



**Student Handbook
2020-21**

**Principal – Adam Bryson
Assistant Principal – Christy Robinson**

Mission

To Assure Academic and Personal Success for Each Child.

Welcome to John Pittard Elementary School, “the Pride of Murfreesboro City School.” We sincerely hope that our Student/Family Handbook will serve as an informational guide when you have questions regarding policies, procedures, rules, and regulations. We want you to share in the genuine excitement that is JPE. The faculty and staff strive to provide the best possible education for every student. The strength and unifying ingredient of this school is the mutual commitment of students, teachers, staff, and parents. By working together, we can accomplish great things!

**SCHOOL HOURS: 8:30 – 3:30
School Doors Open at 8:15 am
“ESP” students may begin arriving at 6:00 am**

Our Commitment to You:

- We will provide a positive, safe, and secure environment for your student so he/she will excel to his/her highest potential.
- The school environment will promote optimal social, emotional, and intellectual growth. Basic skills will be strengthened through research-based instructional practices such as Reading Intervention, personalized computer programs, and a Balanced Literacy approach to reading instruction that provide for developmentally appropriate learning activities at all levels.
- Through the utilization of on-going assessments and close examination of data, appropriate educational programs will be provided that meet the individual needs of students. We will monitor each student’s learning on a timely basis and provide additional time and support until the student becomes proficient.
- The school, parents, and community will help guide the decision-making process through a shared responsibility for the support of the school’s mission and policies.
- High expectations for student behavior will promote good citizenship and a high performing school environment. Students will show a high degree of respect for each other.

Attendance

ARRIVAL: The school day begins at 8:30 a.m. The school doors do not open until 8:15 a.m. Walkers and car riders may arrive any time after 8:15 a.m. The classrooms are not opened until 8:15 a.m. It is our policy to have **no** unsupervised children at any time. If you need to come inside the building (to sign in a tardy child, for example), please park in a designated parking space before heading inside. Please use caution when driving through the parking lot and watch for children. Cell phone usage is prohibited while driving on school property. Students riding a bus must come directly inside and wait until dismissed by the persons in charge.

ATTENDANCE: The Attendance Act requires that all children must attend some type of day school until the age of 18. Children may not be kept at home except for the following conditions:

1. The child's personal illness
2. Illness of immediate family member (doctor's note may be required)
3. Extreme weather conditions
4. Death in the family
5. Special religious holidays
6. Other circumstances (based on principal's judgment)

Students must have a signed, dated note from the parent or guardian stating the reason for the absence. You can also email your teacher or our attendance clerk at diana.stacey@cityschools.net. A doctor's note is also acceptable. This must be done for **each** absence. This note must be sent to your child's teacher. The office cannot go back earlier than the current grading period to mark an absence as excused UNLESS you have a doctor's note. Absences other than for reasons stated above or without a signed, dated note are considered unexcused. Ten unexcused absences will be treated as truancy, and a petition will be filed with the court system. If a student is absent for an extended period of time, parents are strongly encouraged to arrange for schoolwork to be picked up and completed. A child who does not attend at least ½ day (3 hours 15 minutes) is considered absent. Additionally, if absences become excessive (even those excused with parent notes), the principal will require doctor's notes or pursue truancy proceedings. Routine attendance is essential to academic and personal success!

TARDIES: The school day begins at 8:30 a.m. To be considered "on time," your child should be in the classroom by 8:30. If a child arrives in the classroom after 8:30, he/she is considered tardy. Tardies are reported on the attendance report by the classroom teachers. Any tardy impacts the students' ability to learn as teaching time is lost. Early dismissals are counted as tardies. If your child is tardy, you must accompany them inside to sign in. This is for your child's safety.

EARLY DISMISSALS: Please help us provide the best possible learning environment for students. Anytime there are early dismissals, this causes disruption to the classroom learning time. Additionally, students miss the summary of the day's learning and final instructions. Please try to schedule doctor and dentist appointments after school. **Students who leave early are considered tardy.** If your student must miss school due to an appointment with a doctor or a dentist, please send the excuse note to school the next morning with your child.

ARRIVAL PROCEDURE:

JPE doors open for children at 8:15 a.m. each morning. Supervision of students is not provided before this time unless the student is enrolled in the Extended School Program. No students, other than those enrolled in the Extended School Program (ESP), should arrive prior to 8:15 a.m.

Students Arriving by Car:

Parents driving their children to school may drop them off each morning on the left side of the school building (B Hall), rear side of the school building (D Hall), or the front of school building in the carpool loop. Adult supervision is provided between 8:15 and 8:30 a.m. Drivers should pull up to the curb and drop the children off by the sidewalk next to the carpool loop. Children should exit the car on the passenger side to avoid stepping out into traffic. Drivers are asked to pull forward to allow all cars to access the sidewalk, as there may be a line of cars waiting to drop off children.

