

Murchison Middle School

2008 – 2009 Murchison Matadors



*Inspiration Within,
Excellence Throughout*

3700 North Hills Drive
Austin, Texas 78731-3092
(512) 414-3254
FAX (512) 343-1710

WELCOME

Welcome to Murchison Middle School! We are excited that you are here and know that you will truly enjoy being a Murchison Matador.

This Handbook is a resource for you and your family about our various policies and procedures. We look forward to getting to know all of our students and helping them to be successful Murchison Matadors. If you have any questions or concerns please don't hesitate to let us know. Welcome to Murchison!

CAMPUS HOURS

The official school day is 8:20-3:30. Students may enter the building at 7:30. 6th graders are to report to the cafeteria, 7th and 8th grade boys are to report to the large gym, and 7th and 8th grade girls to the small gym. Once students are on campus, they are not to leave. Students who are not under the direct supervision of a teacher and/or staff member, must be off campus by 3:45 unless attending tutorials. When attending an after-school event, students must leave campus by 3:45 and return at the time of the event.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBER

Please inform the Attendance Clerk of any changes of address, telephone number, or pertinent information for the Emergency Care Card.

ATTENDANCE

By State Law, all students must attend school. Parents must call to report their child's absence to the Attendance Clerk (414-4555) by 10:00 a.m. each day the student is absent. All absences are unexcused except for the following – illness/medical and event for which the student had to qualify. A signed note from the parent or doctor may be used to excuse a medical/illness. Notes must be received by the attendance clerk within 5 school days of the absence or tardy. After 5 days, the absence or tardy will remain unexcused. Absences from an event for which a student had to qualify must be approved in advance by the campus principal. Documentation should be submitted at least one week prior to the event.

If a student is late to class more than 50% of the class period, the student will be counted absent for that class period. When a student has accumulated three unexcused absences, the District mails a warning letter to the parents. Parents and their son/daughter may be required to attend an Attendance Hearing when the student has accumulated 10 unexcused absences. Students attending family trips during scheduled school days will receive an unexcused absence. Car problems, traffic or oversleeping will not be considered as an excused absence or tardy.

LEAVING SCHOOL

If you leave school for any reason, you must have a "Permit To Leave."

1. Bring a note from home with the reason you must leave school, the time you will leave, and when you will return to school.
2. Give the note to the Attendance Clerk before going to first period. The Attendance Clerk will give you a "Permit To Leave" note for you to show to the appropriate teacher when it's time for you to leave.
3. When it is your time to leave, you must meet your parents in the office.
4. When you return to school, you must check with the Attendance Clerk. You will then be given a "Permit to Enter."

Parents must come into the office to check students out of school.

STEPS TO FOLLOW WHEN RETURNING FROM AN ABSENCE:

- Bring a note stating the reason for the absence on the day you return. The note must have a parent signature and a phone number where a parent can be reached.
- Give the note to the Attendance Clerk before going to first period.
- Make arrangements with teachers to complete all make-up work.

TARDY POLICY

A student is tardy to class if he/she is not in the classroom when the tardy bell rings. Tardies are excused only if accompanied by a note from a Murchison staff member. Teachers will follow these guidelines when a student is tardy to class:

Tardy to Class

- ***1st Tardy** – Teacher warning.
- ***2nd Tardy** – Teacher consequence/parent contact
- ***3rd Tardy** – Referred to office for after-school detention 3:30–5:00pm.*
- ***4th Tardy** – Referred to office for Saturday Detention.*
- ***5th Tardy and all subsequent** – Administrative consequence

**Consequences apply to unexcused tardies each six weeks per class.*

CAFETERIA EXPECTATIONS

Food service lines close 5 minutes before the end of lunch periods.

1. Be considerate of others.
2. Walk at all times.
3. Wait in lines patiently.
4. Remain seated.
5. Eat only your own food.
6. Playing with food is inappropriate.
7. Clean up your area.
8. Do not take food or drink, except water, out of the cafeteria.
9. Students must have a pass to leave the lunch area.

BREAKFAST

Breakfast is available from 7:45 to 8:15. Students planning to eat breakfast at school, must report directly to the cafeteria as soon as they arrive. Students who arrive on buses at 8:10 or later will be allowed to eat. Teachers will be notified of late bus arrivals. Two rows of tables have been set aside for breakfast. It is not permitted to eat breakfast at any other table.

