

# **New Kid on the Block:**

## **A Guide for New Students to McMurray Elementary School**



*Updated summer 2015*

# Welcome to McMurray Elementary School!



**In this handbook, you will discover information about our school. You can find out about the library, what to bring to class, lunch, recess, and much more!**

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# **Arrival and Dismissal**

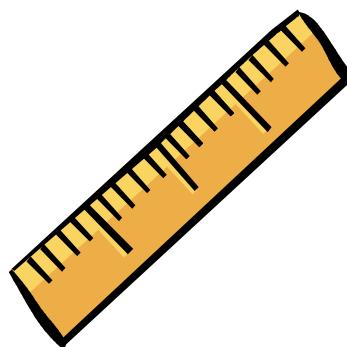
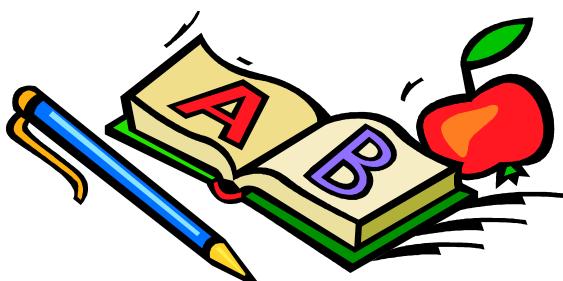
**When you arrive at McMurray Elementary School, it will be about 8:45 A.M. You have to be in your classroom by the time the bell rings, at 8:55 A.M., or you will be marked tardy unless your bus is late. If you are tardy, you will need a note from home explaining why you are late and you will need to stop in the main office for a late pass to class. Homeroom period is from 8:55 – 9:02 A.M., during which time the McMurray Morning News will be broadcast on the TV in your homeroom. This news broadcast, with 6<sup>th</sup> grade students as anchors and the camera crew, provides important announcements, character quotes, anti-bullying tips, and the word of the day. The school does the Pledge of Allegiance together. Student birthdays and the lunch menu are posted on the scrolling announcements as well.**

**When it is time for dismissal, you should be packed up and ready to leave by 3:28 P.M. At 3:30 P.M., the dismissal bell will ring, which signals that the school day is over. Your teacher will dismiss you from your class. If your teacher has bus duty, you may have to go downstairs a little bit earlier. Walkers and car riders are dismissed separately. Car riders will need to bring their note or pass to the Car Rider Exit, which is in the hallway near the art room. Teacher or other students can direct you to this exit if you are a car rider. You are not permitted to bring a friend on your bus with you. If you want to bring a friend home, you can both be a car rider.**



# **What to Bring**

**You will need to bring lots of things to school each day. First of all, you need to bring a backpack to carry all of your supplies and belongings. In your backpack you need to keep your homework or accordion folder. If you had homework in any of your workbooks make sure that they are in your backpack. Using your assignment book will help you to stay organized and remember your homework. You need to remember your student I.D number so you can buy a lunch/snack. If you are not buying a lunch, you will need to pack your own lunch. You can find a school supply list for each grade on the McMurray Elementary website.**



# Dress Code

**McMurray Elementary School has established an appropriate dress code for the students. Below is a summary of the dress code. A more complete list of dress code rules can be found in the McMurray School Handbook.**

- **Clothing worn to school should not be ripped, torn, or have holes in it. This includes jeans.**
- **Tank style shirts are permitted as long as the shoulders are covered by at least three fingers width. "Racer-back" style shirts, camisoles, spaghetti straps, shirts with cut-outs, etc. are not permitted unless worn under a cardigan or shrug which covers the shoulders.**
- **Shorts and skirts are permitted if they are thumb-tip length or longer.**
- **Hats and bandanas are not to be worn in the building.**
- **Footwear must provide protection and stay securely on your feet. That means no flip-flops.**



**No**



**Yes**

# **Bus Rules**

**IN THE MORNING:** To find your bus stop and what time it comes, go on the school district website. Be at your bus stop five minutes before your bus comes. Don't fool around at the bus stop. Stay on the side of the road. Do not stand on the road.

**ON THE BUS:** Find a seat and stay seated. Don't shout on the bus. You may talk quietly to the person seated with you. When your window is down, DON'T PUT ANYTHING OUT THE WINDOW, including your body. Treat everyone with kindness and respect as you ride the bus. School rules also apply on the bus!

