



**Meadow Lakes Elementary**

**Student Handbook**

**2021-2022**

*In partnership with home and community, our mission is to develop responsible citizens and lifelong learners.*

**Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District**

[www.matsuk12.us](http://www.matsuk12.us)

**Principal:** Mary Watts

**Physical Address:** 1741 N Pittman Rd. Wasilla, AK 99654

**Mailing Address:** 7362 W Parks Hwy, #824, Wasilla, AK 99623

Office: (907) 352-6100 Fax: (907) 352-6147

Website: <https://www.matsuk12.us/mle>

<https://www.facebook.com/1741PITTMAN>

## Table of Contents

Welcome letter from the Principal.....	Page 5
Introduction.....	Page 6
Meadow Lakes Elementary Beliefs and Mission Statement.....	Page 7
Getting Kids to / from School.....	Page 8
• Attendance	
• Notifying school of absences	
• Morning Drop off	
• Afternoon Pick up	
• School Dismissal Manager	
• Bus concerns	
• Pick-Up List	
Student Behavior at School.....	Page 9
• Guidelines for Success	
• Bullying	
• Items brought from home (including personal electronics)	
• Gum, Candy, Soda	
• Playground and Common Area Expectations for students	
• Fighting	
• Office Referrals	
Student Dress Code.....	Page 12
• What to wear to school	
• How to be prepared for Recess	
• Lost and Found	
• Borrowing clothes at school	
Emergency and Disaster Procedures.....	Page 13
• Fire Drills	
• Bomb Threat Drills	
• ALiCE Drills	
• Earthquake Drills	
• Offsite Evacuation Procedure	
School Nursing Care Protocols.....	Page 13
• Medication	
• Visits to the nurse's office	
• Spare supplies for students	
• Human Growth & Development Class	
• Annual Health Screening	
Resources for Students and Families at School.....	Page 15

- School Counseling
- Tutoring
- Multi-Tiered System of Support
- Special Education Programs
- Social Skills Groups

- Federal Programs
- Talented and Gifted Program
- MLE Library Instruction
- Music Instruction
- Physical Education
- Field Trips

Events Happening at School.....Page 18

- Parent & Family Engagement Nights
- Extracurriculars for Students
- Classroom Parties
- Student Performances

Partnering with Families.....Page 19

- Parent/Teacher Communication
- School Newsletters
- Parent/Teacher Conferences
- School Staff Directory
- School Facebook page
- School Website
- Parent Requests for student class assignment
- Technology
- Volunteer Policy
- Visiting School during the School Day
- School Supplies

Staff Requirements.....Page 22

- Grading
- Mandated Reporting
- Curriculum / Instruction
- Contractual Working Hours

Dear Families,

Welcome to Meadow Lakes Elementary! On behalf of the entire staff, I'd like to invite you to get to know our school and its community. With a staff of 55 adults and an enrollment of around 300 students, you've got a great team of people ready to welcome you into the building and cheer you on as your students grow!

We are the proud home of the Lynx. Our PreK-5<sup>th</sup> grade elementary school is focused on getting all students what they need to grow academically, emotionally, socially, and behaviorally. We use a combination of whole group, small group, and individualized instruction and support to help each child demonstrate progress and be successful.

We believe in partnering with parents and our community to help students achieve their goals. Our team of teachers, paraprofessionals, tutor advisors, specialists, school psychologist, school counselors, kitchen servers, custodians, and administrative staff are all here to work with families to achieve common goals for each one of our Lynx students.

In addition to traditional classroom structures for reading, writing, and math, we offer daily skills block time for students to receive guided instruction on their individual academic needs. Our Kindergarten and First grade classrooms received daily tutor advisor support to help all students have positive experiences during their earliest learning years. We also have a variety of special education programs, including Behavior Support, Preschool, Academic Resource, Intensive Resource, RISE (Reaching Independence through Structured Environments), as well as occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy, and adaptive physical education.

Meadow Lakes Elementary also houses a Federal Programs Preschool that offers both morning and afternoon sessions for children. Our migrant education program is growing and developing each day. We also have an amazing case worker for students that are English Language learners.

