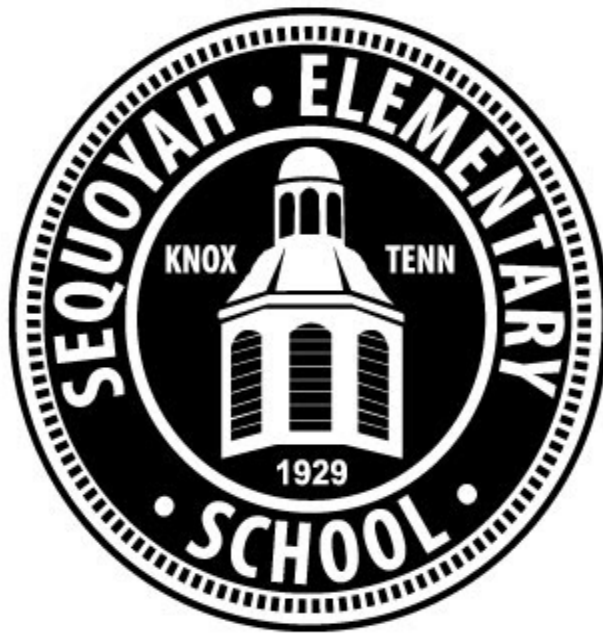


# ***Sequoyah Elementary School Parent / Student Handbook 2025 - 2026***



*942 Southgate Road  
Knoxville, TN 37919  
(865) 594-1360*

*[www.sequoyahes.knoxschools.org](http://www.sequoyahes.knoxschools.org)*

*Principal: Mrs. Shay Siler  
Assistant Principal: Dr. Rebecca Curtis  
Superintendent: Dr. Jon Rysewyk*

## **Administration**



Mrs. Shay Siler  
Principal



Dr. Rebecca Curtis  
Assistant Principal

## **KCS BOE Policies**

The following information provides a general outline of the policies and procedures that Knox County Schools has adopted for students and parents. Families may also reference the complete Knox County Board of Education Policies found at [KCS BOE Policies](#).

## **Sequoyah Elementary Mission Statement**

A collective school community (Faculty, Staff, Administration, Parents, Volunteers, and Community Supporters) providing the foundation and opportunity for continuous and relentless student ownership and growth.

### **School Motto**

Striving for Excellence!

### **School Mascot**

“Bolt” the Thunderbird

### **School Colors**

Blue, White, Gray

### **School Hours**

7:45 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.  
(Front Door opens at 7:15am)

## **Absences**

All absences are initially marked “unexcused”. It is the parent's responsibility to provide appropriate documentation regarding absences to the classroom teacher within three (3) days upon returning to school. A written note is always required in order for the status of an absence to be changed to “excused”. **Telephone calls will not substitute for a written note.** After five days, Knox County School guidelines require a doctor’s statement for sick days beyond ten (10) per year.

After five unexcused absences, a letter will be sent to the child’s parent from Knox County Schools.

Attendance is an essential element in students’ school success. Every student is expected to be present every day of the school year. Knox County Board of Education policy allows students’ absences to be *excused* for such reasons as: personal illness, illness in the family, death in the family, recognized religious holidays of the student’s faith, and verifiable family emergencies. Any absence not complying with the above reasons for excused absences will be considered unexcused. Please note that travel and vacation are considered unexcused absences for KCS policy.

Please reference KCS Policy J-120.

Although illness is an excused absence, Knox County elementary school guidelines require a statement from a medical provider for illness beyond ten days per school year. Board policy permits parents to appeal for reconsideration of absence decisions. Such an appeal must be submitted to the principal/assistant principal, using forms available from the office, within five days following the student’s return to school, and the principal/assistant principal will determine if the absence was unexcused or if the excused absence requires a medical providers’ statement. The decision of the principal/assistant principal is final.

In order for a student to be counted as present for the full day, a student in grades K-5 must be at school for a minimum of three hours and sixteen minutes. If a child is not present for these minimum times, he or she must be counted as absent for the full school day. Students checked out before 11:15am are considered absent. Students will not be called to the office prior to parent’s arrival.