**IN THE AFTERNOON:** Remember your bus number. Find the location of your bus in front of the school. Your bus will be in the same spot in front of the school each day. If your bus isn't there, wait patiently until your bus comes. You will have to wait until your bus driver gives you a signal to come onto the bus. Don't run to the bus because there are lots of other kids going to the bus, too.



# **Lunch Time and Recess**

**One daily procedure that you will need to learn about is lunch. You go to lunch every day at a scheduled time depending on your grade. McMurray uses a computerized system for lunch. Your parents can go online to load money onto your account. All you need to do is type in your student ID number at the cash register. A “kid favorite” at lunch is the snack bar. The snack bar is open during the last half of lunch, and the lunch monitors will let you know when you are allowed to visit the snack bar. You will have twenty minutes for lunch, and then you will either be dismissed for recess or will be picked up by your teacher to return to class.**

**One popular activity during the school day is recess. Some classes have recess before lunch and other classes have it after lunch. They call these A and B lunches and recesses. We also have great playground equipment with many swings and the new X-Wave. The playground rules are: do not jump off the swings; do not go on the field if it has been raining; and listen to the monitors. Make sure you do not play tackle football. In case of a rainy or a very cold day, we have indoor recess in the classrooms. The indoor rules are: do not run around, do not yell and stay in your classroom. Your teacher will tell you what you can and cannot do.**



# Fourth Grade

**It's exciting to meet all the new teachers when you come to fourth grade at McMurray Elementary School! In fourth grade, you will read a lot of new novels. Just a few of them are Sarah Plain and Tall, Skylark, Charlotte's Web, and of course, Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing. Science is very interesting because you will study weather, oceans, and the layers of the atmosphere while doing many exciting experiments. In social studies, you will experience many hands-on activities as you learn about geography, political science, Pennsylvania, and economics. You will also have Forces & Motion Day (in science class) where prizes are given for the fastest derby car and the derby car that goes the furthest. You will enjoy fourth grade at McMurray Elementary!**



**The Fourth Grade  
Teachers!**

## Fifth Grade

In fifth grade, you will make more friends because you are in your second year of school and you will have more self-confidence! It's more fun than fourth grade because you get to know more people and more teachers! You will read many books throughout reading class. Three great books are Bud, Not Buddy, The Bridge to Tarabithia, and From the Mixed Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler. In Social Studies class, you will learn about American History up to the Revolutionary War and about the regions of the United States. You will also write a fantastic personal narrative and a persuasive essay. In science, you will do lots of exciting experiments about energy. You will need to work hard in fifth grade, so be prepared!



The  
Fifth Grade  
Teachers!

# **Sixth Grade**

**Sixth grade is the highest academic level at McMurray. You will read many novels in your reading class and begin studying higher-level math. In social studies, you learn about the entire world! To learn more about different countries, the sixth grade participates in a special day called “Spanning the Globe,” which is an exciting, fun-filled event! Each classroom pretends to be a country and everyone dresses up and demonstrates customs from that country. In science, you learn a lot about the environment. In sixth grade, you have health class for the first time. You will enjoy sixth grade at McMurray School!**

**The  
Sixth Grade  
Teachers!**



# **Art Class**

**Art class lets you use your creativity and imagination. You make a lot of exciting projects. In art, you make clay projects and create many pictures using a variety of materials. You will paint pictures and cut paper to make very interesting objects. The mosaics that can be found on the first floor at McMurray were created by students. If you enjoy creating, you will love art class!**



# **Music**

**You will have music class at McMurray! You will get to play the recorder and other cool instruments such as tambourines and the Orff instrument. You will enjoy learning about pitches, notes, rhythms, and time signatures. You will sing songs that help you to learn. Sometimes you will even get to play games. Music class is a lot of fun!**



# **Physical Education**

**In physical education class, you will play a variety of sports including soccer, basketball, volleyball, kickball, dodge ball, hockey, softball, and baseball. Sometimes you get the opportunity to use the climbing wall or go outside and play sports on the field. Indoor classes are usually held in the winter and also when it rains. During your first class, you will be assigned a spot on the floor and you will sit there when you walk into the gym. You also get warm up spots. Physical education class is fun most of the time, but when the teacher is talking, you have to listen. If you do not listen to the teacher, you might get hurt.**



# World Language

**At McMurray Elementary, we have a World Language program. Fourth and fifth graders will explore Spanish class with excellent teachers! Fourth graders will learn the basics of Spanish and in fifth grade the work will get more challenging! The sixth graders will not only have Spanish class, but they will also learn French and German, too! In sixth grade, a third of the year will be spent on each language.**