We know all children can learn. We believe all children want to do well and find success. We will help all families along the way. Thank you for joining and partnering with us down your child(ren)'s educational path.

Sincerely,



Mary Watts

Principal

(907) 352-6100

[mary.watts@matsuk12.us](mailto:mary.watts@matsuk12.us)

## ***Introduction***

*This entire Handbook is subject to the laws of the United States and Alaska and policies of the local Borough School District and is subject to any School Board policy changes.*

*This Student Handbook is intended to be a general guide for parents and students. It does not contain the details of each school's regulations. It should be understood that no one document can contain policies to cover every single situation than can occur in a public-school setting. The unit school principal or teaching principal has the responsibility to make decisions and develop each school's detailed policy implementation. Any questions that may arise as this document is read should be referred to the unit administrator for clarification and/or answers.*

*For more information, please contact the following person(s):*

*The Chief School Administrator/Superintendent:  
Dr. Randy Trani (907)746-9255*

*Meadow Lakes Elementary Principal:  
Mary Watts (907) 352-6100*

*[Or visit the district website: www.matsuk12.us](http://www.matsuk12.us)*

**Note:** You may visit the district's website to complete a teacher/administrator performance form.

## **Meadow Lakes Elementary School Belief Statement:**

*We believe all children deserve to be loved, respected, and challenged in a school that is safe, supportive, and inclusive for all.*

*We believe that the collaboration between the home, school, and community has a direct impact on the quality of the educational experience of each student.*

*We believe every child contributes to our classrooms and school through their culture, character, and experiences.*

*We believe learning is a responsibility shared by students, teachers, and families, and the community.*

*We believe that all expectations need to be explicitly taught and reinforced using a variety of methods.*

*We believe that students should be exposed to a variety of different teaching methods, materials, and technology to inspire them to be lifelong learners.*

## **Meadow Lakes Elementary School Mission Statement:**

*In partnership with home and community, our mission is to develop responsible citizens and lifelong learners.*

## **Getting Kids To and From School**

### **Attendance:**

Regular attendance is the key to every child's success at school. Parents, students, and schools need to work together to promote regular attendance and success. Parents of habitually absent students can expect regular calls from the classroom teacher or school administration. In some cases, a referral may be made to the Office of Children's Services.

### **Tardy Policy:**

Children should be in class by 9:15 a.m. Students are considered tardy if they are not in their classrooms by 9:21 a.m. A tardy student should report to the office upon arrival. Persistent tardiness is a matter of serious concern. Students in Kindergarten through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade receive reading instruction each morning; habitually late students may struggle in academic areas, especially reading.

### **Absence Policy:**

Children who do not attend school will be counted absent, either excused or unexcused. Students who spend less than 3.5 hours at school, regardless of the time, are considered half-day absent. Students that spend more than 3.5 hours at school are considered full-day present. Parents are encouraged to report any absences using ParentVue online or by calling the office. Teachers will work with parents to plan for missing work to be provided. Teachers are unable to provide missing work in less than 24 hours.

### **Student Arrival:**

Students riding the bus to school will be released from the bus at the 9:00 a.m. bell. Staff will dismiss one bus at a time and lead the students into the building.

Students being dropped off for school can be dropped off between 9:00 a.m. and 9:15 a.m. Students are not able to be dropped off prior to 9:00 a.m. as adults are not available to supervise them. Parents will pull up to the "drop off zone" found on the side of the building closest to the driveway and near the portables. Students will exit the car and walk into the side door of the building. Parents can also park their car and walk with their child into school. Please remember to use the crosswalk when walking from the parking lot into school.

### **Student Afternoon Pick Up:**

Students will exit the building at 3:45. Parents wanting to pick up their students can drive through the pick up lane in the front of the building. Students will be staggered by grade level either on the sidewalk adjacent to school (grades PreK-2) or in the cordoned-off zone of the parking lot (grades 3-5). Parents are also welcome to park their car and walk to their student's teacher to have the child released. Please remember to use the crosswalk when picking your child up from school. Parents or other authorized adults should be prepared to show identification prior to the release of a student.

