

MEADE HEIGHTS ELEMENTARY



2022-2023 PARENT HANDBOOK HOME OF THE MIGHTY HAWKS



1925 Reece Road
Ft. Meade, MD 20755
410-222-6509 (MAIN) 410-519-1277 (FAX)
Raquelle Moore, Principal

Dear Families and Friends,

Welcome to the 2022-2023 school year! The staff and I are eager to welcome all our students back to what promises to be an exciting year. We welcome new staff to our school and have some familiar faces that we all know and love. I value strong relationships between our teachers and parents. Please work closely with your child's teacher to establish two-way communication, which is vital for a successful school program. Your support will go a long way in helping to make this a successful school year! Feel free to contact your child's teacher or myself with your questions and concerns throughout the school year.

This handbook is designed to familiarize you with our school policies and procedures. Please take some time to read our handbook carefully and review the information with your child.

The faculty and staff at Meade Heights is committed to building strong relationships with our scholars and develop a genuine love for learning. It is our mission to help each child reach his or her fullest potential. We look forward to working with you and your children.

Sincerely,

Raquelle Moore
Principal

"Every child deserves a champion: an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection and insists they become the best they can possibly be."

--Rita Pierson, Educator

NEW

School Hours

Student Arrival	7:45 am
Late Bell	8:00 am
Breakfast	7:45 am
Morning Meeting	7:55 am - 8:05 am
Instruction Begins	8:05 am
Dismissal	2:25 pm

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are part of the instructional program. Notices are sent home in advance outlining the details and cost of the trip. Written parent permission is required. All students are expected to attend these planned activities. If the cost of the field trip creates difficulty for your family, please contact the administrator. Funding may be available to support families in need. Since all reservations are made in advance, refunds are not available if your child is unable to attend. If, for some reason, the student does not attend the field trip, they are still expected to come to school. They will be placed in an alternative setting for the day.

Parents are often asked to help supervise field trips and, for the protection of our children, will be required to submit to a background check at the board of education.

Chaperone For Field Trips

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BACKGROUND CHECK APPLICATION

A valid email address is required to request a commercial background check. Applicants will use the portal below to start the background check process. AACPS utilizes a third-party vendor, CARCO Group - Inquiries Screening, to perform commercial background checks. Shortly after Inquiries Screening receives the applicant's initial submission, the applicant will receive an email from **CARCO Group** with an acknowledgement of the request. This email will provide instructions for the applicant to continue the background check process by completing all required forms in their entirety. Inquiries screening will then provide verification to the applicant upon receipt of the completed application. Typically, results of the background check take approximately 3 weeks to complete. After that 3 week period, the applicant may contact personnel at the school where their student attends, for results. **Applications must be made in the Google Chrome platform utilizing a laptop, desk top computer, or tablet; applications submitted via cell phone may not process correctly.**

If you have submitted a fingerprint supported background application or are planning to submit a fingerprint supported background check, **DO NOT** apply for the commercial background check indexed below.

[APPLY FOR COMMERCIAL BACKGROUND CHECK](#)

* To begin the background application process, applicants will fill out this form and then submit.

* Within 10 seconds the applicant will receive an email from the "CARCO Group" - that email will include a username & password, and will direct the applicant to an online link where they will complete the application process.

* If applicant complains - they did not receive an email - tried to reapply and got the following response-

"unable to create an account duplicate detected."

This response is received because an account is created when they filled out this first form - they need to complete the process.

* If applicant says they did not receive an email from the "CARCO Group" have them check their Junk mail or Spam mail folders.

* The email from the "CARCO Group" does not expire.

Volunteer Mandatory Background Checks

Anne Arundel County Public Schools is committed to providing safe and secure learning environments for all students and employees. Successful completion of a background check is required **before** any person has access to students, either on or off school property. The Office of Investigations has continued to work closely with the Office of School Security to review AACPS protocols for conducting background checks.