# **Library**

**Visit the McMurray Library for a real treat! The library is spacious and has several different areas for working and learning. It has the right book for you, regardless of your interests. It contains many different genres of fiction books and a wonderful selection of non-fiction books. There are popular series and brand new books. The books are great for enjoyment and for your school projects. There is a huge reference section in our library that makes it easy for you when you are looking for information. You can check out four books at a time.**

**There are many books in the library that have a sticker with a little book on the side of them, and it looks like the book is running. That is the symbol for Accelerated Reader, also called “AR.” Every student has an AR goal. If you look on the inside, it will tell you how many points the book is worth and the book level. After you read the book, you can take a test to find out how well you read. This test counts towards your AR goal. There is another test you can take called the Star Reader Test. It can give you an idea of the level of books that you should be reading. Computers are available for research or to access our online card catalog. The library is located on the second floor. Stop in to visit and pick up some wonderful books. Make sure you take a library pass!**



# **Computer Applications and Mobile Labs**

**In Computer Applications, you will explore new ways to use Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, and Microsoft PowerPoint. Also, you will be exposed to G-Mail which is your school E-Mail account. In the G-Mail unit, you will learn to use “Google Docs” which includes how to access documents, slideshows, and more. We hope you will enjoy your time in Computer Applications!**

**At McMurray we have mobile labs which are carts with mini or regular sized laptops. We have a total of seven mobile lab carts and one that stays in the library permanently. The laptops are used for your class work with your teachers. You have to treat them with respect. Remember they are not yours, they belong to the school. If something is wrong tell your teacher whether it is a broken key or your computer is malfunctioning. Your teacher will tell you what you are allowed to do in that period of time.**



# **Character Counts**

**McMurray Elementary is a National School of Character. That means that our school is known for having exceptional character education programs, for being able to solve problems, and for saying no to bullying and drugs. We won the award for the National School of Character in 2004. In 2010, we won the award for the National School District of Character. Our core values are respect, honesty, responsibility and caring. McMurray is a great school filled with kind and caring people.**



# School Counselors

One very important department at McMurray Elementary is the School Counseling Department. We have two excellent school counselors here. If you are having problems, you can ask your teacher if you can go see one of the counselors or you can complete a "Request to See the Counselor Form" found outside the Counseling Offices and your counselor will see you as soon as possible. The counselors are very nice, and they can help you with all kinds of situations. For example, if you and a friend are fighting, or you are having a problem at home, one of them can help you to fix the situation. They also go into your classroom to teach your class about bullying, goal setting, and stress management.

If you are new to the school, you can ask to be paired with a lunch buddy or bus buddy that will help you find your way around the cafeteria and find your bus after school. If you are having any type of problem, just see our amazing counselors here at McMurray!



Mrs. Gruhn- 4<sup>th</sup> Grade & 5A



Mrs. Recker- 5B & 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

# Problems/Bullies

**McMurray Elementary is a great school for kids who do not like bullies. We have a no-bullying policy. If you have a bullying problem, you can go to your teacher or school counselor. They can really help you with your problems. There is a “Bully-Tip Box” located outside the Guidance Offices. This is another way to report bullying if you have seen or heard something and you are worried about reporting it. The counselors are great at helping to stop your bullying problems! Our guidance counselors have a *Friendship Group* program. A handful of students are chosen to come eat lunch with their guidance counselor once a week and have the opportunity to make new friends.**

## School Rules!

- Treat everyone with respect.
- Take care of school and personal property.
- Follow safe practices.
- Stay quiet in the hallways.
- Respect others who are working.
- No running in the hallways.
- Care for others.
- Listen to teachers and adults.
- Include everyone.
- Be a good friend to all!
- If you don't have something nice to say, don't say it at all.



Bully Tip Box

# **Student Council**

**When they say that the students rule the school, they aren't kidding! With the student council, students have a say over how they wish to improve the school. Two students are elected from each classroom as representatives. Both students attend the student council meetings and discuss changes that need to be made. Student council meets once a month before school. The student council is a lot of fun, so do your best to be elected to student council!**



# **Student Leadership Team**

**At McMurray, we also have a student leadership team that meets monthly before school. This team is open to all volunteers and focuses on Stephen Covey's Eight Habits of Highly Effective People. Students sign up for their areas of interests and take a leadership role in the school. The students suggest the committees and they include several interest areas such as technology and beautifying the school through gardening.**



