



**MERAMEC
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**



2025-26

Parent-Student Handbook



MUSTANGS
MERAMEC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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Mission Statement

We inspire each student to love learning and embrace challenges within a rich and rigorous academic culture.

Vision Statement

We develop leaders who shape the world through independence, creativity, and critical thinking.

Core Values

We model and promote;

- **excellence** by challenging our students and ourselves to meet the highest expectations of our community.
- **trust** by building relationships based on integrity, mutual respect, and open communication.
- **inclusiveness** by valuing individual differences and the contributions of a diverse student body and staff.
- **innovation** by encouraging ideas and practices that foster adaptability.
- **accountability** by aligning our actions and resources with our objectives and taking responsibility for the outcomes.

Meramec Elementary: About Our School

Our Mission

"We Strive to Create Global Citizens who are Empowered to Better Themselves, Better Our Community, and Better Our World"

The Meramec Five - Our Core Principles

- Cooperation, Kindness, Respect, Responsibility and Safety
 - Our core values of cooperation, kindness, respect, responsibility, and safety are taught, modeled and practiced throughout our school community. Meramec 5 is the Meramec Way!

The Meramec Pledge

Each day as part of our morning announcements, all students are encouraged to join the school as we recite our Meramec Pledge, written below, and remember what makes us all Mustangs!!

*I promise to be kind and cooperative throughout my school day
Showing respect for others in what I do and say
To Meramec Five I'll be responsible and true
Making Meramec and safe and peaceful place for me and you*

History of Meramec

Meramec Elementary is proud of its rich history; it is not unusual to find several generations of families represented among the school population. Since 1939, Meramec Elementary has offered children an education with high academic standards in a student-centered, diverse school environment. Meramec is a school where students are valued for their individuality. Every student is recognized for their unique strengths and talents and is encouraged to aspire to and achieve their goals.

The Meramec community is well known as a place where students, staff, administration, parents and community members work together in harmony. Parent involvement is a hallmark of Meramec. The Meramec Parent - Teacher Organization (PTO) partners with the school in support of building a cohesive school community through a wide variety of enriched experiences over the course of each school year. At Meramec, parents, teachers and students collectively embrace the "Meramec Five" - responsibility, respect, kindness, cooperation and safety - as core values that are modeled, taught and practiced throughout the school year. Students know "The Golden Rule" and strive to ensure that every child has a strong sense of belonging within the learning community. It is often said that "magical memories are made at Meramec."

Policies and Procedures

Daily Schedule

| | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Office Hours | 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. |
| Students' Arrival | 8:20 a.m. |
| Announcements/Tardy Bell | 8:40 a.m. |
| Students' Dismissal | 3:30 p.m. (3:25 p.m. Kindergarten) |

Supervision will begin at all doors at 8:20 a.m. Students who would like to eat breakfast may come in and go to the cafeteria and all other students will enter the building at 8:30.

Attendance

Regular attendance is essential. Punctuality and regularity in attendance relate positively to school achievement. The child's job is regular school attendance unless they are ill. Irregular attendance requires a period of re-adjustment that slows down learning and creates stress for the child. Students must report to the office and sign in before class if tardy. If your child is absent or going to be tardy, contact the office as early as possible at 314.854.6300 to inform the school.

Visitor Management System

Student safety is our top priority throughout the School District of Clayton. For the safety of everyone in the building, all entrances are locked once the school day begins. In the interest of student and staff safety, the District uses a visitor management system to check in all visitors to our buildings. It allows schools and buildings to produce visitor badges and electronically check all

visitors against registered sex offender databases. All visitors will need to show a photo ID each time they enter a building. Visitors will receive a printed visitor badge to wear that includes a photo, their name, time, date, destination and purpose of visit. Thank you in advance for helping us use this extra step to keep our schools safe.

Traffic, Parking and School Entrances

Traffic Flow During Arrival and Dismissal

Safety is our first priority! For the safety of everyone, we encourage all families to make use of our carpool procedures for pick up and drop off on South Central which is not in front of our school, but behind the building closest to the blacktop and playground areas.

For Carpool, please observe the following routine during arrival and dismissal:

- From 8:20-8:38 a.m. and 3-4:00 p.m., use S. Central and the circle drive to pull along so the passenger side of the vehicle is closest to the sidewalk. .
- If there is a line, we would ask that you pull past the first circle and use the second circle where the drive fully dead ends.
- Wait patiently while children unload from cars or as we load children into cars in the circle
- drive on the passenger side only.
 - Please do not wave your children to cross the lot it isn't safe.
- When dropping off children in the circle drive please make sure they are able to exit the car on the passenger side so they do not have to exit into the street
- Please honor the no parking signs on South Central in front of the playground.