## **Absence - Prearranged**

When a parent or guardian knows ahead of time that a student will miss a day of school, a formal written request will need to be sent to the classroom teacher if student work is needed for those days. The parent/guardian should state the reason for the absence and the exact dates of the absence(s). This will be submitted to the Secretary for documentation in Aspen.

## **After-School Care**

Kids Place at Sequoyah provides after school care beginning at 2:45pm on site. Please contact the front office for a list of other daycares that pick-up at Sequoyah.

## **Aspen Emergency Information**

Updated contact information on Aspen is required and needed in case of emergencies. Please provide the school with accurate emergency information and report changes promptly. Correct home and work phone numbers are essential. The main purpose of this information is to help

locate a parent or guardian in the event of illness or emergency involving your child. Please list phone numbers of neighbors who will know where you are for emergency calls and who may pick up your child when he/she feels ill and a parent is not available. Please note the Aspen system only lists 2 parents/guardians as priority contacts. Other parents/guardians may be listed as Emergency Contacts. Any individual picking up a student must present a photo ID and must be listed in the Aspen system (please list grandparents, nannies, etc).

### **Behavior Expectations**

Children move through the building when transitioning to the playground, cafeteria, bathrooms, breaks, etc., so it's imperative that we maintain an environment that is conducive to learning for all children. Students should follow the school's PBIS expectations at all times. All students deserve an equal right and opportunity to receive a quality education in a safe and secure environment. Therefore, we expect a school atmosphere that supports teaching and learning. Any behavior that interferes with the teaching and learning of students is not acceptable. Students are expected to conduct themselves in an orderly and courteous manner. Failure to maintain appropriate conduct may result in a referral to the office and/or exclusion from an activity.

### **Consequences**

All students make mistakes and need to be redirected from time to time. Teachers will handle initial violations of classroom or school rules in their classrooms. However, it is *sometimes* necessary for the principal/assistant principal to provide extra support. If a child is sent to the office, the principal/assistant principal will decide on the appropriate consequence for the misbehavior. A parent/guardian will be notified by phone, e-mail or personal conference. Consideration will be given to:

- Nature of the misconduct
- Unusual circumstances
- Number of times the child has been sent to the office
- Repetition of the misconduct

The Knox County Board of Education has established a policy (J-211) prohibiting acts of harassment, intimidation, bullying and/or cyber bullying. We will work with individual students to uphold this policy, and the consequences for misbehavior can be very serious. Please help us help your child to be respectful of everyone and to not harass, intimidate, or bully any student.

**Transfer Option for Students Victimized by Violent Crime at School:** Under the Tennessee State Board of Education's Unsafe School Choice Policy, any public school student who is the victim of a violent crime as defined under Tennessee Code Annotated 40-38-111(g), or the attempt to commit one of these offenses as defined under Tennessee Code Annotated 39-12-101, shall be provided an opportunity to transfer to another grade-level appropriate school within the district. Additional information regarding this option may be obtained by contacting Brian Hartsell, Supervisor of Transfers, at (865) 594-1502.

### **Bus**

Bus transportation is provided for children who live at least one mile beyond the school - outside of the parent responsibility zone. It is important that you help your child learn his/her correct bus number and route stop. For all eligible children, school bus routes are posted on the Knox County Schools website, or you may inquire at our school's office (865)594-1360. The KCS Supervisor

of Transportation arranges bus routes and stops. Transportation may be reached at (865) 594-1550 for questions about bus routes.

In the event that school is delayed or dismissed early due to inclement weather, buses may follow a prearranged snow route. Transportation may be reached at (865) 594-1550 for questions about bus routes. State law does not require school bus transportation, but is a privilege extended to eligible students by our Board of Education.

*Tennessee State Board of Education States:*

“A pupil shall become ineligible for pupil transportation when his behavior is such as to cause dissension on a school bus, or when he disobeys state and local rules and regulation pertaining to pupil transportation.”

