

# **MLES**

## **#KnightLife -**

**Learners Growing**

**Together to**

**Positively Impact**

**Our World**

**2022-2023**

# Mt Laurel Elementary School



Dear Parents,

Welcome to Mt Laurel Elementary School! We consider Mt Laurel a family - oriented school and are dedicated to the success of every student.

Our teachers have high expectations of their students and provide quality differentiated instruction to help each student meet his or her goals. MLES teachers utilize best practices, including AMSTI Science, EnVision Math curriculum, Phonics First Reading curriculum and the Alabama Reading Initiative, promoting hands -on learning and higher -level thinking. Most important ly, our teachers care about their students and strive to make a difference.

Another strength of MLES is the amazing parent involvement and relationship building. Our parents are very supportive and together we work as a team. Our PTO supports MLES through volunteer efforts, fundraisers and various other programs. Our goal is to foster the parent -school partnership through increased communication and participation in school events.

Recently, MLES received the National Blue Ribbon School award in the category of Exemplary High -Performing Schools. Exemplary High -Performing Schools are among their state's highest performing schools as measured by state assessments or nationally normed tests. The National Blue Ribbon Schools award affirms the hard work of educators, families and communities in creating safe and welcoming schools where students master challenging and engaging content.

Feel free to contact us with any questions. We are excited to have you join our MLES family!

School Website: <http://www.shelbyed.k12.al.us/schools/mles/index.htm>

Facebook: Visit us at <http://fb.me/MLESPTO> or @ MLESPTO

Celita Carmichael  
Principal  
[cdeem@shelbyed.org](mailto:cdeem@shelbyed.org)

Tina Neighbors  
Assistant Principal  
[tneighbors@shelbyed.org](mailto:tneighbors@shelbyed.org)

Our school is located in the Town of Mt Laurel. Mt Laurel, founded in 1998, is the first traditional neighborhood development in the Birmingham area. Mt Laurel Elementary was constructed in 2004 and is now one of the Oak Mountain community schools and part of the Shelby County School District.

### **Our Mission ~ To Make Every Student a Graduate & Every Graduate Prepared**

Motivating students to become  
Lifelong learners through meaningful  
Educational experiences that promote individual  
Student success

### **Our Family**

At Mt Laurel Elementary, our faculty, staff, students, and parents truly make up a family that supports and encourages our students every day. This atmosphere makes each child feel safe and valued. As you enter the building, there is a sense of belonging that permeates the attitudes of everyone. Vince Lombardi once said, "The challenge for every organization is to build a feeling of oneness, of dependence on one another . . . because the question is usually not how well each person works, but how well they work together." We believe students work better in a stress-free environment where they feel loved and supported. Our goal is for each student to know how important he or she is to our family.

*"Education is not the filling of a bucket, but the lighting of a fire."*

*--W. B. Yeats*

### **Our Vision**

Mt Laurel Elementary School is committed to becoming a model of excellence in our community, district, state, and beyond. Through collaboration, preparation, and differentiated instruction, we strive to create an environment where every child will be successful.

### **Leadership**

Our goal is to create an environment where all students are valued for their individual gifts and talents. Our faculty believes that all children can be successful. In collaboration with our families and community, we work diligently to deliver instruction that is motivating, challenging, and effective. We strive to nurture and develop students where they are in their learning. High expectations and a focus on progress keep all of our students challenged and moving forward on their journey to becoming life-long learners.

**Celita Carmichael**  
**Principal**

**Tina Neighbors**  
**Assistant Principal**

# Curriculum

## School Objectives

1. To promote a safe and nurturing school environment.
2. To provide a comprehensive curriculum, following the Alabama State Course of Study.
3. To ensure a quality education through differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all learners.
4. To establish a learning community that involves all stakeholders.

## Programs

Art	Guidance Class
Music	Special Education
Physical Education	Gifted Education
Library Media	English Language Learners Program
Computer Lab	Problem Solving Team

## Community Involvement Opportunities

Very Important Parent (VIP)	Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)
Parent Seminars	Classroom Volunteers
Adopt-A-Class Sponsors	

## Parent Involvement

Mt Laurel is more than a school for children; it is a community for families. We encourage and support the active involvement of all parents in the life of the school. When parents share their knowledge and talents, they help create a more enriched environment. Through the involvement of many, the quality of the programs at the school is greatly enhanced.

There are many ways to get involved at Mt Laurel. We encourage parents and community members to serve as VIPs, sponsor a classroom through the Adopt-A-Classroom program, attend parent informational sessions, sign-up to be a classroom volunteer, and serve as volunteers during special events. Volunteering for the school is a great way to get to know the faculty and staff and be a part of the wonderful things going on at Mt Laurel.

