

MURPHY'S HOPE ACADEMY
Parent Student Handbook
2023-2024

Disclaimer:

This Handbook is not intended to be a comprehensive list of all policies and procedures but is intended to provide general information parents and students need to know about the school. The school reserves the right to amend the school year, modify curriculum, change programming, change policies or otherwise make changes in the best interests of the school and at the school's sole discretion.

Non-Discrimination Policy:

The school admits students regardless of disability, race, color, creed, ethnic, or national origin who possess the motivation, ability, and character which would enable them to succeed in our school community to the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. The school does not discriminate based on disability, race, color, creed, ethnic, or national origin in the administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarships, and other school-administered programs.

MURPHY'S HOPE ACADEMY

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the 2023-2024 school year! We have assembled Murphy's Hope Academy's Parent/Student Handbook to help you understand the guidelines and policies of Murphy's Hope Academy. Murphy's Hope Academy Parent/Student Handbook is available on the Parents page on the school's website, www.murphyshopeacademy.com.

Parents, please take time to discuss Murphy's Hope Academy's Parent/Student Handbook with your child. I look forward to getting to know you and your child.

Dee Murphy James
Principal/Chief Administrator

Murphy's Hope Academy

5226 Hwy 49 S Harrisburg,
NC. 28078

Main Office Phone Number: 704-456-7400

**School Hours
And
Carpool Schedules**

School Hours: 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Morning Drop Off: 7:45 a.m.-8:00 a.m.

Afternoon Pick Up: 3:00 p.m.

A Landmark for Excellence in Education

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PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK

This Handbook was developed to answer many of the commonly asked questions students and parents may have during the school year. Because the Handbook contains information about student rights and responsibilities, parents and students are responsible for knowing its contents. Please take the time to become familiar with the following information and keep this Handbook available for your use, either electronically or by printing out a copy. It can be a valuable reference during the school year and a means to avoid confusion and misunderstandings when questions arise.

The Academy reserves the right to interpret the content of this Handbook, including the rules and regulations governing the academic and non-academic conduct of students. This Handbook is not a contract, nor is it intended to be so construed. Murphy's Hope Academy reserves the right to modify and/or amend the content of this Handbook at any time during the year. If any written modification or amendment is made to this Handbook, a copy of such modification or amendment will be distributed to students and parents.

If you have any questions about the Handbook or any of its policies, please contact Dee Murphy James Principal/Chief Administrator.

ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to attend School regularly. Please avoid scheduling vacations, trips, doctor appointments and other planned absences during the time school is in session. Our structured and sequential teaching makes it difficult for teachers to recreate lessons for students who spend excessive time away from the classroom. Excessive absences may cause students to have problems both academically and socially. MHA is under no obligation to modify, amend, or otherwise provide alternative programs for students missing school for extended periods of time due to medical conditions, extended vacations, suspension, or other non-school activities.

When it is necessary for your child to be absent, please notify the school by 8:00a.m. All absences due to illness require a doctor's note to be excused. Progress reports will indicate the number of days a child has been absent from class. Excessive absences will require a conference between parents, teachers, and administrators, and may result in the student's removal from Murphy's Hope Academy.

Early Pick Up

If you need to pick up your child earlier than the designated dismissal time, you must do so through the Front Office before 2:30 p.m. After 2:30 p.m. no student may be picked up through the Front Office. Parents are required to sign out their child in the Front Office and the Receptionist will call the classroom for release of the student. Parents are not permitted to go directly to the classroom. If your child will be leaving school at a different time (e.g., for a doctor's appointment, trip out of town, etc.) or will be riding home in a different carpool (e.g., with grandparents, with another student, etc.), you must call the school office, send an email, or send a written notification. Students will not be allowed to go in a different carpool unless the school has written notification or email. Please also contact the carpool driver directly and phone the Front Office as an added precaution. If you are faced with an emergency or unavoidably changed plans, please call, or email the Front Office as soon as possible.

Notes to teachers, drinks for special events, etc., are to be dropped off in the Front Office only. Carpool is not the time for these types of errands/deliveries, and carpool personnel will not be available to take any of these items.

If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to discuss these with your child's teachers. We want, as much as you do, for carpool to run quickly and for your children to return home safely each day.

Release of Students

Students will not be dismissed to persons not authorized on the Afternoon Carpool and Driver Permission form unless an email is sent to the school. Unfamiliar persons picking up students will be asked for identification. Be prepared to show identification when picking up your child or someone else's child.

Signing-In

School officially begins at 8:00 a.m. After that time, access to the building is through the Front Office only. Students arriving after 8:00 a.m. are tardy. For the safety of the student, we require that students arriving after 8:00 a.m. **MUST** be accompanied into the building by an adult and signed in through the Front Office. From those records, we also adjust the daily carpool sheet and official attendance records. Any student who is recorded as absent will be crossed off the carpool list for that day.

Tardiness

Students are to be in class by 8:00 a.m. Any student who arrives after 8:00 a.m. will be considered tardy and should report to the Front Office to sign in. Parents of students who are late five or more times in a semester will receive a courtesy letter from the school. All students with excessive tardiness in a semester will have a parent/teacher conference. **Please remember that punctuality is important. We are building the foundation for your child's future.**

CLASSROOM

Birthday Parties

Parents are invited to bring cupcakes or other treats for their child's birthday. Please schedule the best time to have the party with the student's teacher. Please also ask about possible food allergies of your child's classmates. **We have a few students in the school who are extremely allergic to nuts, and we ask everyone to not include nut products or products processed in the same facility as peanuts or tree nuts in special party treats or in snacks/lunches.**

Class Placements

Class assignments result from a process of careful consideration based solely on the professional knowledge, judgment, and discretion of the school administration, with input from classroom teachers, therapists, and Director of Admissions. Although the School is happy to hear from parents who have information to share about their child's learning style and developmental issues, the school cannot and will not honor special requests for teachers. Class placements are communicated to parents in early August.

Conferences

Scheduled conferences are held with classroom teachers three times a year with an additional fourth conference as needed for outplanning students. Student involvement may vary depending on the age of the child. Parents are expected to attend all scheduled conferences.