Misconduct on the bus endangers the safety of others and may result in a loss of bus privileges. Both parents and students must understand that the bus driver is in charge of the bus and students, and any student who is reported by the bus driver for a safety rule violation will be subject to disciplinary action. Please go over bus rules with your child.

### **Knox County's School Bus Rules:**

- Obey the bus driver; follow the driver's first request; driver is authorized to assign seats.
- No loud, rude, abusive, or profane language.
- No eating or drinking allowed; keep the bus clean.
- Keep hands and head inside the bus; no throwing objects in or out of the bus.
- Possession and/or use of tobacco, alcohol or drugs are prohibited in any form.
- Parents will be fiscally responsible for any act of vandalism.

Permission to ride a bus other than the one that your child is assigned can only be granted by the principal and approved by the bus driver. The parent must make the request in the form of a written note. The note must be signed by the principal and presented to the bus driver.

### **Cafeteria**

Breakfast is served daily in the cafeteria from 7:15am - 7:40am. Our meal pricing for 2025-2026 is as follows: Breakfast \$2.25 and Student Lunch \$3.25. Visitor lunch is \$4.00 (subject to change). There is a charge for ice cream (\$0.75) and for additional milk. Children may bring lunches from home. Students are welcome to bring water bottles for use in the cafeteria. Please do not send glass containers or soft drinks.

Lunch is a time for the students to relax and enjoy conversation with their friends. Educational assistants are on duty full time to help children with any problems that arise and maintain a pleasant environment. While in the cafeteria students are expected to use the same mealtime manners they use at home. Parents are encouraged to discuss the importance of good manners with their children. Our staff reserves the right to maintain a calm and quiet environment so that communication and action in an emergency is timely.

You may send money for lunch day-by-day or pay ahead. Payment for lunches is available online. Children are allowed to buy their lunches or bring their lunches any time.

Please refer to the Lunch Visitors section and the Early Release section.

KCS Nutrition Department uses online payment system for school meals, and a new website to apply for free / reduced-price meals.

The new portal is called LINQ Connect, and users can register for an account at [linqconnect.com](http://linqconnect.com). Paper applications are also available by calling the KCS Food and Nutrition Services Department at (865) 594-9563.

Please visit the [LINQ Connect FAQ page](#) for details about topics including:

- Creating an account;
- Adding money or making a payment;
- Setting spending limits;
- Reviewing meal purchase transactions;
- Receiving “low-balance” notifications; and
- Applying for free or reduced-price meals.

### **Child Abuse**

Any teacher, nurse, counselor, administrator or other school professional acting in an official capacity who has reason to believe a child under age 18 has been subjected to or adversely affected by physical, mental or emotional abuse/neglect must report this to the county Department of Social Services or appropriate law enforcement agency in accordance with the Child Protection Act of 1977.

If you suspect or have knowledge of abuse, please notify Mrs. Siler and/or Ms. Matthews asap.

### **Chromebooks**

Chromebooks will remain at the school for instruction during the 2025-2026 school year unless otherwise stated. Additionally, should devices be sent home at some point in the school year, a student must have the signed Device Agreement on file. Insurance is optional. Please do not place stickers on the devices. Please be encouraged to purchase a cover for your child’s device. The district will charge for the replacement of the cover if stickers are placed on the device.

The site to purchase device insurance and sign the required device agreement is:

<https://www.knoxschools.org/chromebooks> (student ID number is needed from Aspen/Parent Portal).

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### **Clinic / Medication**

The clinic is staffed by the Knox County Schools. It is important to make sure your emergency contact information is kept current in the event the nurse needs to contact you about a sick child.

No medication should be sent to school with a child. Medication must be brought to the school by a responsible ADULT in an appropriate container labeled by the pharmacy or Health Care Provider and cannot be accepted in any other container. The school is not permitted to administer medication to a child without a signed Medication Authorization Form.