Neighborhood Parking

- If you drive to school, but choose not to use our carpool procedures. Please know that you will NOT be able to use the regular parking lot to pick up or drop off your child(ren). Several streets in the immediate Meramec area are zoned for one hour parking from 8:00 until 5:00. You will NOT be able to park in front of the school as this is our bus loading and unloading zone. We also ask that you not park and block the front walkway where children enter the cafeteria and Clayton Kid Zone Program.

Parking During School Hours

- If you are coming to school during school hours, you will be able to park in the school parking lot, but do NOT park in any of the handicapped parking spots even if you are just dropping something off
- If the lot is full you can either park in the neighborhood and follow regular parking expectations, or you can utilize the parking spots behind the school in the lot connected to South Central.

Entrances

The main office will be used for all entrances that take place during school hours, but will not be used for students during arrival and dismissal.

For Arrival:

- **Kindergarten, 1st, and 5th Grades**
 - **Those arriving from the front, will use the northern most door on the front of the building.**

- Those coming from the back will use the door closest to the science lab and garden area on the north end of the blacktop
-
- **2nd, 3rd, and 4th Grades**
 - Those arriving from the front, will use the southern most door on the front of the building.
 - Those coming from the back will use the door closest to the gym

For Dismissal

Please see carpool procedures above, but if you are meeting your child outside, and not in a vehicle, plan to meet your child on the blacktop behind the school.

Please, NO DOGS: while we all truly love dogs and know that it can seem like a great time to get in a quick walk with your furry family member, we are asking that you please do NOT bring your dog up with you to pick up your child. With a lot of kids running around and a lot of other stimuli, it can create an unpredictable environment which can lead to unexpected behaviors in even the most calm dogs. We have had close calls with this in the past, so please do not bring your dog with you

Before and After School Care - Kid Zone

Kid Zone is the before and after school service for the School District of Clayton. Families must register for Kid Zone prior to the first day of use. Families may register online through the Clayton Kid Zone web page or by calling 314.854.6910. Childcare is available on a full-time basis, occasional usage, for a monthly fee. Registered families may also take advantage of service for Early Release and Full Day Programming.

Student Absences

Regular school attendance and punctuality are important to a student's educational progress. Children should arrive at school no more than fifteen minutes before the school day begins.

If a child arrives late for school, he/she is to report to the office with a parent or guardian prior to going to his/her classroom.

Please contact the office if your child is going to be absent or late. You can call us at (314) 854-6300. If the school is not notified, the school office will contact parents concerning the child's absence.

Student Absences for Vacation: Some parents may take their children out of school for an extended vacation at various times during the school year. If you choose to do this, please inform the principal, school registrar and your child's classroom teacher. Please note that teachers are not responsible for providing "makeup" material for planned absences. If your child misses more than ten consecutive school days, you must re-enroll them upon return with a current electric/gas bill and proof your lease is still active.

School Dismissal

Dismissal will begin at approximately 3:25

Students are dismissed as either bus riders, carpool, walkers, or Kid Zone.

We ask that you please provide your classroom teacher with a regular, weekly schedule for how your child will be dismissed. If you need to change this schedule please do the following:

1. Please contact the main office (do NOT just send an email to your child's teacher) and let the office know that your child will be to leaving school in a manner different from their regular dismissal.
2. Please note, if your child rides the bus, they can NOT have a friend join them on the bus who does not regularly ride the bus. Our bus space is limited, so alternative plans will have to be made.

Bike Riders/Walkers Safety

Students may independently ride bikes and/or walk to and from school with parental permission. Helmets should be worn if riding a bike. Students are asked to walk their bike once they arrive on campus. Students should wear helmets and store them in his/her/their lockers.

For any student riding a bike, we do have bike racks located on the blacktop just north of the turf playground area.

Please teach your child to use the safest route to and from school and to walk alongside a parent, caregiver or buddy if walking to and from school. Students should stay on sidewalks, crossing the street at an appropriately marked intersection. Instruct your child not to engage with or accept gifts from a stranger and never to get into a stranger's car.