Students riding the bus will exit the building at 3:45. Teachers will supervise students boarding

the bus prior to bringing “pick-up” students over the sidewalk or parking lot. Students that have boarded the bus are not allowed to leave the bus, unless in case of emergency (such as needing to use the bathroom). Students, once out of the building, are not able to re-enter the building to retrieve forgotten items.

### **School Dismissal Manager:**

School Dismissal Manager is an app for your phone or tablet that allows us to more efficiently transport students home. Parents are encouraged to sign up for a free account and use it regularly to denote a student’s default mode of transportation home or to make an exception, set a rule (such as every Tuesday afternoon), or to provide other pertinent information to the school. If you need assistance in setting up an account, please speak to the School Registrar. Please note that School Dismissal Manager reports are printed around 3:00 p.m. each day. Changes to your child’s route home need to be entered prior to 3:00 p.m. each day.

### **Pick Up Lists:**

Please ensure that you are listing all adults that are safe to transport your child from school each day when you register your child. Any changes to the list can be made in ParentVue throughout the year. We will request photo identification of all adults to whom we release children (until they are known). If unlisted or unknown adults arrive to pick up students, parents will be called.

## **Student Behavior at School**

We believe all students require instruction and support in managing their behavior and emotions at school. Students are rewarded for positive behavioral choices with PRIDE paws, which can be used toward purchases in their classroom stores. Several teachers also use Class Dojo, which rewards students as individuals and entire classes with points for positive behavior. Students are often also able to earn school-wide privileges and opportunities through their positive choices. Students are expected to follow our Guidelines for Success, as outlined below:

### **P: Personal Responsibility**

- I will do what I am supposed to do.
- I will be on task.
- I will be prepared.
- I will follow rules.

### **R: Respect**

- I will treat others with kindness.
- I will use and model good manners with others.
- I will listen to the speaker.

### **I: Integrity**

- I will be honest.
- I will do the right thing, even if no one is looking.

### **D: Determination**

- I will set goals for myself and actively work toward them.

- I will persevere (keep trying), even when doing something difficult.
- I will use a growth mindset and I-Can attitude.

### **E: Empathy**

- I will show I care for myself and others.
- I will consider how others feel and be sure my behavior doesn't cause a problem for them.
- I will treat others with kindness.

## **Playground / Common Area Expectations**

### **Hallway Expectations:**

- During before and after school transitions, students are encouraged to speak with each other at a voice level one or two.
- During the instructional day, students will walk in teacher-led lines on the right side of the hallway with a voice level as close to zero as possible. This will help ensure the learning taking place within classrooms is not disrupted by unnecessary hallway noise.
- Students will face the front while walking on the right side of the hallway, either in lines or during independent transition before or after school. Students will refrain from running in hallways.
- Students will keep their hands at their sides and to themselves. Students will refrain from touching the walls, decorations on the walls, or students around them while in the hallway.

### **Restroom Expectations:**

- Students will sign out from their classroom prior to using the restroom.
- Students will return to class from the restroom within three minutes of leaving class.
- Students are expected to flush the toilet after use.
- Students are expected to use one pump of soap for washing their hands and three pumps of paper towels for drying.
- Students are expected to throw their paper towels in the trash after use.
- Students are expected to notify an adult if there are problems in the restroom (messes, graffiti, lack of toilet paper/soap/paper towels)

### **Playground Expectations:**

Students and parents can view the playground rules and expectations [here](#). Students are expected to follow directions, share equipment, and demonstrate kindness while having fun at recess. Students are required to bring proper outdoor gear or will be asked to call home to request a mid-day gear delivery. Students that are not feeling well are not able to stay inside the classroom or nurse's office during recess, unless ordered by a doctor. Students are not allowed to bring toys, balls, or other equipment from home to use.

### **Personal Items Brought from Home:**

Students should leave toys, games, blankets, pillows, etc. at home during the school day. If there is a

special occasion (such as a class party), parents will receive a notification from the classroom teacher clarifying which personal items can be brought to school and why. Students that opt to bring personal items from home that are not essential to learning can expect the teacher to keep it in a safe yet inaccessible space for the entirety of the school day.