## About PTO

Mt Laurel Elementary PTO (Parent Teacher Organization)

The mission of the Mt Laurel Elementary PTO is to provide support and assistance to the teachers, staff, and administration in order to maximize the quality of education our children receive. This is accomplished through generating parent involvement, fundraising to support educational programs, technology, and supplies, and open communication concerning school and community efforts. All of our attention, time and financial support are used toward improving or enhancing the quality of education at our school. Annual PTO membership is \$20 per family. Membership is available to all families of children who attend the school as well as all faculty who work at the school.

**Mt Laurel Elementary School**  
**Policy & Procedures**

**Enrollment**

An Alabama Immunization form (blue form) is required to be on file for every student. This form may be obtained from the family doctor or from the health department. This is a requirement of the State of Alabama.

All students must present a certified birth certificate at the time of enrollment.

Two proofs of residence must be submitted.

Registration is now on-line.

**Address & Telephone Changes**

Changes in your home address or phone numbers should be reported to the school office immediately. Any change in your place of employment or employment phone number should also be reported to the school office. This is necessary in case we need to reach you in the event of an emergency. We will not give phone numbers or addresses to any outside agencies or callers.

**Visitors**

Parents (Guardians) must sign in at the front office and get a visitor's sticker.

**Check-In/Out Procedures**

All students arriving to his/her classroom after 7:45 am must be checked in at the office by the person transporting the student.

Students checking out of school must be signed out in the office by the parent or a responsible adult designated on the child's check-out card. **Emails and telephone calls will not be accepted.** Be prepared to show a form of identification. Please limit check-outs to necessities. **Students may not be checked out during afternoon dismissal (after 2:40).**

**Tardiness**

Your child will be considered tardy if he gets to his homeroom after 7:45 am. Three or more incidents of reporting to school or class late during a calendar month will be considered as excessive tardiness. With the first occurrence of excessive tardiness, the student and parent will be notified.

## **Absences**

Any student enrolled in grades K-5 who accumulates more than 10 absences during the year is subject to being retained in the same grade the succeeding year. Absences beyond 10 (excluding 2X and 3X absences) must be documented with a doctor or court excuse or permission of the principal. All absences require an excuse in the form of a parent note or doctor's excuse. Excused absences are: a) personal illness documented by a physician's or parent's statement that must be submitted no later than three days after returning to school; b) death in the immediate family; c) inclement weather which would be dangerous to the life and health of the child as determined by the principal; d) legal quarantine; and e) emergency conditions as determined by the principal. A written excuse is required for a student to make up all work after an absence. The parent or guardian shall be responsible for arranging necessary make-up work within three days of returning to school after an excused absence. As required by the Shelby County School System, when a student accumulates 5 unexcused absences, the parents' names must be submitted to Early Warning Court with a Shelby County judge. **Please avoid family trips that interfere with the school calendar.** The "Parent Request Form for Excused Absence" in the back of the Code of Conduct is for unforeseen emergencies. The Shelby County Attendance Policy is in the Shelby County Code of Conduct on pages 17-20.

## **Car Rider Policy**

All students who do not ride the bus or walk home must be dropped off and picked up at the car rider loading area.

1. **No parent should park and walk up to drop off or pick up his/her children.**
2. Teach your child to watch for you and be ready to load while he/she is in the loading/unloading area. Ask him/her not to play while waiting.
3. Children will go to cars only after the whistle blows.
4. The front car in each lane should pull up to the line so that we may unload and load.
5. Please do not move vehicles when children are loading. The teacher will give the signal for traffic to move.
6. All vans, large trucks, and other large vehicles should use the left lane, unless there is a single line.
7. Please pick up your child by 3:00. After this time, he/she will be sent to the office.
8. Car rider begins at 7:15 and ends at 7:45. **Your child should be in his/her classroom prior to the 7:45 bell.** If the 7:45 bell rings while your child is in the car rider line, you will need to sign your child in at the office.
9. **Please do not be on your cell phone during car rider drop off or pick up.**

## **Transportation**

In order to provide safe and effective transportation of the students to and from school, standards of conduct and safety procedures have been listed for the bus rider and car rider. Students will not be allowed to vary from their normal, established routine without **written permission** from their parents. Therefore, written permission instructing the teacher of the change is necessary in the following situations:

1. Getting off the bus at any stop other than the regular one;
2. Riding in a car when the regular method of leaving school is the bus;
3. Riding a bus when the regular method of leaving school is by car; and
4. Riding in a car different than the regular one.

