



2025-2026 Parent Handbook

Mission: One Team. One Goal. Student Success.

Vision: Empowering people to work together to **Learn**, **Serve**, and **Lead** with integrity.

Updated December 2025:

Morning Arrival Car

Communication – Contact table added

Health/Medical/Allergies – “I need to say home if...”

Welcome to the Murdock Mustangs Family!

At Murdock Elementary, we believe that a strong, connected community is the foundation of a thriving school. As proud Mustangs, we work together—families, staff, and students—to create a warm, inclusive environment where every child feels supported and inspired to grow. This handbook is your guide to understanding key operational expectations to make this school year a meaningful and successful one. Thank you for being an essential part of our Mustang community!

[2025-2026 CCSD Family Information Guide and Student Code of Conduct](#)

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ABSENCES & TARDIES

- You will receive a CTLS message each day your child is absent. Please reply to that message and attach any doctor/dentist notes you may have within 3 days of returning to school. Failure to return the CTLS message will result in the absence being unexcused. Please include the following information:
 - Child's name
 - Teacher's name
 - Date(s) of absence
 - Reason for absence
 - Upload of doctor's excuse, if applicable
- State law governs excused absences. If a child needs to be out for an extended period of time, please notify the teacher and the front office. Please make every effort to schedule medical and dental appointments after school hours to avoid interruption of the instructional program. Communication will come through CTLS each day your child is absent or tardy. Please call the school office if you receive this communication by mistake.
- If a child comes to school after 11:10 am or leaves before 11:10 am, he/she will be counted absent. A child must be here for a minimum of half the school day to be considered present.
- Attendance Referral Process:
 - Three (3) unexcused absences: Teachers will communicate with parents regarding student attendance.
 - Five (5) unexcused absences: A district generated letter will be sent to the parents.
 - Seven (7) unexcused absences: A school social work referral may be generated by principal or principal designee listing specific school-based interventions (phone calls, letters, conferences, etc.) that have occurred prior to making the referral.
 - Ten (10) consecutive unexcused absences from school will result in automatic withdrawal.

Tardies

- Students who arrive to school after 7:50 am will be counted as tardy.
- An adult is required to sign-in any student who is tardy.
- We encourage students to ride the bus in order to avoid ever being tardy.
- Referrals to the school social worker will be made if tardiness becomes excessive.

Studies have shown excessive tardiness has a negative impact on a student's academic performance, social and emotional development, and overall school experience. They miss out on time to get settled in and prepared for the day, in addition to missing time to connect with peers during a less structured portion of the day. Tardiness also disrupts the learning of others in class since the teacher usually has to pause to get the student caught up with the class.

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM (ASP)

- [ELEYO](#) is the ASP website, and it is not connected to ParentVUE. The enrolling parent must register on ELEYO
- Registration fee: \$20
- Daily fee is \$10
- ASP runs from dismissal until 6:00 pm Monday-Friday on the days that school is in session.
- Photo ID is required for student pick up by approved adults on the registration form.
- Late fees accrue at the rate of \$1 per minute beginning at 6:00 pm.
- A nutritious snack is provided daily and is included in the fee.

For additional information about the ASP program, please visit the [ASP page on our school website.](#)

MORNING ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

Morning Arrival: Bus

The bus is the best. Students will never be late and typically arrive before 7:30. Students get time with their friends on the bus and with their peers in class before the academic day begins. We encourage you to allow your child to ride the bus for these reasons, and to help alleviate congestion in the car line.

[Find bus stop, morning pick-up, and afternoon drop-off times](#)

Here Comes the Bus app: [Sign-up Instructions](#)

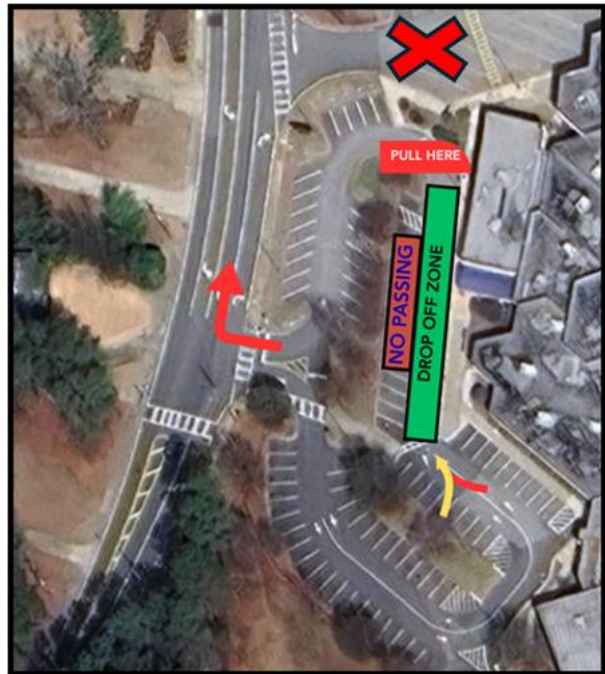
Morning Arrival: Car

At 7:15 am, doors to the school will open. Students should remain in the car and may not enter the building until that time.