Students that opt to bring personal cellphones to school each day will be required to keep them in their backpacks during the school day. The school is not responsible for any lost personal items brought to school, including cell phones or other electronics.

### **Gum/Candy/Soda**

Students are not allowed to chew gum, eat candy, or drink soda during the instructional day. Though some parents may opt to send candy in a lunch as a treat, it is not recommended. Gum and soda are not allowed at any point during the school day. In the case of a class party, the classroom teacher will notify parents of any exception to this rule for the special occasion.

### **Bullying/Fighting at School will not be tolerated.**

Bullying is repeated, unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. Fighting is an act of aggression between two students that is instigated by at least one student with the intent to cause harm to another. Neither act is tolerated at school and either act will result immediately in an office referral.

### **Office Referrals**

It can be expected that students will be referred to the office anytime their behavior causes a disruption to the learning or safety of others. Teachers and other adults in the building do their best to proactively and positively handle student behavior, but the administration (or designee) will intervene as needed. Students requiring administrative support to promote positive behavior can expect to have their parents contacted and typically a loss of privilege of some sort (as well as an opportunity to practice and correct the problematic behavior). Students engaged in prohibited practices as outlined in Board Policy can expect to have reactive consequences as applied, including suspension.

## **Student Dress Code**

### **What to Wear to School**

Students' dress and general appearance is a shared responsibility among students, parents/guardians, and school staff. The school board requires students to attend school in appropriate dress that meets the following standards and does not interfere with the learning process (**BP 5132 DRESS AND GROOMING**).

Student dress code includes:

- Shirts or tops that cover the waistband or are able to be tucked into shorts, pants, or skirts

covering the midriff. Tank tops that have spaghetti straps *must be covered appropriately*.

- Shorts, dresses, and skirts need to be no higher than three inches above the knee.
- Pants need to fit appropriately.
- Shoes need to be appropriate *and safe* for school. Flip flops and shoes with any sort of wheels are prohibited.
- Apparel cannot be of a sexual nature or display anything that pertains to alcohol, tobacco, other drugs or weapons. Racial, religious, or other prejudices may not be advertised.
- Hats *and hoods* must be removed upon entering the building.

Students wearing inappropriate clothing will be *asked to fix/change their* clothing to adhere to the dress code. If the problem cannot be fixed, the parents will be called for a change of clothing.

### **How to be Prepared for Recess**

Students need to be prepared for outdoor recess (in addition to waiting outside for a ride to/from school) each day. This includes dressing for wind, rain, snow, and ice. Students go out to recess every day that the temperature is warmer than -15 F. Students that arrive at school unprepared for outdoor recess will be calling home to ask for gear to be brought in. All students will go outside, regardless of the gear they've brought to school. If there is a risk of frostbite, students without ample gear will be required to sit in the office doing schoolwork and the parents will be notified. It is suggested that all students have a winter coat, a hat, mittens or gloves, snow pants, and boots. If any student needs help obtaining the gear needed for winter, the school will provide a complete set of gear to be kept at school for that child. We will not be able to lend gear to students for a day, nor provide additional clothing if a student's outfit becomes wet at recess. In rainy conditions, it is recommended students wear a raincoat with hood, as well as rubber boots.

### **Lost and Found**

Any items found throughout the building that are unable to be identified as belonging to a specific student will be placed in the bins directly inside the front door of the building. Please check the bins periodically to claim lost items. Any unclaimed items will be donated to charity at the end of each quarter.

### **Emergency and Disaster Procedures**

We conduct safety drills to ensure your child's safety during school hours. The following drills are practiced

**Fire Drills** - Before the 15th of every month (weather permitting). Students practice grabbing their coats and exiting the school building safely and quickly. Attendance is taken outside to ensure that everyone is out of the building.

**Bomb Threat Drills** - Twice a year, one in the first semester and one in the second semester of school. Teachers visually check their rooms for any unidentified/suspicious materials, notify the office and exit the building if necessary.

