

# **KARNS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

Parent/Student Handbook



**2019-2020**

**One Big Team!  
#TheKarnsWay**

# Karns Elementary School

Shay Siler, Principal

Shaunna Foster, Assistant Principal

Suzanne Parham, Assistant Principal

Theresa Reed, Assistant Principal

Dear Parents & Guardians,

Welcome to **Karns Elementary School!** We are pleased that you and your child will be a part of our school family this year. We know this will be an exciting and successful year. We continually work towards academic excellence, and we look forward to working with the parents and community this year to achieve our school improvement goals. There is a strong tradition of support in the Karns community for our students, teachers and staff. We look forward to a new school year of learning and growing together!

Communication between the school and the home is essential to promote the best interests of the child. This handbook is meant as a communication tool between the school and the home. There are many important policies and procedures within this handbook. We ask that you carefully review all of the material in our handbook and keep this for future reference during the year. We are always available and may be contacted at 539-7772 (east office) or 539-7767 (west office). For additional information regarding our school and the Knox County Schools' programs, policies, and announcements, check out the Knox County School website at <http://knoxschools.org>.

Please mark your calendar for the "**Parent Information Night**" where you will receive very important information regarding curriculum and procedures. We hope you will attend these important events.

**Kindergarten:** August 5

**First Grade:** August 15

**Second Grade:** August 15

**Third Grade:** August 20

**Fourth Grade:** August 22

**Fifth Grade:** August 22

Again, we look forward to an exciting new school year of learning, growing, and working together!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Shay Siler, Principal

Ms. Shaunna Foster, Assistant Principal

Mrs. Suzanne Parham, Assistant Principal

Mrs. Theresa Reed, Assistant Principal

# School Policies

## Accountability Letter

Each classroom teacher will send a letter of accountability to you via Friday folders during the first month that school is in session. The purpose of this letter is to provide information regarding classroom expectations, procedures, and policies. Please read it and discuss it with your child.

## Allergies

We are an "Allergy Aware" school as we have students with varying allergies (food, insects, etc). We request the help of all parents in making Karns Elementary safe for students who have life-threatening allergies. Several students at our school have severe allergies (peanut based products, dairy, eggs, gluten, and several others). We ask that you be considerate to those children whose quality of life is threatened by their allergies. Please talk to your child's teacher when considering sending in food to the classroom as well as consulting Knox County Food Policy. Thank you for your consideration and your assistance!

## Animals

No live animals may be brought to school without prior consent of both the teacher and the principal.

## Arrival & Dismissal

**Arrival:** School begins each day at 7:45 a.m. for all grades, including kindergarten. Children are expected to be in their seats (not at the door being dropped off) at 7:45 a.m. as classroom instruction begins at 7:45 a.m. The school opens at 7:05 a.m. to receive students. The cafeteria, where breakfast is served from 7:05-7:40 a.m., or designated bus room areas are the only areas students are allowed before 7:35 a.m. Please help your child to arrive on time.

\*Safety Patrol students should arrive to school at 7:00 a.m. to ensure they are ready for morning arrivals at 7:05 a.m. Safety Patrol parents may drop off in the east parking lot so long as it is BEFORE 7:00 a.m. If you are running late, you must follow the regular traffic pattern or you will be asked to exit. Thank you in advance! We try to reduce confusion among our parents & visitors regarding the drop off procedures.

**Dismissal, Grades K-5th:** Dismissal is at 2:45 p.m.

- Students who dismiss to a school bus or an after-school program will be dismissed first.
- Students who need to be checked out early must be checked out before 2:15 p.m.
- Students in Kindergarten and first grade will be dismissed from the west lobby, and car traffic will enter the campus from the direction of Byington Beaver Ridge/ Emory Road.
- Students in second, third, fourth, and fifth grades will be dismissed from the gym. The vehicles will enter from the Byington/Beaver Ridge Road side of our campus and pick up in front of the gym. Once the buses have left the campus, cars will be dismissed.
- If your child needs to be picked up from the gym or the west lobby and is not in the grade

level that typically dismisses from that area, you will need to notify your child's teacher in writing. The teacher will ensure that the student is in the correct place for dismissal.