Homework

Homework is seen as a continuation and reinforcement of study begun in school and not as a routine task. Homework is developmentally and age appropriate and expectations vary from grade level to grade level.

Plagiarism and Cheating

All work students complete for which they receive credit must be their own. The concepts of plagiarism and cheating are explained and discussed in age-appropriate language, and developmentally appropriate consequences will be determined at each grade level.

Standardized Testing

Once a year, Murphy's Hope Academy gives standardized and nationally normed achievement tests to students. While the MHA does not overemphasize the results as a measure of learning, it does regard these as useful measures and means of assessing our children and our school. We strive to create a relaxed, supportive testing environment in the hopes that positive experiences will affect future assessment. Scores are reported to parents and the teachers and administrators are available to assist with interpretation.

COMMUNICATIONS

Communication Policy

Murphy's Hope Academy encourages communication between families and the school. While voicemail and email are efficient methods of communication, we do not feel these should replace face-to-face contact. The administration, faculty and staff will respond to voice mail and email messages within 24 hours or one school day.

The administration requests that parents respect teachers' planning time and the teachers' responsibility to all students during the school day. We ask that parents schedule ahead for an appointment to confer with teachers and not stop or interrupt faculty during the school day.

Voicemail

If you would like to leave a voicemail message after school hours, please call 704-456-7400. You may either enter a mailbox number or use the dial-by-name directory.

- Messages may be sent to individual faculty or staff members. All individual email addresses are the faculty or staff member's first initial followed by their last name. The school's website may be accessed at www.murphyhopeacademy.com.

DIRECTORY

Students, faculty, staff, and trustees are provided with a directory of names, addresses, email addresses and telephone numbers to assist in operating the school. The information provided may not be used for anything or provided to anyone other than for school purposes.

DISCIPLINE/BEHAVIORAL STANDARDS

The school views discipline as a branch of learning rather than simply a list of rules. Children are taught behavior management and self-regulation. Classroom rules are agreed upon at the beginning of each year. These rules stress the importance of creating

a classroom in which learning can take place and the importance of respecting the rights, feelings, and property of all.

Our goal is to maintain a secure, challenging, and nurturing school environment in which students develop a strong sense of integrity and respect for others. To promote this goal, students are expected to be honest, use appropriate language, and have appropriate interactions with others.

Another equally important goal is to help students mature and learn a sense of self responsibility. For this reason, students are held to a high standard of integrity and are expected to appropriately seek help and report problems when circumstances arise. We encourage students to seek help and report problems.

The standards of student conduct are designed to provide students with guidance to help them meet the goals and expectations of our community. Our behavioral expectations should be read carefully. Violations will result in serious consequences, up to and including suspension or dismissal from the school. Students may also be held responsible for any damage or harm that they cause to individuals and/or the school community at large.

Our policies and expectations apply any time a student is enrolled in the school, whether on or off campus.

The policies and expectations outlined in this Handbook should not be read as an all inclusive description of the school's standards, which are based on **honesty, respect, trust, and safety**. Any behavior that constitutes a breach of these school values may be treated as a major infraction. Students may be dismissed or otherwise disciplined if the student does not meet the behavioral or academic standards of the school, or whose conduct at any time or place interferes with school programs or operations or brings discredit to the school. Determination of compliance is in the sole discretion of the school.

Student Behavioral Expectations

- Students are expected to be considerate and respectful of adults, visitors, and one another.
- Students are required to show good sportsmanship and courtesy on and off campus.
- Students are expected to cooperate with school staff.
- Students are expected to listen and respond appropriately.
- Students are expected to respect school property and the property of others.
- Students are expected to respect other students and to listen to their wishes regarding personal space, personal belongings, etc.
- Students are expected to settle their own problems whenever appropriate.
- Students are expected to follow classroom rules.
- Students are expected to be honest.
- Students are expected to treat others with kindness and respect.

- Students are expected to use appropriate language and actions.
- Students are expected to refrain from fighting and horseplay.
- Students are expected to refrain from bullying, harassing, or intimidating peers always.

Classroom Approach

- Class rules: these are simple, discussed and posted in each classroom
- “Environmental” handling of problems: change seating, change in classroom activity, etc.
- Directly and privately talk with a student: “What can we do about the talking during math class?”
- Behavior modification: incentives to encourage appropriate behavior such as earning points or tickets that can be exchanged for activities or privileges, etc.
- Isolating a student: any student who continually interferes with the learning of others may be asked to take his/her work to another area of the school to finish. If this is a regular occurrence, this situation will be discussed with the parents.
- Finding another school placement: if we are unable to keep a student from disrupting others, we will meet with the parents and help them find a more appropriate school setting for their child.
- The school always reserves the right in its discretion to issue discipline, up to and including removal from school.

Procedures and Consequences

The teacher of each class oversees the ordinary discipline in the classroom. The student is expected to comply with whatever rules or disciplinary measures the teacher may impose. Faculty and staff members should always be addressed in a polite and respectful manner. Confrontational behavior with a teacher is at variance with conduct expected from all students and parents. Each situation will be handled at the school’s discretion in accordance with the school’s rules, policies, and practices as well as general common sense. Students who do not behave appropriately or break the rules will experience consequences that are developmentally and situationally appropriate, such as talking with a member of the administration and/or potentially being sent home from school. Any continued violation of these expectations will result in a conference with the child’s parents, teachers, and administrative staff, as well as with the child. Disciplinary incidents will be considered over the entire time a student is enrolled at the school. However, there may be one incident or infraction that could lead to suspension or removal from school.

Bullying and Harassment

The physical and emotional safety of each student is the primary concern of the administration, faculty, and staff of our School. To encourage positive social interactions, the teachers work closely with each class to encourage the courtesy, respect, and kindness essential to a supportive and nurturing academic environment. Any behavior, either in person or with the use of technology, including but not limited

to intimidation and/or harassment, which threatens the emotional or physical safety of any of our students will not be tolerated. This includes but is not limited to teasing, ridiculing, threatening, and inappropriate touching. We are confident that we have our parents' full cooperation and assistance in expecting from our students only those behaviors which affirm the highest ideals of good citizenship and healthy peer relationships.