PLEASE NOTE: The parking lot in the front of the building is reserved for parking only, and may not be used as a drop off location.

Students Arriving by Bus:

Students transported to school on buses begin arriving at approximately 8:15 a.m. The buses drop off students in front of the gym entrance to the school building. Staff members carefully monitor the arrival of ALL students.

DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

The instructional day at John Pittard Elementary School ends at 3:30 p.m., following afternoon announcements. Carpool lines will begin dismissing students at 3:30. Staff members carefully supervise the car rider pick-up areas at all times. Car riders will meet their rides at the carpool loops.

Changes in Dismissal: If you need to change your child's dismissal on a particular day, a note signed by the parent or guardian is required. If the dismissal change is unplanned parents need to call the front office to let our office staff know. Changes by phone must be in by 3:00.

Pick-up procedures are as follows:**Car Dismissal:**

Car enters carpool loop and displays car-rider sign in front window.

Please note: The car-rider sign created by the school is required and helpful in creating an environment of safety and order. Signs are provided by the school, and families may request additional signs. If you are a carpooling family, please let the office know. Any parent picking up a child without an official JPE car rider dismissal sign, will have to park in the lot in the front of the building, sign in, show valid identification, and wait until the conclusion of afternoon dismissal.

Bus Dismissal:

Students traveling home on buses will be called to the gym. They will line up according to their buses and be escorted outside and onto the buses by staff members. The Department of Transportation will not permit children to ride on buses to which they are not assigned on a daily basis.

Bike Riders and Walkers: Only students in 2nd – 6th grade may be walkers or bike riders, and this choice should be noted by parents on the student's registration form under the transportation section. Students in kindergarten or 1st grade will not be allowed to walk or ride their bikes home unless they are escorted by an older sibling in 3rd – 6th grade. A student's route home must have access to sidewalks and be free of crossing major roads.

*Students crossing DeJarnette must do so where a crossing guard is provided.

Arrival and dismissal times at John Pittard are busy times. We are asking your help to ensure the safety of our students in the morning and the afternoon. Please review these arrival and dismissal procedures with your children. The procedures have been designed to ensure the safety of all students at our school. Your patience, courtesy, and willingness to work with the school will assist

us in well-organized and safe arrival and dismissal. Please contact the school at 615-396-0240 if you have any questions or concerns regarding these procedures.

Discipline

All children are expected to follow the rules of John Pittard Elementary School. The rules have been designed in the best interest of the children and staff to ensure a positive learning experience. We have adopted a school-wide discipline program in which we promote positive behavior in our students. Each teacher instructs and discusses the rules and positive behavior concepts with the entire class. Teachers, staff, and students are expected to follow these rules. If a child becomes disruptive in the classroom, his or her behavior must be corrected. This is the job of the teacher, parent and school administration working together as a team.

The following is a list of behaviors that are NOT acceptable at JPE.

- Biting
- Bullying
- Damage to school or private property
- Leaving classroom, cafeteria, school building, etc. without permission
- Disrespect (to adults or other children)
- Drugs, alcohol, or tobacco possession or use
- Fighting or other forms of violence
- Horseplay
- Spitting
- Harassment
- Stealing
- Possession of weapons
- Misbehavior in restrooms, cafeteria, hallways, or other special areas
- Misbehavior on bus (including field trips)
- Profanity (verbally or via gestures)
- Theft
- Threatening others
- Violation of classroom rules
- Other behaviors deemed disruptive to the educational process by the school administration

The following items are NOT allowed at JPE:

- Toy guns or weapons of any kind
- Tobacco in any form
- Laser light pointers
- Lighters and/or matches.
- Toys (unless permission is given by classroom teacher)

If brought to school, these items will immediately be confiscated, brought to the administration, and returned ONLY to the parent.

Violation of the established rules and expectations of behavior may be subject to Disciplinary Action and could include but are not limited to the following:

1. Warning
2. Time Out
3. Withholding of Privileges
4. Parent Contact (phone calls or conference)
5. Counselor Referrals
6. Office Referral
7. In-School Suspension (ISS)
8. Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)
9. Functional Behavioral Assessment
10. Outside agency including Murfreesboro Police Department
11. Other consequences as deemed appropriate by school administration.

Rules for Bus Conduct: Riding a bus to and from school in the Murfreesboro City School System is a privilege not to be taken lightly. All must understand and observe good conduct, courtesy, cooperation, and respect for the authority of the bus driver.