Background investigations are divided into two categories: fingerprint-supported background checks and commercial background checks. Once a fingerprint-supported background check is performed, applicants no longer need to submit the electronic background check. Anyone applying to be a chaperone or volunteer must be at least 18 years of age.

Fingerprint Supported Background Check

All employees, coaches, bus drivers, and bus aides, must complete a fingerprint-supported background check prior to beginning employment. **Additionally, the following groups of individuals must complete a fingerprint-supported background check:**

- **All overnight volunteers or chaperones**
- **All drows proofing volunteers or chaperones (effective 07/02/2018)**
- **Any volunteer or chaperone with one-on-one unsupervised/unrestricted access to children**

- **Student teachers**
- **All Student Services Interns/Practicum students (effective 07/02/2018)**
- **Any intern with one-on-one unsupervised/unrestricted access to children**

One-on-one unsupervised or unrestricted access- a person having responsibility for a student while not in the direct continuous view of an AACPS employee. This does not include chaperones or volunteers who supervise groups of students (e.g. field trips to the zoo, museum, BSO performance).

Fingerprint-supported background checks must be scheduled through the Fingerprinting Office at 410-222-5045. The Fingerprinting Office is located at the AACPS Central Office on Riva Road and is open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday, during the school year. The cost of fingerprinting is \$58.25 and it includes the commercial background check. Fingerprint-supported background checks for chaperones should be completed at least 3 weeks prior to the scheduled field trip.

Each applicant requiring a fingerprint-supported background check is provided with a blue **Fingerprint Verification Card**. This card should be kept with the applicant while on school grounds and should be displayed to an administrator upon request. Each school should keep a running list of chaperones and volunteers that have been fingerprinted.

All questions regarding this process, or to confirm the results of a fingerprint-supported background check should be directed to the Office of Investigations at 410-222-5287.

Commercial Background Check

All chaperones and volunteers **without one-on-one** unsupervised or unrestricted access to students must complete the online request for a commercial background check. This group is inclusive of PTA and PTO officers, CAC officers, Booster Club officers, and chaperones or volunteers who work with children in the presence of an approved AACPS representative (e.g. daytime field trip to the zoo). These background checks are at no cost to the applicant and are valid for 2 years. All applications should be submitted electronically at least 3 weeks prior to the intended school event.

*Persons without personal computer access may access this process on a school computer or use computers in a public library.

*This application is not supported by cell phones; therefore, a computer must be used to submit all commercial background checks.

DEFINITIONS

Volunteer - a person who provides a variety of services (e.g., tutoring, mentoring, clerical assistance, chaperoning, athletic coaches, club advisors, etc.) without financial payment from AACPS. A volunteer generally includes persons who regularly, i.e., on more than one

isolated occasion, provide scheduled time and service working in an uncompensated capacity. A volunteer may, however, provide uncompensated service on isolated occasions. These types of volunteers frequently include persons who serve as "chaperones" during on and off-campus school events. A volunteer might additionally include student teachers, PTA/PTO officers, and/or office assistants with access to personally identifiable information, currency and other sensitive matters.

Chaperone - one type of volunteer who provides short-term supervision to students during on-campus and/or off-campus educational activities. The role of the chaperone is to encourage safe and proper student behavior during activities where an AACPS employee cannot reasonably be expected to keep students in his/her exclusive observation. Chaperones, by nature of the duties assigned, are presumed to have uncontrolled access to students.

Visitor - a person who arrives at an AACPS educational location for a short period of time for a specific purpose. Visitors can include family members, vendors, community members and other non-AACPS employees who are doing specific business at that location. Generally, a visitor might have access to students, but this access will be supervised. Supervised access to students occurs when an adult has proximal contact with students while remaining under the direct observation of an AACPS employee. As an example, supervised access to students can occur during "guest reader" events where the visitor provides educational service to students while in the continual presence of an AACPS employee. Other examples of supervised access to students might occur during field day activities and/or science fair judging. Visitors are **not** required to complete commercial background criminal history checks. Visitors will only be required to present photographic identification that allows school personnel to enter the visitor's name into a software program that checks Registered Sex Offender databases in the United States.