FMNV – FOODS OF MINIMAL NUTRITIONAL VALUE

1. No competing foods may be served before or during the lunch periods.
2. No pizza parties or birthday celebrations may occur before or during lunch hours.
3. Parents may bring lunch to their child only. Food must be delivered by the parent to the child during the lunch period. The office staff will not deliver food to students.

SELLING ITEMS ON CAMPUS

Students are permitted to sell items only as a part of an approved Murchison fund raiser. Penalties for selling unapproved items on campus may include detention or suspension.

GRADING

Report Cards will be mailed to students at the end of each six weeks grading period. Numerical grades will be used to report grades. Numerical values shall be used for determining honor rolls.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress Reports are mailed to parents after the first three weeks of each grading period. The computerized reports are sent to students who are failing, borderline failing, or unsatisfactory in a certain area. Parents may inquire about Progress Reports by contacting the teacher who sent the report.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

Students will be promoted to the next grade if:

- A. They pass 3 out of 4 of their academic classes which are Math, Science, Social Studies, and Language Arts.
- B. They have an overall 70 average in all classes.

Students pass only by completing A and B, not by completing A or B.

MATADOR HONOR CODE

Honesty, integrity, and a respect for individual achievement are expected at Murchison Middle School. The foundation of the Matador Honor Code is the belief that every student has the right to pursue an education free from dishonesty.

All Murchison students are expected to uphold the standards of academic conduct outlined in the Matador Honor Code and abide by its requirements.

Incidents of academic misconduct will result in an **automatic zero** for the assignment and may result in other consequences as designated by the Administration.

HALLWAY EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to have an official hall pass with the correct time and the exact destination points clearly written by a staff member. Students are encouraged to move from class to class quietly.

In addition, students are to abide by the following expectations:

1. Be considerate of others.
2. Walk at all times.
3. Keep your hands and feet to yourself.
4. Use kind words and actions.
5. Move to class on time.
6. Walk on the right side of the stairs.
7. Maintain appropriate voice levels.

*** At no time will public displays of affection be permitted.**

HOMEWORK POLICY

Homework is a valuable learning tool. Students are responsible for turning homework in on time. The amount of time required to complete homework may vary according to a student's academic level and the level of the class.

Assignments will be posted by teachers at:
<http://murchison.typepad.com>

LATE WORK POLICY

Homework/classwork/projects:

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| First day late | 15 points deducted from grade |
| Second day late | 30 points deducted from grade |
| Third day late | 45 points deducted from grade |
| Fourth day late | 0 credit given |

Extenuating circumstances for late work will be considered at the teacher's discretion. Late work must be turned in the next time the class meets.

RETESTING POLICY

The grading of student performance, and the reporting of those grades, is the responsibility of the classroom teacher. Re-teaching of subject matter, and re-testing, is at the discretion of the classroom teacher. It is the responsibility of the principal to ensure fairness to students.

MAKE-UP WORK POLICY

It is the responsibility of a student or the student's parent to request the opportunity to make-up classwork or homework missed. The request for make-up work should be directed to the teacher. The teacher will have a make-up work policy as part of his/her grading procedures. This policy will promote student responsibility. Students will be given one day for every day absent to make up assignments w/out penalty.

Long Term Projects (assigned 2 or more weeks in advance) are due on the assigned date. Extenuating circumstances (major illness, family emergency) will be reviewed by the administration.

Make-up work may be requested through the counselors' secretary (414-4524) when a student is absent three or more days. Assignments will be gathered within

24 hours and may be picked up in the Counselors' Office. Assignments can also be found on the Murchison Website: <http://murchison.typepad.com>

IMMUNIZATIONS

Board Policy stipulates that students must have current immunization records on file. The Guidance Office will notify parents of students whose immunization records are not current. Students must have proper documentation of required immunizations to attend class.

ILLNESS OR INJURY AT SCHOOL

If you become ill at school, report your illness to your teacher. Students must have a pass from their teacher to report to the nurse's office. You must not leave school because of illness without authorization from the Administration. If you are injured at school, please let the closest adult know so that they may help you get the proper attention. EMS will be contacted for emergency needs. Parents will be responsible for medical and/or hospitalization cost.

