

# Burnt Mills Elementary School Volunteer Handbook



*“Soaring to New Heights”*

*Principal: Dr. Stacy A. Ashton*

*Assistant Principal: Mr. Troy D. Clarke*

*Assistant Principal: Rashida A. Thomas*

## Introduction

Thank you for volunteering your time to assist with lunch, recess, media center, or classrooms. We are fortunate at Burnt Mills Elementary School to have a committed and involved parent community. Volunteering your time to support in these areas provides valuable hands-on assistance, and reinforces valuable connections between school and home.

In order to ensure a successful volunteer program, each volunteer must understand the responsibilities inherent in working with the children of Burnt Mills Elementary School. Please read through the information in the handbook prior to volunteering.

### Positive Encouragement

Language is one of the most powerful tools we use as educators. Language contributes to our understanding, building relationships, and confidence. As an adult on the premise of Burnt Mills Elementary School, we want to use simple, firm, direct, and positive words when interacting with students.

### Important Volunteer Procedures and Policies:

Below are some important procedures and policies that must be followed when volunteering:

- Confidentiality – You must respect the confidentiality of your relationship with the school. Your knowledge of Burnt Mills Elementary School students is privileged information and may only be shared with responsible staff at Burnt Mills Elementary School.
- Safety – If a child shares anything that involves concerns about personal safety, please see a teacher or administrator at once.
- Discipline – You may not discipline. If needed, get assistance from a staff member. If you cannot leave the situation, ask a nearby child to bring a staff member to you. Fairness – You are here for all of the students and must treat them all equally. Follow the Rules Yourself – e.g. if it is quiet time, please do not talk.
- Injury – If a child falls and is lying on the ground, do not move him! Get help from a staff member.
- Assist the Teacher as Directed – the teacher will let you know how they would like you to assist in their classroom. Please follow their lead and ask clarifying questions as necessary.
- Cell Phone – Please refrain from using your cell phone while with the children. If you must make or take a call or a text please step out of the classroom and away from children.
- Eyes on our Children – please keep your eyes on the children at all times during lunch and recess and refrain from having adult conversations.

We thank you for your participation, partnership, and support. Parents are a valuable asset to our Burnt Mills Elementary School community. Thank you!

### **BMES Hours:**

School Hours: 9:00 a.m.- 3:25 p.m.

Office Hours: 8:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.

Early Dismissal/Half Day: 9:00 a.m.- 12:55 p.m.

2 Hour Delay Opening: 11:00 a.m. - 3:25 p.m.

### **Lunch & Recess Schedule for 2025-2026**

Lunch Times	Grade Levels & Classes	Recess Times	Grade Levels & Classes
11:15-11:50	5th Grade & 3rd Grade (split) <i>Avelar</i> <i>Hamilton</i> <i>Outlaw</i>	11:15-11:50	4th Grade & 3rd Grade (split) <i>Guzman</i> <i>Turlington</i>
11:50-12:25	4th Grade & 3rd Grade (split) <i>Guzman</i> <i>Turlington</i>	11:50-12:25	5th Grade & 3rd Grade (split) <i>Avelar</i> <i>Hamilton</i> <i>Outlaw</i>
12:25-1:00	Kindergarten & 1st Grade (split) <i>Canales</i> <i>Prather</i> <i>Hirpa</i>	12:25-1:00	2nd Grade & 1st Grade (split) <i>Diaz</i> <i>Dieterich</i> <i>Hoyle</i>
1:00-1:35	2nd Grade & 1st Grade (split) <i>Diaz</i> <i>Dieterich</i> <i>Hoyle</i>	1:00-1:35	Kindergarten & 1st Grade (split) <i>Canales</i> <i>Prather</i> <i>Hirpa</i>

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## Entering & Leaving the Building

- ☐ Press the gray button on the right to initiate the Access Control System (ACS) to alert office staff. Office staff can and may ask your name or to move toward the above camera to see who is requesting entrance into the building.
- ☐ ALL visitors must enter through the front main entrance.
- ☐ Visitors must check in using the Visitor Management System (VMS) with the assistance of office staff before visiting a classroom, portables, all purpose room, gym or outdoor playground. We must be accountable for all visitors at all times.
- ☐ You will be asked by staff for identification, especially when picking up a child before dismissal.
- ☐ Visitors will be given a visitor's sticker to wear that must be visible while in the building or playground.
- ☐ Before leaving the building or school grounds, please return to the office to inform office staff of your departure even when not taking your child.
- ☐ For large school events, special rules may apply when entering or leaving the building and will be communicated prior to the event via email.