Screening criteria - the standard of judgment for evaluating an applicant's criminal history record against expected standards for persons who have access to students. It is essential that AACPS consider each applicant's criminal history in totality and in context of law enforcement experience and training. AACPS has the legal and ethical obligation to protect children in the District's care, and as such, no list of disqualifying crimes and adjudicated outcomes can be all-inclusive. Multiple criminal charges are frequently imposed during singular events. Plea negotiations and other legal strategies dramatically impact each case's disposition. Some applicants will have recurrent misdemeanor criminal charges. Some applicants will have serious felony convictions adjudicated decades prior. AACPS must exercise prudent and conservative judgment when reviewing each request that facilitates a person having access to children in the District's care. AACPS retains the exclusive right to approve or deny any unpaid volunteer the opportunity to have access to students based on unique factors in the applicant's criminal history.

Approval period - the length of time an approved commercial background check remains effective. Commercial background checks are valid for two calendar years. AACPS, however, retains the discretion to require a subsequent background investigation for any volunteer within that two-year period. AACPS additionally retains the exclusive right to revoke volunteer authorization for derogatory information coming to the District's attention during the two-year period.

Agenda Books

Students in grades 2-5 will use the **AGENDA BOOK** for recording homework, school projects, due dates, and other important information. Please review this daily and initial when students have completed all assigned tasks.

Students in Grades K-5 will use a blue plastic **TAKE HOME FOLDER** as part of a school-wide effort to foster organizational skills. One side of the folder will hold papers to be reviewed and kept at home. The other side will hold papers to be reviewed and returned to school.

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL

Meade Heights school hours are 8:00 AM-2:25 PM. Students should not arrive before 7:45 as there is no adult supervision. If you arrive after 8:00 am, you must come into the building to sign your child in. Please do not plan to escort your child to class as instruction will be underway.

If you drive your child to school, please use the side driveway so that he/she may enter the building safely. The traffic flow allows you to drive through the HUG & HOP lane to a covered area, drop off your child and continue driving to the exit. If you want to come into the school, you must park in the lot and check in the office after entering the building. In order to keep all students and staff safe, please be sure to abide by the requests of staff members on duty. Thank you for your cooperation!

CARS SHOULD NEVER ENTER THE BUS CIRCLE.

Early dismissal procedures won't take place after 2:05pm. After that, parents are asked to wait for formal dismissal procedures. Walkers and car riders will be dismissed first, then bus riders. Car riders have two options: (1) Parents can remain in their cars and wait in the HUG & HOP Lane until a supervising adult directs their child to the car, or (2) Parents can park in an identified parking spot in the lot and walk to the covered entrance area to meet their child.

ATTENDANCE

State regulations dictate that students must attend school a certain number of days per year. The Board of Education policy states ***“a student who is absent six or more days a semester is excessively absent”***. Attendance is carefully monitored. When a child is frequently absent or tardy, you will be contacted. Additionally, a referral may be made to the Pupil Personnel Worker. For excessive absences/tardiness, the school may require doctor’s notes.

Regular school attendance is critical to your child’s academic progress and success in school. Please try to schedule appointments and other commitments before or after school hours. When your child is absent, we are required to record the reason for the absence. Please have your child bring a note from you when he/she returns. A student is legally absent when ill, when there is a death in the family or when another serious situation exists. If your child is absent in excess of five consecutive days, a doctor’s certificate is required before returning to class. Children who have excused absences will be given time to make up work. Vacations are not considered excused absences.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES

Birthday party celebrations are NOT PERMITTED starting this school year. The primary focus at Meade Heights Elementary is to ensure that all students receive a quality education and that the learning environment is uninterrupted as much as possible. We appreciate your understanding.

CAFETERIA

Breakfast and lunch are available daily in the school cafeteria. Applications for free or reduced meals will be sent home at the beginning of the school year. Families may qualify according to federal income eligibility guidelines. All applications are kept confidential and are accepted at any time during the school year.