Crossing Guard Schedule

Both in front and in back (between Polo and Meramec) of school

8:20 - 8:38 a.m. (Meramec Staff)

3:25 - 3:45 p.m. (Meramec Staff)

Clayton/Meramec Ave (approx. times)

8:00 -8:30 a.m. (Covered by Meramec Custodian)

3:30 - 3:50 p.m. (Covered by Meramec Custodian)

Car Riders

To keep everyone safe, all drop-offs and pick-ups must occur on South Central Avenue, not in front of the school where buses load and unload. Please see traffic and parking procedures listed above

Bus Behavior and Transportation

Students who are provided daily bus transportation to school are expected to follow rules set by the School District of Clayton. These rules are for the safety and well-being of each student. Bus rules and procedures, as listed below, are expected to be followed. These rules include:

1. Following directions and being respectful to the bus driver
2. Be on time at your bus stop
3. Be safe
 - A. Stay in your seat
 - B. Sit straight
 - C. Keep arms and head inside the bus
 - D. Be courteous to your classmates
 - E. No eating or drinking on the bus
4. Be polite
 - A. Talk quietly
 - B. Use appropriate language
 - C. Keep the bus clean

An infraction may result in:

1. Conference with principal
2. Phone call to parent
3. Suspension from bus

Dining Services

The District contracts with Chartwells Food Service. The cafeteria offers a nutritious breakfast from 8:15 to 8:30 a.m. each morning and a well-balanced lunch at a reasonable fee. Breakfast and lunch include a drink. If your student qualifies for free or reduced lunch, you will receive a letter indicating your qualification after completing the application. Students who bring lunch from home can purchase milk, juice and a la carte items from the cafeteria.

To eat a hot lunch or breakfast, students must have a credit balance in their lunch account. Please send a check or cash to the school office to make a deposit. Make the check payable to the "School District of Clayton." Please indicate your child's name and classroom teacher on the check.

If you wish to pay with a credit card, you can set up an online account at myschoolbucks.com. Cafeteria personnel will send a letter or email with a low or negative balance notification whenever a student's prepaid balance is less than \$10. When a student's account is \$10 overdrawn, food service is suspended until additional funds are added to the student's account.

Menus and meal prices are available at claytonschools.net.

Expected Cafeteria Behavior

1. Enter quietly
2. Wait patiently in line
3. Sit appropriately at the table
4. Talk softly
5. Use good table manners
6. Be kind to your classmates
7. Dispose of trash properly
8. Wait to be dismissed

Cell Phones and Personal Electronic Devices

To maintain a healthy, learning-focused environment, students are not permitted to use cell phones, smartwatches or other personal electronic devices at school. If a parent or caregiver desires their child to carry a cell phone or similar device, the device must remain turned off and stored in the student's backpack during the school day. Parents are encouraged to contact the main office to communicate messages to their child instead of texting or calling the student's device.

It may be necessary for adults supporting the classroom to use their mobile devices to complete school-related needs. In addition, exceptions to this rule may apply based on accommodations included in a student's 504 or IEP plan. View [Board Policy JFCD Student Use of Personal Communication Devices](#) for more information.

Dress Code

Please use the following to provide guidance to your child/children:

- Clothing is to be free of advertisements and slogans that could be considered inappropriate for elementary students.
- For safety reasons, it is requested that children have a pair of athletic shoes for Physical Education classes and recess every day.
- Parents are encouraged to clearly mark outer clothing with students' names for easy identification in the event of being lost or misplaced.
- Students are welcome to wear hats, scarves, and/or other accessories so long as they are not a disruption to the learning environment. Students are encouraged to remove hats during the playing of The National Anthem and/or The Pledge of Allegiance.

Discipline Policy

The School District of Clayton is committed to providing a safe learning environment for all of its students. In support of this commitment and in compliance with state and federal guidelines, the Board of Education has adopted policies that address safety, discipline, sexual harassment and the use of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs in the District's schools. These policies and

associated procedures are observed in each of our schools. They serve as guidelines for the behavioral expectations of all students in the District and outline responses when expectations are not met.

All policies may be reviewed on the District's website at claytonschools.net. Please contact Assistant Superintendent of Equity and Student Services Dr. Cameron Poole at 314.854.6018 with questions regarding the District's discipline policies.

Please refer to Clayton 101 for additional details.

School Specific Behavior Guidelines

The School District of Clayton has adopted a comprehensive Student Discipline Policy followed by all Clayton Schools.

Meramec Discipline Procedures

At Meramec, we focus our student development on character education, Positive Behavior Support, and Meramec 5, our core values of cooperation, kindness, responsibility, respect and safety. Our faculty works to build common routines, procedures, and expectations so all students can be successful. Teachers carefully explain their classroom procedures through their Open House parent meetings, newsletters, and conferences.

Level I Minor irresponsible misbehavior on the part of the student. Nearly 95% of the behavioral challenges fall in this category. Teachers and staff handle these problems on a one to one basis in a private conference and not in front of a group. The purpose of this conference is to clarify expectations and plan to make better choice in the future. Consequences of this or continued behavioral problems are determined in the conference.

Level II Misbehavior whose frequency or seriousness tends to disrupt climate of the school including acts directed against persons or property. Student meets with teacher, administrator or counselor. There may be a withdrawal of privileges or temporary removal from class with parent notification and/or conferences.