## Child Abuse & Neglect Training Modules:

- ☐ ALL volunteers over the age of 18 are required to view the Child Abuse and Neglect Training module.
- ☐ The training is valid for three (3) years upon completion.
- ☐ Please remember to add Burnt Mills Elementary when you initiate the module. You may add up to three (3) schools if you have children in middle or high school.
- ☐ The online Child Abuse and Neglect Training Module can be found at:  
→ [Child Abuse & Neglect Training](#)
- ☐ At the conclusion of the Child Abuse & Neglect Training module, you have the option of printing a certificate of completion. Please bring a copy of the certificate or the completion email sent to you to leave at the front office.

## Volunteering During Lunch and/or Recess

- ☐ Always sign in at the main office before reporting to the APR or playground.
- ☐ Make sure your visitor's sticker is on and visible.

- ☐ Check in with one of the paraeducators in the APR and/or playground to let them know you are here to help.
- ☐ Plan to engage and play with all students during recess. During lunch, please assist staff with monitoring students and cleaning up.

### Recess Guidelines

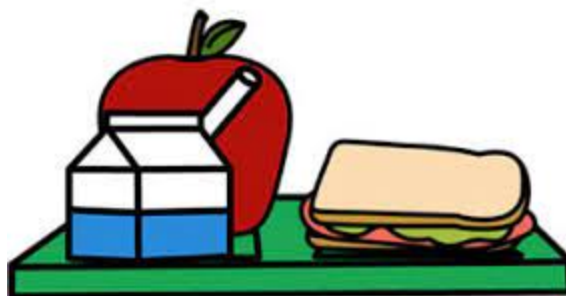


- **How You Can Help at Recess**
  - Monitor recess for safe play. While supervising recess, think of your role as a “lifeguard.” Keep alert at all times – attempt to anticipate potential issues.
  - Encourage and coach conflict resolution steps when students disagree. Refer to a recess staff member when a student will not follow your directions.
  - Help staff members gather students when it is time for them to line up for dismissal from recess.
  - With Primary Grades – Please lead students to play age appropriate games. Many students at this age find it difficult to initiate games on their own and do not know the rules of many games. Your support will enhance their playtime!
  - With ball games (primarily older students) – It is extremely helpful to have a volunteer serve as a referee for ball games, such as soccer and basketball. Students can become quite competitive and also have difficulty interpreting the set rules in a fair manner. Students may need to be reminded to use an appropriate level of competitive spirit which is consistent with recess. This is a time for fun and play.
- **Restroom Use**
  - Students must ask the designated adult permission to use the restroom. The adult will give them access to the restrooms near the gym.
  - Students may not wait by the exterior door. This is a “no standing area,”
  - Once students return from the restroom, they will return to the playground area.
- **Injuries**
  - Bring all matters of injury to a staff member. Staff members can provide band-aids. More significant first aid must be delivered in the Health Room.

- If a student cannot get up by themselves, stay with the student and send another student to get a staff member for you. DO NOT move the student yourself.
- ☐ If you see a student doing or saying something inappropriate, please get the help of a paraeducator to address the student. Only address your child's behavior, not other students.
- ☐ It is important to stay engaged, please limit cell phone use and do not take pictures of students.
- Appropriate Recess Play

Safe Play	Inappropriate Play
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Blacktop games - individual or small groups (Four Square, Hopscotch, Basketball, Walking relay races)</li> <li>● Children must have a grip when climbing on the bars</li> <li>● Games on the field: Soccer, Kickball, Capture the Flag, Relay Races</li> <li>● Sidewalk chalk drawings</li> <li>● Reading, talking with friends on benches or round tables</li> <li>● Slide down slide - feet first</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Standing at the top of the jungle gym without holding onto part of it</li> <li>● Wrestling / play fighting</li> <li>● Playing with the dirt or picking up sticks, mulch, dirt or stones.</li> <li>● Walking or running up or down slide; going down slide head first.</li> <li>● Tackle football with any kind of ball.</li> <li>● Name calling</li> <li>● Using bad language</li> </ul>

## Lunch Guidelines



- How You Can Help with Lunch
  - Check to see if cones are set up for outdoor dining, if not find a staff member
  - Assist students with condiments, utensils, and napkins as they exit the lunch line.

