

KMS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL 2025-2026

HANDBOOK FOR PARENTS



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(320) 264-5021
www.kms.k12.mn.us

Welcome to KMS Elementary School

Dear Families,

On behalf of the staff and administration at Kerkhoven-Murdock-Sunburg (KMS) Elementary, I warmly welcome you to an exciting new school year and an important part of your child's educational journey.

The **KMS Elementary School Parent Handbook** has been developed to share key information and expectations that help foster a successful experience for all students. Included in this handbook are recommendations that support student achievement and overall well-being:

- Read with your child at least 20 minutes a day, 20 days each month.
- Encourage your child to build friendships and participate in school activities.
- Get to know your child's teacher and our office staff—building strong school-home connections is essential.
- Learn about your child's interests, strengths, challenges, and goals. Encourage them to grow by setting and working toward meaningful challenges.
- Support consistent study habits and a love of learning.
- Talk with your child about their dreams and future career goals. Help them set short- and long-term goals to work toward those aspirations. The only true limits are our effort, focus, and determination.

The handbook is organized alphabetically for your convenience. It provides an overview of important policies, procedures, and general information to help you navigate the school year. Please note that updates are made annually to reflect changes or clarify expectations.

The staff and I are excited to begin this school year with you. We strive to lead with positivity and serve with purpose, supporting your child's growth in both academics and character.

Should you have any questions or concerns throughout the year, please feel free to reach out to me directly. If the concern is classroom-related, your child's teacher is the first and best point of contact. For peer-related issues or anything that may require additional support, both the teacher and I are here to help. While KMS Elementary is a strong and supportive learning environment, we recognize that challenges may arise—and addressing them early helps prevent disruption to learning.

We believe school is a place where students prepare for real-world success. Thank you for choosing KMS Elementary. We are honored to be part of your child's educational journey.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey R. Keil

Principal, KMS Elementary School

☎ 320-264-5021 | ✉ jkeil@kms.k12.mn.us

Attendance

Daily attendance is essential for all students to achieve and learn at a high level. Regular attendance is vital for your child's future educational success. Please send a note to the office or call the auto attendant at 264-5020 to share why your child is absent.

- Late arrivals must report to the office before going to class.
- Students must have a daily written excuse from parents to stay in from playing outside or gym class because of illness or injury.
- When a child is going to be absent from school the parent is expected to call the office before 9:00 a.m.
- Absences caused by school-sponsored activities will not be recorded as an absence.
- If a student knows an absence will occur, a note from home should be brought to the office in advance of the absence. A student will generally have two days for each day of excused absence to turn in assignments.

Appointments and Personal Absences

- Parents are encouraged to make every effort to make these appointments when school is not in session.
- Professional appointments unable to be scheduled outside the school day should be infrequent.
- Serious personal or family concerns should be infrequent.

Absences and tardiness is reviewed weekly. Parents will be notified and office staff will support the parent and student on how to resolve attendance concerns. Two unexcused absences are an attendance concern. A notice will be sent home about the two unexcused absences. Three unexcused absences represent truancy and Swift County Truancy Prevention is contacted.

Band

All fifth and sixth grade students have the opportunity to take band lessons during the school day. When students join band they are committing to complete and entire school year of lessons. If a student drops band during the school year they will receive an "F" grade during the remaining quarters. Information about band lessons and instruments will be sent to parents during the school year.

Bicycles

Bicycles should be parked in the rack provided by the south entrance of the school. Students are to observe the following expectations about biking safely to school.

- Ride in the designated safe route to and from school.
- Cross the street at intersections only.
- Walk bicycles on and off of school grounds.

Birthday Parties and Other Parties

Birthdays are one of the “highlights” in each student’s school year. Hand delivered invitations can be given out if all the class members of the same gender are invited to a birthday celebration. This policy needs to be followed for any other party where invitations are given out at school.