All car riders must use the main entrance. **Drop off in the bus port is reserved for those with prior approval from administration. Avoiding a tardy is not an excuse to use the bus port to drop off.**

Students entering the building after 7:50 are considered tardy. If you arrive late and there are no adults outside, we ask that you park and walk your student inside.

- Two lines merge into one using an alternate lane system. There is a staff member to direct this process and to ensure the crosswalk is safe for students.
- Please pull as far forward as possible to drop off your student.
- Students should exit on the right side of the car
- Please help your student to be ready to exit when approaching the drop off area.
- NO PASSING is permitted in the car line. We wait on all students to exit safely, then the line moves forward.
- RIGHT TURN ONLY when exiting
- Morning carpool ends at 7:50 and Murdock staff members must head inside to begin the academic day.



Morning Arrival: Walkers/Bike Riders

All walkers/bike riders should enter through the front doors. The bus port is not staffed after 7:30 and there is not an accessible door.

AFTERNOON DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Afternoon Dismissal

Normal Dismissal Times	Early Release Dismissal Times
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2:10 – All ASP, Club + Walkers• 2:13 – 4/5 Bus + K-5 Car• 2:16 – 2/3 Bus• 2:19 – K/1 Bus• 2:23 – Clubs to Rooms/Buses Roll	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 12:20 – All ASP, Club, Walkers• 12:22 – 4/5 Bus + K-5 Car• 12:24 – 2/3 Bus• 12:26 – K/1 Bus• 12:30 – Clubs to Rooms/Buses Roll

Afternoon Dismissal: Car Line

- Please do not line up for the afternoon car line until 1:30 or later.
- Have your barcode (PVUE - Student Information – Dismissal Changes) ready – either phone or paper.
- If you have more than one child to pick up, you will need to display a barcode for each child.
- NO LEFT TURN when exiting the school parking lot.
- Parents should alternate entry into the parking lot from Murdock Rd - one from the right turn, one from the left turn lane. Cooperation is essential to the efficiency of the line.

Afternoon Dismissal: Walkers/Bike Riders

- Starting this year, walkers will require a barcode ((PVUE - Student Information – Dismissal Changes) as well.
- If your child is 9 or older, and you'd like them to walk/ride home on their own, you'll need to send an email to Christina.Mills@cobbk12.org confirming this.
- The email must come from the enrolling parent and will serve for the entire year.

Dismissal Changes

- A dismissal change can only be submitted through ParentVue and must be done before 1:30.
- You are welcome to call the front office to confirm any change you attempted to make.
- Remember, transportation decisions are made by the enrolling parent and *only* communicated through ParentVue. **Emails or CTLS messages to teachers or the front office regarding dismissal changes will not be accepted.**
- We cannot take the word of the student in any circumstance. We always adhere to PVUE.

Early Check-Out

- Student checkouts must be completed by 1:45 p.m. on regular school days and 11:45 a.m. on early release days.
- It is important that these deadlines are enforced as the front office begins dismissal procedures then.
- Identification will be checked for all student dismissals.
- Students will be released only to those authorized in PVUE, and this is managed by the enrolling adult.

Emergency Dismissal/Inclement Weather

Make sure to complete this portion of dismissal information in PVUE.

CAFETERIA and BIRTHDAYS

- Lunch visits are by sign-up only due to space limitations.
- The sign-up link can be found in each edition of the Murdock Weekly sent by the principal.
- Visitor lunch tables are indicated in the cafeteria.
- Visitors may not invite additional students to join them at these tables.