# **Special Musical Activities**

**There are many musical activities that you can participate in at McMurray. During the school day, you can take classes such as band or orchestra or have small group instrument lessons. In band and orchestra, there are many different instruments you can play such as the flute, trumpet, violin, French horn, viola, and saxophone. You will have a lesson each week. You are responsible for finding out what you missed while you were in band or orchestra. In sixth grade, in addition to your lesson, band and orchestra meet twice a week for a regularly scheduled period.**

**If you enjoy singing, chorus might be for you! Chorus meets during the school day. It is held during a special time in the schedule so you will not miss any classes. There are different choruses in each grade level. If you sing in chorus, you can try out for various parts in the performance, such as a solo or speaking part. The concert will be performed towards the end of the school year.**

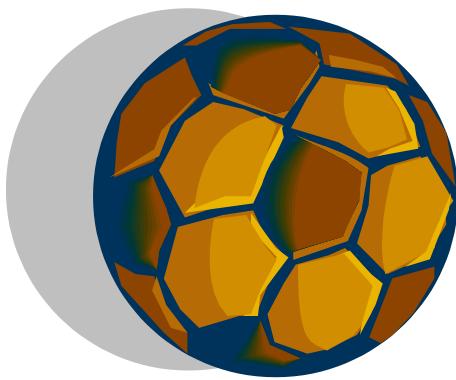


# **After School Activities**

**There are other exciting opportunities that take place after school. The PTA sponsors a “Reflections Contest”. You can enter by drawing a picture, making up a story, writing a song, or taking photographs. The PTA also sponsors after school activities such as chess club, Lego building, cooking, babysitting and art classes, too.**

**Intramurals are after school classes where students participate in sports like hockey, basketball and softball. Dance classes are really fun to do because you can learn jazz, hip-hop, cheer/gym, baton, ballet, or tumbling. You can even take more than one class. At the end of the year, you have your final recital. You share the dance or routine that your group has made up. Also, you get a fabulous costume that you wear during the recital.**

**You should find something that you enjoy at McMurray Elementary! If you don't, watch for the other exciting activities that are offered by the Peters Township Recreation Department!**



# **Special Days and Weeks at McMurray**

**At McMurray Elementary, we have special days and events! They include great activities such as:**

- \*McMurray Kick-Off! – A great outdoor afternoon pep rally at the beginning of the school year! Students have a chance to meet all the of the McMurray teachers and staff, be entertained by special guests like No Tune Left Behind and the PTHS Cheerleaders, and participate in fun activities to kick off the start to a great school year!**
- \*Spirit Days – Show your school spirit each month by wearing your McMurray colors (red and white) to lunch for a chance to win a prize.**
- \*Field trips – Take a fantastic trip to a famous destination with your class.**
- \*Assemblies – Special days when a variety of visitors come to our school and present programs related to music, history, science and other subjects.**
- \*Career Day – An annual event where all students have the opportunity to learn about a variety of careers while listening to professionals describe their jobs.**
- \*Character Counts Week – Practice your good character and use your McMurray manners.**
- \*Red Ribbon Week – We say “No” to drugs while having different opportunities to dress a variety of ways, whether it be in your favorite sports gear or your pajamas!**
- \*Anti-Bullying Week - We make sure that no one in our school is bullied so we can have a safe school for everyone.**
- \*McMurray Day – An end of the year, outdoor celebration. The students participate in games and activities!**



# **The McMurray Elementary Website**

**McMurray Elementary is a big school. When you are a new student, it can be scary. Thankfully, the school district website is a helpful resource for students to use to get off to a good start at McMurray. If you are afraid you will lose your way in such a big school, our district website has a tour of the building**

**To get to the tour from the home page is simple. All you have to do is look for Our Schools and scan for McMurray Elementary. Then when you get to the home page for McMurray, click on Information. Then a list will appear on your screen and the second option will be Building Tour.**

**If you click on it, a long stream of pictures (some with a description about the picture above it) will help you see what McMurray School is like. When you are finished with the building tour, go back to Information and right below the building tour option are lists of what you should bring based on your grade. Also included on the website is a calendar of upcoming events that are happening at McMurray and in the school district. It will also tell you if you have a day off due to vacation or a teacher in-service day.**

**On our website you can find the lunch menu so you know what they will be serving in the cafeteria each day. Another good thing about the website is that it tells you our school colors, our mascot, and all about the different classes we have. There are also teacher pages and links to resources for you and your parents. Our website is an excellent resource that you can use to help you have a great time at McMurray Elementary!**