- Children cannot be at school with fever, vomiting, diarrhea, severe cough or rashes.
- A child should be free of fever for 24 hours before returning to school after an illness.
- You will be notified if your child becomes ill. Children must be picked up when you are called. If we cannot reach you, the emergency contact provided by you on the emergency card will be called.
- Children with a temperature of 100.4 are required to be picked up by a parent or emergency contact.
- Any child diagnosed as having a contagious or communicable medical problem cannot, by law, be permitted to remain at school.

- Please notify your child's teacher if your child has been diagnosed as having significant medical problems, such as diabetes or epilepsy, so that appropriate arrangements can be made if events warrant.
- To comply with Knox County School Board policy, prescription medication will not be given unless the doctor completes the Physician Form for Administration of Medication and Self Medication. *(This form is available at the school.)*

## **Dress Code**

The standards for elementary school dress code reflect “common sense” and a concern for each child's comfort, safety, cleanliness, and sense of modesty. All students are expected to dress appropriately for an educational environment. Any clothing that interferes with or disrupts the educational environment is unacceptable. Hats are not permitted in school and should be removed when entering the building, unless approved by an administrator.

Please reference KCS Policy J-260.

There is a strong relationship between neat, appropriate attire and a positive learning environment. To help create the best learning environment for elementary students, the following standards for student dress must be observed in all Knox County Elementary Schools:

- Pants must not sag below the waist and must not touch the floor.
- Shirts, blouses, and dresses must completely cover the abdomen, back, and shoulders. Shirts or tops must cover the waistband of pants, shorts, or skirts with no midriff showing.
- Head apparel, except for religious or medical reasons, must not be worn inside the school building.
- Footwear is required and must be safe and appropriate for indoor or outdoor physical activity. Flip-flops and shower-type shoes are examples of inappropriate footwear.
- Clothing or accessories may not display offensive, vulgar language or images, and must not advertise products that students may not legally purchase.
- “Short shorts”, mini-skirts, and spandex are deemed inappropriate attire for students in grades 3-5.
- Coats and jackets exceeding fingertip length are not to be worn in the building.

School administration reserves the right to determine whether a student's attire is within the limits of decency and modesty. The principal/assistant principal may allow exceptions for school-wide programs or special classroom activities.

## **Early Release Days**

The Knox County Schools calendar includes early release days throughout the school year. These dates for the 2025-2026 school are: September 17, November 19, January 28, and March 25. Students will be dismissed at 11:15 am on these days. Literacy and math instruction will be provided on these days.

## **Emergency Drills**

A fire and evacuation plan is posted in each room. Teachers will review the established procedures with students during the first week of school. When the alarm sounds, students will immediately stand and leave the room. Running is not permitted. Students are not permitted to

talk during the drill and are to remain at least fifty feet away from the building until the signal is given to reenter. Every drill is to be treated as the "real thing." Fire drills occur monthly throughout the school year.

Emergency drills such as Intruder, AED, Tornado/Inclement Weather and Lockdowns are required by the state and school district during the school year. Staff and students will participate in all emergency drills.

### **Emergency School Closings or Delayed Openings**

The decision to close school due to weather conditions or emergencies is made by the Superintendent of Knox County Schools. Please remember to listen to radio, television and social media for information on school closings, early dismissals, or delayed openings due to snow or adverse weather conditions. Please do not call the office to find out if school is dismissing early, as this ties up our telephone lines. Students may not leave school with anyone who is not listed on the emergency card.

NOTE: Students may only be picked up by an adult (18 years of age or older).

All extracurricular activities, interscholastic contests, field trips, day cares, and non-school activities in school buildings will be canceled when schools are closed.

### **Enrollment Requirements**

- Children must be five years of age by August 15th in order to be eligible for Kindergarten.
- Children must have completed a year of accredited Kindergarten, to be eligible for First Grade.
- Before any child may enter school in Knox County, the school office must receive an official record of the new TN Certificate of Immunizations, including the dates of all required shots, combined with the record of a medical examination by a licensed physician. This information must be recorded on the official form required by the State of Tennessee, and a licensed physician must sign the form.
- A certified photocopied birth certificate verifying date of birth must be provided at the time of registration.
- All students must reside within the Sequoyah Elementary zone and proof of residence (original utility bill) must be provided at the time of registration.