Prohibited Items:

- Food, drinks, chewing gum, tobacco (any form), or alcoholic beverages
- Glass or other breakable items, flower arrangements, balloons/balloon bouquets
- Insects, reptiles, or other animals
- Weapons, explosive devices, harmful drugs, or chemicals
- Perfumes or fingernail polish

Bus Behavior

- Students shall not open windows unless asked to do so by the driver.
- Students must keep hands, feet, arms, and head inside the bus.
- Students shall not throw objects on the bus or out the windows.
- Students shall not distract the driver with loud talking, laughing, fighting, or unnecessary distractions.
- Students shall not litter.
- Aisles must be kept clear of books, bags, lunches, instruments, and school projects. Parents must make arrangements to transport items too large to be held on the student's lap.
- Students shall not use inappropriate language or gestures. It is unacceptable to use language or gestures that are lewd, obscene, profane, or in general offensive and objectionable.
- Students shall not be disobedient. It is unacceptable to be defiant or refuse to obey and follow a legitimate request, command, rule, regulation, directive, or order.
- Students shall not be disrespectful, discourteous, impolite, rude, insubordinate, or surly.
- Students shall not be abusive or aggressive. It is unacceptable to mistreat, misuse, hurt by treating badly, demean, insult, intimidate, extort, mock, jeer, ridicule, threaten, or use excessive force.
- Students shall not damage school property.
- School supplies such as pens, pencils, markers, crayons, or sharp objects of any kind must be contained in the student's backpack/book bag at all times.
- Students shall not touch the emergency door, exit controls, or any other safety equipment on the bus unless directed by the bus driver.

Misbehavior on the School Bus

- When a student misbehaves on a bus for the first time, the driver will explain to the student the necessity of good behavior.
- If after talks and warnings, if the student continues to violate the rules, the driver will inform the student that the rule violation will be reported to the principal. This report will include the use of a written form that lists the offense and action taken by the principal.
- When a student is not allowed to ride the bus, the principal will inform the parents of the penalty, the reason for it, and how long the penalty will last. The parents become responsible for seeing that their child gets to and from school safely.
- If a student damages any part of the bus, the student's parents may be held financially responsible.

School-Wide Discipline Plan

School Mission:

At John Pittard we strive to maximize learning by providing an atmosphere that is safe, nurturing, and positive for all students. It is our goal for students to take the responsibility in creating a climate that is conducive to academic excellence and civic awareness.

Classroom Mission:

Our mission is to ensure that every student feels they can be successful. We believe that "fair" does not mean doing the same thing for all students. It means meeting the needs of every student. Each child will be challenged to work to his or her potential and strive to go beyond. We believe it is important to teach children how to think on many different levels and take that skill with them when they move forward. Every child will come to class knowing that they are important, special, and have something to offer. The classroom is a safe environment where students are free to try, share, and achieve excellence in every endeavor.

Belief:

We believe children need parents and teachers who set firm, consistent, and positive expectations while providing warmth and support that nourishes academic and social growth and ultimately encourages excellence! Students must know exactly what is expected of them and be given the opportunity to practice these skills. In an effort to promote this and maintain a safe and orderly environment, John Pittard Elementary School will implement a consistent school-wide Discipline Plan.

To culture a positive learning environment at JPE, our school-wide behavior goal will be to emphasize being respectful, responsible, ready to learn, and safe. We hope to equip our students with characteristics that will aid them in being successful members of society.

* Please focus on these four traits outside of school as well.

Classroom General Procedures:

Each classroom teacher will establish general procedures, class rules, a Behavior Plan, and Discipline System for the classroom that is specific to their grade level! These rules and procedures will be sent home at the beginning of the year. (Ex. Class rules/expectations and how you handle any consequences)

Bullying

MCS Policy Title: Anti-Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying, and Cyber-bullying Of Student

Bullying is any **unwanted aggressive behavior(s)** by another youth or group of youths who are not siblings or current dating partners that **involves an observed or perceived power imbalance** and is **repeated multiple times or is highly likely to be repeated**. Bullying may inflict harm or distress on the targeted youth including physical, psychological, social, or educational harm. (CDC's Uniform Definition of Bullying)

Tennessee's Legal Definition of "Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying"

Any act that substantially interferes with a student's educational benefits, opportunities or performance and:

If the act takes place on school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity, on school-provided equipment or transportation, or at any official school bus stop and has the effect of:

- Physically harming a student or damaging a student's property;
- Knowingly placing a student or students in reasonable fear of physical harm to the student or damage to the student's property;
- Causing emotional distress to a student or students; or
- Creating a hostile educational environment.