Prices are as follows:

	Full Price	Reduced Price
Breakfast	Free For All	Meade Heights Students
Lunch	\$2.75	\$.40
Milk	\$.55	N/A

Some students are allergic to milk. If the health room has a current doctor's note on file specifying this allergy, juice will be provided with their school lunch at no additional cost. Due to food allergies, and the need to respect parental dietary preferences, please remind your child that sharing or trading food is not permitted.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES MAY A STUDENT BRING ANY TYPE OF KNIFE (BUTTER KNIFE, TABLE KNIFE, PEN KNIFE, ETC.). THIS WILL RESULT IN DISCIPLINARY ACTION.

COMMUNICATION

The **MEADE HEIGHTS MESSENGER** contains important information including the school calendar, planned activities. Please be sure to look for this in your child's TAKE-HOME FOLDER, the first week of each month.

Feel free to contact the school at **410 222-6509** if you have additional questions or concerns. Most questions are to be directed to the classroom teacher. They are asked to return phone calls within 24 hours. However, please consider that teachers have a limited amount of time during the day to make phone calls. Additionally, they may not receive a phone message until the end of the day, or possibly, the next morning. Instruction will not be interrupted unless there is a true emergency. Classroom teachers welcome email communication.

EMERGENCY CARDS (Now Online)

Each child has an emergency card on file in school. You will have access to a link that will be active in August for you to update current names and phone numbers. It is critical that we have current, accurate information in case of an emergency. Be sure to list ALL persons who have permission to pick up your child. If you send someone not listed to pick up your child, please send in a note authorizing the individual to remove your child from school. For the safety of all children, identification must be presented.

When there is a change of any information listed on the emergency card, please notify the school immediately.

If you will be out of the area for a period of time and someone else will be caring for your child, please write us a note detailing the dates you will be gone, as well as the caregiver's name, address and phone numbers. Please include a copy of the power of attorney or temporary custody agreement.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

CONNECT-ED: Anne Arundel County Public Schools utilizes the Connect-Ed automated telephone notification system to alert parents to emergencies and other important issues and events throughout the school system. The Connect-Ed system may also be used by principals to communicate with parents about school-specific events.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS: Sometimes it may be necessary to close schools due to inclement weather or facility emergencies. On such occasions, tune to one of your local radio/television stations or check www.aacps.org for updates.

DELAYED OPENINGS: The delayed school opening plan eliminates the need to close school for an entire day while at the same time ensuring transportation conditions are safe for all students.

If school is delayed **1 hour**, AM busses will begin their normal routines one hour later than usual.

If school is delayed **2 hours**, AM busses will begin their normal routines two hours later than usual.

TWO HOUR EARLY DISMISSAL: Students will be dismissed at 12:25pm. It is critical that we have your pre-arranged emergency plan for early

dismissal completed. Be sure your child understands this plan. Please note that this plan cannot include individual phone calls or simply waiting in the office.

HEALTH

IMMUNIZATIONS: The State of Maryland Immunization Regulation requires students enrolled in school to show proof of immunizations.



A student whose immunizations are not up-to-date or who has not provided proof of having the required immunizations will not be permitted to attend school until proper documentation has been provided.

Children enrolled must show proof of 4 DTaP, 3 Polio, 3 Hepatitis B, 2 Measles, 2 Mumps, 2 Rubella (often given as MMR) 2 Varicella (chickenpox for K - 12), 1 Varicella (for ECI/Pre-K) and 1 Prevnar (PCV7 – required for students 24-59 months).

HEALTH ROOM: Meade Heights is staffed with a part-time RN and a full-time health assistant should your child become ill or is injured at school. Children who are unable to return to class must be taken home by a parent/guardian. They cannot remain at school. Students who are ill or running a fever, may not come to school until they have been without a fever for 24 hours.