**Students are not allowed to ride a bus that is different from their regular bus.**

**Please do not call the office or email the teacher requesting changes in the transportation of your child. Written instructions are required.**

**Kindergarten students and siblings of kindergarten students will drop off and pick up at the kindergarten door each day. Parents of kindergarteners are not to drive around the orange cones on the main street in front of the school.**

### **Early Morning Care**

MLES will not have EMC for the 2022-2023 school year.

### **After School Information**

All students will be supervised by our regular staff from 7:15 am – 3:00 pm each day. If it is necessary for your child to stay at school past 3:00, he/she should go to the After School Care Program.

### **After School Care**

**System Director: (205) 682-5963**

**Local Director: (205) 682-7239 (after 3:15 pm)**

The After School Care Program offers a safe, structured environment assisting children in their physical education and psychological growth. Since the program is an extension of the regular school day, it supports and enhances the regular academic program.

The After School Care Program is designed to make maximum use of school facilities and foster a positive attitude toward learning. The program seeks to provide services to working parents by seeing that homework is completed, private lessons are acquired, and children are happy. Therefore, family time can be increased and enhanced.

This program provides a wide array of activities, including: homework assistance, craft projects, sports, games, and time to play. For additional fees, classes such as dance, gymnastics, etc. are often offered.

Children will be received by the After School Care staff at the conclusion of the regular academic day and should be picked up by parents no later than 6:00 pm.

**Please call the number above for information concerning the cost of the program.**

### **Lunches**

The price of a student lunch is **\$2.50** per day. Each student is assigned an identification number. You must pay in advance, for as many days as you would like, by check, money order, or by visiting the

website, [myschoolbucks.com](http://myschoolbucks.com). Make all checks or money orders payable to MLES. Applications for free or reduced lunches are available online or in the office.

**Visitor lunch \$4.50.**

**No restaurant food is allowed in the cafeteria.**

### **Breakfast**

Breakfast is provided at a cost of:

**Student -- \$1.75**

### **Birthdays**

A special snack may be brought for the entire class in recognition of a child's birthday. A note must be sent to the teacher in advance asking permission to send refreshments and to inquire about any allergy restrictions. Snacks must be pre-packaged, not homemade. Please do not pass out invitations at school for outside parties.

### **Snacks**

Each teacher has an individual snack schedule. Please do not send glass bottles with your child for snack. We recommend that you send only healthy snacks with your child.

### **Promotion**

Promotion means that a student has successfully completed the grade's work and is ready to move on to a higher level of study. In recommending promotion, the following will be our guide:

1. Attendance – Students who miss more than 10 days may be retained.
2. Knowledge of skills – Students must show progress in the basic skills as shown by teacher-made tests and assessments.
3. Students must pass four of the main subjects, and at least two of the four must be in the basic skills subjects – reading, language, and mathematics.

### **Conduct**

The Shelby County Schools Code of Conduct and Attendance states the behavior expected of each student. Because the Code outlines the minimum behavior expected, Mt Laurel Elementary adds regulations to the Code that clarify or accommodate our unique situation. Also, to enhance the teaching/learning environment of each classroom, the teacher develops classroom rules that follow the Code.

**The school requests that each parent read the Code of Conduct and discuss the expectations of this handbook with his/her child.** The Code of Conduct is on the Mt Laurel and Shelby County Schools website. If any section is not fully understood, the school urges the parent to contact the teacher or office for further explanations. Most regulations or procedures of Mt Laurel Elementary that help maintain an effective school program are found in this handbook. Good communication between parents and their child's teacher and bus driver is very important.

Students are under the jurisdiction of the Shelby County Board of Education and Mt Laurel Elementary rules any time they are on campus, on the bus, or attending an off campus event.



## Report Cards

Report cards are sent home every nine weeks. The signed report card is to be returned to the school within three (3) days.

## Field Trips

Certain field trips are scheduled for each grade level to provide educational experiences pertinent and appropriate for that grade level. Permission slips will be sent home with each student to be signed. A signed permission form must be returned before any student will be permitted to leave the school grounds on a field trip. The cost of the trip will be paid by the students. Field trip money should be sent in a **separate** check from other monies and in an envelope labeled "Field Trip".

1. All students must leave the school and return to the school with the group. Only teachers, chaperones and students from the class will be allowed to participate in field trips. No one will be allowed to join a group at the site of a field trip unless previously authorized. This is for every student's protection, since teachers or chaperones may not know all parents.
2. All money and permission slips must be turned in during the designated time because arrangements are made in advance. No late money can be taken after tickets have been ordered.
3. Chaperones must come only at the designated time.
4. All chaperones must pay unless otherwise notified.
5. Students not attending field trips will stay in another classroom. The absence of a student due to non-participation in a field trip will be unexcused.
6. Chaperones are depended on to help during the entire field trip, therefore other siblings not in the classroom may not attend. (Please remain with the class until they arrive back at school).
7. Chaperones are asked to contact the teacher two (2) days before the trip if they cannot fulfill their chaperone duties.
8. Chaperones should come by the office and receive a chaperone badge before going to the designated area.