### **Field Trips**

Educational field trips are planned to provide experiences correlated with subjects studied in the classroom. When an out of school field trip is to be taken, your child will bring home a permission form listing the destination and date. All trips are chaperoned by school personnel who will be assisted by approved parent chaperones. Transportation for field trips will be provided by a school bus or other approved/properly insured charter bus. No private vehicles are used for school field trips. Field trips are non-refundable. Acceptable behavior in the classroom and on previous field trips is necessary to maintain the privilege of field trip eligibility. Students who do not qualify behaviorally for field trips will be given alternative assignments. Permission slips must be turned in by the designated deadline and permission cannot be given over the telephone. Deadlines WILL BE strictly maintained due to transportation and bookkeeping requirements. All children must ride the bus to the field trip destination. Volunteers are needed to help provide for the safety and security of the children. Volunteer chaperones may not bring other children/siblings. It may be necessary to limit the number of chaperones per trip based on



site restrictions. Knox County has established rigid regulations regarding field trips and these must be followed at all times.

### **Going Home with Friends**

If your child will be going home with a friend or having a friend go home with him/her, a note from each child's parent must be brought to school stating permission. Both children should give their notes to their teacher. In the event buses are at capacity, it may be necessary to restrict students from riding a bus home with a friend. Please arrange for other transportation in advance. Thank you!

### **Homework**

Students are given homework to enrich and/or support classroom instruction. Each teacher will discuss homework expectations with parents at Parent Night. Please ask your child's teacher for more information about homework policies. (Please note the Chromebook required drill listed under Emergency Drills.)

### **Lost and Found**

Unidentified articles found in the building are turned in and placed in Lost and Found outside the gym entrance. Please check here when your child has lost an article of clothing. After notifying parents in the newsletter, lost and found items will be donated to a charitable organization at the end of each semester.

It is important to label any clothing item that may be removed during the day, such as jackets, boots, scarves, hats, mittens, etc. Lunch boxes should also contain a name so they can be returned easily. Labeling these items will help us greatly when things accumulate in lost and found.

### **Lunch Visitors**

Parents may join their child/ren for lunch (verified with proper ID in the school office); however, seating is limited, therefore, siblings are not allowed to attend. Parents may only eat with their child. Friends are not allowed to join for lunch due to safety concerns and student supervision. Visitor seating is limited to the designated outdoor picnic area. Visitors may not sit in the lunchroom at student tables due to limited seating, possibility of assigned seats and other factors. Students must remain at the picnic area if you choose to eat outside due to playground schedules and safety issues. Students shall not leave the outdoor seating area to play on the playground.

- Anyone visiting for lunch must be listed on a child's Aspen page. If an individual is not listed in Aspen, they will not be permitted to have lunch with the student (without parent present).

### **Missed Assignments**

If a student must be absent from school (excused or unexcused), he or she has up to ten (10) days to make-up any and all assignments that were missed during the student's absence. The student must request make-up assignments within three (3) days after returning from the absence. Teachers shall set a reasonable time for the completion of make-up work. Failure of a student to initiate a request for make-up work within three (3) days will result in a lost opportunity for credit for that assignment.

### **Morning Arrival**

Parents and the community are encouraged to participate in the education of their children. For your child's protection, school board policy states, "All visitors must report to the school office to identify themselves and state the reason for the visit." Visitors/parents need a photo ID to check in with the school office. The district utilizes a Visitor Management Systems in which parents/visitors must have a photo ID. A photo identification badge (printed from the system) must be worn at all times.