Level III Misconduct is classified as acts which result in violence on another person or property, may include illegal use of drugs or alcohol or pose a threat to the safety of others in the school. The act of misconduct is confirmed by the Administrator. Student may be removed immediately with parents, school officials and/or law officials notified. Such serious acts usually result in out of school suspension.

Homework Guidelines

Research studies have consistently shown that the amount of time devoted to learning is related to achievement in a subject. Homework, therefore, is essential to a student's overall success in

their academic program. The school staff recognize the importance of homework as a vital part of learning essential skills taught in the classroom.

The Purpose of Homework

Homework is defined as work completed outside the classroom. It is one of the many learning activities in which students engage; its purposes should be to:

- Extend learning and/or provide practice in applying concepts initially presented in the classroom.
- Provide opportunities for independent work.
- Strengthen concept and skill development.
- Provide enrichment opportunities.
- Develop initiative, responsibility, self-direction, time management, and organizational skills.
- Collect evidence of student understanding and application of what has been taught.
- Provide a risk-free opportunity to experiment with and transform new learning.

Guidelines

Well-planned homework assignments involve the following principles:

- Assignments support classroom instructional objectives.
- Assignments are well-defined and clear to the student.
- Assignments will be varied and require the use of many skills.
- Homework assignment feedback will be given in various ways (i.e., some papers will be self-checked, some teacher or instructional assistant checked, some shared with peers, etc.).
- Homework will not be assigned on designated religious holidays when students are absent because of religious observances.
- Homework should grow from classroom tasks, projects, and concerns. Types of homework assignments may include practice or reinforcement of skills learned, long-term projects, unfinished classwork assignments, and enrichment activities.
- In grades 3-5, teachers encourage students to maintain a daily planner to record daily and long-term assignments (as appropriate).
- Make-up work due to a student's absence will be assigned to the student upon their return to school after the student confers with the teacher to determine their needs.

Nightly Reading Routines

As a component of homework, parents are invited to establish a nightly reading routine to encourage reading as a life-long love and habit. We support a school-wide reading initiative that emphasizes reading at home. Minimum time allocations for students to engage as readers each evening are recommended as follows:

- Kindergarten – Parent reads to their child daily

- Grades 1-2 students read a minimum of 10 minutes four days a week
- Grades 3-5 students read a minimum of 20 minutes four days a week

Time Allotments

The time allotment toward homework generally increases gradually from grade to grade. The following is a list of approximate daily time allotments (this includes nightly reading as described above):

- Grades K-2: 10-30 minutes
- Grades 3-4: 30-45 minutes
- Grade 5: Up to 60 minutes

Please remember that the following times are estimates and may vary depending on individual needs. If classwork has yet to be finished during the allotted time in school, it may be assigned as homework, which could exceed the recommended daily time.

Special Considerations

- The resources available to students should influence the amount and nature of the homework assigned.
- If a student cannot complete an assignment due to a lack of understanding of the work, the parent is encouraged to write a note/email to the teacher explaining why the assignment was not completed. The teacher will further explore the learning with the student, after which the student may or may not be expected to complete the assignment.

Communications

Making homework meaningful to the student requires cooperation and communication among the teachers, students, and parents. The teacher's plan will be shared with students at the beginning of the school year. The plan will also be explained to parents at Curriculum Night held at the start of each school year.

Tips for Students

- Be aware of assignments and seek further explanation as needed.
- Organize their time to work on assignments.
- Turn assignments in on time.
- Turn in assignments reflecting high standards of quality and completeness.

Tips for Parents

While the student should assume the primary responsibility for completing homework assignments, parents and guardians play a key role in establishing the value of homework through their involvement in the homework process. Parents are encouraged to take an active role in the student's homework by:

- Providing a study area that is quiet, comfortable, and free of major disturbances.
- Setting a regular time for study and homework and sticking to the established schedule.
- Making supplies and resources available (i.e., pencils, paper, etc.).
- Checking your child's work for neatness and legibility.
- Arranging with the teacher for differentiated homework assignments when the individual learning needs necessitate it.
- Contact the teacher if your child needs help to complete an assignment due to a lack of understanding of the homework.
- Communicating specific student needs to their child's teacher.

Having a well-structured homework program can be an effective way of enhancing a student's learning experience. For homework to positively impact a student's education, it's important that everyone involved is working together and the conditions are suitable. Carefully planned homework activities create an excellent opportunity for collaboration between the school and home. This highlights both parties' crucial roles in providing quality education for our students.

