

# Mitchell Elementary Parent Handbook

*Our School Motto: To Be The Best, Give your Best!*

*2020-2021*

We welcome those of you who are returning to Mitchell Elementary for this school term, and a special welcome to those of you who are entering Mitchell for the first time. We hope you will find a warm, friendly atmosphere in our school. It is our sincere hope that this handbook will help you have a better understanding of school policies and procedures. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call the school. We are here to serve you and your children. Please visit our website at <http://mitchell.mysdhc.org> for additional information. You can also access a video explaining many of our new procedures due to Covid 19 at <https://youtu.be/4fwLqNUQpYQ>

## Parent/ Student Information

### Daily Schedule/Arrival and Dismissal Times

All students will enter the school through the back gate located on Gomez Ave. For security purposes, all other gates will be closed. **We are asking that you to utilize the car line as much as possible. Due to Covid 19 and following the CDC guidelines, we ask that you do not congregate by the gate and that both you and your child are wearing a mask when walking on the sidewalks around school.**

8:00- 1<sup>st</sup> Bell

8:00 -8:25 Students only may enter the building and go directly to class **Students will go directly to the cafeteria for grab and go breakfast then go to directly to class or go directly to class if they don't want breakfast.**

8:30 - Tardy Bell School starts

8:31- Considered tardy

2:15- No more early sign outs (1:15 on Monday)

2:45- Dismissal \* **\*Monday's are early dismissal at 1:45 p.m.**

**-To help with making sure our hallways are not crowded with students, we will stagger the times we dismiss students. We will wait for one grade level to be in place before calling another. Once all students are in place we will start dismissing to parents. Please be patient, especially in the early weeks as safety is always our number one priority.**

**-Students will be given a colored dismissal tag that we will put on their book bags. Please leave these on their book bags. It helps us know where every student goes at the end of the day. If you need to change how your child goes home please email the teacher by 10:00. If you do not hear back from them please make sure you call the office so they can let the teacher know of the change.**

### Safety & Visitor Information:

Maintaining a safe environment for all students is a task we take very serious. Students will **NOT** be allowed on campus before 8:00 A.M. Supervision will begin at 8:00 A.M. Your assistance with this is greatly appreciated.

For our students' protection, all gates surrounding our school will be locked and will remain locked until our dismissal procedures begin. In the morning students will enter the school through the only unlocked gate on Gomez Avenue. Parents are only allowed entrance through the front of the school and must sign in and receive a visitors badge. **Due to Covid 19 we are limiting parents on campus. Parents are allowed on Campus through appointment only.**

### Protecting Our Instructional Day:

Students are with us for 6 hours and 15 minutes each day. We must make sure that our time with students is spent in quality instruction, focusing always on academic excellence. Please be sure your child comes to school on time each day, ready with everything that he/she needs. **We also ask that you save early sign outs for emergency purposes only. Each time we call for a student, we interrupt instruction, and take precious time away from teacher/student contact. Also, please be sure students remember their backpacks, lunches, violin, etc. If your child leaves something at home, please do not bring it to school. We will work with the child to make sure they have what they need for that day. This will help limit the number of people going in to a classroom.**

### **Important Phone Numbers**

We are providing a list of school extensions that may be of assistance to you. Please do not hesitate to call Mitchell's School Office at 872-5216 if you have any questions or concerns.

Attendance .....	Ext. 400	Registration.....	Ext. 229
Guidance Counselor.....	Ext. 225	District Office.....	272-4000
Mitchell Lunchroom .....	Ext. 227		
Health Assistant/Nurse.....	Ext. 226		

### **PTA Officers for 2020-2021**

President.....	Alisha Stephens	Treasurer.....	Andy Warren
Vice-Pres - Ways & Means.....	Colleen Dunlop	Recording Secretary.....	Erin Nitz
Vice-Pres- Volunteers & Membership...	Natassja Prose		
Corresponding Secretary....	Amber Godsey		

Our PTA offers a variety of opportunities for volunteerism. Choose to work on campus, at home, or both. Lots of exciting things are happening at school – you won't want to miss out! You'll find that volunteering is rewarding for both you and your child(ren). Please contact us to find out how you can participate!. For more information on membership, please contact Natassja Prose at natassjaprose@gmail.com or visit [www.mitchellelementarypta.org](http://www.mitchellelementarypta.org).