MEDICATION: NO MEDICATION OF ANY KIND CAN BE ADMINISTERED BY THE SCHOOL UNLESS YOUR DOCTOR HAS FILLED OUT THE PERMISSION FORM ISSUED BY Anne Arundel County School Health Services. Permission forms are available from the school office and on Anne Arundel County Health Department Website. Many physicians have these forms available in their offices, as well. Students are NOT to have ANY medications with them at school. This includes all common over-the-counter medication (Cough drops, Tylenol, Calamine lotion, etc.) as well as prescription medication. Failure to follow this important safety rule will result in disciplinary action.

Morning Meeting

Morning Meeting sets the tone for a respectful and engaging learning environment, where students feel connected to their classroom community. Morning Meeting will occur each morning beginning at 7:55am. Be sure to ask your children what topic was discussed during Morning Meeting sessions.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parents are encouraged to be involved at Meade Heights. Please consider joining the PTA or volunteering.

PTA: The PTA is an asset. The Association members assist the school in many ways including planning events for students and their families, raising funds to purchase needed items and volunteering their time during the school year. The PTA meets periodically throughout the year. Dates and times will be published in the MEADE HEIGHTS MESSENGER. The success of the PTA is dependent upon the active involvement of all members of the Meade Heights community.

PETS

Please do not bring pets on school grounds. Many children have serious allergies. Additionally, some students are frightened by animals.

POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTION SUPPORTS

The Code of Student Conduct is located in the *AACPS Handbook*. This booklet contains countywide information including The Anne Arundel County Public Schools expected student behaviors. Please read it carefully and review important details with your child.

At Meade Heights we are part of a national initiative called Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS). The focus of this program is to explicitly teach and positively reinforce appropriate behavior.

Our school introduced the *Mighty 7* expectations during the 2018-19 school year. The *Mighty 7* include social and behavioral expectations that teachers will explicitly model and reinforce throughout the school day.

The *Mighty 7* rules are as follows:

1. Stand to speak and make eye contact
2. Acknowledge others by greeting them
3. Respectfully respond to adults
4. Celebrate others' successes
5. Make eye contact
6. Honesty is the best policy
7. Keep our school community clean





Students may receive positive feedback for demonstrating these behaviors and may be awarded positive office referrals from their teachers, where accomplishments are celebrated by the administrator and staff members.

Another new initiative to help build a strong sense of community and belonging amongst students and staff members is the introduction of House Systems. The purpose of House Systems is to:

- Promote community
- Increase cross grade level connections
- Encourage positive behavior and expectations
- Promote healthy competition

Students will be awarded “House Points” for exhibiting characteristics of the *Mighty 7*. The four “Houses” that are represented are Reveur, Unidat, Altruismo, and Isibindi. Students will learn the characteristics of each house and be chosen to be in one of the houses. where team building and community are emphasized.

House Systems Fact Sheet

 <p>The Black House Inspirational Country: Brazil Language: Portuguese Meaning: The Givers</p>	 <p>The Red House Inspirational Country: Spain Language: Spanish Meaning: Love</p>
 <p>The Green House Inspirational Country: South Africa Language: Zulu Meaning: Courage</p>	 <p>The Blue House Inspirational Country: France Language: French Meaning: Dreamer</p>

Everyone deserves a safe, supportive and orderly learning environment. Therefore, students are expected to demonstrate safe, respectful and responsible behavior always. If students make bad choices, the staff will provide additional instruction. Leveled consequences will be used to discourage continued inappropriate behavior.

Parents can support positive behaviors by;

- Discussing rules and consequences with your child
- Praising your child for positive behavior
- Communicating with your child’s teacher

STUDENT PROGRESS

REPORT CARDS: The primary purpose of report cards is to inform parents of student progress; however, it should be only one of many means of ongoing communication between parents and teachers. Report cards are issued four times a year.

INTERIM REPORTS: Interims are distributed midway through the grading period. An interim is a notice that your child is averaging a D or an E, has dropped two letter grades in a subject or is having a problem in conduct, work habits or social development. This may indicate a need for further communication with your child's teacher. Teachers may also send positive interims home to recognize and acknowledge strengths or accomplishments.