Lost and Found

Parents should label their child's items, such as coats, jackets, gloves, boots, and lunch boxes, with their child's first and last name. If these items are lost, our "Lost and Found" is located near the main office in the hallway that leads to the 5th grade staircase by the science lab. The area is often filled with unclaimed items, and we encourage both students and parents to search through them in case of a loss. Any unclaimed items not retrieved within a reasonable time will be donated to a charitable organization.

Medication and Health Policies

All elementary schools have a full-time nurse on staff.

A. Medication

If, for some medical reason, it becomes necessary for a student to take medication at school, a request in writing shall be filled out by the doctor. **Over-the-counter medicine cannot be given at school.** Prescription medicines must be brought to school in a labeled container by the pharmacy or physician. This information must contain the child's name, name of medication, dosage, direction for giving, and the doctor's name. Send only the amount needed at school, and have your pharmacist label the school container.

Medications must be checked with the school nurse. Please do not put the medication in your child's lunch. Students must come to the nurse's office to take the medication.

B. Physical Education Permits and Excuses

Requests from parents that their children be excused from participation in specific physical education activities for medical reasons will be honored for one week. For

extended periods, a medical excuse from a physician must be submitted to P.E. instructors and the School Nurse.

C. Health Record

The School District of Clayton recommends that every student attending school receive a complete physical examination at the beginning of kindergarten and grades three (3) and nine (9). It is also recommended that every student new to the District have a physical exam before enrollment.

According to a Missouri state mandate, every student must be completely immunized, and parents must provide the school with the immunization record by the first day of school attendance. Students must be fully immunized or properly exempted from entering school. It is strongly recommended that parents provide immunization information at least two weeks before enrollment so that records may be checked for compliance. A form listing needed immunizations is enclosed in the registration packet when a student is enrolled.

Health Screening Services provided by the Health Department at the District and Special School District include:

- * Hearing/Vision Screening – K, 1, 3, 5, and new students
- * Heights & Weights – yearly

D. Illness at School

If a child becomes ill during school hours, a call will be made to parents. For your child's well-being and the health of others, **please pick up your child as quickly as possible**. It is critically important to keep the school office updated with any changes in telephone numbers. This is for the safety and well-being of your child in case of an illness or emergency.

E. Student Illnesses

1. Contagious or communicable diseases should be reported to the nurse to protect all children.
2. A child with a fever of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or above must stay home and be fever-free for 24 hours without the aid of medication before returning to school.
3. A child with a sore throat may require medical attention to determine if it is a strep infection. They should stay home until the culture's results are known; if it is positive and they are on an antibiotic for 24 hours AND is fever-free, they may return to school.
4. If a student vomited or had diarrhea during the night or just before school, they should not attend. Students should remain at home until symptom-free and able to tolerate regular food.

Parties

Children participate in Halloween, Valentine's, and winter classroom parties during the year. PTO Room Parents in each class plan the parties. General party guidelines will come from the classroom teacher. Students are offered a snack that is in compliance with the Food Allergy Management policies of the District. The time allotted for the parties will be one hour - the last hour of the school day.

Birthdays

Due to the District Food Allergy Policy, students celebrating a birthday will be acknowledged during morning announcements and receive some special birthday gifts such as a pencil, a bookmark, a bracelet, and a sticker.

Meet the Teacher

Every August, before the beginning of a new school year, students and parents are invited to "Meet Your Teacher." This event is usually held the day before the first day of school. It is an opportunity for students to find their classrooms, meet their teachers, drop off school supplies, re-acquaint themselves with old friends, and meet new friends.

Progress Reporting to Parents

The School District of Clayton elementary schools officially communicate progress four times each school year. The first and third quarter progress is reported at Parent-Teacher conferences, and for the second and fourth quarters a report card will be available to view in your student's Powerschool account.

Parent/teacher conferences will be scheduled in the fall and spring. Your child's teacher will schedule your child's conference time via written notice, email, or telephone two to three weeks before the conference day. It is important that you make every effort to confirm and attend the conference since this is the best opportunity for face-to-face communication with your child's teacher. Additional communication, both by phone or in person, is invited and may be scheduled as needed.

Care of School Property

Students are expected to take appropriate care of textbooks, library books, third-fifth grade student planners, and school materials that are provided for them during the school year. Writing in textbooks, torn pages, water damaged pages, or damage to a book's binding will result in an assessment for the book's replacement.

School Safety

Our staff undergoes regular training in school safety procedures, including Active Shooter Training. We actively practice emergency drills with our students to ensure they know what to do in the event of a fire, tornado, earthquake, or intruder. Our principal leads a School Safety/Crisis

Team consisting of teacher representatives that meets at least once each semester to review procedures, roles, and responsibilities in the event of a threat to the security of staff and students.