### **General Information**

#### **School Parties/Birthday Parties, Etc.**

Each grade level is allowed two class parties per year. One usually comes before the Winter Holiday and the second before the end of school. **PARENTS ARE REMINDED NOT TO SEND CUPCAKES OR OTHER TREATS FOR BIRTHDAYS OR OTHER SPECIAL OCCASIONS.** This would pose a problem for the teachers and teams when one teacher's class receives treats and another team member's class does not. In addition, we would be celebrating some special event on a daily basis at the expense of valuable instructional time. Many children also have allergies and this could endanger them. Thank you for understanding.

#### **Parents Requesting Classmates' Addresses**

We are not able to provide a birthday/address list. **We also request that party invitations not be distributed at school.** The Mitchell Directory has many phone numbers and addresses and is available online through the Mitchell Elementary PTA website.

#### **Homework - How Parents Can Help**

1. Have a quiet place set aside -- a table or desk where homework is to be done.
2. Set a specific time for homework:
  - a. as soon as child gets home and gets comfortable
  - b. after play, but at least one hour before dinner
  - c. right after dinner, before television

If your child is continuously frustrated due to difficulties with their homework, please email the teacher and they can help adjust and support when needed.

#### **Parent Communication**

We are an informed community of child advocates with the common goal of student success. As such, we strive to maintain a relevant and open line of communication between school personnel and home. The Mitchell PTA sends out weekly email blasts (BOBCAT BLAST) every Wednesday with important information about school related activities for the week. In order to receive the Blast electronically, you will need to provide your email address. Please see [www.mitchellelementarypta.org](http://www.mitchellelementarypta.org) to register.

**Please note you must RE-REGISTER for communications EVERY YEAR. Please do this right away so you do not miss any important communication from school or your PTA.**

#### **Student Transfers**

It takes one day to process a child's record when he/she is moving. Please notify the office one day prior to your departure in order that we may prepare your child's records. If an emergency arises and you cannot give us a one-day notice, please make every effort to notify us as soon as possible.

#### **Attendance Line (872-5216 & press 1)**

Parents Attendance Line is for parents to call to report student absences 24 hours a day. The line will have an answering device that will allow you, as parents, to let the school know when your child will be out of school.

***STRICTLY ENFORCED! Change of PICK-UP: For your child's safety no child will be dismissed from school by a different method than the one established unless the school receives an email by 10:00 A.M. Please email teacher. If you do not hear from them please contact the office.***

### Illness/Health/Conduct

#### Illness or Accident at School

Many times children become too ill to remain at school. In all fairness to your child and to others, it is of utmost importance that we have on file the following information correct on their emergency card (This should be in your first day packet. If it is not available by the first day we will let families know.):

1. Name, address, phone number of parents or guardian (should include business phone)
2. **Emergency numbers:** Name and phone number of relative, friend or neighbor, should your child need home care and you cannot be reached

Please make every effort to keep the office informed of any changes in the status of the information listed above.

#### School Discipline Policies

We firmly believe in the right of every child to have the best academic instruction and the happiest school life we are able to provide. We enjoy praising the successes of all of our students and believe that praise and success are the keys to good discipline.

In order to guarantee your child and all the students in the classroom the excellent learning climate they deserve, we will continue our positive disciplinary policies.

We believe all students can behave appropriately. Certain rules and consequences have been developed to aid students in making appropriate decisions governing their behavior. These rules and consequences will vary slightly from grade level to grade level, but in general, they will be consistent throughout the school.

Please be aware that some behaviors **cannot** be tolerated in school. Students who commit offenses such as fighting, destroying property, using profanity or continuing repeated offenses will be sent to the office immediately and the appropriate consequences will be administered. For continuous negative behavior, student services as well as the teacher/s and parent will work together to come up with a more individual plan to help the child be successful.