- All vehicles will need to display a car tag that either hangs from the rear view mirror or is placed in the car dashboard with the student's name written in large, dark print. The tags will be sent home at the beginning of school and are available in the office. If you have more than one person who picks up your student, please ensure that each person has a car tag. Please ensure names are legible.
- Please be sure you have arrived no later than 3:00 p.m. for dismissal.
- Students who walk home will be dismissed after the car traffic has cleared for the SAFETY of the walkers (approximately 3:00 p.m.)

We encourage all students to be picked up through the car lines. This will be the fastest and safest process for your child to exit. If you will regularly pick up your child at the OUTSIDE west gym door, let your child's teacher know in writing.

Parents who are volunteering in the building until the end of the day or who are a substitute teacher for the day will receive dismissal directions from the office. **Students must be called from the office for check-out to ensure consistency and safety for the children.** These dismissal procedures were previously developed by a committee of parents, teachers, and administration in an effort to make the dismissal procedure safer. If you have questions, please contact Mrs. Siler. Thank you!

It is imperative that all children be picked up on time. Teachers are off car duty at 3 p.m. If you are late picking up your child, you will need to check in the office and see an administrator to sign out your child.

## Attendance Policy

**Absence Policy:** When a student is absent, a parent must send a note or doctor's statement within FIVE days to the child's teacher in order to have the absence excused. If, after five days, the teacher has not received a note from the parent explaining the absence, that absence will remain an unexcused absence. Be aware that even if a parent calls the office to explain an absence, a written note is still required to excuse the absence. A phone call without a note will result in an unexcused absence. A student may be absent due to illness no more than 10 days per school year before a medical statement is required. Please refer to KCS Board Policy J-120 "Attendance" for full policy review.

Situations that qualify as excused absences include:

- \* *Personal illness (a medical statement required after a total of 10 absences per school year)*
- \* *Illness of a family member that temporarily requires help from the student and is supported by medical documents*
- \* *A death in the family*
- \* *A recognized religious holiday regularly observed by members of the student's faith*
- \* *A verifiable family emergency*

*\* For students with a parent/guardian who is deployed as member of the U.S. Armed Forces, the following excusable absences shall apply provided appropriate documentation of deployment is provided to the school: 1 day when deployed, 1 day upon return. Excused absences for up to 10 days for visitation when member is granted R/R and stationed/deployed out of the country.*

**Vacations or trips out of town are unexcused absences.**

Student attendance is monitored by our social worker. The attendance officer will be in contact with parents whose child has more than 5 or more than 10 unexcused days. This is an effort to work together to ensure the student's regular attendance to school.

**Tardy Policy:** Being on time each day is extremely important for students in every grade, including kindergarten. Schedules and responsibilities are defined and clarified during the first part of the day. Each student needs the opportunity to start the day feeling good about the teacher's expectations. Please help your child begin the day on time.

*Students who arrive at school after 7:45 a.m. must report to the office **with a parent** to get a tardy slip and have their names removed from the absence list.*

**Early Dismissal Policy:** Students who leave before 2:45 must be signed out in the office by a parent. Parents must be prepared to show proper ID when checking out their children. Remember that we will not check students out after 2:15. It is too confusing when we begin our dismissal procedures to call students to the office for early dismissal. If you MUST check your child out early, please do so before 2:15 p.m. Please note - if you pick up your child before 11:00 am, he or she will be counted absent for that day. Excessive tardies may negatively impact a child's attendance record. Early dismissals are recorded as a "tardy" on the report cards.

## **Authorization for News Media Contact and Release to Publish**

Occasionally we have the opportunity to highlight some of our programs and students through special coverage by news media. We would also like to include pictures of students on our website (not with their names attached to the pictures on the website). At the front of this handbook, there is a release/authorization for your child to participate in any media coverage. Please check the appropriate space, sign the form, date it, and return to school. Please call the school office if you have any questions. Thank you for your assistance.