John Pittard's NO Bullying Rules:

- We will not bully others.
- We will try to help students who are bullied.
- We will try to include students who are left out.
- If we know that someone is being bullied, we will tell an adult at school and an adult at home.

Bullying Prevention Program

- *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (training and implementation of)*
- *School-wide rules prohibiting bullying*
- *Class meetings to address bullying prevention and promote character development*
- *Appropriate responses to bullying behavior*

Reporting and Investigation Procedures

- Principal or designee is responsible for investigating and resolving complaints
- Principal/designee shall initiate investigation within 48 hours of receipt of the complaint
- Principal/designee shall immediately notify parent/legal guardian when student is involved in an act of harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber-bullying and inform them of the availability of counseling and support services.
- Principal/designee shall provide information on district counseling & support services
- Principal/designee shall refer students involved in an act of harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber-bullying to the appropriate school counselor when deemed necessary.
- All investigations shall be completed and appropriate intervention taken within 20 calendar days from the receipt of the initial report.
- Investigation shall include:
 - Interview of alleged offender
 - Interview of the complainant and/or victim, if different person
 - Interview of possible witnesses
- Following any required investigation, the principal or designee shall report the findings, along with any disciplinary action taken, to the director of schools and the chair of the local board of education.

Dress Code

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

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

The following items are considered inappropriate and unacceptable for school dress:

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

Extended School Program

Before- and After-school care is provided through our Extended School Program, from 6:00 until 8:15 in the morning and from 3:30-6:00 in the afternoon, Monday through Friday. Children may stay for both sessions or only attend one session, either morning or afternoon. Information about **ESP** options and fees is available if you are interested.

Field Trips

Field trips will be included in the learning experiences at JPE. These field trips will be teacher-supervised and are in correlation to a unit of study. Adequate notice will be given to the parent and the school will provide transportation. Students must ride the school bus to and from the trip. Each child will pay for his/her share of the trip, and a permission slip signed by the parent or guardian is required for attendance. *No refunds can be given for field trips missed due to student absence.* Siblings will not be allowed on field trips.

Food Service/Cafeteria

Universal free breakfast and lunch is available to all students. The breakfast program starts at 8:15 and will be served in the classroom. Students may purchase a la carte items. Parents shall put all money and checks in sealed envelopes with the child's name, teacher's name, and the purpose of the money on the outside of the envelope. All children are expected to eat lunch. Students may bring their own lunches if they choose. Parents are also invited to eat lunch with their child. Due to safety procedures, parents will not be allowed to walk with their child back to their classroom after lunch.

NO canned or bottled soft drinks should be sent to school.

NO candy should be sent to school for lunch or snack.

IN-School Suspension

An In-School Suspension (ISS) program is used in the rare instance we have students whose behavior will not allow others to learn and/or the teacher to teach.

ISS is a consequence assigned by school administration ONLY.

Instruction

John Pittard teachers and students will be exploring various content areas (reading, language arts, math, science, music, art, health/wellness, etc.) each day. We believe your child's learning atmosphere is of the utmost importance and should be protected. So, to avoid interruptions to valuable learning time, please limit doctor and dentist appointments to after school hours. Parents may drop off items or personal messages for students at the JPE office. Parents will not be allowed to take items to their child's classroom, so as to protect instructional time for all learners. School personnel will see that the students are informed of the message or receive the necessary item at the appropriate time. Please assist us in limiting interruptions and protecting instructional time. Unexpected visits can be distracting as well. Please schedule all visits with the teacher or front office staff.

Reporting Student Progress

Parents and teachers working together maximize the potential for success of each student. Therefore, it is necessary that communication be a continuous process between home and school. Faculty and staff welcome and encourage communication. Report cards are distributed four times each year. Parent conferences are scheduled twice a year. In order to meet the needs of each student and present information consistently, only one time slot will be scheduled for each student during parent conferences. The teacher and/or parent may request additional conferences if necessary.

Academic Acknowledgement

Students are constantly rewarded for their hard work and progress at John Pittard. To further acknowledge the academic success of students there are two distinguished groups that the students may become a member of through their hard work and effort.

Honor Roll – A student must earn all A's and B's.

Principal's List – A student must earn all A's.