All concerns relating to harassment or bullying should be reported immediately to the principal. We also expect that anyone, whether student, faculty, staff, or family member who witnesses, or has knowledge of an incident of bullying or harassment, will report the incident to administration immediately. When the school administration becomes aware of harassment or bullying, the situation will be promptly investigated. Any student found to have violated this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, including dismissal from school for serious violations. No adverse action will be taken against any person who makes a good faith report of harassment or bullying. Retaliation in any form against anyone for making a complaint under this policy or for participating in an investigation is strictly prohibited. Any retaliation should also be reported pursuant to this policy and is itself a cause for disciplinary action.

Cell Phones and Other Electronics

When a student brings any electronic devices to school (smart/cell phones, iPads, Gameboys, etc.), the student does so at his/her own risk. The school will not be responsible for the theft, damage, or loss of such devices. Students who choose to bring such devices to school must comply with all rules and regulations regarding same.

All electronic devices must be turned off and stored in the student's backpack while on campus unless a teacher has specifically authorized the use of the device during that class for educational purposes. If the device is being used for educational purposes, students must comply with the guidelines relating to such use. Whenever such use is permitted, students may not use electronic devices in any way that is harassing or disruptive to the educational environment including using devices to take, transmit, or post pictures or videotape classes, to send text messages to other students in class, or in ways that would otherwise violate a school rule.

Students who violate this policy will have their cell phones or electronics confiscated. In such case, the school reserves the right to inspect the device, including all contents. Students must provide any passwords to inspect the device upon request by a school administrator. Parents will be required to come to the school office to pick up confiscated items. Students will also be subject to disciplinary procedures for violation of this policy.

Drugs and Alcohol

□ **General:** Students are prohibited from possessing, using, selling, or purchasing any alcoholic beverages or other mind-altering substances (including synthetic salts or other substances) on or near school property or at school-related off campus activities. Off-premises possession, use, sale or purchase of mind-altering substances and off-premises alcohol abuse is also prohibited.

This policy does not prohibit the proper use of medication under the direction of a physician. However, the misuse or abuse of such drugs is prohibited. Parents of students who are taking prescription or nonprescription drugs must notify an administrator in the school office of this fact when they report to school. All medications should be dropped off at the front office or given to the school nurse or secretary by the parent, not by the student or in the student's book bag.

Tobacco Products

The use or possession of tobacco products is not permitted on campus or at school related events.

FAMILY

Family Situations

Parents should notify the administration of any family situation that arises regarding students such as births, deaths, serious illness, hospitalization, divorce, or separation, etc. at the time of occurrence so the school can respond appropriately.

Statement of Parental Support

A positive and constructive relationship between the school and the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) or other adults or children interacting with the school and/or school community by virtue of their relationship with the student is essential to the mission of the school and the school's responsibility to its students. As a parent or guardian of a student attending Murphy's Hope Academy, I understand that it is my responsibility to support the school's philosophy and uphold the school's standards of academic and moral excellence. Parents/guardians agree that they will:

- Be responsive to teacher and administration communication and expectations
- Be responsible for getting students to school on time (8:00 am)
- Provide time and space for the completion of homework as needed
- Read the *Statement of Behavioral Expectations* and discuss it with their child
- Support the school with financial contributions and volunteer time to the best of their ability

The school reserves the right to place restrictions on parents' or other family members' involvement or activity at school, on school property, or at school related events if the parent or other family member engages in behavior or has a status (such as a criminal conviction) that would reasonably suggest that such restrictions may be appropriate for the community.

Divorced or Separated Parents

Teachers and administration need to be aware of a student's home situation such as separation, divorce, or custodial arrangements. Unless Murphy's Hope Academy is directed otherwise by court order or receives a written letter signed by both parents requesting a different procedure, each parent will have equal access to school records, information regarding school calendars, school activities, conferences, etc. Each parent will have equal rights to confer with teachers about the student. Each parent has the right to pick up the student at school either during the normal school day or other

activities. Each parent has the right to consent to any emergency medical procedure that may become necessary.

In the case of separation or divorce, the school requires a copy of any/all court documents pertaining to custody arrangements.

FIELD TRIPS

Day field trips are part of the educational process. It must be stressed, however, that only those students who, in the administration's sole discretion, have demonstrated good conduct during their classes will be permitted to attend.

Proper behavior during the trip continues to be of utmost importance. Parents of any student unable to follow the given guidelines will be notified. In severe cases, the parent will be requested to come and/or provide transportation home for the student.

A condition of a student's participation in any field trip is the execution of the school's standard Field Trip Release. For any student(s) whose parents have not executed the release, the student will have the option of remaining at school.

FOOD POLICY

A nutritious lunch, snacks and a beverage will be provided daily for all students by parents and guardians. *Lunches from home should avoid peanut or nut products and may not include gum, sweets, or carbonated drinks.*

All Lunches brought from home cannot be refrigerated, and students do not have access to a microwave.

Please note that our school is a nut sensitive school. The school cannot guarantee that a student will never experience a peanut allergy-related or other allergy-related event while at school, but we are committed to student safety, and therefore, ask that you NOT send any foods containing tree nut/peanut products. This includes peanuts, peanut butter, walnuts, peanut oils, pecan, almonds, pistachios, macadamias, etc. We will do our best to avoid serving foods with nuts but cannot guarantee that products with nuts will never be present, nor can we monitor products served at school events, products brought for celebrations, or served on off campus trips. Therefore, persons with severe food allergies must carefully monitor their food.

For children with severe food allergies, it is the family's responsibility to notify the school, in writing, of the allergies. Working in conjunction with the family physician, the family should submit written protocols for the student. The school will work with the parents to implement reasonable protocols in the form of an Allergic Reaction Care.