## **Cafeteria**

Lunch should be a pleasant time for all students. Students are expected to behave appropriately and courteously. Staff members monitor the cafeteria in order to provide a safe, pleasant atmosphere. Parents, if you come to eat lunch with your child, you may NOT bring in outside food to give to other children. We would prefer that you purchase a lunch from the cafeteria. But, if you insist on bringing in outside food, you may only serve it to your own child.

Due to limited space in our cafeterias we have a small Parent Lunchroom and picnic tables outside where you may eat lunch with your child (also see section on Visitors Procedures).

Knox County Schools has the K12 Payment Center. This on-line system allows parents to establish their own login/password and to add money to their student's account (by name, birth date, and school). Parents can then view their student's cafeteria account balance, their meal purchases, set up automatic payments, or make one-time payments.

For information regarding this account go to KCS website- For Families tab and choose School Nutrition. Families can send in cash or check to the cafeteria to advance pay for meals and this minimizes loss of breakfast or lunch money. Please send checks or cash in an envelope with your child's name, grade, and teacher's name written on it.

All students in Knox County Schools are assigned a number that they use to access their cafeteria account. This number will go with them throughout their entire school experience. Please help your child commit this number to memory.

Prices are: Student Breakfast: \$1.75	Visitor Breakfast \$2.25	Reduced: \$.30
Student Lunch: \$2.50	Visitor Lunch: \$3.75	Reduced: \$.40
Extra Milk: \$.75	Ice Cream: \$.75	

## Clinic/Illness at School

Our clinic is staffed by our school nurse. If your child becomes ill at school, you will be notified. Knox County Board Policy requires that students who have a fever over 100 degrees must be picked up from school. Medication cannot be given without a medication form from a physician, written parent permission, and medication in a prescription bottle (please see medication policy). Medication must be brought to school and picked up from school by a parent. *It is extremely important that your phone numbers are always current on the emergency cards.*

## Communication & Conferences

Teachers and administrators welcome discussions with parents regarding a child's progress and any other concerns.

When you have a concern regarding school, your first step should be to ask for a discussion with your child's teacher. We also encourage you to correspond with your child's teacher early on in the school year to establish a rapport between the two of you. Good communication lines reduce the potential for misunderstandings. If your concern is not fully addressed by the teacher, your next step is to schedule a conference with a school administrator.

## Discipline Policy

The school's administration and faculty are committed to providing learning experiences in a positive, supportive, and motivating atmosphere. We believe that every student in our school is capable of learning and demonstrating appropriate social interaction. We believe in accepting the responsibility for behavior in a shared commitment towards good citizenship.

Students are expected and required to:

- 1. Follow the directions of all adults in the building.**
- 2. Show courtesy, kindness, and respect to everyone.**
- 3. Be prepared and on time for all classes.**
- 4. Move about the building in a quiet and orderly manner.**

Each teacher has the primary responsibility for establishing a classroom climate conducive to learning. This includes maintaining consistent behavioral expectations. Communication among

administrators, students, teachers, and parents facilitates a positive learning atmosphere and promotes high educational values.

The Knox County Board of Education has established a policy (J211) 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.

## Elementary Dress Code

The standards for elementary school dress reflect "common sense" and a concern for each child's comfort, safety, cleanliness, and sense of modesty. There is a strong relationship between neat, appropriate attire and a positive learning environment. Apparel or appearance which tends to draw attention to an individual rather than to a learning situation must be avoided. 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:

1. Pants must not sag below the waist and must be at a safe length.
2. Head apparel, except for religious or medical reasons, must not be worn inside the school building.
3. Footwear is required and must be safe and appropriate for indoor or outdoor physical activity.
4. Clothing or accessories may not display offensive, vulgar language or images and must not advertise products which students may not legally purchase.
5. For students in Grades 3-5, "short shorts", mini-skirts, and skin-tight outer materials such as spandex are inappropriate attire.
6. For students in Grades 3-5, shirts, blouses, and dresses must completely cover the abdomen, back, and shoulders, and shirts or tops must cover the waistband of pants, shorts, or skirts with no midriff visible.

