, parents, friends and community members who share their experiences, history and life lessons. Chairs assist with decade research in the library with Mrs. Tanenbaum and organize the day when visitors come to Murray to be interviewed by the students.

PARENTS' NIGHT OUT

This event in March is designed to raise money for the school, while providing a social evening get-together for parents. It is our largest school fundraiser and funds the majority of the programs listed above.

ONLINE STORE

Assist the Webmaster by setting up the online store for various PTA fundraising and transactions. The person volunteering for this position would optimally be familiar with html, spreadsheets, simple reporting and reconciliation. This role also includes managing our Online Store after it is set up.

PTA NOMINATING COMMITTEE

A request for volunteers to serve on the Nominating Committee is announced in Tiger Talk in December and members are elected at the membership meeting in January. This committee convenes in February/March to select one candidate for each Executive Committee position being vacated. Nominations are announced before, and voted upon, at a spring PTA meeting.

REWARDS PROGRAMS

Stop & Shop's A+ Bonus Bucks Program: Sign up using your Stop & Shop card number and select "Murray Avenue School" to earn points for our share of Stop and Shop's monthly donation to schools. Amazon Smile: When parents purchase items from Amazon by accessing it via the Murray PTA website, our school receives a percentage of each purchase as a donation from Amazon.

ROOM REPRESENTATIVES

The PTA organizes two room reps for each class to act as the information liaisons between parents, the PTA and your child's classroom teacher. Room reps assist all year long in building community amongst parents in the classroom, sending PTA-related emails, collecting for and buying teacher and aide gifts and also assisting their teacher with organizing field trips, class parties and special events.

SCHOOL SPIRIT

This committee is responsible for designing, ordering, organizing and tracking sales of Murray Avenue School merchandise.

SCIENCE ACTIVITIES

For grades K-2, an experiential science program is provided from an outside vendor, during the regular school day.. This committee also plans and facilitates events in conjunction with the STEM Alliance, such as Tinkering Night.

SCIENCE BOOK FAIR

This book fair, featuring different kinds of science related books, is a SEPTA fundraiser that is held on the night of the Science Fair.

SCIENCE FAIR

The Science Fair encourages children in grades 3-5 to investigate a topic and share results verbally and through a presentation board/project. Parents and children attend this evening event in the Spring, and students in other grades walk through the Science Fair earlier in the day.

SEPTA -- Special Education Parent-Teacher Association

SEPTA is a district-wide PTA representing all children in the district from ages 3-21 who require special education. SEPTA offers educational programs and conversations to all families in our district and works with the district to ensure that all students' educational needs are met, according to the NYS Education Department guidelines.

Membership is open to all parents and staff within the district. SEPTA's membership drive and the sale of the school district "mini" calendars fund programs, communications and grants. For more information, please contact the SEPTA school liaison (listed in the district calendar), or visit our webpage on the district website, to sign up for e-mail notices directly from SEPTA.

SOCIAL MEDIA

This committee shares the great happenings at Murray with the Larchmont-Mamaroneck community, through taking photos and writing articles and press releases for the local papers, as well as managing our Facebook account.

SPRING FAIR

The event of the spring (on the Saturday before Mother's Day), this fundraiser provides fun for the whole family, with parent-staffed games, rides, sales, crafts and refreshments. Each class sponsors a booth, and parents are asked to volunteer for a one-hour shift at each of their children's booths. Lots of work goes into making this event a success, so we ask every family to help out in whatever way they can. Bring your family and friends for a great time!

STAFF APPRECIATION

The staff at Murray goes above and beyond to teach and nurture our young children. This committee finds creative ways throughout the year to express our gratitude to our teachers, administrators, aides and TAs, and hosts a luncheon at the end of the year, to which all staff members are invited.

STUDENT SCHOOL SUPPLIES

A program that saves parents time and money! Committee Chairs and teachers coordinate student school supply lists for the upcoming school year. Supply kits are purchased through Futterman's Stationary Store in Larchmont, and are available for pickup in August, or you may have them shipped to your home. Each box purchased earns our PTA \$5!

THEATER ARTS/MURRAY MUSICAL

In conjunction with a professional production company, the Theater Arts Committee produces the Murray Musical in January. All students in grades 2-5 are welcome to participate, but space is limited. Rehearsals occur daily, after school for two weeks, and culminate in two weekend performances for each cast. The production company manages the casting, direction, music and choreography. The Theater Arts Committee handles registration, cast coordination, costumes, ticket sales, concession stand sales, programs, lighting & sound, photography & video and rehearsal chaperones. This committee relies on parent participation to run and the kids love it!

WALK TO SCHOOL

This committee encourages families to walk to school. During district-wide fall and spring Walk to School Weeks, all walkers are recognized and celebrated through a variety of fun programs. Walking reduces traffic around Murray, helps to promote a healthy lifestyle and a cleaner environment, and builds school and community spirit.