#### Pediculosis (Head Lice)

It is HCPS policy that a child will be excluded from school when this condition exists. Please notify the school nurse with questions or concerns.

## **Health Screening**

School Health Services Program conducts health-screening activities at various times during a child's school experience. Screening activities occur based upon guidelines established by the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services and local school health personnel. School health screening may include the following activities: vision screening; hearing screening; measurement of height, weight and dental screening. Parents will be notified prior to any screening that takes place in school.

## **School Meal Information**

**In the interest of fairness...we ask that you do not bring restaurant-bought lunches into school for your child. While it may make your student happy, others might feel badly. Food delivery services such as Uber eats, Doordash, and others will be sent away with the order.**

**Due to Covid 19 parents will not be allowed on campus to eat lunch with their child.**

## **School Breakfast and Lunch Programs and Prices**

We provide children the opportunity to participate in our breakfast and lunch programs at Mitchell. Breakfast is served from 8:00-8:25 each morning, and lunch is served between 10:15-1:00 each day. Lunch menus are available online and are also available in the cafeteria. **Students will not have the ability to purchase snacks this year.** Breakfast is free to all students. **This year breakfast will be a grab and go. If they choose to eat breakfast, they will pick it up from the cafeteria and go directly to class.”.** You may add funds to your child's account through Payment Plus Plan ([www.mypaymentsplus.com](http://www.mypaymentsplus.com)).

### **Lunch & Breakfast Prices**

Full price lunch .....\$2.25

Full breakfast.....Free to all students

We have an easy and efficient method for parents who are interested in paying for their child's meals by the week or longer. Parents will receive information explaining our lunch program in the first day packet as well as the opening school mail out.

Applying for free and reduced meal benefits is now easier than ever with the NEW online application center!

- ✓ Complete in the comfort of your home or office
- ✓ Follow easy, step-by-step instructions
- ✓ Available online 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- ✓ Avoid delays through school or U.S. mail
- ✓ Available in English and Spanish

For more information or to complete an application log on to: [www.sdhc.k12.fl.us](http://www.sdhc.k12.fl.us). Search “Go SNS”

Healthy Meals Express Application Center  
2920 N 40<sup>th</sup> St, Tampa, FL 33605  
Telephone: (813)840-7066

Meal Status/Meal Prepay Hotline: 1-866-544-5575 (Be sure to have your child's ID number available.)  
Account access and adding funds may also be done at [www.mypaymentplus.com](http://www.mypaymentplus.com).

## Uniform Policy/Dress Code/ Parent Conference

### Dress Code

Mitchell has adopted the following Mandatory School Uniform Policy. **Any student who does not participate must follow the County's guidelines, which are provided by an "Opt Out" procedure.** For more information, please contact the school office and set up a conference with our school principal.

### The school uniform consists of the following:

1. White, navy, or yellow top with collar.
2. Navy blue or khaki (shorts, long pants, skirt or jumper). Shorts must exceed past the fingertips when arms are placed along the side.
3. Winter attire to include navy windbreaker, navy or white sweater (either pullover or cardigan), or a navy sweatshirt.
4. Shoes must be the type that will be securely fastened to the student's foot.

### The following items are NOT considered to be consistent with the uniform policy:

- Warm-up suits or athletic clothing
- Clothing of any color inconsistent with the above
- Leggings and long colored socks

Uniforms can be found at a variety of stores and do not require special purchase from a particular supplier. Spirit shirts are sold by the PTA and may be worn on Fridays with uniform bottoms.

### For those students not wearing uniforms, please note the following:

1. Clothing should be non-disruptive and appropriate for the learning environment.
2. The following will be classified as disruptive or inappropriate clothing: tank tops, hats worn indoors, ankle-length dresses (unsafe for going up the stairs), bare midriffs, halter tops, short-shorts, see through material

### All students are required to conform to the following:

1. Shoes or sandals should be securely fastened to the feet and of a reasonable heel height; therefore, **NO** thongs or clogs. Crocs should not be worn. They do not fit the feet securely.
2. Hair should be clean and neatly groomed.
3. General appearance of students should reflect neatness and good personal hygiene.