Birthday Treats

- The preferred method for birthday treats is to purchase them through the cafeteria. This is the safest method, and it supports our self-sustaining cafeteria. Email our cafeteria manager, Dismery.Alberto@CobbK12.org with as much advanced notice as possible to arrange this. More information about options can be found here: [Classroom Celebrations](#)
- If you choose to provide your own treats, they must be store-bought with a visible or known ingredient list and should be ready to serve – either individually wrapped or pre-cut into the number needed. This procedure is in place out of abundance of caution for students' food allergies. Donuts and cupcakes are examples that meet these criteria.
- **Birthday treats CANNOT be shared with other classes.**

Birthday Invitations

- Teachers can distribute birthday invitations provided there is one for each student in the class.
- Any select invitations or distribution outside the classroom will need to go directly through parents or through PTA room parents.

Extras at Lunch

Students are allowed to buy extras each time they go through the lunch line. In order to regulate the type and frequency of extras purchased, the enrolling parent should discuss expectations with the child and monitor the spending on the account. Alternative, the enrolling parent can email our cafeteria manager: Dismery.Alberto@CobbK12.org to set parameters for the student.

Breakfast

The Murdock cafeteria will not provide breakfast this year.

CELL PHONE & SMART WATCHES

Cell phones must be turned off and in a backpack if brought to school. Parents will be notified if a student does not adhere to this.

While we could have the same expectation for smart watches, we are content to allow students to wear, unless they become a distraction. Sending and receiving texts during the day can be disruptive to the learning environment and could lead to parent contact and/or the removal of the privilege to wear the device.

CLUBS

Clubs are not directly affiliated with CCSD or Murdock ES. If you enroll your student in a club, please ensure PVUE is updated with correct dismissal information for the duration of the club. ASP registration and fees are still applicable if your child needs to attend before or after a club. There are never clubs on early release days, and any changes to club schedules (e.g. cancellations) will come directly from the club itself.

[Club Information on the Murdock Website](#)

COMMUNICATION

Our front office staff is here to assist you in any way we can. Please refer to the [calendar on the website](#) for important dates and scheduled events. You are able to subscribe to our calendar directly.

If you would like to get in touch with your child's teacher, the best way is via CTLS Parent. You should always hear back within 24 hours, and please feel free to reach out to an administrator if you do not.

Contacts

Area of Responsibility	Contact
K-2 Administrator	Carey.Callahan@cobbk12.org
3-5 Administrator	Christina.Mills@cobbk12.org
Special Education	Osman.Khan@cobbk12.org
504s	K, 1, 5: Ally.Martin@cobbk12.org 2,3,4: Anastasia.West@cobbk12.org
RTI (Response to Intervention)	Vanessa.Choate@cobbk12.org
Gifted	SARAH.COVINGTON@cobbk12.org
AC (Advanced Content)	Carey.Callahan@cobbk12.org Christina.Mills@cobbk12.org

Here is a table that lays out the different types of communication you can expect from Murdock.

Communication	Purpose	Frequency
Website	To answer any parent question and help prospective parents get a sense for our school community	Updated as needed – We welcome and need suggestions on improving this resource
Murdock Weekly	To provide a glimpse into Murdock Elementary and prepare the school community for the week ahead	Every Thursday @ 6pm
CTLS Posts: Class Newsletter	Prepare parents and students for the week ahead, while providing conversation points and for material already covered. Use templates/studio editor to avoid attachments	Shared on the same day and time weekly
CTLS Posts: Counselors, Library, Specialists	To provide updates from staff/departments that your child interacts with frequently and keep communication channels to all staff for parents	Varies: 1x/month, 1x/quarter, as needed
CTLS Messages	1:1 communication with the teacher or staff member that should be responded to within 24 hours	As needed
CTLS Texts/Voice Calls	To provide timely reminders or inform of late changes	As needed
Instagram/Facebook	Share the fun and exciting things happening at Murdock. Not typically information or reminders – just positive moments from the school	3x week

FORGOTTEN ITEMS

You are welcome to drop off school related items to the front office up until school begins at 7:50. After that, no late assignments or personal items will be accepted except the following: glasses, lunches, coats and medicine. This policy allows us to protect classroom instruction time and limit unnecessary interruptions.








Students will not be allowed back into the school following dismissal for forgotten items, such as homework, backpacks, etc.

*Special circumstances do arise, and the front office will use appropriate discretion at that time.

HEALTH/MEDICAL/ALLERGIES

Please communicate directly with our school nurse, Susan.Murphy@CobbK12.org with any and all concerns in this realm.