**ALICE Drills** - Twice a year, one in the first semester and one in the second semester of school. ALICE stands for Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate. Announcements

are made, teachers **Lock** and close their door as well as cover windows, **Information** is given over the loudspeaker or other appropriate manner, **Counter** techniques are used to distract, confuse and gain control, **Evacuate** the building when it is safe to do so.

**Earthquake Drills** - Twice a year, one in the first semester and one in the second semester of school. Students get under desks or tables and stay put until further instructions are given.

**Off-site Evacuation Procedures** - used if building will be inaccessible for a prolonged amount of time. Our off-site evacuation location is the West Lakes Fire Department.

## **School Nursing Care Protocols**

### **Medication**

It may be necessary for a student to take medication during the school day. All over the counter and prescription medication is to be brought in by a parent or guardian with appropriate documentation from a state acknowledged medical professional. This documentation can be provided by the school nurse and will need to be renewed each school year. Students are not to carry medication on their person at any time. Additionally, all medication will be destroyed unless picked up by the end of the last student school day of the school year.

Prescription medication: All prescription medications must be delivered in the original container with a pharmacy label attached that includes the student's name, medication name, and administration instructions. Additional forms will be necessary in the case of asthma inhalers, emergency epinephrine for allergies, seizure medication, and diabetes medication.

Over the counter medication: Some over the counter medications have been pre-authorized by a physician for use in school if permission is given by the parent/guardian. These medications include Tylenol, Ibuprofen, Benadryl, Zyrtec, antibiotic ointment, tums, Lactaid, and cough drops. Dramamine may be used as an approved medication for field trips. Any other over the counter medication not listed requires authorization in writing by a healthcare provider with prescriptive authority. All over the counter and prescription medication must be FDA approved and regulated and delivered in the original, non-expired container with a manufacturer's label identifying the medication, dosage schedule, and student's name. Vitamins, supplements, and herbals are not permitted at school, as they are not FDA approved or regulated.

Short term medication: Most medication that is prescribed 3 times a day can be given at home before the student comes to school, after school, and again at bedtime, unless it is time sensitive. If it is time sensitive, the second dose can be given at school if proper documentation is obtained. Medication that is prescribed four times a day can be given at school by the school nurse if the appropriate form is completed and on file in the nurse's office. Examples would include short term antibiotics.

Medication administration: All medication administration and procedures will be supervised by the school nurse. Unlicensed school personnel trained by the school nurse may administer medication, except for injections. If a student requires injections, permission for unlicensed staff members to administer must be provided by the parent on a form supplied by the school nurse.

## **Illness or Injury**

Whenever an accident or illness occurs and is of a serious nature, every attempt will be made to contact a parent or guardian. If unable to reach, alternative emergency contact numbers will be used to reach a responsible adult. Please keep all contact numbers current. In the case of life-threatening injury or illness, an ambulance will be called.

In the case of minor injury or illness, the nurse will evaluate the child and notify the parent if symptoms are not improving or are getting worse. The following are conditions that require a student to stay home or be sent home from school to recover and protect other students or staff from illness:

- Fever over 100 degrees in the last 24 hours
- Rash of unknown cause
- Recurrent Head lice
- Immunizations out of compliance
- Impetigo
- Any reportable communicable disease
- Diarrhea
- Severe cough
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Vomiting
- Scabies
- Cytomegalovirus

Additionally, please report all chronic illnesses or pertinent medical history to the school nurse or on the registration each year.

## **Spare Supplies for Students**

The nurse's office is stocked with basic supplies for a student in unexpected need such as tampons, pads, hair ties and brushes, underwear, socks, and clothes. It would be prudent for students to come to school with extra supplies or clothes if they have need of them during the day, as the school supplies are limited. Winter gear for school is available for students whose families need assistance. Students will be required to bring their own winter gear every day during the winter months, as the limited winter gear cannot be loaned out when students forget or lose their own gear.

## **Human Growth and Development Classes**

Each year 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students will participate in a class that covers upcoming physical and health changes expected at their age. The students will view a video approved by MSBSD and specific to grade and gender. Opt-out forms will be sent home before the class is scheduled to take place. Students will be expected to participate in the class if they do not return the forms. Previewing the video is available for parents upon request.