Additionally, our District Safety and Security Officer conducts annual safety walkthroughs in each building with our District Director for Facilities, along with First Responders (Fire, Police, EMT), to ensure our security systems are current. Our teachers also meet with the School Resource Officer assigned to our school to role-play and gain knowledge to ensure students' safety and well-being in an emergency. While school is in session, the building is locked, and visitors must use the buzzer system to enter and check in at the office once they have identified themselves and the purpose of their visit. Students are taught not to open the doors for anyone.

School Supplies

The District provides most items children will need for school activities. Parents are asked to provide certain consumable items such as pencils, paper, erasers and crayons. Parents are also asked to provide tennis shoes for daily use in physical education classes. A supply list indicating the supplies needed for each grade level is available on our school website at this link on our website

Volunteering

We welcome and encourage parent volunteers! Before volunteering, all individuals must complete the District's volunteer process, available at claytonschools.net. This helps us maintain a safe environment for everyone. Teachers often invite volunteers to assist with activities like reading with students or helping with special projects. Please check with your child's teacher to see how you can get involved.

Special Programs

Art Program

The elementary art program Meramec provides art instruction to all students for 60 minutes per week. The emphasis of the art program is given to developing fundamental art skills through studio-centered, "choice" experiences as well as developing verbal and artistic visual literacy by engaging the students in dialogues about their work and the work of other artists.

Individual and group art pieces are often displayed throughout the building and in various art shows sponsored by the School District of Clayton. While smocks are provided, they do not always provide total protection of clothing. It is recommended that students carefully consider their choice of clothing on their scheduled art day. Volunteers are always needed and welcomed in the art room.

Counseling Program

The school counseling program advocates for each child to facilitate learning and personal development in the educational setting. The program is based on the belief that every child has the ability to change, adapt and grow when presented with opportunities within the educational setting. As the advocate for each child, the school counselor strives to ensure these opportunities

are accessible and equitable. The school counseling program consists of responsive services and structured developmental experiences presented systematically through classroom and group activities at each grade level. Responsive services may include personal counseling, crisis intervention, professional referrals, and support groups for students as well as consultation for parents, teachers, and other professionals working on behalf of the student. Structured developmental experiences include a social skills curriculum taught and implemented at each grade level. The counselor meets with each class for these lessons. Consistent with the rights of the individual, the school counselor shall protect the confidentiality of information received in the counseling/consulting relationship as specified by law and ethical standards articulated by the American School Counselors Association. Counselors shall be responsible for explaining to students the meanings and limits of confidentiality.

English Language Program for Speakers of Other Languages

The Multi Language Learners (MLL) Program provides international children in grade K-5 with intensive language instruction and socialization experiences. The amount of time per day in the MLL classroom is dependent upon individual student needs. For beginning students, the curriculum focuses on communicative skills and social language. For more experienced students, the curriculum is more content-based. For all students, the program goal is full integration into all academic and nonacademic activities at school.

Monthly International Coffee meetings allow parents to use English, talk about the American School culture, and share their cultures. The monthly International Family Program hosts holiday parties for our international families. The Program also arranges lectures and discussion groups on a variety of subjects.

Gifted Program

The Gifted Program focuses on talent development incorporating Intellectual Standards and Elementary School XL (Extended Learning) Gifted Program. This program is designed for students in grades 2-5 who show exceptional creativity, problem-solving, and critical thinking compared to their chronological peers. The XL Gifted Program aims to provide students with regular opportunities to build their creative confidence and increase their comfort level with risk-taking. XL classes meet for 150 minutes each week with the building's gifted specialist. The curriculum used in the XL Gifted Program focuses on design thinking, creative confidence, and social-emotional learning.

Information about identification for Gifted programming is available on the Student Services section of the District's website (Student Services).

Library

The school library is a place for investigation, study and enjoyment. In a learning environment with professional guidance, students can:

- Gain confidence exploring literature
- Find joy and enrichment through reading

- Find, evaluate, use, and create information
- Extend learning through literature, research, and technology

The library serves all students as well as the school faculty and families. Scheduling for library use is flexible based on the needs of students and classroom teachers. Open access to all library resources is maintained to facilitate learning and information needs.

All aspects of the library curriculum are enriched with a comprehensive collection of timely materials that support varied student abilities and interests. The librarian and teachers work cooperatively to provide an integrated curriculum where students learn at their own pace, actively engage in self-directed and independent learning, and develop lifelong study and research skills.

In cooperation with classroom teachers, students will build library and information literacy skills in the following areas:

- Locating the most relevant print and web-based resources
- Evaluating and selecting the most suitable print and web-based resources
- Beginning research skills that are coordinated with the classroom curriculum
- Following a research process for both short and long-term investigations

Students may participate in library checkout by either coming to the library with their class or before or after school with a permission slip issued by the classroom teacher. Checkout times are scheduled weekly for children in all grade levels. The librarian and the PTO collaborate to provide a number of special activities throughout the year to encourage reading: the Book Fair in the fall, the Book Swap in the spring, author visits, and the Adopt-A-Book program are a few examples.