The school administration reserves the right to determine whether the student's attire and appearance are within acceptable limits. In matters of opinion, the judgment of the principal/designee shall prevail. The principal may allow exceptions for school-wide programs or special classroom activities. The teachers and the principal will administer appropriate consequences for policy infractions. We respectfully request that all students wear tennis shoes to school every day. Flip-flops may pose a hazard/injury. Tennis shoes are the safest shoes for all school functions and are required for physical education class.

## Fees

Knox County Schools request a materials fee for each student in order to provide the necessary paper, technology, and other supplies for the students. The fee for Karns Elementary students is \$25.00. Please make checks payable to Karns Elementary School and pay the fee during the first month school is in session. Classroom materials for instruction are purchased during the year with these funds.

## **Field Trips**

Field trips are planned to support specific instructional curriculum. Parent volunteers help supervise and ensure the safety of students when away from the school site. All chaperones must have a level 3 or level 4 background check clearance. Please be aware that clearance checks may take several days to several weeks to complete. Ensure you are planning ahead and requesting needed checks well in advance. (For more information, see the section under volunteers). Please contact the teacher if you are interested in being a chaperone.

Chaperones are not allowed to bring siblings along on field trips. Because of safety concerns and increasing bus and program fees, Karns Elementary will look for ways to bring performances and programs into the school setting and use trips away from the school only for special events.

Please note that field trips are an extension of instruction and focus on the curriculum. Appropriate behavior is expected on campus and during field trip experiences. We reserve the right to withhold participation to the field trip if the student has ongoing unsatisfactory behavior.

While attending a field trip, students are expected to ride the bus to and from the event. Parents may not check their child out of school while on the field trip. All children must return to school before being checked out of school. Parents who serve as chaperones may be expected to ride the bus if there is room on the bus.

## **Flowers/Gifts/Invitations Policy**

Students may not receive flowers, balloons, or other gifts at school. These can be a distraction and cannot be transported on the bus. If during the school day a student wants to hand out invitations for a birthday party or other function, *they must hand out invitations to every student in the classroom or hand out none at all.*

## **Food Policy**

Please refer to the Knox County schools' approved snack list for approved healthy snacks for the classroom. It is located under the "For Families" link on the school webpage. It is also located under the KCS School Nutrition webpage.

## **Friday Folders**

Every student will bring home a Friday Take-Home Folder. This folder is a key part of the teacher's communication with you. Please thoroughly review the material in the folder on Friday evening, sign it as indicated, and return it on Monday. Friday folders are one of the main ways you are kept informed of your child's progress and important classroom activities.

## **Grades**

Students are graded at their instructional level. Interim reports will be sent home during the fifth week of every nine-week grading period. Report cards are sent home to parents at the end of each nine-week grading period.

Changes were made to the Kindergarten Progress Report starting this school year, 2018-2019. Students will now receive **ME** for Meets Expectations, **DE** for Developing Understanding of Expectations, or **LE** for Limited Understanding of Expectations.

In first and second grades, students will earn E (Excellent), S (Satisfactory), or N (Needs to Improve) in all subjects and a letter grade (A, B, C, D, U) in behavior.

Students in third through fifth grades earn a letter grade (A, B, C, D, U) in all subjects including special area classes and in behavior. They will earn an E (Excellent), S (Satisfactory), or N (Needs to Improve) in work habits.

### **Knox County Grading Scale**

A – Exceptional (93-100)	E -- Excellent
B – Above Average (85-92)	S -- Satisfactory
C -- Average (75-84)	N -- Needs to Improve
D – Below Average (70-74)	
U -- Unsatisfactory (Below 70)	

## **Gum**

Gum is not allowed at school. It is a safety hazard in some of our special area classes and generally creates a mess when littered around our building. Thank you for your support in our "NO GUM" policy.

## **Lost and Found**

Students or parents looking for lost items should look in the lost and found box outside the east cafeteria. These items are typically not stored in the school office (except for eyeglasses, cell phones, etc.).