- Circulate throughout the APR areas to assist students who raise their hands for help. Also, your proximity to students encourages them to make good choices.
  - Encourage students to raise their hands if they need assistance. Students are to remain seated unless they receive permission to leave their seats.
  - Remind children to pick up any trash that falls on the floor.
  - Assist students with throwing their trash away in the large cans, recycling their milk bottles, and recycling the lunch trays near the trash cans when they are directed to clean up.
  - Help students maintain a safe, orderly, and quiet line when transitioning to recess.
  - Remind students to walk at all times in the APR.
- Restroom Use
    - When a student needs to use the restroom, they must raise their hand and ask for permission.
    - Provide the student with the restroom pass.. If all passes are in use, students must wait for another student to return.
    - Remind students to wash their hands.
    - Please reinforce to students that they should return to the APR as quickly as possible.
- Appropriate Strategies to Get Student's Attention
    - First signal-Countdown from five, hold hand in air and quiet sign over lips. Students should copy this signal to indicate they are ready to hear next steps.
    - Second signal-Clapping- Clap a rhythm and students should repeat.
    - Third signal-Speaking in the microphone, ask a staff member to blow the whistle or use a loud projection voice.

### Nut-Free Table Guidelines



- Nut-Free Table
  - We have several students at our school who have varying degrees of tree nuts and other food allergies. We take every precaution in order to ensure the safety of everyone. This table is clearly marked with a sign that reads “Nut-Free Table.”

- The students who have a nut allergy are offered the option of sitting at the table marked “Nut-Free Table”. They may choose to sit there or not. If they choose to sit there, they may invite one friend who does not have nut products in their lunch to sit at the table with them.
- Staff members are primarily responsible for monitoring the Nut-Free table. They will ask students who have been invited to this table, “What do you have in your lunch?” and look for items that have nuts in them. Many children don’t always know what items contain nuts. If you ask, “Do you have nuts in your lunch?” Many children say “no” because they don’t realize it.
- Lunches from the school cafeteria are nut-free,
- **Signs of an Allergic Reaction**
  - Definition: Anaphylaxis is an acute, systemic reaction which can occur in a person who has a hypersensitivity to insect venom, nuts or other allergens. This reaction may occur within seconds after a previously sensitized person is exposed to the allergen. However, onset of symptoms may also be delayed for more than an hour after exposure.

THIS IS A LIFE THREATENING EVENT  
Signs and Symptoms of Anaphylaxis

Symptoms may appear and progress rapidly:

- Generalized tingling / itching
- Apprehension
- Rapid Pulse
- Facial Flush
- Hives
- Acute Coughing / Sneezing
- Throbbing in Ears
- Difficulty Breathing / Wheezing
- Lightheaded / Dizzy
- Swelling of Lips / Eyelids
- Vomiting

*Information obtained from the Montgomery County Health Department*

- **Allergic Reaction-Steps to Take**
  - Stay with the student.
  - Alert the recess/lunch aide on duty that a possible allergic reaction is occurring (immediate attention is vital). If you cannot get the attention of a staff member, send another student to get the staff member. The staff member will alert the health room of the situation.



- Monitor the other students and help them remain calm as the staff member alerts the office that there is a possible allergic reaction. The staff member will escort the student to the health room.
- Office staff will notify health tech, administrator, and classroom teacher and follow the appropriate emergency procedures.

## Behavioral Expectations

### ● Expectations for Students

- In the CAFETERIA, students are expected to:
  - Stay seated at their assigned table and in their assigned seat. See grade level seating charts.
  - Clean up their own food on the table and floor.
  - Raise their hand and ask permission to get up for any reason.
  - Eat their own food.
  - Line up quickly when their table is dismissed.
  - Be ready with all their belongings.
- In the RESTROOMS, students are expected to:
  - Have a bathroom pass.
  - Use the restroom facilities and supplies properly.
  - Respect the rights and privacy of others.
  - Wash hands.
  - Return promptly to class activities.
  - Use a buddy system, if their classroom is located in a portable.
- On the PLAYGROUND, students are expected to:
  - Remain on the playground and in designated areas only.
  - Keep hands, feet, and objects to themselves.
  - Use respectful language.
  - Stop playing when the whistle blows and bring in recess equipment.
  - Remain in line with class and enter the building silently.
  - Use equipment and structures safely.
  - Welcome other students to their game.
  - Solve conflicts in a peaceful and friendly way.
- During INDOOR RECESS, students are expected to:
  - Follow directions given by the teacher and indoor recess aide.
  - Select an approved indoor game or activity.