## Money

The school is not allowed to cash checks. Please make every effort to send checks for the exact amount due. **Lunch money may not be included with any other money to be paid to the school – always send lunch money in a separate, sealed envelope with your child's name, lunch #, and the teacher's name.** All checks must be made payable to Mt Laurel Elementary School (MLES), except in the case of pre-paid pictures.

NexCheck System handles all checks returned for insufficient funds. Your account will be electronically debited for the amount of the check and any processing fee that they charge. If we receive more than two (2) returned checks, the school will no longer accept payments by check. Money order or cash will then be required for all payments for lunch, field trips, etc.

### **Textbooks & Technology**

The parent, guardian, or other person having custody of a child to whom textbooks and technology such as chromebooks are issued shall be held liable for any loss, abuse, or damage in excess of that which would result from the normal use of these books.

### **School Donations**

Your donation of \$100 per child is greatly appreciated. These funds will be allocated for supplemental instructional resources. Thank you for supporting Mt Laurel Elementary.

### **Teacher/Parent Conferences**

Teacher/Parent conferences are encouraged by the administration. Parents may be asked to participate in a conference, or may choose to request a conference by writing a note or email to the teacher or by leaving a message for the teacher. Also, conferences can be held through Google Meet. **Please understand that conferences cannot be held during class time. To keep parents better informed, newsletters are sent home on a weekly basis. These newsletters will contain important classroom information.**

### **Fundraisers**

Your child truly deserves the best education possible. Fundraisers help us provide your children with experiences that exceed “the basics”.

### **Health Care Procedures**

1. Parents will be contacted in cases of illness or accidents.
2. We ask that all parents designate an emergency person to be contacted if he/she cannot be reached. This can be done by listing that person first on the check-out sheet.
3. If the student does not show signs of physical illness or injury (fever, nausea, etc), the student will be sent back to the class until the parent can be reached.
4. The school will only dispense medication according to the Shelby County Medication Policy.

### **School Safety**

In accordance with State and Federal guidelines, Mt Laurel Elementary School has formulated and implemented a comprehensive safety and crisis planning manual. The safety of your child is our top priority. Teachers follow these procedures for tornado, fire, and intruder drills.

### **Emergency School Closing**

In the event that inclement weather occurs, county administrators will make the decision to close schools or allow them to remain open. School closings will be aired on local radio and television stations. Parent/Guardian notification of school closing will be sent via Listserv email, school Facebook, as well as the Blackboard calling system. **If you receive a voicemail from the school, please listen to the message and refrain from calling the school. The office needs the phone lines open in case of emergencies.**

### **Telephone Procedures**

The phone in the office is for conducting the daily business of the school and not for personal communication with students. Emergency messages will be conveyed to students. Any other messages will be announced at the end of the day. In case of illness or injury, the office will see that the parent or emergency person is contacted. **It is very important for the office to have more than one emergency number for each child.**

### **Electronic Toys/Sports Equipment/Toys**

Please do not send electronic toys/sports equipment/toys to school. These items are usually expensive and they can be lost, taken or damaged. They are also an educational distraction. Only by special invitation from the teacher should these items be brought to school. On these specific days, please remind your child to observe the permitted time of use.

### **Clothing/Lost & Found**

All clothing should be marked with the child's name, especially sweatshirts, sweaters, coats, jackets, caps and gloves. A "Lost & Found" closet is located outside the library. All unclaimed lost and found articles will be donated to charity at the end of each semester. Students should be neatly dressed and clean at all times. Students should come to school appropriately, modestly, and comfortably dressed. The Shelby County dress code will be enforced.

### **Parent Rights**

As a parent of a student in a Shelby County school, you have the right to know the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers who instruct your child. Federal law allows you to ask for certain information about your child's classroom teachers, and requires us to give you this information in a timely manner if you ask for it. Specifically, you have the right to ask for the following information about each of your child's classroom teachers:

- Whether the Alabama State Department of Education has licensed or qualified the teacher for the grades and subjects he/she teaches.
- Whether the Alabama State Department of Education decided that the teacher can teach in a classroom without being licensed or qualified under state regulations because of special circumstances.
- The teacher's college major; whether the teacher has any advanced degrees and, if so, the subject of the degrees.
- Whether any teachers' aides or similar paraprofessionals provide services to your child and, if they do, their qualifications.

**If you would like to receive any of this information, please call an administrator.**

***#KnightLife-***

***Learners Growing Together to Positively Impact Our World***