## **Make-Up Work**

If you need to request that your child's work be sent home because of an extended illness (two or more days), call the office before 9 a.m. to make your request. The office staff will contact the teacher and have your child's make-up work sent to the office for you to pick up later in the afternoon. Please do not go to the classroom during school hours to request make-up work as this interrupts the teacher and the other students during instruction.

## **Medication Policy**

No medication of any kind can be administered to students by school personnel except when medication must be given on a long-term basis and is necessary to be given during the school hours in order for the student to remain in school. This includes over-the-counter medications. If medications **MUST** be given at school, it must be personally delivered by a responsible adult, in

an appropriate container that is labeled by the pharmacy. A *Medication Administration Form*, available in the school office, must be completed by the physician and signed by the parent/guardian. Students will not be allowed to transport medication to or from school. Any over-the-counter medication prescribed for a student must be in an unopened original container and must be labeled with the student's name.

## Phone Calls to Change Transportation

Because of concerns for the safety of our students, we cannot make changes in transportation (who will pick up child, where child goes after school) over the telephone. **We must have a written note from the parent.** In extreme emergencies, you may fax a note with your driver's license picture on it. Without a note, the student will be dismissed from school the usual way.

## Smoking Policy

All Knox County Schools property (campuses & buildings) are "Tobacco Free" per Knox County Schools' board policy.

## Student Assignment Books

All students in fourth and fifth grades will have an assignment book or other method in which they record homework assignments and other important information. Please help your child make use of this valuable tool. These assignment books are a critical component of students' education at these grade levels. Assignment books are the responsibility of the student; the school does not replace them if they are lost. The cost of a replacement agenda is \$5.00

## Telephone Use

In the case of urgent matters, parents are allowed to telephone the school office and leave messages for a student. A student will be called out of class to talk on the telephone only in an emergency. 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. **The school is not responsible for lost or stolen cell phones.**

## Textbooks

Textbooks, classroom reading books, library books, and other school material assigned to a specific student are the responsibility of that student and must be returned or replaced. Permanent personal copies of textbooks may be purchased by parents directly from Tennessee Book Company at the wholesale price. Details are available in the school office. Students and parents are responsible for paying for any lost or damaged books or material belonging to the school. Failure to pay the fine imposed may result in the withholding of all grade cards or student records until restitution is made, per Knox County Board Policy.

## Toys at School

Please do not allow your child to bring toys (Hand-held computer games, electronics, CD players, cards, games, stuffed animals, and all other toys) to school unless the teacher notifies you of a special activity such as Show and Tell. The school is not responsible for damaged, lost or stolen electronics and toys.

## Traffic Flow

Please adhere to the new traffic flow designed by Knox County Engineering in the fall of 2016. Note that during morning drop off students may be dropped off in any designated car areas. In the mornings, select the shortest line to ensure a timely drop off. It is important that you follow the dedicated car lines (K-1, 2-5) for afternoon pick up due to the location of specific grade level students. As you exit the campus, we recommend that you consider turning left onto Beaver Ridge Road and going down to the Ingles stoplight. This will help exit the campus in a timely manner.

## Visitor Procedures for Karns Elementary

Visitors are welcome to our school. All visitors must sign in at the office and wear a visitor's badge while on school property. If you are volunteering in the classroom or eating lunch with your child, you must be prepared to show your ID. You will be issued a "Lunch/Visitor" card that on future visits you can show when you sign in. However, you will always have to show your ID to check out your child from school.

## Volunteers

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. The form is located on [knoxschools.org](http://knoxschools.org) on the forms page (PA-104).

- 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 can 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.

## **Weapons Policy**

Knox County Board Policy states that students and parents shall not possess, handle, transmit, use, or attempt to use any dangerous weapon in school buildings or on school grounds at any time. This policy includes school vehicles and/or buses at locations both on and off the school grounds at school-sponsored activities, functions, and events.

**One Big Team!**

**We look forward to a great year of learning and growing together!**