FUNDRAISING

No class, individual, or organization is to begin any money raising activity without permission from the school. No class, individual or organization may request money from any other class, individual, or organization within or outside the school without permission from school administration.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Should inclement weather necessitate the closing of School, listen for closing announcements on WSOC(ABC), WBTV (CBS), and WCNC (NBC). School closing announcements will also be posted on the school's website (Murphyshopeacademy.com). Please remember any closing of Murphy's Hope Academy will be announced independently. Weather related closings will be posted on the school's website at Murphyshopeacademy.com and announced via on the front office voicemail greeting.

INSPECTION POLICY

The school reserves the right to inspect and conduct a search of any place or item on school campus or at a school-related event including, but not limited to, a student's book bag, backpack, computer, or personal electronic devices. Students must provide any passwords or other access required to inspect such places or items upon request by a school administrator. Inspection of electronic devices includes laptops, phones, cameras, and any other electronics, including the contents of same (texts, emails, photos, images, address books, etc. whether such message or information was sent over the school's system or any personal account such as Yahoo, AOL, Gmail, etc.). Further, the school has the right to seize and permanently retain property disclosed by an inspection or search which is considered potentially harmful, dangerous, illegal, inappropriate, or the possession of which is a violation of the school's rules, community standards, and/or local, state, or federal law.

INVESTIGATIONS

Students are expected to cooperate in investigations. Students are expected to be honest, but honesty is not necessarily a mitigating factor and students' own statements may be used against them. Failure to cooperate with an investigation may be cause for disciplinary action.

If a student refuses to participate or cooperate at any stage of an investigation, or is unable to do so for whatever reason, including without limitation, pending criminal charges, the school reserves the right to act, including proceeding without a statement from the student, or to require the student to withdraw from School.

LOST AND FOUND

Books, clothing, and other personal items which are left at the end of each day will be placed in the Lost and Found and may be claimed before or after school. Unclaimed items will be donated to charitable organizations or disposed of at regular intervals. Labeling of all items helps prevent loss.

MEDICAL

Wellness Policy

It is very important that a child is kept home when sick, both for the child's health and for the well-being of other students. Students must stay home until there is no fever, excessive coughing, headache, unexplained rashes, nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, or pink eye without using medication for 24 hours. Parents or guardians will be called to pick up their child if he or she is too ill to remain in school, thought to be contagious, or has more than a minor injury.

Student Health Records

Student medical information is managed through a secure online database. Parents must complete student information yearly. Parents will have continuous access to their child's health record and can make updates when needed.

Student Medication

The school Nurse and/or staff must oversee the administration of all medication including over the counter and prescription medications. Students are not permitted to have any medication in their possession on campus, except for inhalers, diabetic supplies, and/or an EpiPen (requiring parent or guardian permission in their care plan). When possible, medication dispensing schedules should be set so that all medicines are taken at home rather than at School.

- Information regarding all medications that a student is taking must be included in the SMR.
- If a child requires medication during school hours, it must be brought to the school Nurse or school office staff by the parent or guardian in labeled pharmacy containers with current and complete directions.
- It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that the school has current information. We will not alter a student's medication at any time unless the online form has been submitted through the student's SMR. Parents must remove the former medication from the school the day the medicine has been changed.
- If the student misses a dosage of medication at home and you wish the school to administer it, you must provide written instructions via email as well as notify the student's teachers.
- Medication is a parental responsibility. School personnel cannot assume any liability for supervising or assisting the student.

Medical Emergency Treatment

In the event of an emergency, 911 will be called and parents will be notified. Parents are responsible for keeping the school informed of changes in phone numbers and emergency contact information in the SMR.

Lice

Murphy's Hope Academy follows guidelines established by the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Centers for Disease Control. Head lice are not a health hazard or sign of poor hygiene, nor are they responsible for the spread of disease. Once lice have been identified, the child must be treated appropriately before returning to school. If an administrator deems it necessary, a document verifying treatment might be requested. When there is a confirmed case of head lice, an email will be sent out to the parents in that grade. The school nurse or school staff can give you further information and a list of resources if requested. Your pediatrician can also provide diagnosis and treatment choices.

Medical Situations

If a medical situation occurs (ex. bump on the head, cuts or scrapes, serious injury received at PE or recess, fall with noticeable pain, etc.) the injured student will be brought to the school office. An administrator will determine if 911 should be called.

When a student is recovering from an injury or illness and will miss physical education or recess, parents should send in a note to the student's teachers. If this illness or injury impacts physical education or recess for more than one day, a doctor's note should be sent to the school. In addition, if any student suffers from a concussion, the protocol from the doctor must be shared with the school so proper precautions can be taken.

Health Information Sharing

Parents and guardians agree, as a condition of continued enrollment, to consent to the release of any of the student's health related information, including information relating to drug treatment, testing, medical and mental health records, to employees or agents of the school, as determined by the principal or his or her designee, to meet the medical or safety needs of the student and the community or the legal responsibilities of the school.

The school will maintain appropriate administrative, technical, and physical safeguards to protect the security of all health-related information within its care or custody. While it is the obligation of the school to safeguard student medical information, we must also balance matters of privacy and confidentiality with safeguarding the interests and well-being of our students and our community. Thus, parents/guardians and students consent to allow employees and agents of the school, who have a need to know, to receive and/or share medical and/or psychological information necessary to serve the best interests of the student and/or community. In the event of a disclosure required by law, every effort will be made to notify the parents/guardians in advance.

PARKING

Parking at the school is limited. Please park in any open space on days with no special events or any available space for special events. The school will have representatives in the parking lot to help with traffic flow and parking when needed.

PET POLICY

The following are guidelines for when pets visit campus:

- Visits must be prearranged with a classroom teacher
- Animals must be escorted by an adult and should not be on campus for more than one hour.
- Animals must be on a leash or contained in some way during their visit
- The School grounds should not be used for "bathrooming." Should an accident occur, please dispose of animal waste appropriately.