MAINTAINING A SAFE AND HEALTHY LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Murchison Middle School is committed to providing a positive learning environment for all students that enhances personal safety and promotes respect, dignity and equality among students. *High standards are expected for both academic achievement and for behavior.* **Bullying and sexual harassment will not be tolerated at Murchison or school-sponsored or school-related activities.**

Bullying is aggressive behavior or intentional harming behavior. It can be physical, verbal, or emotional. It can occur once or be carried out repeatedly over time. It occurs among students in which the student who bullies has more power than the target. Examples of prohibited behaviors include, but are not limited to: name calling, unwanted touching, threatening to hurt someone, threatening gestures, or physical contact.

Sexual harassment is unwanted and unwelcome sexual behavior that interferes with a student's academic and social life. It can be physical, verbal, gestures, notes, or pictures. Sexual harassment can happen once, several times, or repeatedly. Bullying about gender, body parts, or sexuality may be considered a form of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment also happens in dating relationships and can lead to violence. Sexual harassment is a violation of the law. "Pantsing", the act of pulling down another student's pants, will be considered harassment and subject to suspension.

Murchison encourages parent and student support in its efforts to prevent and address bullying and sexual harassment. Students and parents are encouraged to discuss their concerns or questions about expectations in these areas with a teacher, counselor, or principal.

PHYSICAL AGGRESSION

Murchison Middle School has a zero tolerance policy for fighting and physical aggression. Students engaged in fighting or physical aggression will be suspended for three days and placed on a behavior contract. If a second incident occurs, a hearing will be held for removal to the Alternative Learning Center. Play fighting will be treated the same as real fighting.

ISS, AFTER SCHOOL DETENTION, SATURDAY DETENTION

Students who violate school or classroom rules may be assigned the following consequences. **In School Suspension (ISS)** occurs during the school day. **After School Detention** is held 2 days per week from 3:30-5:00 p.m. **Saturday Detention** is held from 8:00-12:00 noon. Parents will be notified. Students are supervised by a monitor and are required to work when assigned to ISS or a detention. Failure to attend, complete assignments, or behave appropriately may result in further administrative action. Parents are responsible for providing transportation for the detentions. **Persistent inappropriate behavior may result in a Behavior Improvement Plan, suspension, or assignment to the Alternative Learning Center.**

DRESS CODE

The purpose of the Dress Code is to maintain a safe and respectful learning environment and to model good citizenship. Students are required to use good judgment, to respect themselves and others, and to demonstrate modesty in selecting attire. Students may wear uniforms associated with approved campus extracurricular activities (such as cheerleader uniforms) with the approval of the adult sponsor and principal. The district prohibits any clothing or grooming that, in the administration's judgment, may reasonably be expected to cause disruption of or interference with normal school operations. The following is a description of items of clothing and personal appearance that may **not** be worn at school.

- Slippers
- Roller Shoes
- Backless Tops
- Baggy Pants (waistline below hip)
- Bare Midriff
- Muscle Shirts
- Untucked shirts longer than fingertip length of an extended arm
- Gang-Associated Clothing or Colors
- Halter Tops
- Low Cut Necklines
- Pajamas/Flannel Lounge Pants
- See-Through Clothing
- Shorts shorter than a fingertip length of an extended arm
- Dresses, Skirts and Skorts shorter than one hand width above knee
- Spaghetti Straps

- Strapless Tops
- Tank Tops (straps must be at least the width of the hand)
- Visible Undergarments
- Clothing that advertises, condones, depicts, or promotes the use of alcohol, tobacco, or drugs
- Clothing with vulgar or obscene language, or with images or writings that promote disruption
- Chains or accessories that would endanger students' safety or distract from the learning environment.
- Hats, Caps or Hoods (except for religious headwear) – includes scarves, bandanas and do rags
- Rips/tears/holes in pants that are above fingertip length
- Shorts with a drawstring or elastic waistband may be worn, if the length of the shorts is to the knee or longer.

All students are expected to abide by the stated dress code. If the administration judges a student's dress is out of compliance, the following steps will be taken:

- 1st infraction**– change clothes and written warning
- 2nd infraction**– change clothes and serve an after school detention.
- 3rd infraction**– and subsequent infractions change clothes and serve a Saturday detention.

Students will be given a chance to contact parents for a change in clothing. Students who do not change clothes will be sent to In-School suspension.

Administration has the final judgment when determining if a student's dress is out of compliance.

BUSES

Riding the bus to school is a privilege which may be revoked if safety rules are not observed. The bus driver has the responsibility for the safety and conduct of students riding the bus to and from school. Students are expected to abide by the guidelines governing student conduct on school buses. An announcement will be made to excuse students who arrive on a bus that is late. Students requesting to ride a bus to which they are not assigned must bring a note signed by their parent or guardian to the office no later than 1:30 p.m. Approval may be subject to availability.