**<http://www.ptsd.k12.pa.us/>**

# **Where Am I?**

**When you first arrive at McMurray Elementary, it seems really big! Eventually, you will find your way around. This tour should help you to locate all of the different areas in the building. The school counselors will give you a map with room numbers on it so that you can find your way around the school. Teachers and classmates can also help you!**



**Welcome to McMurray Elementary School! In the morning, the buses will drop you off in front of the building. Car riders will be dropped off in the parking lot on the side of the building.**



**You will walk into the building through two sets of double doors.**



**As you walk in, you will see a hallway that leads to many places.**



**On your right, you will see a door that leads to the office.**



**If you go down a long hallway a little farther, you will come to a smaller hallway on your right. Go down that hallway and you will find the Guidance Offices.**



**ANTI-BULLYING POSTER CONTEST WINNERS!**

**Across from the Guidance Office is the Nurse's Office.**



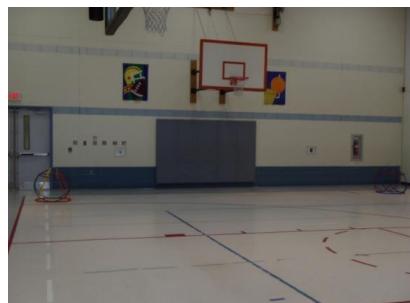
**Further down the hallway you will find the HUB, which is a small area on the first floor. It has five classrooms, numbered 101-105. Currently, fifth grade classrooms are in the HUB.**



**There are two art rooms at McMurray. These rooms are down the first hallway on the left as you come through the main doors. There are also music lessons in this hallway and our LGI, or Large Group Instruction Room, is on the left.**



**If you go straight ahead when you walk in the front doors you will come to the Multi-Purpose room on your left. This is the stage side of the MPR.**



**This is the cafeteria side of the MPR. The door between the two sides opens for assemblies.**



**If you go past the MPR, you will come to another hallway. You will see the AUX gym to the left. In this gym you will mostly have gymnastics and play scooter football.**



**The band room, Spanish room and several music rooms are in this hallway.**



**This is a picture of the “Grand” Staircase. This staircase is across from the MPR.**



**This is at the top of the Grand Staircase on the second floor. There is usually artwork displayed here.**



**If you turn left at the top of the second floor, you will go down a hallway to the library.**



**If you do not turn to go into the library and keep going down the hall, you will come to the Computer Lab. There are also sixth grade rooms in this hallway. The rooms are numbered from 213 to 220 on this hallway.**

**At the top of the Grand Staircase, on the second floor, if you turn right, you will come to the fourth grade wing. These rooms are numbered from 201 to 211 on this side of the hallway.**



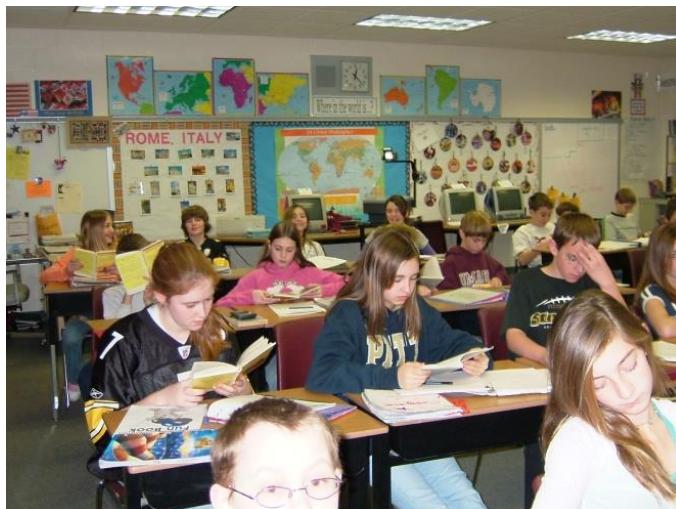
**If you continue up the grand staircase to the third floor you will see this beautiful skylight above you.**



**To the left are doors that lead to a hallway where more classrooms can be found. These are sixth grade rooms and range from room 314 to room 322.**



**To the right is another set of doors that leads to more classrooms. Both fourth and fifth grade rooms are in this hallway. These classrooms are numbered from room 301 to 313.**



**McMurray Elementary is a big place, but don't worry! With some help from your teachers and the students in your class, you will be able to get around in no time!**

# Welcome to McMurray!

***"Where a good mind and a good heart  
always make a great combination!"***



**Edited by: Mrs. Gruhn & Ms. Boyer**

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