PROPERTY

Students are responsible for the proper care of classrooms, restrooms, supplies and furniture. Students who disfigure property, or otherwise damage School property or equipment, will be required to pay for the damage done or replace the item. For the protection of furniture and carpet, gum chewing is always prohibited

REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE

We take our responsibilities to report suspected physical abuse, emotional abuse, emotional deprivation, physical neglect, inadequate supervision, sexual abuse, or exploitation seriously and will cooperate with governmental authorities in connection with their investigations. If

you have any questions regarding the school's mandatory reporting obligations, please consult with the principal.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Safety and Security on Campus

Murphy's Hope Academy has a Crisis Management plan that details actions of all faculty and staff in case an emergency and/or crisis occurs at the school or in the community. Parents will be notified by letter, phone, email and/or website as to the extent of the emergency and how it is being handled. In the event of any emergency or crisis, the principal or his/her designee is the sole spokesperson for the school.

Each classroom has an emergency notebook with our crisis management plans. Classrooms are equipped with building maps, evacuation plans and procedures. Students, faculty, and administration practice safety drills monthly so that all are familiar with our emergency plans. Weather conditions are monitored.

In addition, visitors must enter through the main reception area, sign in, receive a visitor's badge, and generally be escorted within the building.

Weapons and Threats Policy

It is a violation of school policy and a felony under North Carolina law for any person to carry or to possess a weapon or an explosive on school grounds, at a school function, on a bus or other transportation furnished by the school, or within 1000 feet of any part of the school's property. Under North Carolina law, the following items are considered weapons: pistols, revolvers, any weapon that can propel a missile of any kind; any dirk, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife and any other knife having a blade of two or more inches; any straight-edge razor, razor blade, spring stick, metal knucks, blackjack; any bat, club, or other bludgeon-type weapon; and any nun chuck type weapon, any fighting chain, any disk with pointed blades, oriental darts, stun guns and lasers.

In addition, School policy prohibits any person from bringing to school any item that can be used as a weapon, or that resembles a weapon. This includes paint guns, toy guns, water guns, knives of any length, ice picks, screwdrivers, bows and arrows (toy or real) and similar items.

Whether or not School is in session, these items may not be brought onto School grounds unless a member of the school's administration authorizes the person to have a weapon for use as part of an activity being conducted at the school. This authorization must specify the weapons authorized and the time during which authorization is valid. Sports equipment for legitimate athletic purposes are not considered weapons.

Please note that the definition of weapon is broad and can encompass items that may not ordinarily be considered weapons, such as steak knives, art knives, utility knives, Swiss army/toy knives, and box cutters. If it is necessary for any of these items to be brought to School, written authorization must first be received from a member of the administration.

All weapons may be confiscated and, if appropriate, turned over to law enforcement.

The school takes all threats seriously, even when students make comments in jest, on the Internet, by text, or away from school toward or about another student, employees, or the school. Any pictorial depictions of weapons or verbal or written comments that the

administration determines in its discretion appear to be threatening in nature will result in disciplinary consequences.

Personal Property

While we take great care to help children learn to be responsible for their possessions, we cannot take responsibility for objects brought to School. We discourage children from bringing toys to school. Under no circumstances are children allowed to bring any form of toy weapons. Please mark all clothing, book bags, and other items with the child's name. Cell phones must remain off and in students' back packs during school hours.

SCHOOL BUSINESS OFFICE HOURS

The school's business office is open from 7:45 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Social media encompasses a broad array of online activity including social networks such as Facebook and Twitter, blogs, and other similar online or Internet communications. Because this form of communication is vast and growing, we feel it is important to communicate to you the school's position regarding a student's use of social media or networking.

Use at School or a School-Related Event

We do not permit students to access social media and/or social networking sites while on school property or at a school-related event. We have taken steps to block many of the social media/networking sites on our network. However, since technology advances rapidly, we cannot ensure that access to all sites is immediately blocked. Therefore, even if students can access such sites on school property or at a school-related event, all students should understand that their activities are in violation of school policy and may result in disciplinary action.

Use Away from School Property

It is not our goal to regulate a student's personal online activities when not on school property or at a school-related event. Please understand, however, that certain activities might impact a student's relationships with other students or school employees or school rights that we do reserve the right to regulate. All students should ensure that they are familiar with school's conduct policies to avoid any online communications that might violate those policies.

For example, students should ensure that their online activities do not violate a school policy regarding bullying or harassment, or other similar policies pertaining to how students interact with each other. If a student posts or says something online that makes another student feel uncomfortable, that activity may result in an investigation and possible discipline.

Students should also be aware that teachers and administrators periodically check such sites and may determine that off campus behavior violates the school conduct code by making disparaging or negative comments about the school, administration, or faculty members in a manner that is disruptive to the school's educational mission or activities.

Students should not be "friends" with any faculty member or other adult member of our community (other than the student's parent) on any of these social networking sites. Any violation of this prohibition must be reported to the administration immediately.

In addition, postings on social networking or other internet sites of students engaging in inappropriate behavior (such as drinking, smoking, sexual actions, etc.) is prohibited. Students are not permitted to use the school's name, logo, trademark, or service mark in online activities. Students are not permitted to post photographs of the school, its locations, activities, students, parents, or employee-related activities online. Students are not permitted to create websites or social networking profiles to rate teachers, discuss aspects of the school, or otherwise disclose information online that the school would find offensive or inappropriate if posted in the school's newsletter. Finally, students are not permitted to disclose any confidential information of the school, employees, students, parents, or activities online.

Student's Identity Online

Students are responsible for all their online activity conducted with a school email address, and/or which can be traced back to the school's domain, and/or which uses School assets.

What a student publishes on such personal online sites should never be attributed to the school and should not appear to be endorsed by or originated from the school.

School's Right to Inspect

The school reserves the right to inspect all electronic data and usage occurring over the school's network or on school property without prior notice. We also reserve the right to assess information in the public domain on the internet and to discipline students for any violation of these guidelines.

SPECIAL SERVICES

Occupational Therapy Specialists

Murphy's Hope Academy faculty includes occupational therapists. Our therapists work closely with classroom teachers to assist with the varied learning styles and needs of our students. Individual students may be referred to our therapists by classroom teachers for individual or small group work if the child has difficulties with "foundation skills" which directly impact a student's classroom performance. These "foundation skills" include skills such as: fine motor/gross motor, visual perceptual/motor, and sensory processing issues. Through a schoolbased assessment, which involves standardized testing and clinical observations, the student's strengths and needs are determined.