CONFERENCES: Parent-teacher conferences are held in twice a year, October and March. Pre-K and Kindergarten parents will have an initial conference in September and at the end of the year in May. Additional conferences may be scheduled as needed with your child's teacher.

TRANSPORTATION



School bus transportation is a privilege. This privilege may be temporarily denied or permanently revoked if the misconduct of the child jeopardizes the safe operation of the school bus or the safety of the students. Please review bus rules and consequences for misbehavior in the *AACPS Code of Student Conduct* with your child. An initial bus referral will require a parent conference. Additional referrals will result in bus suspension.

Behavior before the bus arrives and after drop-off is a community responsibility that should be shared by all parents in a particular neighborhood.

All children are to ride their bus and get off at their regular stop each day. This is important so children will not be lost or left unattended, and to prevent overcrowding of buses.

If your child needs to ride a bus other than the bus to and from your home, you must fill out an Exceptional Transportation Request form. Exceptional Transportation Requests that will be considered are:

- Parent(s) work and student goes to a babysitter's home
- Parent(s) work and students goes to/from a daycare facility
- Parent(s) are away, and student is staying with another adult.

Transportation arrangements of this nature are to be consistent each day, morning and afternoon, for the duration of the time period requested. Approval is contingent upon space being available on the affected bus. Situations that will not be approved are:

- Community athletic practice/games
- Doctor or dental appointments
- Scout/Club meetings
- Music lessons
- Religious training classes
- After school employment

Uniform Policy

All students are required to wear the basic uniform which includes:

- ❖ Navy blue or khaki colored pants, shorts, skirts, skorts, or dresses
- ❖ Light blue, navy blue, or white polo style shirt (long or short sleeve); Oxford blouses or shirts

In addition to the basic uniform, the following may be worn in light blue, navy blue, or white:

- ❖ V-neck Sweater Vest
- ❖ Front button Cardigan
- ❖ Socks and Tights
 - No colored socks or leggings

The following garments *are not considered* part of our school uniform:

- ❖ Hooded sweatshirts
- ❖ T-shirts
- ❖ Sweatpants, jeggings, or jeans
- ❖ Mixed colored tights and socks
- ❖ Items with logos or writing on them
- ❖ Sandals, jellies, crocks, or flip flops

General Information:

- ❖ Uniforms must be the appropriate size and fit
- ❖ No logos, characters, or writing
- ❖ Shirts must always be tucked in
- ❖ Black, brown, or blue belts are recommended for pants with loops
- ❖ Skirt and short length must meet the requirements of AACPS dress code policy for all students

- ❖ Closed toe and athletic shoes are permitted.

VISITORS

We welcome parents and other visitors to Meade Heights. For safety reasons, ALL visitors must check in the office and get a visitor's tag which identifies that you have done so. Please do not be offended if a staff member stops you to politely inquire about your purpose in the building. This is a security precaution practiced by all schools.

If you need to speak with a teacher, please schedule an appointment. Teachers cannot give you the attention you deserve when they are responsible for their students. This includes arrival and dismissal times.

If you wish to observe in your child's classroom, contact the teacher or the administrator to schedule a mutually convenient time.

WITHDRAWALS

We want to prepare all appropriate information for students who are transferring to other schools. Please give the office at least 48 hours to prepare the transfer packet. Students must return all media and classroom materials and pay outstanding fees before the packet will be released.

Our teachers and staff members are here to serve all our families. Please don't hesitate to call or email us with any questions about the upcoming school year.

<i>Meade Heights Elementary</i>	<i>410-222-6509 (main line)</i>
<i>Principal's Secretary</i>	<i>Sherry</i>
<i>Amedofu--samedofu@aacps.org</i>	
<i>Records and Registration Secretary</i>	<i>Candice Wilson--</i>
<i>Principal</i>	<i>Raquelle Moore --rkmoore@aacps.org</i>