- Use equipment and games appropriately and safely. (Items intended for outdoor use are not permitted.)
- Key Points to Remember When Working with Students
 

Please facilitate problem resolution, encourage and model constructive and respectful behavior. Be firm, but kind and friendly at all times. Please remember, volunteers may not discipline students. If you need help, inform a staff member of the issue, and they will take the appropriate steps. If the student will not walk on his or her own to a staff member, ask a child to get a staff member for you.

  - What You Focus On, You Get More Of
    - Tell children what you want them to do instead of what you don't want them to do.
    - Example: Student keeps getting up from cafeteria table - "Please sit at the table."
  - Allow Children the Chance to Solve their Own Problems
    - Have children identify what making a good choice "looks like."
    - Example: "Show me what sitting appropriately at lunch looks like."
  - Conflict is an Opportunity to Teach
    - Teach and re-teach children how to handle conflicts.
    - Example: Have students work through conflict with Debug strategies (see below) and restorative practices with your guidance.
  - Remain Positive and Calm
    - When you address an issue with students in a calm manner, they are more likely to hear your message.
  - Consistency and Predictability are Critically Important

## Supporting Students in Solving Conflict

- Debug
  - The DeBug System is a problem-solving strategy to help students resolve conflicts. It includes a series of five possible steps for students to use when someone is "bugging" them.
  - The DeBug System
    - 1. Ignore
    - 2. Move Away
    - 3. Talk Friendly
    - 4. Talk Firmly
    - 5. Get Adult Help
- When two students cannot decide on a game, have the students use Rock Paper Scissors to determine their decision- one round.

- There are always two sides to a story. Listening to all parties involved helps students feel respected, even if their actions caused harm.
  - Say: “Where is the other student?”
  - Teachers get both students.
  - Talk to student #1 privately to get their story. Say: “Thank you for telling me your story.”
  - Talk to student #2 privately to get their story. Say: “Thank you for telling me your story.”
  - Help students resolve the conflict by helping them understand the others perspective.

## Volunteering In Classrooms or Special Events:

- ❑ For questions or more information about volunteering please visit the following links:
  - [MCPS Volunteer Webpage](#)
  - [MCPS Volunteer HUB](#) (Your one stop shop for ALL things volunteers!)
  - [School Guidance for MCPS Volunteers](#) (This document is located under the “For Schools” section at the bottom of the MCPS Volunteer webpage.)
  - [Volunteer Liaison Training Slide deck](#)
  - [Volunteer Liaison Training Recording](#)

Parents/guardians are encouraged to volunteer. Our PTA also has events where volunteers are needed. Please take a look at our PTA’s website: <https://bmespta.memberhub.com/w/>

- ❑ Parents/guardians should communicate with your child’s teacher prior to volunteering to allow the teacher time to prepare materials, schedules, etc.
- ❑ Communication with teachers prior to volunteering also helps to avoid conflicts if students are taking assessments or involved in an activity that impacts their normal schedule.
- ❑ If you are unable to volunteer during the school day, please communicate with your child’s teacher. He/She may have tasks you can complete at home or from a computer.

*Before volunteering at school or field trip, ALL potential volunteers MUST complete the online Child Abuse & Neglect Training.*

## Class Parties & School Celebrations

- ❑ As a school, we acknowledge and celebrate two (2) occasions: Fall Festival (October) and Valentine’s Day (February) beginning at 2:15 p.m.
- ❑ Prior to celebrating the birthday of a student, please communicate with the teacher to coordinate the celebration.
- ❑ Birthday parties are to be celebrated near the conclusion of the school day (3:00-3:25 PM). Please bring a small store bought treat (i.e., brownies, donuts, mini cupcakes). The

following party items are not allowed: sheet cake, goody bags, balloons, juice boxes, chips, etc.

- ❑ Items brought to school for students to eat must be purchased from a store. This allows schools to see the ingredients used and trace the manufacture in case of an allergic reaction or sickness of a student.
- ❑ ***As a general rule, please avoid bringing in food items with nuts.***

## Field Trips & Chaperones

- ❑ Most grade levels participate in two (2) off-site field trips each school year.
- ❑ Every field trip venue varies regarding the number of adults allowed to attend.
- ❑ The number of chaperones or volunteers allowed depends on the venue students visit.
- ❑ Chaperones may or may not need to pay a fee in addition to the cost for your child. This depends on cost and type of field trip.
- ❑ On occasion, students attend field trips where no parent chaperones are allowed such as the annual second grade trip to the Strathmore Music Hall.
- ❑ Teachers make decisions on which parents/guardians attend field trips based on the demand, however, we ask that parents/guardians understand that not every parent will be able to attend.
- ❑ You may be asked to monitor a small group of students during the bus ride and field trip.