School Counselor

Murphy's Hope Academy will employ a part-time counselor who works with students in social and emotional behaviors. The counselor provides services that are part of our school curriculum and services. Referral to the counselor begins with school faculty or staff.

The counselor will notify parents informing them of both group and individual ongoing sessions with students. A teacher may request that the counselor talk with a student about a particular event or problem at school. In these instances, the counseling is provided as needed to meet the needs of a child at that moment and parents will be notified as appropriate.

Speech & Language Therapy Specialists

Murphy's Hope Academy faculty will employ speech and language therapists. Our therapists work closely with classroom teachers to assist with language development, articulation, and fluency. If you feel your child has difficulty with any of the above areas, please consult with your child's classroom teachers. A child's communication difficulties must have a negative impact on his or her performance in the classroom for a referral to be appropriate. Referrals

to our speech and language therapists for individual or small group work are made by classroom teachers.

STUDENT/ADULT INTERACTION AND COMMUNICATION Our students and adults (teachers, administrators, staff members, parents, and visitors) are expected to interact with each other in a professional and respectful manner. Although our adults can and should be friendly with the students, becoming too friendly with each other sometimes results in confusion and anxiety.

If a student or the student's parents become aware of any adult's communications or actions toward one or more students that seems unusual, overly friendly, or otherwise inappropriate, such information should immediately be reported to the principal.

Hope Program

Murphy's Hope Academy offers the Hope Program. This program is not a time out area but rather a structured program aiding students who want and need help socially, emotionally, mentally, physically, and spiritually. The program runs Monday-Friday during school hours currently. Parents and guardians will be introduced to the aspects of this program. Parents and guardians must give permission for their child to participate.

STUDENT DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS

We understand that there may be circumstances in which a parent may request that the school provide an adjustment or accommodation for a student's medical needs or physical, mental, or learning disability in addition to those accommodations the school has already provided. As the range of requests have grown over the years, the school believes that it is appropriate at this time to outline the school's policy and general guidelines for addressing such requests.

General Policy

In general, it is our school's policy to provide accommodations or adjustments for a student's minor needs in circumstances in which the administration determines, in its sole discretion, that doing so is within the reasonable ability of the school and/or its staff and will not result in an unacceptable impairment to the rights of other students (or employees) or a fundamental change to our educational environment or mission. We also ask parents to realize that, given the size of our school and our available resources, we may not be able to provide all requested accommodations. To the extent we agree to provide accommodations, we may require a sharing of responsibility for the accommodation.

Request and Documentation

For any type of accommodation, the parent must contact the principal, to discuss the need. The school will then advise the parent of the type of medical documentation needed, which generally will state the student's diagnosis, how the condition limits the student, the recommended accommodations, and the length of time that the accommodation(s) will be needed.

Release for Communications with Physician

Sometimes, the documentation received from the physician may raise questions or be unclear as to the recommendations. For that reason, the parent(s) must sign a Release of Information form, permitting the school to contact the medical professional, when necessary. In addition, if there is any cost associated with the physician's cooperation (i.e., to answer a set of questions submitted, etc.), the parent must agree to bear the cost of such process.

Assessment of Request

Once the parent's request and medical documentation has been received by the school, appropriate persons within the administration will meet with the parents to clarify information and to discuss whether the school will be able to implement the accommodation requested. In some cases, the parent may be asked to provide (at the parent's cost) any special equipment needed, training for the school's staff, or other associated matters. In addition, the school may advise the parent that the school will allow a particular accommodation, but the full responsibility for doing so will rest with the parent. For example, if the student needs to be tested or have certain types of medicines administered during the day that the school believes are beyond the scope of the school's responsibility, the school may allow the parent to make arrangements to visit the campus for the purpose of testing and administering.

Limitations on Requests

Please understand that the school is not a medical facility and does not have the personnel, training, or equipment to handle certain types of medical procedures best left to the student, parent, or physician. Examples of accommodations made for students include appropriate classroom locations, extended time on tests, use of computers, and/or dispensing of medication through designated staff.

TECHNOLOGY

As new technologies continue to change the world in which we live, these also provide many new educational benefits for classroom instruction. The school is committed to providing students with the technology necessary to participate in classroom activities.

Personal Technology on Campus

In the event a student brings privately owned technology to school, the responsibility to keep the device secure rests with the student and parents. Neither Murphy's Hope Academy, nor its staff or employees, is liable for any device stolen or damaged on campus, at school events, in carpool, or while using school technology resources. It is recommended that appropriate decals, markings, engraving and/or other custom labels are used to physically differentiate your device from others. Families may also wish to explore applications and services that provide GPS location. Additionally, protective cases for personal technology are encouraged.

Students must take full responsibility for their personal devices. The school and staff are not responsible for the security of personal technology. By choosing to bring devices onto school grounds, students accept the risk of potential loss or damage to personal technology. Personal devices cannot be left on campus before or after school hours. Students should not allow other students to take possession of their devices. • Students must immediately comply with teachers' requests to shut down devices or close the screen. Devices must be put away when asked by teachers. Devices must always be in silent mode while on the school campus.

- Students are not permitted to take, transmit, post photographic images/videos of any person while in class or at school with your own personal device. Students will only use devices to access files or sites relevant to classroom curriculum using their built-in network access. Wireless, internet, or network access will not be provided by the school. Non-instructional games and other non-instructional purposes, such as making personal phone calls or messaging, are not permitted on campus.

- Students should have no expectation of charging or plug-in capabilities. Personal devices should be fully charged prior to bringing these to School.
- Students understand that introducing a virus, trojan, or any program designed to damage, alter, destroy, or provide access to unauthorized data or information in the network is in violation of the Acceptable Use Policy and will result in disciplinary actions. The school has the right to collect and examine any device that is suspected of causing problem or is the source of an attack or virus infection. In such cases, students must provide any passwords to inspect the device upon request by a school administrator.
- Students realize that processing or accessing information on school property related to “hacking”, altering, or bypassing network security policies is in violation of the Acceptable Use Policy and will result in disciplinary actions. Students can only access files on the computer or internet sites which are relevant to the classroom curriculum and suggested by a teacher.
- Printing from personal devices is not permitted at school.
- Violations of the above listed rules, any law or any school policy may result in confiscation of personal electronic devices by teachers or staff, as well as other disciplinary action. Return of the same may be dependent upon parental conference where deemed necessary.