## **Health Screenings**

The following is a list of possible screenings and reviews the school nurse will be conducting:

Immunization reviews: Parents of new to district, pre-school, and kindergarten students will need to provide a completed immunization list or permission to access VacTrak (state online portal for immunization records). Students will be required to be up to date on Alaska State required vaccinations before beginning school and to remain up to date throughout the year.

Hearing, vision, dental and health screening: All new to district students, as well as kindergarteners, 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students, and any referred students will be screened for hearing, vision, dental, height/weight, and blood pressure and pulse. Additionally, 5<sup>th</sup> grade girls will be screened for scoliosis, a condition that causes a sideways curvature of the spine.

Additional health screening: Students may be screened for illnesses and head lice as necessary.

## **Resources for Students and Families at School**

### **Meals**

Meadow Lakes Elementary is currently part of the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) non-pricing meal option available in low-income areas of school districts. Our participation and eligibility for this program allows all students, regardless of individual household income, to eat breakfast and lunch daily at no cost to parents. We still encourage families to complete the [annual application for Free and Reduced Lunch](#) as a means to maintain our eligibility for this program and to accurately reflect the community needs for resources (including our access to Title I funds used to supplement each child's education).

Students eat all meals in their classrooms each day. Students that opt to bring meals should home are encouraged to bring meals that can be prepared, eaten, and cleaned up independently. Parents are encouraged to refrain from sending meals requiring microwave preparation.

### **School Counseling**

Meadow Lakes Elementary has access to counseling services for students on an on-going basis, as well as to support students through unexpected or difficult life circumstances. Counseling staff will seek permission from parents prior to meeting regularly with students. Teachers feeling that specific students would benefit from counseling will contact parents prior to making counseling referrals. Parents seeking counseling services for students should contact the classroom teacher.

### **Tutoring**

Tutoring is available using Title I funding each year, before or after school. Tutoring is available to all students needing additional academic support. Parents seeking tutoring opportunities should contact the classroom teacher to sign up or look for available tutoring slots in the tutor schedule.

### **Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)**

Meadow Lakes Elementary is committed to providing high quality instruction and support to promote the highest level of achievement for all students. The Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is a framework and a mindset used to provide instruction and support that maximizes the level of academic and behavioral success of all students.

The key components of MTSS include:

- Universal screening of all students early in the school year
- Tiers of instruction that support each student's individual needs

- Ongoing data collection and continual assessment to guide instruction
- Schoolwide approach to expectations and supports to support all learners

## **Special Education Programs**

Meadow Lakes Elementary has many different special education programs available to students. Programs currently available include:

- Early Childhood Special Education for students with special needs ages 3-5
- RISE (Reaching Independence through Structured Environments) for students with significant need in the areas of communication, behavior, adaptive, and academic areas and require on-going special education support throughout the school day.
- Resource Teachers for academic areas.
- Intensive Resource for students two or more years behind in academics or with multiple disabilities that require special education support throughout the day.
- Behavior Support Program for students demonstrating social/emotional/behavioral challenges that impact their education.
- Itinerant Related Service Providers: Speech Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist, Adaptive Physical Education teacher, Vision Therapists/Specialists, Audiologist, School Psychologist

If a parent is interested in learning more about how to gain access to any of these (or other Special Education resources), he or she can contact the school psychologist, principal, or classroom teacher.

## **Social Skills Groups**

Meadow Lakes Elementary offers on-going social skills groups for students needing extra practice and/or instruction in the areas of sharing, waiting, taking turns, task completion, following directions, friendship building/maintenance, etc. Students are referred to social skills groups based on information from teachers and parents. Social skills groups typically take place during a student's lunch or recess and are led by trained counselors or the school psychologist. To learn more about accessing these programs for a specific child, please contact the child's classroom teacher.

## **Talented and Gifted Program**

The District Elementary Talented and Gifted (TAG) program offers extracurricular opportunities and academic support to eligible students based on their MAP scores. Second through fifth grade students scoring within the 91st percentile in the areas of reading, language use, and mathematics are referred for further testing into the TAG program. Teachers can refer high-achieving students for the assessment process as well.