WEBSITE

Parent volunteers update and maintain the Murray PTA website, which provides information about PTA events and programs, and includes the weekly Tiger Talk e-newsletter. Access to computer, familiarity with webpage design and maintenance is required.

YEARBOOK

Students cherish this memento of the school year. Parents take candid photos, create photo collages, help with design and layout, and arrange to have the yearbook printed. Fifth graders receive the yearbook as a gift from the PTA; other students may purchase it. Students in all grades enjoy having the yearbook signed by classmates on the last days of school.

DISTRICT POLICIES/PROCEDURES

BOARD OF EDUCATION

The Mamaroneck School District is governed by the Board of Education, which is composed of seven community members, all volunteers, who are elected to three-year terms. Since the board's decisions directly affect all children's education, parents are urged to attend school board meetings whenever possible. The meetings are also televised on LMC-TV; Channels 75, 76 & 77 (Cablevision)/Channels 34, 35 & 36 (Verizon).

- Public school board meetings are generally scheduled for the third Tuesday of each month in the High School Post Road Tiered Classroom. The community is invited to sign up to address the board at this time.
 - The time and place of school board meetings are listed on the District Calendar.
 - In addition, other Tuesday evenings are devoted to informal meetings of the board called Study Sessions, which are also open to the public but without public input. These meetings are not televised.
 - One Tuesday evening every month is set aside for board hours. This is a time when one can make an appointment to meet with individual board members privately.
 - Study Sessions, board hours and any changes or additional meetings are announced in the local newspapers and in "*PAWS*" for News (the Principal's weekly newsletter).
- *Board Briefs* is a bulletin, published by the School District's public information office, which provides a summary of the board meeting minutes. It is posted on the district website.

CALENDAR

The Mamaroneck School District publishes a district-wide school calendar, which is mailed in August to every family with a child in the Mamaroneck School System. This is an important resource for dates of vacations, conference days and early dismissal days throughout the school year. You will also find listings of School Staff, Support Services, District Information Sources, Murray Avenue PTA Committees, as well as events occurring in all schools within our district. The calendar is also available on the district website, www.mamkschools.org.

COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLICITY

CABLE TELEVISION

LMC-TV, Larchmont-Mamaroneck Community Television, airs on Cablevision Channels 75, 76 & 77 and Verizon Channels 34, 35 & 36. It frequently airs programs about our schools that will be publicized in "*PAWS*" for News or *Tiger Talk*. For further information, you can call LMC-TV at 698-6808. If you know of an interesting story, have a videotape, or if you wish to view a previously aired program, please call the Public Information Director at 220-3070.

Occasionally, the district may film children in classes. Teachers will usually know about taping in advance, and we do not anticipate any disruption in classes. Children may also be taped without prior notice on the playground, at a performance, in the lunchroom or in the halls. If you do not wish your child to appear in a video, please inform the superintendent in writing by the third Friday of the school year.

PHOTOGRAPHY

The school district occasionally takes photographs and videos of students involved in school activities for submission to local newspapers and for use in its own publications. In addition, the local media take their own pictures when they are invited into our school to cover events. Information released with these pictures may include: student's name, grade in school, awards and participation in officially recognized activities and sports. If, for any reason, you do not want to have your child included in pictures used in any of the district's publications or other media, you must notify the superintendent in writing by the third Friday of the school year. A letter to this effect is sent to all parents with the summer mailings.

ONE CALL ALERTS COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

It is crucial for the district to be able to communicate with parents effectively and immediately in emergency situations. The district has instituted a messaging service called One Call Alerts for this purpose. With this web-based system, the district can send a personalized e-mail, text, or voice message to your family's home, work and cell phones in the event of an emergency or weather-related school closing. In non-emergency situations regarding school events or other issues impacting your child, a message can be sent to your family's home phone. Parents are responsible to update their phone numbers for home, work and cell phones through the parent portal of this system.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS/DELAYED OPENINGS

School may be **cancelled** for the day because of extreme weather or, if weather is uncertain, a **delayed opening** of one or two hours may occur. You can gain information on either of these situations from the following sources:

- You will receive an automated call from One Call Alerts.
- Fire whistle will blow 2-2-2-2 blasts at 7:15 a.m. and 7:30 a.m. for **school closing only**.
- Radio stations WVOX (1460 AM), WFAS (1230 AM) and others carry school cancellation and delayed opening notices from 6:30–9:00 a.m.
- Emergency Info Hotline (call at any hour): 220-EMER (220-3637).
- LMC-TV – Channels 75, 76 & 77 (Cablevision)/Channels 34, 35 & 36 (Verizon) – should also carry information.