Bus Behavior

Students are expected to follow the bus rules while riding the school bus. Student inappropriate behavior on the bus will not be tolerated. If a student makes inappropriate choice while riding the bus they will be given an assigned seat. If inappropriate behaviors continue parents will be contacted and informed of their inappropriate choice. The KMS District has the responsibility to maintain a safe and orderly atmosphere on the bus.

Bus Discipline

The school bus is an extension of the classroom. District code of conduct and discipline policies apply to the school bus and to the bus stop areas as well as to school buildings and grounds. If a student refuses to obey the instructions of the bus driver, the matter will be reported to the elementary school principal and the following disciplinary action will be taken:

First Offense: Principal will meet with the student and driver. Student will be given an assigned seat.

Second Offense: Up to five days off of the school bus.

Third Offense: Up to ten days off of the school bus.

Fourth Offense: Privilege to ride the school bus removed.

Bus Transportation

Transportation on the school bus is a privilege not a right. A student’s privilege to ride a school bus may be revoked for a violation of school bus safety or conduct policies, or for violation of any other law governing student conduct on a school bus, following a written school district discipline policy. Revocation of a student’s bus riding privilege is not an exclusion, expulsion, or suspension under the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act of 1974.

2025-2026 KMS Elementary School Year Calendar

Wednesday, August 27	Open House
Tuesday, September 2	First Day of School
Monday, September 8	First Day of Preschool
Tuesday, October 14	Parent-Teacher Conferences
Thursday, Friday October 16-17	No School-Fall Break
Thursday, October 23	Parent-Teacher Conferences
Thursday, Friday November 27-28	No School-Thanksgiving Break
December 24-January 4	No School-Christmas Break
Monday, January 5	School Resumes
Monday, January 19	No School – Teacher Training
Friday, February 13	No School
Monday, February 16	No School – President’s Day
Thursday, February 26	Parent-Teacher Conferences
TH, F, M, T, April 2, 3, 6, 7	No School – Spring Break
Wednesday, April 8	School Resumes
Thursday, May 21	Last Day of Preschool
Thursday, May 28	Last Day of School
Sunday, May 31	Graduation

Quarters

1Q	September 2-November 4	44 days	1 st	Midterm	October 1
2Q	November 5-January 16	43 days	2 nd	Midterm	December 5
3Q	January 20-March 23	43 days	3 rd	Midterm	February 19
4Q	March 24-May 28	<u>43 days</u>	4 th	Midterm	April 29
		173 days			

Contingency Dates: February 13, April 2, April 7, and April 6.

If school is cancelled due to inclement weather an e-learning may be used.

Cell Phone and Electronic Device Expectations

KMS students are expected to **NOT** have their personal cell phones / electronic devices (for example: smart watches and tablets) in the classroom. Cell phones and electronic devices must be kept in a locked locker. Students are not to be in possession of a cell phone or device during all class times (8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.). Students may not use their personal cell phones or device during class time for any reason. Students may not use cell phones in the bathrooms for any reason.

- It is suggested that students put a lock on their locker to secure their cell phone and electronic device up during class. If needed a lock can be obtained through the school for a cost of \$10 or a lock can be brought from home. All lock combinations must be registered in the office.
- Students may use their cell phones and devices, appropriately, before and after school.
- Parents and students should not text or call during their child's cell phone or device during the day. If parents need to contact their student, they should call the office.
- Cell phones may be reviewed by administration at any time if they are suspected of being involved in misuse.

Cell Phone and Electronic Device Misuse Consequences

If a student's is in possession of a cell phone or device during class time, the device will be removed. After turning off the device, the student must immediately turn in the device with sim card and battery intact. Students that refuse to give up their device may have additional consequences. Below are the consequences for violating this policy:

1st misuse: Student's cell phone and device will be removed and brought to the office for the rest of the day. The parent will be notified and the student may pick up the device at the end of the day.

2nd misuse: Student's cell phone and device will be removed and brought to the office for the rest of the day. Parent will be notified and parent will be required to pick up the electronic device.