ARTICLES PROHIBITED IN SCHOOL

Students may not bring articles which are hazards to the safety of others or interfere in some way with school procedures. Examples of disruptive items are PSP's, confetti, and laser pointers. If these items are brought to school, they will be taken up and returned only to a parent.

Cell phones and other electronic devices are permitted on middle school campuses by Board policy, but must remain turned off and "out of sight" from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. This means that they must be powered off in a locker or backpack (or similarly stowed) NOT in a student's hand or under a desk. Devices that are not kept "out of sight" will be confiscated. Confiscated devices will be kept in the main office and will be returned according to the following guidelines:

- Cell phones and other electronic devices will not be available for claiming until 2 days after the date of confiscation.
- Parents must provide proof of ownership in person and fill out the required forms.
- A fifteen dollar (\$15) fee will be assessed, payable by cash or money order.

Additionally, students may be subject to disciplinary action for violating school rules, and their device privileges may be suspended or revoked. **The District is not responsible for devices brought onto District property that are lost, stolen or damaged.**

EMERGENCY DRILLS

Fire Alarms – Murchison is equipped with a fire alarm system and smoke detectors for everyone's safety and security. Students tampering with any part of the fire/security/smoke systems will be subject to suspension/referral by the school administration and consequences by the AISD Police and Austin Fire Dept.

Weather Emergencies – Should weather emergency situations occur, Murchison administrators and staff members will use their best judgment for the safety of everyone. In the event that severe weather conditions prevent the opening of school, parents and students should listen to announcements via local radio and television.

Fire/Emergency Drills – Fire and emergency drills will be held monthly. Map and evacuation instructions are posted in each classroom.

LIBRARY

The Library is available for students from 8:00 – 4:30. The Librarian will provide specific information about checking out books from the library. Students will be placed on the Obligation List for lost library books and/or damaged library books. Students may also participate in the *Reading Counts Program* through the Library.

LOCKERS

Lockers remain under the jurisdiction of the school. The school has the right to inspect all lockers during any time there is reasonable cause to do so. Periodic locker checks to clean lockers will occur.

LOCKER SECURITY

Lockers are designed to provide only minimal security. Students should not leave any valuables such as house keys or money in their lockers. Each student is responsible for making certain that his/her locker is secured. Students need to check to see that their locker is closed and the combination dial has been turned completely around several times. Combinations should not be shared with others. **The school can not be responsible in the event of loss or theft.** If your locker has been broken into, report it to the office immediately.

LOST AND FOUND

Students who find lost articles are asked to take them to the office, where they may be claimed by the owner.

The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items including musical instruments.

MEDICATION AT SCHOOL

If a student needs to take medicine at school, the parent must come in and sign a Student Medication Request Form. All medication must be left with the nurse and must be in its original container. This procedure includes prescription and over the counter medication (Tylenol, aspirin, etc.)

The sale of prescription medication is a mandatory removal to the Alternative Learning Center. This includes ADHD medication. Possession of prescription medication that is not prescribed to the possessor is also a mandatory removal hearing.

MESSAGES TO STUDENTS

ONLY EMERGENCY MESSAGES WILL BE DELIVERED TO STUDENTS DURING THE SCHOOL DAY. IT MAY NOT BE POSSIBLE TO DELIVER MESSAGES RECEIVED AFTER 3:15.

STUDENT TELEPHONE USE

Students may use the phone in the office for an emergency. Students must have an official pass from a teacher to use the telephone during class time. The school phone may not be used for social arrangements or conversations.

TUTORIALS

Tutorials are available on Mondays and Wednesdays from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Make arrangements with your teacher.

VISITORS TO CAMPUS/CLASSROOM AND OBSERVATIONS

All parents/visitors must first report to the Main Office to sign in and receive a visitor's badge. School aged children are not allowed to visit the Murchison campus during school hours. Classroom observations must be approved by the principal and are limited to 30 minutes. Teacher conferences must be scheduled in advance.

SCHEDULE CHANGE POLICY

"Change of mind" schedule changes will not be honored after July 31st. After July 31st, only scheduling errors will be addressed. If necessary, students' schedules and/or teams will be changed to achieve balanced numbers in classes. If possible, all schedule changes will be completed by the end of the third week and students will be in their classes for the year.