### Labeling Student's Clothing

Please label your child's clothing (coats, sweaters, etc.) so that it will be easily identified and returned if it is misplaced. After a reasonable time, unclaimed clothing or articles will be sent to a local charity.

### Parent Visitation

For your child's protection, we are asking that anyone coming to the school report to the office for a visitor's pass. This procedure will assure the staff that the visitor has been cleared by the office. (Thank you for your cooperation.) **This year due to Covid 19, all visitors are by appointment only. Must have photo ID at all times to volunteer on campus.**

### Conference with Teachers

The faculty encourages at least two parent-teacher conferences during the year. Please keep in mind these conferences cannot be held during the school day when the teacher is working with the children. A conference may be scheduled during the teacher's conference time, before or after school, and on conference days. We will make every effort to communicate effectively with parents.

## Dismissal Information

The last page of this handbook has our Drop-off & Pick-up procedures and a map that will assist you.

**Car signs will be in your first day packets. This will help assist in identifying the child (ren) you will be picking up along with their teacher's name. Please use this in your car for car line as well as when you walk up to the gate. Again, this will help us easily identify who you are picking up.**

**Walkers (students who walk without a parent)** will exit the campus at 2:45 p.m. and begin walking home.

**Day Care Vans:** Kindergarten through fifth grade students will be escorted by staff members to the designated daycare area and placed in the appropriate vehicles. After school DayCare pick-up will be in the front of the school. Please communicate the exact provider with the teacher.

**YMCA Successful Afterschool Program:** Designated staff members will escort kindergarten through fifth grade students to the YMCA area, in the cafeteria, where they will meet with their YMCA counselor. YMCA will be housed in the cafeteria and parent pick-up will be on Gomez Ave.

**Rainy Day Procedures:** We will send out a Perentlink text to notify of a rainy day dismissal. If it is lightening, we will hold off on dismissal until it has stopped.

\*Students who ride a daycare van will wait inside of the building for vans to arrive.

\*Students who walk home by themselves will stay in the building until the rain lightens or until they are picked up.

\*We will keep the **walk up** students under a covered area. Parents will still walk up where they usually do to get their child. Please hold up your car tag sign. We will then call for your child to come up.

\*For students who are usually **car riders**, parents will park and walk up to either the gate on Gomez by the cafeteria for K-2<sup>nd</sup> graders or walk up to the gate on Gomez by the playground for 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> graders to get their child. Students in K-2<sup>nd</sup> will be waiting in the cafeteria and students 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> will be waiting on the courts.

See Map at the end for clarity. Rainy day dismissal pickup locations are marked with an orange flag.



**Anyone picking up a child on a rainy day dismissal should bring their car tag/sign with him or her to help us identify whom they are picking up. Please make sure you info the person who picks up your child about rainy day dismissal.**

### **Bicycle Safety**

If your child rides a bicycle to school, be sure he knows and abides by the traffic rules, which apply to the use of bicycles. **Please be sure your child is wearing a safety helmet while riding his/her bike.** Bicycles will be parked in the bike racks on the south side of the covered court facing Gomez Avenue. **The school is not responsible for lost or stolen bicycles.**

### **Sun Protection**

Our boys and girls will be outside for line-up in the morning and afternoon. They will also be outside for PE and lunch each day. Please be sure that you take the necessary precautions to protect your child's skin with sunscreen. It would be most beneficial if applying sunscreen became a daily morning routine prior to school.



## **Afternoon Pick Up (More Information Below)**

There are **4 ways** from which you must select on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of school and follow each day for how your child will go home. Any changes to this initial selection must be communicated in advance and in writing to your child's teacher. Emails may not be checked prior to dismissal so early notification is the best way to ensure your child is in the right place. Please call the office if you need assistance.