- Please reference the traffic map on our school website for information regarding morning drop-off and traffic patterns.
- Our doors open at 7:15am. Students should not arrive prior to that time as they will be unattended outside.
- Visiting children of any age are not permitted beyond the office area during the instructional day (7:45am-2:45pm). Parent volunteers should schedule their volunteer day/time with the teacher in advance.
- Students will report to their assigned areas upon arrival: K-2 in the gym and 3-5 in the cafeteria. All students eating breakfast will report to the cafeteria. We respectfully require parents to allow children to enter the building on their own. Teachers are not available for walk-in appointments prior to the start of the instructional day, and space is limited in the cafeteria. This allows our teachers to begin their instructional day in a timely manner. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.
- Kindergarten parents may walk their child/ren in on the assigned staggered days and the first day of school if needed. We have multiple staff members on duty to support student arrival.
- Visitors are not permitted to enter any classroom in which the teacher is not present.
- Children who attend after-school functions and PTO events must be accompanied and closely supervised by the parent at all times.
- Instructional or planning time for teachers may not be interrupted, even briefly.

### **Notes Required by Parents**

The school requires notes from parents explaining the following:

- Absences
- Requests for early dismissal
- Permission for field trips
- Permission to ride bus with another student after school
- Permission to go home (car rider/walker) with another student
- Changes in usual method of transportation home

### **Parent Concerns**

Sequoyah teachers and staff work closely and cooperatively with parents. If you have questions or concerns regarding your child, please convey these concerns directly to the teacher through a note, phone call, or scheduled parent-teacher conference. This will lead to a positive resolution of concerns. If you wish to discuss a concern regarding your child's teacher with the Principal or Assistant Principal, please call the school office to request a conference. The Principal requires that the teacher be included in such a conference, since the resolution of any concern requires the

teacher's full participation. Anonymous concerns do not merit or receive consideration of any kind.

### **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

We strongly encourage communication between school and home. Parent / Teacher conference months are set for October and February. If you would like to request a conference at any point during the school year, please email or contact your child's teacher to arrange a meeting.

### **Parent Portal/Aspen**

Knox County Schools has enabled the ability to create Parent Portal accounts electronically. Parents that do not have a Parent Portal account should receive an email with a security code for access to this service. Parent accounts for newly enrolled students will have a Parent Portal security code emailed within one week of registration.

Once you have received your security code, you should be able to follow these instructions, attached to the email, to create your Parent Portal account.

After your account is created:

1. Visit [knoxschools.org](http://knoxschools.org), and click on "Popular Links" at the top of the page
2. Click on "Parent Portal"
3. Log in using your username and the password that you created.

### **Parking**

Parking is available for visitors along the front sidewalk. Please exercise caution and consideration when parking. Parking in the marked spaces on the side of the school building is reserved for faculty and staff during the school day. During evening activities, such as PTO meetings, parents are welcome to use any spaces. Please observe reserved signs. Please do not block school or neighbors' driveways, or park in areas designated as fire lanes, or for the handicapped. Parking on city sidewalks is not allowed at any time.

\*We strive to be a good neighbor to those living around the school. Please do not block or partially block neighbors' driveways or park on their grass.

### **Progress/Interim Reports**

In order to communicate a student's academic progress with parents, an interim progress report will be sent home at the midpoint of each nine weeks. Please sign and return this report as soon as possible. A report card will be sent at the end of each nine weeks, which reports a student's final grade for that quarter; it needs to be signed and returned as well. You may request a conference with your child's teacher if you have any questions or concerns about your child's progress.

### **Protecting Instruction**

Instructional programming is our priority. In keeping with this, each class will be limited to two class parties during the school day. These will be held in the classrooms with the help of parent volunteers. To prevent interruptions, all messages or materials brought in during the school day should be left in the office, and will be sent to the classrooms at an appropriate time.

### **Pupil/Student Transportation by Car**

Staff members are on duty during arrival and dismissal to ensure the safety of all students. Students on Safety Patrol will also be opening and closing car doors in the morning. The school door opens at 7:15am. Students should not be dropped off or left unsupervised prior to 7:15am. We respectfully request that students exit the car on the passenger side to insure the safety of all students and adults. If your child needs extra time exiting the car, please pull past the cross walk to prevent the car line from backing up. The front door is closed at 7:45 am (tardy bell) for the start of the school day. Parents will need to come to the office to sign-in students arriving after 7:45 am. Please note that the instructional day begins at 7:45 am. Small groups are started in several grade levels. If your child arrives at 7:45 am, they are already behind for the day.