In instances of a **delayed opening**, contingency plans must be made for your children. Children **cannot** be left at school since teachers and administrators will not be arriving until the delayed opening of school.

EMERGENCY EARLY DISMISSAL

The Superintendent of Schools may determine that it would be more prudent for students to be in the safety of their homes rather than in school due to inclement weather conditions or other emergency situations. When the decision is made to close school early, emergency dismissal procedures will be initiated, and you will be contacted at home, office and cell phone numbers via the One Call Alerts. Parents are required to fill out the Emergency Contact Information form via One Call Alerts for each child.

Parents are asked to list up to three emergency contacts. In the event of an emergency early dismissal, the school will release your child ONLY to you or one of the emergency contacts you have designated. Be sure all your emergency contacts are aware that they may be called to pick up your child if you are not available in the event of an emergency dismissal.

It is important that parents and students are aware of the following information as it relates to Emergency Dismissal:

- Students remaining after a reasonable pickup time will be waiting in the school library.
- **It is the parent's responsibility during the school year to update any information on the form and inform the school office of any changes. Parents should keep a copy of the completed form(s) for their files.**
- A drill of early dismissal procedures is required by New York State and will be planned to make sure all students, parents and school staff are aware of their part in the safety and well-being of all our students. Students from grades K-5 will be dismissed 15 minutes early – **children must be picked up from their classroom at that time by a parent, guardian or designated emergency contact.** Please note the date of this drill on the district calendar. Parents will also be reminded at least one week in advance of the date/time of this drill.
- As always, if you deem weather conditions to be worsening and therefore wish your child to be dismissed early, you (or your designated surrogate) may sign a release form in the school office and pick up your child at school.

HEALTH FORM REQUIREMENTS

The Mamaroneck UFSD requires the following health forms for all students:

- **Physical Examination Certificate:** As your children are preparing to enter our school, they are in need of a physical examination by their doctor or practitioner. By law, all new students and those entering grades K, 2nd and 4th must have a physical examination. Completed forms, signed and dated anytime within the last 12 months are

acceptable. Your child will be examined by the school physician if we do not receive a signed and dated form.

· **Student Health Body Mass Index and Weight Status Category Reporting Form:** Effective 2008, this new law requires that each student in grades needing a physical exam submit a BMI (body mass index) and weight status category report. This form is available on the Web site. You only need to complete, sign and return this form should you NOT want your child's anonymous data released to NY State Dept of Health as part of the mandatory reporting of this information.

· **Vaccination Administration Record:** All new students, including K, must have a vaccination form completed and signed by the child's physician/practitioner. Tdap is a required vaccination for all students by age 11. **Students will not be allowed to enter school without vaccination information.**

· **Child Health History Information Form:** Health history forms are requested for all students each year. The information on this form helps the school nurse ascertain the current health status of your child.

· **Tuberculin Screening Form:** To be completed by your child's physician/practitioner when your child receives a skin test for tuberculosis (TST), or if your physician/practitioner feels that this test is not necessary at this time.

· **Dental Examination Certificate:** To be completed by your child's dentist for grades K, 2nd and 4th.

· **Medication Permission Form:** If your child requires any medication, including over-the-counter medications, during school hours, the nurse must have a note signed by a parent/guardian, as well as a written request from your physician/practitioner. This request must include the diagnosis, and the frequency and dosage of the prescribed medication. Medication must be delivered to school in the original pharmacy labeled container with your child's name and the name of the medication. Please call your school nurse should you have any questions. If your child has been determined to be self-directed and is able to carry his/her own inhaler for asthma, it is a good idea to keep an extra inhaler at the nurse's office.

Please do not send/mail forms to the school over the summer. Incoming K and new students will receive health forms in their registration packets. All forms are available in the nurse's office and on the district website at www.mamkschools.org under the "Student Registration" tab should you need extras. Please be sure to keep a copy of your forms.

STUDENT RECORDS

Student records are confidential, but accessible to parents and legal guardians. Please call the principal's office for an appointment. Copies of student records should be requested in writing.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

- 1) The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the School Principal (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access, and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
- 2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate. Parents or eligible students may ask the School to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write the School Principal (or appropriate official), clearly identify the part of the record they want changed and specify why it is inaccurate. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
- 3) The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A School official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate education interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.
- 4) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
US Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-4605

It is the district's policy to disclose personally identifiable information from student records without consent under the following conditions:

- 1) To other school officials within the district as permitted under FERPA;
- 2) Upon request, to school officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll;
- 3) As "directory information."

Student “directory information” includes the following: student’s name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major course of study, participation in school activities or sports, weight and height if a member of an athletic team, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, most recent school attended, class schedule, photograph and class roster. You have the right to have your child’s name and any of this information removed from the list of directory information. **If you choose to do so for the school year, you must advise the superintendent’s office in writing by the second Friday of the school year.**