I NEED TO STAY HOME IF:

I HAVE A FEVER  TEMPERATURE OF 99.5 OR HIGHER WITH OTHER SYMPTOMS TEMPERATURE 100.4 OR HIGHER WITHOUT SYMPTOMS	I AM VOMITING  WITHIN THE PAST 24 HOURS	I HAVE DIARRHEA  WITHIN THE PAST 24 HOURS	I HAVE A RASH  BODY RASH WITH ITCHING OR FEVER	I HAVE HEAD LICE  ITCHY HEAD, ACTIVE HEAD LICE	I HAVE AN EYE INFECTION  REDNESS, ITCHING AND/OR PUS DRAINING FROM EYE	I HAVE BEEN IN THE HOSPITAL  HOSPITAL STAY AND/OR EMERGENCY ROOM VISIT
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I AM READY TO GO BACK TO SCHOOL WHEN I AM:

Fever free without the assistance of medication for 24 hours (i.e. Tylenol, Motrin, Advil, etc.)	Free from vomiting for 24 hours	Free from diarrhea for 24 hours	Free from rash, itching, or fever. I have been evaluated by my doctor if needed.	Treated with appropriate lice treatment at home.	Free from drainage and/or have been evaluated by my doctor if needed.	Released by my medical provider to return to school.
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If your child has a sensitivity to a food, not a documented allergy with a doctor, you can communicate that concern directly to our cafeteria manager Dismery.Alberto@CobbK12.org.

LINKS & APPS

Yes, there are a lot of these. The county has compiled this excellent resource to help [parents organize their digital resources](#).

Simplifying Cobb Digital Resources for Families

The following are digital resources often used by Cobb County School District families. All digital resources, with the exception of Eleyo are accessible through the [web](#), the [Apple App Store](#), and/or the [Google Play Store](#).

Digital Resource	Download the App	This resource helps me:	How do I get started?	How do I get help?
	 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> View child's official grades View class schedule View attendance Change dismissal View child's report card Update contact information Shortcut to apply for Meal Benefits and MySchoolBucks Access student field trip permission forms View athletic registration View Student Device Liability 	http://parentvue.cobbk12.org 	bit.ly/pv-support ParentVUE Information • English • En Español • Em Português For additional ParentVUE support contact your local school.
	 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receive communication from district, school and teacher(s) Message teacher(s) Access child's Digital Classrooms Locate feedback and score for digital CTLS assignments View certain State and District assessment results View Attendance Notifications Send Absence Notes Conference Week Sign-Ups 	ctlsparent.cobbk12.org 	bit.ly/ctlsparent-support How to Log In to CTLS Parent • English • En Español • Em Português For additional CTLS Parent support: Email: CTLSParent.support@cobbk12.org Call: 770-426-3330

	 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make an online payment for various school fees such as field trips and yearbooks 	www.mypaymentsplus.com 	bit.ly/mpp-support For My Payments Plus support use the website above to view: • FAQ • Live Chat feature
	 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> View child's lunch balance Add money to child's lunch account Apply for Meal Benefits 	www.myschoolbucks.com 	bit.ly/msb-support Language can be changed in upper-right corner. MySchoolBucks support videos and document: https://bit.ly/msb-videos
	 Eleyo is mobile friendly web app.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Register elementary child for Cobb's After School Program (ASP) Pay and manage child's ASP account 	https://cobbk12-ce.eleyo.com 	bit.ly/eleyo-support Registration & Contract Creation • English • En Español • Em Português

PTA and MURDOCK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FOUNDATION (MESF)

At Murdock Elementary, we are proud of the strong partnership between our families and school through the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and the Murdock School Foundation. These organizations play a vital role in enriching our students' educational experiences by supporting classroom initiatives, organizing events, and funding programs that go beyond the basics. We encourage every Mustang family to get involved—whether by volunteering, attending meetings, or contributing ideas. Your time, energy, and voice help strengthen our school community and ensure every child has the opportunity to thrive. Together, we make Murdock a place where learning is celebrated, and every student feels proud to be a Mustang!

[PTA](#)

[MESF](#)

VISITORS & CLASSROOM VOLUNTEERS

- All visitors, including parents and volunteers, are required to show identification and must check in with the front office.
- All visitors must wear a visitor or volunteer badge while on school property. This includes our building and outdoor areas.
- If you are here without a badge, please do not be offended if a member of the staff asks you for your identification and purpose for visiting. You will be asked to report to the front office. This is to protect our children from unauthorized visitors.
- Classroom volunteers will be pre-arranged through the classroom teacher, PTA, or MESF
- Visitors should only go to the specific areas they are scheduled for.
- Classroom volunteers are still considered 'visitors' to the school and must complete a separate FERPA form each year.
- Pets are not allowed in the building at any time. Please contact the principal if there is an issue surrounding a service or support animal