3rd misuse: Student's cell phone and device will be removed and brought to the office. A timeout/rule review (lunch/recess or after school) will be required, parent will be notified, and parent will need to pick up the electronic device after the timeout is completed.

Child Abuse or Neglect

School personnel who know or have reason to believe a child has been or is being neglected, physically abused, or sexually abused will be immediately reported to the local welfare agency or law enforcement office. This school district complies with the Minnesota Statute 626.556, Reporting and Maltreatment of Minors.

Classroom Placement

The purpose of classroom placement is to ensure a balanced learning environment for all students. When assigning students to classrooms the following is considered: friendships, gender, ethnicity, talents, abilities, and parent requests. Administration and classroom teachers spend a large amount of time seeking input and considering combination of students when developing a balanced classroom. Our teaching staff is focused on meeting the instructional needs of all students through the development of a balanced classroom.

Staff will do their best to consider and honor parental requests. A classroom placement request submitted by a parent is not a guarantee the request can be honored. If parents choose to make a classroom placement request for their son or daughter, please follow the listed steps.

- Make your request in writing by April 15.
- Please state an educational reason for your request.
- Share your written request with your child's classroom teacher, office staff, and principal.

Student enrollment fluctuates over the summer months. Class placements are reviewed in August by the principal and classroom teacher. Adjustments are then made to a class placement before school starts in September.

Closed Campus

Students will not be allowed to leave the school campus during the noon-hour period unless write permission is given. When a student leaves the school grounds they leave the safety and supervision of the school.

Cold Weather Clothing

Students are allowed outdoors for recess if the temperature and wind chill is within safe limits for longer than twenty minutes. If the weather is too extreme students will be supervised in the gym or free play activities in the classroom.

Parents are encouraged to have their children wear the following items to school during the cold weather so they will be adequately dressed to play out-of-doors during recess:

- Winter coat
- Cap and gloves
- Winter boots
- Snowsuit or snow pant

Please send an extra pair of pants and gloves since they often become wet. To play in the snow, boots and snow pants or snowsuit must be worn. If students do not wear appropriate gear they will be required to play on the black top.

Cumulative Records

As parents or legal guardians of students at KMS, you have the right to:

- See any records the school maintains regarding your child.
- Receive a copy of the records.
- Challenge the accuracy of the records.

If you would like to review your child's cumulative records, contact the office.

Dismissal

End of the day buses arrive to pick up students at 2:50 p.m. on the north side of the elementary school. All students will be walked to the bus loading area by their classroom teacher. Without a parent note or parent call to the office, students will be sent home in their traditional manner.

- 2:51 Grades K, 1 & 2
- 2:53 Grades 3 & 4
- 2:55 Grades 5 & 6
- 3:00 Buses depart

Children not leaving the school by 3:00 p.m. need to wait in the porch area next to the office until they are picked up.

Discipline Policy and Student Behavior

School is the place students prepare for the real world. When students make bad choices it is an opportunity for students to learn from their choices. Logical consequences, reinforces and motivates all of us to make better choices in the future.

Each person at KMS Elementary School is expected to:

- Keep their hands and feet to themselves.
- Speak kind words to others.
- Learn by being Readers, Listeners, and Learners.
- Receive help from caring adults.

Student Behavior Expectations

Be Safe

- Follow game rules
- Play gently
- Use equipment appropriately
- What's on the ground stays on the ground
- Stay within designated boundaries
- Report unsafe people or equipment

Be Kind

- Play fairly and include everyone
- Share equipment
- Use appropriate and friendly language
- Hands and feet to self
- Use respectful tone of voice
- Be respectful to students and adults

Be Responsible

- Follow adult directions
- Put equipment away
- Toys and food stay in the classroom
- Respond to the whistle
- Get permission to leave the playground or classroom

Consequences

1. Review what occurred
2. Identify where a positive choice should have occurred
3. Meet with the principal
4. Letter to your parents

The behavior goal is to support students so they can be independent and make good choices, solve problems, practice appropriate behavior skills, and demonstrate their behavior skills daily.