Acceptable Use Policy

All persons using the school’s computers, the school’s computer systems, or personal computers on school property or over the school’s systems are required to abide by the following rules. This policy also applies to the use of any personal electronic devices (computers, cameras, iPhones, iPods, etc.) on school property for educational purposes or at a school-related event. Failure to abide by these rules will result in appropriate disciplinary action determined by the school administration. All technology should be used in a responsible, ethical, and legal manner. Violations of the following guidelines may result in the revocation of access privileges and possible disciplinary responses, including removal from school for serious offenses.

- **Purpose:** The purpose of providing access to the internet and the school’s computer systems is to support research and provide unique educational opportunities. The use of such resources should be limited to those activities that support the school’s educational objectives.
- **Privilege:** The use of the school’s systems is a privilege and not a right. Inappropriate or illegal use of the school’s systems or of the internet will result in loss of the privilege and disciplinary action.
- **Internet Access:** The School community--students, faculty, administrators, and staff--have the privilege of full access to the internet. The school encourages students and teachers to use the internet to expand their knowledge. The internet allows users to send and receive email, to log onto remote computers, and to browse databases of information. It also lets users send and receive files and programs contained on other computers. Files are not to be downloaded to the school’s local or network hard drives.
- **The school has a firewall in place.** Although doing so generally can eliminate access to offensive and pornographic materials, it also has the

negative effect of filtering out genuine educational materials. In addition, no filtering system is foolproof. Therefore, we expect users to act responsibly in their searches and to immediately disengage from any materials that are inappropriate and to report the situation to the faculty member or administrator in charge of the activity. Although the school cannot effectively restrict the content of information obtained by students via the Internet, obtaining material that is explicitly labeled, as not intended for minors will be considered a violation of school rules. Furthermore, making public or passing on any material that is pornographic, violent in nature, or otherwise harassing is totally unacceptable and will be dealt with immediately by the appropriate administrator.

- **Internet Safety:** Students should never give out personal information (address, telephone number, name of school, address of school, date of birth, social security number, credit card number, etc.) over the internet. Students also should not meet with someone that they have contacted on-line without prior parental approval. Safety is the responsibility of the parent and student. The school is not liable in any way for irresponsible acts on the part of the student.
- **Pirated Software:** The term “pirated software” refers to the use and transfer of stolen software. Commercial software is copyrighted, and each purchaser must abide by the licensing agreement published with the software. There is no justification for the use of illegally obtained software. The school will not, in any way, be held responsible for a student’s own software brought to school for personal use.
- **Network Access/Passwords:** Accessing the accounts and files of others is prohibited. Attempting to impair the network, to bypass restrictions set by the network administrator, or to create links to the school’s web page is prohibited. Obtaining another’s password or rights to another’s directory or email on the network is a violation of school rules as well as a form of theft. Taking advantage of a student who inadvertently leaves a computer without logging out is not appropriate. Using someone else’s password or posting a message using another’s log-in name is a form of dishonesty, just as is plagiarism or lying, and will be treated as a violation. **Students must guard their passwords. They will be responsible for any activity done on the school’s system under their password.**
- **School’s Right to Inspect:** The School reserves the right to inspect user directories for inappropriate files and to remove them if found and to take other appropriate action if deemed necessary, including notification of parents. The school also reserves the right to inspect any personal electronic devices brought onto campus. In such case, students must provide any passwords to inspect the device upon request by a school administrator. Students should not assume that any messages or materials on their computer or the school’s systems are private.
- **Email:** Email may not be used to harass or threaten others. The school reserves the right to randomly check email or text messages. Email messages must not include personal attacks and should follow the normal rules of appropriate public language. They should not contain any language or content,

which the author would not be willing to share from the podium at a school meeting. Students should be made aware that deleted emails can be undeleted.

Any person who believes that they have been harassed or threatened by an email communication should immediately report the concern in accordance with the School's No Harassment/No Bullying policy.

- **Viruses:** Every effort is made by the school to keep our system virus-free. Even with the best techniques, however, computer viruses can be transmitted to and from any computer, including those in the computer center. The school is not responsible for the transmission of any virus or for damage suffered from a virus.
- **Computer Care:** Members of the school community will not abuse, tamper with, or willfully damage any computer equipment, use the computer for other than appropriate work, or bring food or drink into any computer area. Any intentional acts of vandalism will result in discipline and students will be held responsible for replacement or repairs.
- **Reporting Requirements/Discipline:** Any student who accesses inappropriate material on the internet, receives harassing, threatening, or inappropriate materials via email or on the internet, must immediately report the concern to the teacher who is supervising the activity or to the principal so that the situation can be investigated and addressed appropriately. Students who violate any aspect of this Computer Acceptable Use Policy will be subject to appropriate discipline and loss of computer or internet privileges.

STUDENT RECORDS AND INFORMATION

Requests for student records and transcripts must be directed in writing to the school's office. The school reserves the right to withhold student transcripts and records for non-payment of tuition or fees. The school will also require the parent to sign a consent form before a student's transcript or other records/information will be released.

TRANSPORTATION

Parents are expected to provide transportation for their child(ren). The school will be glad to help identify neighboring families; however, school personnel cannot be responsible for the formation of carpools. Students must go home with their own driver or carpool unless prior arrangements have been made, and the school has been notified as set forth by the school.

Pick-up and drop-off are a brief, yet crucial, part of the school day. Please note that the following regulations have been established to eliminate confusion and, more importantly, for the safety of your child. **Please read carefully.**

*****ABSOLUTELY NO CELL PHONE USE WHILE DRIVING ON CAMPUS OR ONCE CARPOOL HAS BEGUN*****

ALL carpool changes must be emailed to the school. Please call the front office only in the case of an emergency. This policy ensures the accuracy of the school's carpool information and attendance records and the safety of your child.