Students enrolled in high school credit courses will be closely monitored. After team meetings, parent conferences, tutoring opportunities and other support, it may be necessary to change a student's placement. A conference involving the principal, counselor, teacher, student, and the parent will precede the class change.

ELIGIBILITY & EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Students who wish to participate in school-sponsored extracurricular activities must follow the rules listed below which govern participation.

1. A student must meet academic eligibility each six weeks as set forth by the University Interscholastic League (UIL).
2. Failing grades may not be changed to make a student eligible for participation unless there is a computational error by the teacher or computer.
3. Students who violate the Student Code of Conduct may be excluded from participation in extracurricular events.

NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY

Membership in the NJHS is both an **honor and a responsibility.** NJHS students are models for the rest of the school. Requirements for membership include citizenship, behavior, and grades, which are noted throughout the year.

The selection process is as follows:

1. Attaining a 3.5 cumulative G.P.A. for the 1st through the 4th Six Weeks. This includes all grades while at Murchison.
2. Completing and returning to the sponsor the Student Activity Information Form.
3. Faculty assessment with regard to leadership, character, citizenship, and service.
4. Selection by the Faculty Council.

An appeal must be made within seven school days after the designated notification date of membership.

TEXTBOOKS

Students are responsible for all textbooks issued to them. State Law requires that all State Textbooks be covered at all times. Students will be charged for marks, writing, or other types of damages to books. If a textbook is lost, the student must pay for the textbook before another book will be issued. **Students who have outstanding textbook obligations at the end of the school year will not be issued textbooks at the beginning of the next school year until the obligation has been cleared.** If the textbook is found, the money will be refunded.

PTA

The Murchison PTA works with the students, teachers and administrators to provide parent volunteers, educational opportunities, activities, and funding for classroom needs. The PTA, in conjunction with the principal, publishes a monthly newsletter that is mailed to parents. A weekly email bulletin is also distributed to parents.

ADMINISTRATION

Kimiko Cartwright..... Principal
 John Hewlett Asst. Principal
 (Students A–K)
 Robert Musfeldt Asst. Principal
 (Students L–Z)

COUNSELORS

Sharon Ingraham. 6th Grade
 Deanna Ryan. 7th Grade
 Emily Graves. 8th Grade

BELL SCHEDULE

| PERIODS | 6TH GRADE | 7TH GRADE | PERIODS | 8TH GRADE |
|---------|---------------|---------------|---------|---------------|
| 1 | 8:20 – 9:05 | 8:20 – 9:25 | 1 | 8:20 – 9:25 |
| 2 | 9:10 – 9:55 | 9:30 – 10:20 | 2 | 9:30 – 10:20 |
| 3 | 10:00 – 10:45 | 10:25 – 11:15 | 3 | 10:25 – 11:15 |
| 4 | 10:50 – 11:35 | 11:20 – 12:10 | 4 | 11:20 – 12:10 |
| LUNCH | 11:40 – 12:10 | 12:15 – 12:45 | 5 | 12:15 – 1:05 |
| 5 | 12:15 – 1:00 | 12:50 – 1:40 | LUNCH | 1:10 – 1:40 |
| 6 | 1:05 – 1:50 | 1:45 – 2:35 | 6 | 1:45 – 2:35 |
| 7 | 1:55 – 2:40 | 2:40 – 3:30 | 7 | 2:40 – 3:30 |
| 8 | 2:45 – 3:30 | | 8 | |

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| P HILTON | M CHOIR | L TRUE VILLIAN | I FRANTZ |
| O CIIR | N GARNER | K FAIR BANKS | J CARTER |

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| H HADLEY | E NEWTON |
| G WORK ROOM/ LEECH | F HAYNES |