Dress Code

All students are expected to dress responsibly in a manner that promote safety and does not offend other students or staff. Responsible dress strengthens relationships and maintains a positive learning environment for everyone at school. Students found to be dressed in attire that creates a danger to health or safety; creates a disruption to the educational process or violates common standards of decency, will be sent to the office.

If a student is sent to the office for violation of the dress code, the student may be asked to make adjustments.

Parents may be asked to bring alternate clothing.

Appropriate clothing includes, but is not limited to:

- Clothing that is not a danger to health and safety.
- Clothing that is not distracting to the educational process or offensive to others.
- Clothing that covers the midriff, upper thigh, shoulders and chest.
- Clothing that covers undergarments.
- Guideline for shorts: Shorts should have at least a 5-inch inseam or extend to at least mid-thigh.
- Guideline for dresses: Dresses should extend to mid-thigh or worn with appropriate shorts underneath.
- Legging and yoga pants must be worn with a skirt or shirt that extends to at least mid-thigh.
- No clothing, jewelry, or matter of grooming which by virtue of its arrangement, trademark or any other attribute (as a primary purpose) denotes membership in an organized gang as defined by MN stat. 260.125.
- No clothing advertising anything illegal to minors including, but not limited to: alcohol, drugs, and tobacco.

- Clothing with profanity will not be permitted.
- No headgear of any kind unless approved by administration (i.e. medical or religious reasons). Headgear includes, but not limited to: hats, caps, scarves, and hoods. Hooded shirts are acceptable as long as the hood is down the entire day.
- Coats and jackets will not be worn during school hours.
- Appropriate footwear must be worn at all times during normal school hours. Inappropriate footwear includes: slippers, flip-flops, socks, or bare feet.

If a student is sent to the principal's office for any violation of this dress code, the student will be asked to make adjustment to their dress so it meets handbook requirements.

Early Arrival and Morning Schedule

Children arriving before 7:30 a.m. need to wait in the porch by the office. Dropping off students early is a convenience for parents. Doors open at 7:30 a.m. and students will be permitted to play in the gym with adult supervision.

Emergency Drills

Drill procedures and routes are posted in classrooms. Teachers will review and practice drills during the first week of school.

- **Fire and Evacuation Drills**

Students will be notified of a fire drill by a loud continuous buzzing sound. Students are to walk quickly and quietly with their classroom to designated areas. There will be five fire drills per year.

- **Lock Down Drills**

Students will be notified of a lock down drill by an announcement over the public address system. There will be five lock down drills per year.

- **Tornado Drills**

During the month of April students will review and practice this drill. Students are to walk quickly and quietly with their classroom to the designated area.

Health Services

Maintaining Student Health

Effective hand washing is the single best method to prevent transmission of disease. Please practice frequent, effective hand washing at home, especially when entering your home. Teach your child to avoid any blood or body fluids of any other person. Encourage your child to cover their mouths and noses with their elbow or a tissue when coughing or sneezing. When someone else is coughing or sneezing, keep a distance of 2 feet from them and turn your head away from the cough and sneeze.

Student Nutrition

Good nutrition and adequate rest promote a healthy immune system to keep your child healthy. Students requiring special nutrition must obtain a “Medical Statement for Children Requiring Special Needs in Nutrition” from their health care provider to sign before dietary changes can be made.

Parents or guardians are encouraged to inform the school of significant illnesses or injuries affecting their child.

Student Illness---***The school needs to have a way to contact you or a designated person to make health decisions for your child.***

All parents of students with a medical diagnosis (such as asthma, seizure disorder, migraine headaches, etc.) need to contact the KMS Nurse and complete a Health Assessment for their child yearly.