A full-time librarian, library assistant, and many dedicated volunteers make up the staff of the school library.

Music

All students receive two 30-minute music classes per five-day rotation. Through a variety of activities and instructional approaches, our music curriculum focuses on the following objectives.

- Nurturing our students to develop a lifelong joy in singing.
- Learning to be informed, active, and thoughtful listeners.
- Growing in our ability to discern, evaluate, and utilize basic musical elements (high and low pitch, steady beat, loud and soft volume, upward and downward movement, melody, etc.) and more advanced elements (rhythm, harmony, tone color, form, style, aesthetics, etc.).
- Integrating physical movement into our musical experiences in ways that stimulate and enhance the development of the brain and its function. We are regularly incorporating the benefits of this growing body of research into our classroom practice.
- Developing fluency in music reading and notation.
- Supporting grade-level thematic units with music activities that connect directly to their curriculum.

- Using writing as an expressive and reflective tool to assess our musical learning.
- Utilizing new developments in music technology.
- Understanding the historical context and significance of musical works and music's role in shaping and reflecting the surrounding culture.
- Providing our students with individual and group opportunities to perform, compose, arrange, and improvise music. This includes both vocal and instrumental music.

Chorus

Chorus is available to all fourth and fifth-grade students. The chorus for each grade meets one morning before school and one afternoon after school. The students sing in a wide variety of styles and levels of difficulty. Emphasis is given to ensemble vocal technique (posture, breathing, dynamics, pitch, blending, listening) and performance etiquette (appearance, attention, rehearsal habits, attendance, punctuality, etc.). The Chorus enjoys many opportunities to perform throughout the school year, including the Holiday Sing, the Spring Concert, and a Cardinal baseball game.

Strings Program

In the fourth grade, “Suzuki Style” violin is offered. There are two classes offered each week before the school day. District string teachers teach violin classes. Students enrolled in this program will learn the fundamentals of violin playing while learning music by rote. There will not be any note reading at this level. Learning to read music will take place during the fifth-grade year for students continuing in the orchestra.

The fifth-grade string program is available to all fifth-grade students whether they have played in the Suzuki program, taken previous lessons, or want to try their hand at the viola, cello, bass, or violin. The program takes place during the school day twice a week for 30-minute sessions. Due to the implementation of the Suzuki program, the fifth-grade orchestra is divided into two sections. Section one is a continuous program of the “Suzuki style” for students with previous experience, including note reading. Section two is the beginning strings class emphasizing note reading and technique building. The violin, viola, cello, and bass are offered to beginners.

Every year, in late August, the District music staff will host an Instrument Display Night for students participating in instrumental music. This is an opportunity to have staff on hand to answer questions and rent instruments for the school year from our recommended stores. Fourth- and fifth-grade students will perform in a District concert during the school year.

Physical Education

Students receive physical education daily for 30-minute classes. During the school year in physical education, our students will experience a balance of skills, games, rhythms, cooperative activities, health concepts, team building through physical challenges, dance, obstacle courses, creative movement, and movement exploration with different equipment. Our activities have an orderly sequence of motor learning that begins in kindergarten and progresses through fifth grade. Our fitness stations provide a weekly opportunity for students to practice climbing, balancing,

strength, cardiovascular activities, and flexibility. We ask for your support in helping your child be prepared for P.E. by having tennis shoes and comfortable clothes for vigorous activity. The components of our program will assist your child in making healthy decisions and choosing responsible, active, and enjoyable lifestyles.

Reading Recovery

Reading Recovery is an early intervention program for first-grade students in the beginning stages of learning to read and write. This short-term intervention is supplemental to regular classroom teaching. It is designed to help students acquire a solid foundation in reading and writing that allows them to learn successfully within the classroom environment. These students are selected based on classroom teacher recommendations, initial screening results, and the reading specialists. The Reading Recovery teacher works individually with each child during a daily 30-minute session, building on the child's strengths to develop independent reading strategies.

Schedule for Special Classes

Special classes for students include Art, Music, Physical Education, and Spanish. These classes are scheduled on a 5-day rotation called an A-B-C-D-E day. This type of scheduling allows for continuity in the schedule. A calendar of the year, with all days marked as an A, B, C, D, or E day, is available at claytonschools.net

Science Fair

The annual science fair is held every spring. Information regarding science fair projects is always available online through the science teacher's website. The guidelines and requirements outlined by the Greater St. Louis Science Fair are followed. The regional fair for elementary students is usually held in May. This is an excellent opportunity for students interested in science to participate in a long-term project around a question they want to pursue.