### **Recess**

Students will have a 40-minute recess daily. Due to safety concerns, students are prohibited from playing games involving tackling, play fighting, and keep away. In addition to recess, each class embeds physical activity during the school day to give students other opportunities for physical engagement (as required by the Tom Cronin Physical Activity Law).

### **Routine Dismissal**

Car riders are to be picked up at the front of the school. The drive in the front of the building is reserved for cars during student arrival and dismissal periods. KCS buses and daycares pick up on Southgate Road. A student will not be allowed to be picked up without a car tag (the official car) hanging from the mirror. Parents who are picking up their student as a walker must present a car tag to staff. Without a car tag, drivers will be asked to visit the front office prior to release of the student to ensure student safety. Adults should remain in their car at all times. We respectfully request that students enter the car on the passenger side to insure the safety of all students and adults. If your child needs extra time entering the car, please pull past the cross walk to prevent the car line from backing up.

### **School Counseling**

The elementary school counseling program is a part of the total school program and complements learning in the classroom. It is child-centered, preventive, and developmental. The program encourages students' social, emotional, and personal growth at each stage of their development. The purpose of counseling with students, parents, and teachers is to help students maximize their potential. The elementary school counselor also conducts guidance lessons, consults with parents, teachers, and other professionals, and coordinates student services in the school.

### **School Fees**

A \$25.00 fee for classroom supplies will be requested at the beginning of each school year. Please use Givebacks to make this payment. Contact the bookkeeper if you would like to make other arrangements (865) 594-1360.

### **School Supplies**

At the beginning of each school year, parents receive a general supply list compiled by the grade level team. This list can be located on our website under "For Families." Students may also receive a request to purchase additional supplies for individual classrooms.

## **Snacks for the Classroom**

All classroom snacks should adhere to the *USDA Smart Snacks in School* list. Cupcakes, cookies, doughnuts and other treats shall not be sent to the classrooms for snacks, birthdays, etc. We strive to ensure that each child is included in celebrations and activities, and often unapproved snacks (such as those listed above) unintentionally lead to a child not being included. Please review the approved snack list and collaborate with your child's teacher on treats to send to the classroom. (Unapproved snacks will not be sent to the classroom.)

## **Special Education**

Special education services are available to all students who meet eligibility standards, based on both state and federal policies, through the IEP team process. Either teachers or parents may "refer" students to an S-Team (Support Team), which determines whether or not further observation or assessment is required. If the S-Team recommends testing, and the student meets eligibility standards, the IEP Team will determine appropriate programming.

## **Student Walkers**

Student walkers will be dismissed at approximately 2:45 pm each day. If your child walks home, please send written instructions to your child's teacher. Be sure to discuss safety and behavior expectations between home and school with your child. It is the parents' responsibility to get children onto the school campus safely. Please remind your student to only cross streets at designated crosswalks. Walkers are asked to walk on sidewalks (or sidewalk right-of-way), and to cross at intersections at the direction of the crossing guard. Please note that independent walkers must be students in grades 3-5. Younger walkers must be accompanied by an older sibling to ensure safety.

## **Tardy/Early Dismissal**

It is important that every effort is made to ensure that students arrive at school on time. If a student is late to school, a parent/guardian must accompany the child to the main office and sign him/her in for the day, and the student will receive a tardy slip. Students should be in their seats and settled when school starts at 7:45am. This allows our students to start the day on time. When a child leaves class early, it is considered an unexcused tardy, unless a medical note is provided upon returning to school. If it is absolutely necessary for a child to leave during the school day, anyone picking up the child must present a photo ID and be an approved emergency pickup person. To be considered present for the day, students must be in school until 11:15 am. Due to the dismissal process, students will not be dismissed after 2:20 pm until their designated dismissal time. Thank you for partnering with us to ensure a safe dismissal process.

