

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 Thea Minello, Murray PTA Secretary, at MurraySecretaryPTA@gmail.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.
- 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

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Superintendent of Schools

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Engage, Empower, Inspire: Setting High Expectations for Every Student

Dear Families,

The impetus for change and innovation is linked to our aspirational mindset and human propensity for curiosity and persistence. Under the heading of the sky's the limit, my summer break included paying close attention to the launch of the NASA Parker solar Probe – NASA's first mission to "touch the sun." Decades in the making, this car-size explorer will hopefully avoid the fate of Icarus – knowing that bold initiatives require the willingness to see beyond the present moment, a commitment to planning and process, and the adoption of an objective mindset.

From a system's perspective, the upcoming year offers several opportunities to consider the future of our public school system. To this end, forty-six members of the Enrollment Task Force will continue investigating long-term strategies in response to ongoing enrollment growth and space limitations. As a primary responsibility, the group is learning about the global "school redesign" movement, emerging policy issues, shifts in pedagogy, and the transition from an industrial model of school toward preparing students to thrive in a rapidly changing global age. In the coming weeks, we plan to post on the District website Task Force artifacts and information to promote transparency and inclusiveness.

In the fall, the Board of Education will consider a January/February 2019 capital bond to address high-priority facilities improvements and the development of innovative learning spaces at HMX and MHS, including a design/fabrication lab and culinary arts classroom. In collaboration with the architectural and school design firm of Fielding and Nair International, we will investigate a range of redesign models for elementary schools that will complement the work of the Enrollment Task Force. Our goal is to offer the broader community a glimpse of future-oriented learning environments aligned with the unfolding transformation occurring in the realm of teaching and learning.

This year, we expect to strengthen our commitment to authentic and deep learning. At the elementary and middle school levels, we will expand hands-on curriculum resources and professional development to align science curricula with NYS Science Learning Standards. We plan to extend the use of virtual/augmented reality resources across disciplines and expand online learning technologies to support a robust robotics and computer science program at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. At Mamaroneck High School, seniors will have a unique opportunity to enroll in a collaborative design lab introducing and simulating the experience of human-centered design and project management by integrating the disciplines of computer science, engineering, mathematics and design. The main goal of the program is to replicate a real world collaborative work setting oriented toward entrepreneurship and design-thinking. MHS journalism students will formally launch Mamaroneck Associated Press, publishing a host of investigative podcasts from our new podcast studio. Building on the initial success of a four-year Original Civics Research Program, we will offer a second cohort of 9th graders the chance to learn about local issues and develop a multi-year plan to engage stakeholders.

We are excited to introduce two new administrative school leadership teams. Neill Alleva will take the helm as principal of Mamaroneck Avenue School in partnership with Assistant Principal Sandra Zadrima who is transitioning to MAS after serving in a similar role at Chatsworth. At Hommocks Middle School, Emilia Macias-Capellan will serve as principal joined by returning Assistant Principal Rob Andrews and newly-hired Assistant Principal Ms. Margaret Groninger, long-standing MHS English teacher and

department chair. As we welcome our sixth dual language kindergarten cohort, we are pleased to introduce Ms. Judith Ravina as the new Director of Dual Language and ENL Programs.

As a focus of our summer administrative work, central administrators, principals, directors, and assistant principals explored "what matters" as educators. At our core, we are about promoting a culture of care of children in the round and knowing all students and families well. To this end, we will continue to prioritize educating the whole child helping students develop social and emotional skills and dispositions. We plan to continue partnering with Yale University's Center for Emotional Intelligence to advance the use of RULER offering students a framework to help them recognize, understand, label, express, and regulate their emotions in and out of school.

Maintaining a commitment to continuous program review, the administration and faculty will conduct an in-depth review of the MHS performing Arts Program (PACE) and collaborate with our regional critical friend Tri-State Consortium to assess the progress of our K-12 wellness initiative.

We continue to evaluate school safety plans, procedures, and personnel to ensure a safe learning environment. This summer, the Board of Education endorsed my recommendation to replace school greeters with certified security personnel. As parents and students arrive at school they will be greeted by trained security personnel provided by a security firm with a long-track record of working with schools and colleges.