KMS health office does not stock medication except for Caladryl lotion or gel used on rashes, bites, or itches. See (“Policy for Delivery of Medicines at School”)

Student Illnesses lasting for 3 or more days in a row: The health office requests your health care provider write a note (or send a fax) to the health office reviewing the nature of the illness and restrictions for your child while at school.

When to keep your child home

- Is not feeling well in the morning, please keep them at home for observation to be sure they are well enough to come to school.
- Has a disease that may be contagious (like chicken pox, strep throat, etc.). Check with your health care provider before sending them to school.
- Has recently vomited or had diarrhea, be sure it has stopped before sending them to school.
- Has a fever of 100 degrees orally or higher, consult your health care provider before sending them and please have them fax the school to explain.
- Is not symptom free for a period of 12-24 hours.

When a Child Complains of Illness or Appears Ill at School

When seen in the Health Office the student complaint is checked and “Emergency Guidelines for Schools” protocol is followed.

- If there is a serious or persistent concern, you will be contacted.
- A call, email, or text message may be sent advising you about their visit.
- Children may be asked to remain in the Health Office to rest for 20 minutes. After resting they are expected to return to class or a parent will be contacted for a decision on whether to remain in school.
- If complaints seem consistent with hunger, a student may be provided with crackers and water.

Student Injuries

When a child reports an injury at school:

- Injuries will be assessed and action taken based on “Emergency Guidelines for Schools”.
- Emergency Services will be activated as necessary and parents will be informed.

Student Immunizations

Minnesota Law says all students need to show proof of immunizations by the first day of school or they will not be allowed to remain in school. Parents may obtain a legal exemption from the Health Office at either school. The exemption from immunization requirements is for medical reasons or conscientiously held beliefs. If you have questions about immunizations, contact the school nurse.

Student Medications (Policy for Delivery of Medicines at School)

The KMS Board of Education and the KMS School Health Services works to insure the health, safety, and well-being of all students. The Board recognizes the primary responsibility for delivery of medicines lies with the parent and their health care provider. Because the parent, health care provider, or guardian is not available to deliver medicines during the school day, the following policy will be followed for the delivery of medicines at school.

“Medicine” is considered to be any substance whether over-the-counter, natural remedy, vitamin, or prescription that is used to treat a symptom or condition.

II. Medicines should be given at home when possible.

When it is necessary that medicines be given during the school day these guidelines will be followed:

- The form labeled “Permission to Deliver Medicines at School” must be completed and on file in the Health Office.
- All medicines are to be dispensed from the Health Office unless exceptions are pre-arranged.
- Medicines are to be brought to school by a parent or guardian.
- Medicines will be checked in at the Health Office where they are counted.
- Medicines are to be brought to school in the original pharmacy container.
- Prescription medicines must be current with correct directions on the label.
- When the medicine is an on-going prescription, parents are responsible for obtaining the medicine reorders and prescriptions in a timely manner to prevent interruption of the medicine delivery.
- When the child is on a medication that may alter behavior, an evaluation report will be submitted to the prescribing health care provider approximately one month after starting the medicine at school. This report is submitted to give the health care provider information on the effectiveness of the medicine and it is valuable to establish a baseline should changes become necessary.
- Medication is delivered at school by staff that is trained in medicine delivery and is under the supervision of the School Nurse.
- Each child will have a medicine log that records when the medicine is given.
- Secure medicine storage will be provided.

Hot Meal Program

KMS School District participates in the government supported breakfast and hot lunch program. Each day nutritious breakfast and mid-day meal is made available to your child. Family account is available to deposit money in your students account. Check the KMS Website for current prices.

When the balance in the family account is low a notice will be sent to parents. All families in the KMS district will receive a letter explaining the details and qualifications for Free and Reduced Priced Meals.

KMS-4-KIDS

KMS-4-Kids a parent support organization for students attending KMS Elementary. Funds from this organization go toward reducing transportation costs related to classroom field trips. If you would like to assist in one of the activities and help us out, please contact the elementary office at 264-5021.