Behavior does not impact Principal's List/Honor Roll

Illness or Injury

Any child who becomes ill or is injured at school is sent to the school office/Nurse. The office staff/Nurse will take the child's temperature and clean and bandage cuts and scrapes, and apply ice if necessary. Parents are contacted when a child needs further attention. Parents are expected to pick up children within **one hour** of being notified that the child is ill or injured. Failure to pick up sick children in a timely manner may result in contacts with the Murfreesboro Police Department or Rutherford County Department of Human Services. **It is extremely important, for this reason, that the office be informed of any change in home, work, or cell phone numbers throughout the school year.** Please do not send your child to school if he/she is ill. All children should be fever, vomit, and diarrhea free (without the aid of medication) for **at least 24 hours before returning to**

school. This is to protect every student from the unnecessary spread of germs. We want all of our students to be well and able to learn.

Medication: In order for the office staff to administer prescription medication to students, the proper medical forms MUST be filled out by the doctor and parents and filed in the school office. NO medication will be administered without the proper paperwork on file. ALL prescription medication will be stored in the school office, NOT left with the student. Any medicine needed during school hours should be given through the office (including cough drops, inhalers, etc).

Parental Concerns

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

Parent Involvement/ Parent Teacher Association

Parents are expected and encouraged to play an active role in their student's education. Parents are urged to volunteer to work throughout the school. Classroom teachers and special area personnel need help throughout the year in a variety of ways. So, join the PTO and get involved. Our children and teachers need you.

Parties/Invitations/Deliveries

Invitations to and/or reminders regarding personal parties will not be distributed at school unless they are given to every child (every boy and/or every girl) in the class. Due to safety issues, **flower and balloon deliveries are not to be sent to school** and will be returned to the florist/vendor. In accordance with Murfreesboro City School Board policy, classes may have two parties per year. These parties are usually planned and coordinated by the room parent and the teacher. *Birthday parties cannot be accommodated.* When a child has a birthday, he/she will be recognized during morning announcements and will receive a treat from the Administrative Team!

Playground

Classroom or special area teachers will supervise students who use the playground during the school day. Instruction for safe play will be given and enforced. The same rules will be in effect for our **ESP** programs.

Returned Checks

Returned checks to any school account will be charged a \$15 service fee.

Safety Drills

Periodic safety drills (tornado, fire, medical emergencies, Code Red, etc.) will be held throughout the school year. During such drills, the classroom and/or special area teacher supervises the students.

School Pictures

Each year individual and group pictures will be made. Pictures are taken in the fall and spring of the school year. Parents are notified in advance of the dates and costs of these pictures. Purchase of pictures is optional. All student pictures will appear in the yearbook, regardless of purchase.

Visitors

Anyone other than a JPE student or staff member is considered to be a **VISITOR** and must enter the building at the front entrance and report to the office, present a valid state ID, sign in and receive a visitor's pass. Before leaving the building, visitors must return to the entrance desk to sign out. All exterior doors are locked at 8:30 a.m. each day and will remain locked throughout the day. Please do NOT enter your child's classroom through the teacher's back door. If you need to meet with a teacher for any reason, please schedule an appointment. Visitors will NOT be allowed to interrupt instructional time. Please utilize the provided parking spaces when parking on campus. PARENTS AND/OR STUDENTS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO ENTER CLASSROOMS TO RETRIEVE ITEMS LEFT BEHIND ONCE THE TEACHER HAS LEFT FOR THE DAY. Only students may use the playgrounds until 6:00 PM each day. After 6:00 PM, the community can utilize the playgrounds.

Statement of Non-Discrimination

The Murfreesboro City School System does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, marital status, disability or veteran status in programs or activities or employment opportunities and benefits as required by Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Services available include elementary grades K-6, preschool classes, special education, family resource centers, ESL/ELL, Title I, and extended school programs (LEAP).

Inquiries or complaints regarding compliance with the Title VI, Section 504, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Title VII, Title IX, or issues dealing with discrimination/harassment (sexual, racial, ethnic, religious) should be directed to our central administrative office:

Murfreesboro City Schools Administrative Offices

2552 South Church Street
Murfreesboro, TN 37127
Phone: 615-893-2313
Web: <http://cityschools.net>

For additional information or inquiries regarding the Title VI or Title IX compliance issues contact the Tennessee Department of Education or the United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights at the addresses below. Or if you feel that you have been discriminated against, a complaint may be sent to:

Tennessee Department of Education
Office for Civil Rights
710 James Robertson Parkway
Andrew Johnson Tower, 6th Floor
Nashville, TN 37243
Phone: 615-741-2731 or 615-253-1550
Email: TiffanyBakerCox@state.tn.us
Web: <http://www.tennessee.gov/education/civilrights.shtml>

Office of Civil Rights U.S. Department of Education
61 Forsyth Street S.W., Suite 19T70
Atlanta, GA 30303-3104
Phone: 404-562-6350; TDD 404-331-7236
Email: OCR_Atlanta@ed.gov