The Mamaroneck Board of Education and central administration are committed to promoting thoughtful dialogue and communication with staff, parents, students, and community members. To be as efficient and effective in addressing questions, concerns, or the need for clarification, we plan to summarize and publish (on the District website) the various issues and topics that are presented to our co-governance team over the course of the school year. We will also set aside time during monthly Board of Education meetings to report out on the range of questions or concerns that are shared by stakeholders.

I expect the 2018-19 school year to be filled with rich, relevant, rigorous, and authentic learning experiences for students as a result of hard work, preparation, and commitment by administrators, teachers, and support staff and of course students themselves.

Thank you for your continued support of the Mamaroneck Union Free School District. Knowing that education is the greatest gift for children, I am grateful and honored to have the opportunity to serve you, the Board of Education, community, and the staff who work tirelessly on behalf of children. As always, please contact me at the District office if I can be of assistance to you as the year progresses.

Respectfully,

Dr. Robert I. Shaps Superintendent of Schools

MURRAY AVENUE SCHOOL

Mamaroneck Schools



Alison Hazut
Principal

Colleen Melnyk
Assistant Principal

September 2018

Dear Parents,

Welcome to The Murray Avenue School and a new school year. 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 work together to support your children as they develop their curiosities and become more independent, responsible, and confident young people. We strive to develop a nurturing and dynamic environment where your children will learn and grow.

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

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

Best,

Alison Hazut
Principal

MAMARONECK UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT
SERVING LARCHMONT AND MAMARONECK

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Murray Avenue School
250 Murray Avenue
Larchmont, New York 10538

Alison Hazut – Principal
Colleen Melnyk - Assistant Principal

Main Office: 220-3701
Office Staff: Deborah Garriola & Sue Valenti

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: <https://murrayavenuepta.org>

District Offices: 220-3000

Board of Education: board@mamkschools.org

FACULTY AND STAFF

(Staff Assignments as of August 28, 2018)

Kindergarten

A. Bruno
L. Finn
D. Geertgens
J. Opas
R. Spano / K. Hickey
L. Santavicca

Grade 1

D. DeLaurentis
C. Dizenzo
L. McShea
B. Nolan
L. Stroud
J. Cifone / T. Cirolia

Grade 2

A. Cerbone / L. Wechsler
A. Goldenberg
L. Grasso
B. Mannion
A. Vieira

Grade 3

S. Alexander
L. Balbona
A. Grippo
J. Jacobsen
C. Moroney/ A. Franco
A. Smith

Grade 4

M. Arminio / M. Pietropaolo
K. Harris
M. Lipton
M. Montone

Grade 5

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

Art

A. Stone

Clerical

D. Garriola - office
S. Valenti – office

Custodians

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

ENL

P. Griffin

Library/Media

L. Geertgens
E. Mandracchia, Library clerk

Math

S. Hedigan

Music

J. Brady, General Music/Chorus
J. Lieto, Orchestra
A. Kromholz, Orchestra
D. Meltzer, Band

Nurse:

B. Ball

Physical Education

K. Dwyer
R. Rainaldi
K. Zenie

Psychologist

D. Lepofsky

Reading

L. DeLasho

Social Worker

Suehay Gonzalez

Speech

M. Pinkas

Special Education Support

S. Magrone

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SCHOOL POLICIES/PROCEDURES.....p. 9