## **Telephone**

It is important to teach our students responsibility, therefore, students will not make telephone calls home during the day except in cases of emergencies. Please help your child develop a system of placing things that must be brought to school in a designated area, so that money, books, homework, etc., will be remembered. The nurse or secretary will make the call home if your child becomes sick at school. For this reason, please make sure the school has up-to-date phone numbers and accurate emergency information.

Ideally, cell phones should not be brought to school, and per board policy they may not be turned on or used during the school day without permission from administration. Student cell phones should be in the off position and in the students' backpacks per board policy. Please note this applies to SmartWatches also (should not be in transmittal mode during the school day other than clock use). The school is not responsible for lost or stolen cell phones- See Wireless Communication Devices

### **Textbooks**

Textbooks are free of charge to all students. All textbooks are consumable this year. If a student loses a textbook, there will be a charge to replace the book. Textbooks may also be accessed online and are a great resource for homework support. Please visit the Textbook Department link on the Knox County Schools' website for more information.

### **Transportation Changes**

A note to the teacher is required any time a child's transportation method changes (even if the change is for one day only). The teacher should be notified via note when the child first arrives at school in the morning or by 8:00 am. Transportation changes must be communicated to the teacher and Ms. Leifsen by 12:00 pm/noon. If an emergency occurs, please call Mrs. Leifsen in the front office immediately.

### **Visiting a Classroom**

Classroom visits are not permitted as they are distractions to the learning environment. Teachers may request for parent volunteers to assist in the classroom. Outside agencies (e.g. counselors) are not permitted to observe in a classroom.

### **Volunteers**

#### **District Requirement that began in the 2023-2024 school year**

All volunteers must sign the Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement beginning in the 2023-2024 school year. This is required for general classroom volunteering (e.g. guest readers, class parties, help with materials, Monday folders). The forms will be filed in the office. Anyone coming to school to volunteer will be asked if they have a form on file.

All volunteers must sign the confidentiality agreement to protect the rights of students and parents. The volunteer levels are based on task and contact with students as follows:

- Level 1: Task takes place under the supervision of an employee of the Knox County Schools and involves little or no student contact. (For example: running copies for the teacher)
- Level 2: Task takes place under the supervision of a certified employee in a classroom or other group setting. (For example: working in the classroom)
- Level 3 and level 4 volunteers require a background check. Mrs. Siler will send the link to all parents at the beginning of the school year. Background approvals are good for six years. Background approvals are only for the immediate parent (not grandparents or other family members). This only needs to be completed once. Please do not resubmit each year.
  - Level 3: Task involves direct contact with students under limited supervision by school staff. (For example: working with a student in the hall)

- Level 4: Task involves unsupervised contact with students on or off campus. (For example: field trip)

Once completed, the form should be sent to the office or the child's teacher and then will be processed by Knox County. Applicants will receive a notification from Knox County. This agreement is good for six years after being approved. If you have any questions, please contact your child's teacher or the school office.

### **Wireless Communication Devices**

A "wireless communication device" (WCD) is a personal portable wireless device that has the capacity to provide voice, messaging, or other data communication between two or more parties. WCDs include, but are not limited to cell phones, smart watches, smart glasses, and tablets.

Please reference KCS Policy J-240.

WCDs shall be stored in backpacks, purses, or personal carry-alls. However, the use of the devices during the school day is prohibited for all students except in the following circumstances:

1. The principal authorizes a teacher to approve the use of WCDs for educational purposes during instructional time;
2. A student uses a WCD in the event of an emergency or to manage the student's health;
3. A student's use of a WCD during instructional time is included in the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), Section 504 plan, or Individual Learning Plan (ILP); or
4. A student with a disability uses a WCD to operate assistive technology to increase, maintain, or improve the student's functional capabilities.

### **Withdrawals**

Please notify the office if you plan to move out of the Sequoyah Elementary zone. After the office has been notified that the student has enrolled in another school, the student's records will be sent to that school. A student's records will only be forwarded to the new school when all textbooks and library books are returned, and all outstanding fees are paid. Please contact the cafeteria manager to close out your child's lunch account.

*Thank You for partnering with us to ensure a safe and successful school year!*