1. **Car Line-** This is the most efficient, preferred and common departure for students. If you choose this option you will follow the procedures listed above. Students will be escorted out to the covered court by teachers and sit quietly until their name is announced over the PA system. At that time, students will walk to the car line waiting area outside of the gate and watch for their vehicles to come to a stop to enter. Please ensure that you pull all the way forward to the front of the car line at all times. We will have a staff member on the corner of Platt and Gomez to direct traffic and retrieve student names. Please ensure that your student name placard is viewable at all times.
2. **Student walk up gate-** It is located at the Southeast corner of the campus for K-2 and North East corner for 3-5 off of Bungalow Park. This is the only point at which parents are able to walk up and retrieve students. We encourage you to park in the visitor lot on Platt and Bungalow or walk from surrounding neighborhoods. Students will be transported to the waiting area on the front lawn.
3. **Day Care-** Students will be transported to a designated waiting area on campus for YMCA Successful After School Program, Branch Academy, or any of the other providers who supply vehicle transportation from Mitchell to their facility. YMCA Successful After School Program students will be taken to the cafeteria, Branch Academy will go with their class to the covered court and will be dismissed to Branch staff from there, and daycare vans will meet in the main hallway for exit to the vehicles on Bungalow.
4. **Walkers across Kennedy-** These students will meet Mrs. Cannella and Mrs. Lambert in their designated area by the media center. They will then be walked across Cleveland to walk home on their own.

## **Parking Procedure**

- If you choose to park, please find a **legal** parking place. There will be no parking on Gomez Avenue as that is where our car line will flow. Please do not park in any of the neighbors' parking lots, private property or access ways on Gomez or in the Greater Tampa Association of Realtors (GTAR) parking lots off of Cleveland. This is private property and they have the right to tow your vehicle at your expense. This happens frequently to those that disobey posted signage on private property.
- Please cross the streets at the corners using the crosswalks. Jay walking is not safe and puts yourself and students at risk.
- Parking Reminders:
  - Parking is not permitted at any time on the median on Bungalow
  - Parking is not permitted at any time on Platt or Gomez Street
  - Double parking is not permitted at any time on any street.
  - Tampa Police Department will issue tickets to those in violation of parking regulations and speed limits.
  - District Resource officers will intervene at times and issue verbal warnings and civility notices to those who continually violate any parking or drop off/pick up procedures.
  - Parking is available in our Visitor Parking lot on Platt and Bungalow Park.

# MORNING DROP OFF AND AFTERNOON DISMISSAL PROCEDURE

## Morning Drop Off

- Traffic will flow in a northern direction on Gomez Avenue arriving at the back of the school. **No other gates will be open and available for drop off. The back gate of the school will be the only gate used for this purpose.**
- Parents are encouraged to enter the car line on Gomez Avenue via Azeele or MacDill/Platt.
- Tips for an efficient drop-off for the **safety** of all:
  - **Cease all cell phone usage within 100 yards of the school**
  - Parents are to remain in vehicles. Students may only exit once your vehicle is stopped and adjacent to the sidewalk that borders the school campus along Gomez. They should **never exit prior** to passing the intersection of Gomez and Platt.
  - Students should be prepared to exit the vehicle quickly from the passenger side, with the assistance from student safety patrols. Lunch boxes and backpacks should be ready. Limit conversations such as lengthy goodbyes to allow traffic to proceed efficiently.
  - Pull all the way forward before allowing students to exit the vehicle to allow traffic to flow quicker.
  - **Bungalow Park from Cleveland/Kennedy is not a cut-through for Car line as this is our staging area for Day care vehicles.**
  - Do not pass any vehicles in the car line.
  - Do not wait until the last minute to drop students off.

**We will have extra staff out there in the morning to help assist students with knowing where to go.**

Thank you for your support and cooperation. With your assistance, this procedure will be safe and efficient for all of our Mitchell students and families.

**Please share these procedures with all individuals responsible for transporting your child.**

**Please feel free to call the office if you need clarification on any of our procedures. Cheers to a successful 2020-2021 school year!**