SCHOOL PROGRAMS/RESOURCES.....p. 17

GRADE OVERVIEWS

Kindergarten Overview.....p. 20

First to Fifth Grade Overview.....p. 21

COMMUNICATION RESOURCES: HOW TO STAY INFORMED

Back-to-School Nights.....p. 23

Directoryp. 23

Grade Level Coordinators.....p. 23

Murray Avenue School Website & Murray PTA Website.....p. 24

Parent-Teacher Conferencesp. 24

PTA Meetings.....p. 24

Publications.....p. 24

Room Representativesp. 25

Communication & Conflict Resolutionp. 25

MURRAY AVENUE SCHOOL PTA

PTA Overview.....p. 26

Getting Involved in the PTA.....p. 26

Allergy Awarenessp. 28

After School Clubs.....p. 28

Art Appreciationp. 28

Author Visits	p. 28
Book Fair	p. 28
Building Bridges	p. 28
Class Photographs.....	p. 28
Community Outreach.....	p. 29
Cultural Arts.....	p. 29
Daymon Terrace Drop-Off.....	p. 29
Directory	p. 29
Fall Social	p. 29
Grade Level Coordinators.....	p. 29
Grants Liaison.....	p. 29
Green Tigers.....	p. 29
Incoming Kindergarten	p. 30
International Parents	p. 30
Lost & Found.....	p. 30
Membership	p. 30
Murray Farms	p. 30
Murray Meadow	p. 30
New Family Liaison.....	p. 30
Nutrition and Wellness.....	p. 31
Online Store	p. 31
Oral History Program.....	p. 31
Parents Night Out.....	p. 31
PTA Nominating Committee.....	p. 31
Rewards Programs	p. 31
Room Representatives	p. 31
School Spirit	p. 32
Science Enrichment Activities.....	p. 32
Science Book Fair.....	p.32

Science Fair.....p. 32

SEPTA - Special Education PTAp. 32

Social Mediap. 32

Spring Fairp. 32

Staff Appreciationp. 32

Student School Suppliesp. 33

Theater Arts/Murray Musical.....p. 33

Walk to School.....p. 33

Website.....p. 33

Yearbook.....p. 33

DISTRICT POLICIES & PROCEDURES p.34

SCHOOL POLICIES/PROCEDURES

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 8:20 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 8:20 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. Supervision by an aide will begin at 8:20 a.m.
- Parents are welcome to remain with their child; please note that this time on the playground is not a recess/play time for the children but rather a social opportunity.
- At 8:35 a.m., the aides will blow the whistle once indicating that everyone should be at his/her 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 and Second Grade: to the lunchroom and sit at their assigned table. The teacher will pick up his/her class from the lunchroom.

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

Fourth and Fifth Grade: students will walk to their cubbies. 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 inclement 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](tel: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 in the binder with the nurse or safety agent.
- 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 with the safety agent. 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.

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.

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. Bullying is not simply mean behavior. It is planful, targeted actions to isolate and hurt others. 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 and placed in backpacks 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 –THE BOYS & GIRLS CLUB of NEW ROCHELLE– Before -and-After School

Children from Murray, along with children from other Mamaroneck elementary schools, are eligible to participate in The Boys & Girls Club, a before-and after-school child care program.

The Boys & Girls Club is an afterschool program that operates from the end of school until 6pm (7pm at an additional cost). Their model encompasses programs and activities that promote development academically, socially, emotionally, and physically. Their programs include, Power Hour: Homework Help, Arts & Crafts, Triple Play: Mind, Body, Soul, DIY STEM, Smart Girls, Passport to Manhood, Talent Shows, and so much more.

Their *before care* operates from 7am-8:30am Monday-Friday. Their *after-school* program runs from 3:00pm-6:00pm; they also offer extended care from 6:00-7:00pm.

For more information, please visit their website at www.bgcnr.org

CLASS COMMUNICATION

Parents should not make deliveries to a classroom or consult with the teacher when school is in session, without checking with the safety agent 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.

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 The Boys & Girls Club or Tiger Paws Clubs 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 may give a note to their child's teacher in the morning with information about the play date. Play date information may also be e-mailed to the teacher by 8:00 AM 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.
- Students in grades 3-5 who are not picked up by 3:05 p.m. or do not have permission to walk home alone 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 accessible during the day.

All early arrivals (Boys & Girls' Club 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 safety agent 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 inspected 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 3 Lunch/Recess

11:50 a.m. - 12:50 p.m. Kindergarten and Grade 2 Lunch/Recess

12:20 p.m. - 1:20 p.m. Grade 1 and 4 Lunch/Recess

12:50 p.m. - 1:50 pm Grade 5 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

- Children may bring lunch to school or purchase one through our lunch program.
- If students forget or lose their lunch, they can always get a lunch through the lunch program.
- 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 indoor recess.