Morning Drop Off Students must remain in cars until a school representative is available at 7:45 a.m. At 8:00 a.m., the school's doors will be locked. Late arrivals must enter through the front office and be escorted and signed in by an adult. Any drop-off at the front office prior to 8:00 a.m. must be discussed with, and approved by, a member of the Administration in advance.

*****DO NOT USE THE FRONT OFFICE ENTRY TO AVOID CARPOOL LINE*****

Afternoon Pick Up

Afternoon pick-up begins at 3:00 p.m. We ask that you be in your car at this time and that your carpool number is hanging from your car rearview mirror. For safety and efficiency, the carpool number must be the specific card issued by the school. If for any reason you have arrived early for afternoon carpool and are in the building, please return to your car as soon as you hear the dismissal announcement. This is extremely important for the carpool to run smoothly.

Booster Seat Policy

In accordance with the N.C. booster seat law, employees of Murphy's Hope Academy will not load students into a front passenger-side seat or allow students to load into a vehicle if there is not a booster seat available if the child is under the age of eight.

Inclement Weather-Afternoon Carpool

If there is an active thunderstorm or tornado warning during dismissal time, please note that all staff and students will remain in the building and the traditional pick-up procedure will be delayed. For the safety of everyone, parent/driver should wait in his/her car until the storm has passed.

Late Pick Up

Policy states that students not picked up by 3:20 p.m. will be sent to the front office to wait. In the event of an emergency or very unusual circumstance, please call the school office at 704-456-7400.

TUITION AND FEES

The school strives to provide the highest quality education. We depend on the timely payment of tuition and registration fees to cover our obligations. Enrolling your child requires a financial commitment much like any other major purchase. Please make school tuition a budget priority.

Student accounts must be current at the start of the school year and at the end of December for the student to remain enrolled and before requested records are made available. In the event the account is more than 30 days past due, the school reserves the right to withhold progress reports and/or transcripts. The school reserves the right to dismiss a student due to overdue payments.

VISITORS

- **Parents and visitors are not permitted to go directly to their child's classroom or walk freely around the building.**
- All visitors must enter the building through the front office.
- Visitors will sign a visitor's log and be issued a visitor's badge.
- All class visits must be prearranged with the teacher or school administrators.

- Visitors will be escorted on campus when possible.
- For security reasons, faculty, staff, and students are not permitted to open exterior doors to visitors.

Please Note: For the safety and security of our students, anyone seen on campus during school hours without a visitor's badge will be escorted to the front office to sign in and obtain a visitor's badge.

UNIFORM POLICY AND DRESS CODE

Murphy's Hope Academy hopes that each of our students will come to school every day mentally eager and physically prepared for all the challenges and excitement the school day will hold. We believe that appropriate and comfortable clothing and shoes as well as neat and tidy grooming play a significant role in the well-being of our girls and boys as they go about their busy hours in the classrooms, the playground, and the dining hall. Our uniforms have been carefully chosen with our population and their school day in mind, and we thank you for your adherence and cooperation.

Please read the following overview and requirements carefully. Feel free to call the school before purchasing any items if you have questions.

Overview • All students are required to wear the Murphy's Hope Academy uniform.

- Students are required to arrive on campus properly and neatly attired in uniform clothing as designated in the "Uniform Reference Guide List of Approved Clothing Items." Please see the school website.

Other Requirements:

- No monograms other than the school logo will be allowed on uniform items.
- All shirts must be tucked in for both girls and boys.
- Uniform shorts may be worn until Thanksgiving and after Spring Break. Skorts may be worn all year. During the winter months, skorts may be worn with knee socks, tights, or leggings.
- No hats or other headgear may be worn inside unless permission has been obtained from the administration.
- Girls: Makeup and jewelry must be moderate and not distracting.
- Boys: No earrings are permitted. Boys' hair should be neat, clean and should not extend below the collar, earlobes, or eyebrows.
- **Students should have their names clearly marked on the inside of all outerwear.**

Uniform Reference Guide List of Approved Clothing Items

Approved colors: Tops - gray, black, burgundy Pants, Skirts – khaki, black

- Long Sleeve Polo Shirt Short Sleeve Polo Shirt

Skorts/Skirts/Jumpers/Dresses:

- Khaki/black/gray skort

- Khaki/black/gray jumper
- Khaki/black/gray Polo dress

Boys/Girls –Pants/Shorts:

- Khaki/black/gray pants
- Khaki/black/gray shorts

Belts: Belts are mandatory for items with belt loops. Belts can be brown or black.

Socks: Socks must be white, gray, burgundy or black and cover the ankle.

Tights: Solid white, gray, burgundy or black only.

Leggings: Leggings must be the same color as tights and ankle length.

Shoes: Students may only wear athletic shoes or closed toe shoes **Outerwear:**

Any coat may be worn on the playground or in carpool.

Frequently Asked Questions Concerning Uniforms

- **Who wears the uniform?**
All students wear the uniform. All students must wear athletic or closed toe shoes.
- **Where do I get the uniform?**
See your local children’s uniform clothing store.
- **Will all items have Murphy’s Hope Academy logo?**
Pants, shorts, and skorts will not have the logo. All polo shirts, jumpers, dresses, sweatshirts, and fleece outerwear will have the logo.
- **Can my child wear any color polo shirt?**
See colors chosen by the school.
- **Is there a uniform coat?**
Any coat may be worn outside or in carpool.
- **What shoes can my child wear?**
Athletic shoes or closed toe shoes must be worn daily.
- **Can I order non-uniform items with the logo?** No.
- **Should I put my child’s name in the school clothes?**
Yes! We know from experience that outerwear gets left behind. Because all sweatshirts and fleeces look alike, it is difficult to reclaim lost items. Labels are a great way to help your child keep up with her/his belongings.

The Parents Association accepts clean and gently used uniforms to sell in the Used Uniform Closet. The Used Uniform Closet is open to all parents during school hours and special sale dates.