PORTABLES

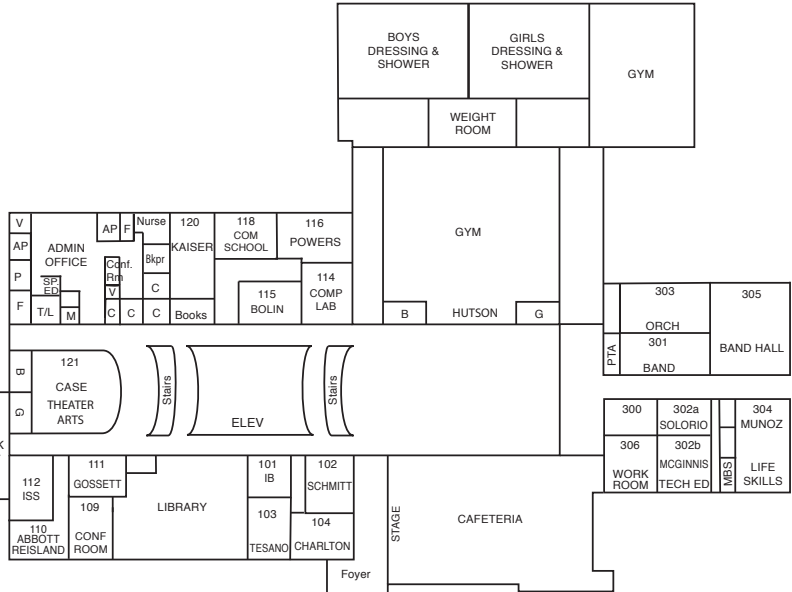
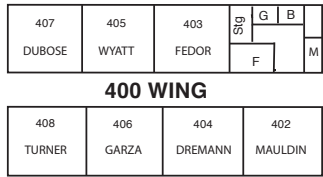
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FIRST FLOOR

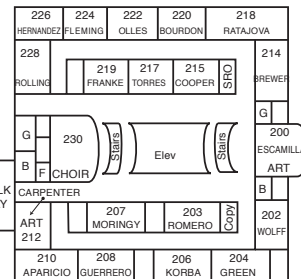
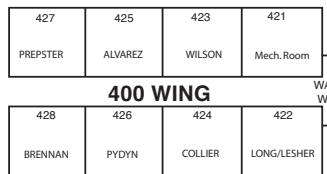


FRONT ENTRANCE

Murchison Middle School

2008-2009

SECOND FLOOR



Fight Song

Onward we go,
 And we'll fight every foe,
 For Murchison Middle School,
 The Orange and the Gold!
 Fight! Fight! Fight!
 Proud is our name,
 And so great is our fame,
 We'll raise that score,
 And fight some more,
 The Matadors will win this game!
 Yea Orange! Yea Gold!
 Yea! Matadors! Go! Go! Go!

Teacher's Name

Room #

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____



Austin Independent School District

2008-2009 School Calendar

August 2008

11-15 New Teacher Orientation
 18-20 Staff Development
 21-22 Planning & Prep
 25 First Day of Classes

September 2008

1 Student & Staff Holiday - Labor Day

October 2008

13 Student Holiday - Elem. Parent Conference; Secondary Staff Development

November 2008

10 Student Holiday - Staff Development
 26-28 Thanksgiving Holiday

December 2008

19 Student Holiday - Planning & Prep
 22 Winter Break Begins

January 2009

5 Student Holiday - Staff Development
 6 Classes Resume
 19 Student & Staff Holiday
 Martin Luther King, Jr., Day

February 2009

13 Student Holiday - Staff Development
 16 Student Holiday - Elem. Parent Conference; Secondary Staff Development

March 2009

16-20 Spring Break
 23 Classes Resume

April 2009

10 Student & Staff Holiday; 2nd Bad Weather Makeup Day for Staff Who Normally Work Beyond June 4

May 2009

25 Holiday - Memorial Day; 1st Bad Weather Makeup Day for Students and Staff

June 2009

3 Last Day of Classes
 4 Planning & Prep; 2nd Bad Weather Make-up Day for Students
 5 2nd Bad Weather Make-up Day for Staff Who Normally Stop Working on June 4

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July 2008

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January 2009

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August 2008

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February 2009

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September 2008

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March 2009

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October 2008

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April 2009

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November 2008

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May 2009

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|----|-----|----|----|----|----|----|--|
| | | | | | 1 | 2 | |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | |
| 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | |
| 24 | 25+ | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | |
| 31 | | | | | | | |

December 2008

| | | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|--|
| | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | | |
| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | |
| 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | | | | |

June 2009

| | | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|--|
| | | | | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4+ | 5+ | 6 | |
| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | |
| 28 | 29 | 30 | | | | | |

Legend

- Student/Staff Holiday
- Staff Development/Student Holiday
- Student Holiday - Elem. Parent Conference; Secondary Staff Development
- First/Last Day of Classes
- Planning & Prep/Student Holiday
- New Teacher Orientation
- + Bad Weather Make-up Day
- { 9-Weeks
- | 6-Weeks