B. Role of Teacher Aides

Each grade is supervised by a number of Teacher Aides who remain with them for the entire lunch/recess period. Please discuss the importance of the aides' role with your child. Children should know that the aides are there to help and 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.myschoolbucks.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 (e.g., Murray Musical, field trips, garden club). Please contact Murray's school social worker, [Suehay Gonzalez Alicea](mailto:sgonzalezalicea@mamkschools.org) (sgonzalezalicea@mamkschools.org), 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 any adult they feel comfortable speaking with. 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, skateboards, 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 water bottles. 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. 31)
- 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.

WELCOME DESK

During the school day, parents and visitors must enter through the Main Office entrance. A Murray safety agent will be at the Murray Welcome Desk, directly across from the Main Office. When visiting Murray, the safety agent 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.

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.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION & PEER MEDIATION

This program was created to address the reality that conflict exists as an ongoing part of our everyday lives. Our work in this area 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 home, at camp, in middle school and beyond. All children learn the steps and language for Conflict Resolution in September and our Peer Mediators, volunteer

trained 5th graders, work with children in K-2nd grade to support Conflict Resolution at designated times.

SUPPORT SERVICES

ENL – ENGLISH AS A NEW 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 (IST)

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-2 grades, all classrooms are equipped with at least one computer that has Internet and e-mail access. In grades 3, 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 second 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 2-5 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 days a week. 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 – 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. Kindergarten children can check out books for one cycle at a time.

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

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 Tevas, sandals or hiking boots.
- Music – 40 minutes per six-day cycle.
- Library – 40 minutes per six-day cycle.

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 are listed in the District [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.

CHORUS

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

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. 19-20) 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. 19-20)

In addition to the above information, there are a number of additional programs/events unique to **fifth grade** at Murray:

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.

CAPSTONE PROJECT

Fifth graders engage in a year-long project called a capstone project. Students choose their own areas of inquiry and design their own investigations. Capstone projects culminate in a celebration of each student's journey and an opportunity for presentation to parents and invited guests in the spring. More information and examples of past projects are on the Capstone [webpage](https://www.mamkschools.org/teaching-learning/elementary-curriculum/elementary-capstone) (<https://www.mamkschools.org/teaching-learning/elementary-curriculum/elementary-capstone>).
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ORAL HISTORY

In the early Spring, Murray Avenue fifth graders engage in 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.

SQUARE DANCE

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

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.

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 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 emailing murrayavetigertalk@gmail.com and asking to be added to the list.

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. 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 COORDINATORS

PTA Grade Level Coordinators are responsible for acting as liaisons with grade level teachers and administration to address any grade specific topics relating to curriculum, events, or any issues that arise. You will meet your representative at a Grade Level coffee in the fall. Each grade has its own coffee and the dates are posted on the District calendar and will be published in TigerTalk.

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 <https://murrayavenuepta.org>.

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 and programs
- Links to sign up for PTA sponsored activities and clubs (e.g., garden club, Murray Musical)
- 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 K-5, in addition to the fall and spring conferences, you will receive two written progress reports each 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 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.

PUBLICATIONS

Various forms of communication are issued by the school and the PTA via email and are also posted to the school or PTA websites.

PRINCIPAL'S LETTERS

Ms. Hazut writes and emails regular letters to the community sharing the work of the school.

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, <https://murrayavenuepta.org>. 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.

FACEBOOK

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

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, 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 CONFLICT 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 Coordinator for more information. You can also reach out to Principal Alison Hazut, 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, please visit the Murray PTA website, where you will find specific information about volunteer opportunities and contact information: <https://murrayavenuepta.org/volunteer/>. 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 Jen Rabina, PTA Volunteer Coordinator, at ParentServicesPTA@gmail.com, or the relevant PTA Chair listed in the Murray Avenue Directory and on our website, <https://murrayavenuepta.org>.

ALLERGY AWARENESS

Our mission is to increase awareness and improve safety protocols as they relate to food allergies at Murray Avenue School. We work with the Principal, PTA and Tiger PAWS staff to help make sure that students with food allergies can safely participate in all school programs and that emergency plans are in place at all times. We also plan interactive activities and programs to help educate the entire student body. Throughout the school year, we are here to answer any questions that parents may have concerning food allergies.

AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS

New for the 2018-19 school year, the Boys & Girls Club of New Rochelle (BGCNR) will be offering and administering after school clubs at Murray. BGCNR plans to offer after school programs in the fall and spring. More information can be found at www.bgcnr.org.

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 program led by parents and our art teacher. This year the PTA will sponsor six evenings of art appreciation, intended for both parents and children to enjoy hands-on learning and projects. Please check the calendar for our fun evening series.

AUTHOR VISITS

In coordination with the Murray librarian, different authors are chosen to make presentations to each grade engaging the students and sharing insights into their writing process. This is a unique opportunity for students to meet an author and enrich their learning about reading and writing. In addition, book sales are arranged so that students may buy a personalized signed copy of the authors most recent book.

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 three 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 ordered online and delivered later in the fall. 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— Alvin Ailey dance performers, 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.

FALL SOCIAL

This social event is held in the beginning of October 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.

GRADE LEVEL COORDINATORS

Grade Level Coordinators are liaisons between grade level teachers, room reps, parents, and the principal. They help research, coordinate, and organize field trips for the year and assist with other grade level activities as they arise.

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. The PTA is pleased to be able to offer grants to Murray faculty each year. Grants provide funding for creative programs or materials to enhance our rich curriculum. A list of grants funded and more information is available on our website: <https://murrayavenuepta.org/grants>.

GREEN TIGERS

This committee develops, promotes and organizes environmental awareness efforts, recycling, composting and educational programs for the Murray community. More information is available on our website: <https://murrayavenuepta.org/green-tigers>.

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 \$15; 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

Murray Meadow is a unique outdoor learning environment that includes a natural stone amphitheater-classroom, pollinator garden, and migratory bird habitat. Murray Meadow further extends the physical space of the school, supporting curriculum delivery to all grades and providing more authentic, hands-on cross curricular learning opportunities. Like Murray Farms, this space is a collaboration between parent gardeners, the PTA, the administration and Murray teachers. A joint faculty-parent steering committee helps coordinate Meadow programs, and teachers also visit the Meadow for independent class projects.

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.

ONLINE STORE

On its website, the PTA maintains an online store, where parents can purchase tickets, register for programs, buy school spirit merchandise and spring fair wristbands (among other things). The online store is managed by parent volunteers.

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM (5th GRADE)

In the early Spring, Murray Avenue fifth graders enjoy 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 Ms. Todd-Fernandez 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 PTA programs and events.

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 you shop at smile.amazon.com Amazon will automatically donate a percentage of each sale to our PTA if you do a one-time selection of our Murray PTA as your designated charity. This is an easy way to support our school!

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 ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

The PTA underwrites hands-on science workshops for students in all grades. PTA volunteers work with teachers to plan science enrichment activities.

In addition, the PTA assists the STEM Alliance of Larchmont-Mamaroneck to organize Murray tinkering nights and Murray's booth at The Stemtastic festival.

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 school. 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. Our website is <https://murrayavenuepta.org>.

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 staggered 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 usually televised on LMC-TV, channel 75, or 76 and Verizon channel 35 or 36.

The Board of Education has a comprehensive [website](#) containing a full list of its meetings, Board documents, budget information, enrollment planning information, and presentations. You may email the Board at board@mamkschools.org with any questions or comments.

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, <https://www.mamkschools.org/calendar>.

COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLICITY

The District regularly communicates with members of the community in a number of ways, to sign up for District emails please subscribe on the District News [webpage](#).

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 will receive an One Call Alert to notify you of any closings or delays.

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.** The date of the early dismissal drill is communicated via One Call Alerts and reminders will also be sent in advance of the drill date.
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HEALTH FORM REQUIREMENTS

The Mamaroneck UFSD requires a number of health forms and has immunization requirements for all students. Details of all public health requirements are outlined in the Health Packet. The school nurse will review and approve immunization records prior to the enrollment of new students. The Health Packet, complete information and contacts are available on the District Health Services [webpage](#).

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 Board of Education [website](#) contains a list of all District policies, including those related to student records. The student record policy is accessible [HERE](#).

Notes