Lost and Found

If your child has lost something, be sure to ask them to check the lost and found area in the lunchroom. Marking your child's items is helpful for you to identify your child's possessions.

Milk Break

Milk break is an optional program for students and is not a part of the hot lunch program. The school district provides a carton of milk for each Kindergarten students at no cost to the student. See the KMS Website for student milk price in grades 1-6 the cost for half year or for the entire school year. The times for milk breaks varies by grade.

Non-Discrimination Policy

KMS Elementary school admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to student at this school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnical origin in administration of its educational policies, programs, athletics, and other school administered programs. KMS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color or ethnic origin in the hiring of its personnel.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled for October and February. Parents will be sent notification of a scheduled appointment for your child's conference time and date.

Physical Education

Students in grades K-6 receive instruction physical education from trained specialists daily for 25 minutes. Tennis shoes or sports-type shoes are required for use in the gym during physical education. Students who wear sandals or any type of shoe making it difficult to run should have a pair of tennis shoes to wear for physical education.

Psychological Services

School psychologist services are available weekly through the Southwest Service Cooperative. A student may receive school psychologist services in an approach to resolve learning concerns that prevent student achievement. The results of the psychological evaluations are shared with the student's parents and members of the evaluation team.

Speech Services

Speech articulation and language services are available to students with a current Individual Education Plan. If parents believe their child might require Speech and Language therapy, please contact the school office for an appointment.

Statewide Testing

The Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment will be given to all students in grade 3-6 grade. These assessments are given traditionally during the month of April. There are yearly updates and changes in the statewide testing requirements. Preliminary results will be shared with parents in May. Final results will be shared with parents during the fall parent teacher conferences.

Each school in Minnesota has to meet yearly performance requirements. Traditionally each school receives a report card score reflecting their level of achievement.

Technology Instruction

Kindergarten through sixth grade students will receive and experience technology on a daily basis. Students have the opportunity to use a variety of programs in the areas of math, reading, spelling and geography. Third through sixth grader students learn keyboarding skills and word processing skills during the year. Students at KMS Elementary have access to the district computer network. Every student who wishes to use this service must obtain parental permission. It is very important that parents and students read, discuss, and understand the information on this form before signing it and returning it to the office.

Title I Services

Title I intervention are a school-wide service federally funded program designed to provide students with research based interventions in reading and mathematics. Our Title I staff includes teachers and paraprofessionals. The teachers and paraprofessionals use researched based interventions to students requiring additional support.

Treats Brought to Share

Treats **should not** be brought by students and shared with classmates. This guidance supports the KMS District healthy food guidelines.

Visitors and Volunteers

All visitors and volunteers need to check and sign in with the office. The office staff will hand out a volunteer or visitor badge. The playground is considered to be a part of the school during the day. If you need to see your student during recess, please stop in the office first. Parents are welcome to visit classrooms. Visiting is a great way to show your child and your child's teacher that you are interested and engaged. Please make arrangements with your child's teacher before you visit and then check in at the office before entering the classroom.

Weather Related Announcements

Announcements of school closings or late starts will be made over the following radio stations.

- Operation Snow Desk at http://www.willmarradio.com/more_weather/:
- Q102 FM or KWLM 1340 AM Willmar
- KDJS 95.3 FM Willmar
- KSCR 93.5 FM Benson
- WCCO 830 AM and Television Minneapolis
- KSTP Television (Parents can sign-up online at the KSTP website for an alert message.)

These announcements should be on the air before 7:00 a.m. Depending on weather conditions, school could be canceled the night before the next school day. When school is closed early due to inclement weather conditions, the elementary will dismiss about 15 minutes prior to the time announced (due to the bus schedule). When school closes early due to weather all after school and evening activities will be canceled.

KMS Weather Alerts

All KMS parents are automatically signed up to receive a text message or email when school is cancelled or delayed. If you are not receiving the KMS Weather-Alerts, contact the elementary school office. Parents can also check the KMS website for weather alerts.