Spanish Program

Students in grades one through five receive Spanish lessons for 30 minutes, two to three times, within their five-day "specials" rotation. Spanish class integrates the curricula of other subject areas with the language and culture of the Hispanic world. The focus of instruction includes all five language skills - listening, speaking, reading, writing and cultural awareness. The Spanish teacher conducts class almost exclusively in Spanish and uses a variety of teaching strategies to address all students' learning styles. As a result, students experience global awareness and cultural diversity through an exciting language experience.

Student Supports and Opportunities

Student Planners

All third through fifth grade students will receive a Meramec Student Planner provided by our school. Students will be instructed on and assisted with correctly using the planner at the beginning of each school year.

The planner is a tool to teach responsibility, work and study habits, and management of

long-term assignments. Each day's entry has a place for home-school communication. Please check the planner each evening and assist your child with managing and completing assignments. Classroom teachers will guide the use of the planners and gradually release responsibility to students as they progress from third through fifth grade.

School Clubs

Each school offers a variety of after-school club opportunities. An informational packet of offerings will be shared via email with an online registration form for your child, should they wish to participate.

Character Development Program

In Clayton, we believe that educating the whole child means nurturing not only academic growth but also social and emotional development. That's why we've adopted the Character Strong program—a comprehensive approach to building positive character traits and strong relationships.

Meramec Student Council is a student representative group of fifth grade students who lead, support and exemplify the Meramec 5 core ethical values of cooperation, kindness, respect, responsibility and safety. This student leadership group leads school wide character education efforts, service learning opportunities, and school spirit activities and events. Meramec Leadership Squad meets monthly.

MERAMEC 5

Cooperation, Kindness, Respect, Responsibility and Safety

Our core values of cooperation, kindness, respect, responsibility, and safety are taught, modeled and practiced throughout our school community. Meramec 5 is the Meramec Way!

Field Day Celebration

At the end of the year, the whole school participates in our Field Day Celebration. Many parent volunteers make this day possible by assisting in the numerous activity stations set up throughout the school. This is an end-of-the-year celebration focused on various great physical activities and the importance of team spirit, cooperation and fun.

School Pictures

Individual pictures of all students are taken in the fall. These may be purchased by parents, but there is no obligation. Make-ups are usually offered in October.

Supporting Your Child: PTO, Buzz Book and More School Communications

It is vital to maintain up-to-date contact information in our school office. Please indicate any changes to phone numbers, emails and emergency contacts via your parent portal in PowerSchool.

In addition, to keep parents informed of school happenings, a weekly newsletter will be emailed with updates on school events and activities. Parents should also visit the school website to stay informed on school news and events.

PTO (Parent Teacher Organization)

We are fortunate to have a highly active PTO that aims to enhance the educational experience of our students. The PTO provides an opportunity for parents and teachers to collaborate and work together. We welcome all parents to join this group and support our efforts to make our school a pleasant and productive place. Annual membership dues are used to support the work of the PTO. The PTO holds functions throughout the year, including family fun events like the fall Ice Cream Social and fundraisers like the Book Fair. We greatly appreciate volunteers supporting the PTO.

All parents whose children attend our school are automatically members of the PTO. Meetings are offered in-person and virtually. All parents are encouraged to attend. Visit claytonschools.net to learn more.

Clayton PTO Council

The purpose of the PTO Council is to provide a forum for individual school PTO representatives. Annual activities are planned, implemented, and evaluated to meet the needs of the School District for each year. The PTO Council also sponsors “Meet the Candidates” nights prior to each School Board election. The PTO Council membership consists of an Executive Board, the PTO representative from the Board of Education, the Superintendent, the Assistant Superintendent, and the Director of Community Relations.

Buzz Book

The “Buzz Book” is published digitally each fall. The book contains a listing of teaching staff, PTO officers and committee chairpersons, school calendars, class lists, room parents, and student telephone numbers and addresses. From claytonschools.net, visit the PTO section of our school website to access the buzz book.

Oasis Intergenerational Tutoring

OASIS’s (Older Adult Service Information System) mission is to get people involved in doing things that are intellectually challenging and stimulating. OASIS tutors enjoy the rewarding opportunity to work with students in kindergarten through fourth grades to build reading skills, self-esteem, and positive attitudes toward reading. Our school works with about a dozen tutors each school year. Our reading specialist works with classroom teachers to match the tutors with one student at the start of each school year. They meet for about 30 minutes each week throughout the school year. OASIS tutors participate in training and have access to a variety of materials. Monthly meetings for the OASIS volunteers provide an opportunity for learning new strategies and exchanging ideas.