## **MLE Library Instruction**

Students will receive instruction in our media center every third school day. During this class period, they will be able to check out and return library books, learn how to use their assigned Chromebook for a variety of school-related activities, be taught how to keyboard and access district-provided email (grades 3 and up), as well as learn about cyber safety and how to spot/report cyber bullying. Students need to return library books each week in order to check out new library books. Books that are lost or damaged may result in the loss of borrowing privileges and/or fines for the family. Grades K-2 can check out one book per visit; grades 3-5 are allowed to check out two books per visit. Parents are encouraged to have conversations with their children regarding family values and which books may or may not align with those values. Staff at school will do their best to encourage children to select books that are appropriate content and skill level for their age and ability.

## **Music Instruction**

Students will receive music instruction every third school day. During this time, students will learn various musical theory, concepts, and be exposed to different instruments, songs, etc., in accordance with Alaska State Standards. Students in grades four and five will also have the opportunity to join various extracurricular music ensembles, such as band, choir, ukulele or other clubs.

## **Physical Education**

Students will have physical education class every third school day. Students are required to participate as best they can in each activity, under the supervision and with the guidance of the PE teacher. Students are required to have a set of “gym shoes” that will remain at school, are free of debris from outdoors, and can be put on prior to gym class each day. Shoes for PE should have lace or velcro ties, and slip-on shoes should be avoided. Students can bring a bottle of water to PE class each time to promote hydration during activity. Students with a medical condition that excludes them from activity will need to provide documentation of that condition from a medical provider to the school nurse.

## **Field Trips**

During typical school years, students will be given an opportunity to attend a minimum of one field trip per academic year. Field trips will be tied directly to academic standards for the specific grade level and parent permission will be required for a student to attend. Parents may opt out of a field trip and an alternative assignment/activity to address the same standards will be provided for a student. All field trips will be at no or low cost to the family. Students are

expected to behave as well (or better) on field trips, as compared to school. Parent chaperones may be requested from time to time and will be assigned using a lottery system if the number of volunteers exceeds the number of needed chaperones. If a student's recent behavior at school does not reflect a readiness to positively represent our school on a field trip, parents may be asked to attend the trip with the student or the student will remain at school with an alternate activity.

## **Events Happening at School**

### **Parent & Family Engagement Nights**

Quarterly events are held for parents and family members to learn more about how to support student progress and learning. These are free events, open to all Meadow Lakes families. Volunteers are always welcome for planning and assisting with the event!

### **Extracurriculars for Students**

There are a variety of extracurricular events offered throughout the school year, typically for grades 2 and up. Activities will vary year to year based on student interest, staffing availability, and funding. Examples include volleyball, cross country, track and field, basketball, chess club, Battle of the Books, Lego club, Science Olympiad, ukulele, choir, and band. Have an idea for a club or want to be a coach? Contact the office.

### **Classroom Parties**

Classroom parties are a great way to celebrate a classroom community's success as well as create opportunities for positive social interactions for students, teachers, and families. Volunteers are needed from time to time to pull off a successful event. Please watch newsletters from teachers to see details about upcoming parties in classrooms, guidelines for donations or treats, as well as to sign up to volunteer.

### **Student Performances**

Student performances during the school day or evenings will be announced to parents and family members via the school website, social media, and newsletters. Participation in such events is always expected, but definitely not required. If you would like your child to abstain from any type of performance, please do contact your child's teacher. Parents and community members are welcome to volunteer, participate, and attend the event.

## **Partnering with Families**

### **School Newsletters**

School newsletters are sent via email, mass messaging systems, social media, and are posted on our school website twice monthly. The newsletter will denote upcoming events, inform parents of opportunities for students, and include a message from the school principal. Parents are encouraged to update their contact information in ParentVue if they are not receiving the newsletter regularly. Classroom teachers are expected to send classroom newsletters at least once each month.

### **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Parents are encouraged to contact classroom teachers or special education case managers at any point in the school year to discuss a student's progress. Formal Parent/Teacher Conferences are held twice annually, in October and February. Parents will sign up for their desired meeting using an online registration process and can opt to meet in-person, telephonically, or via Zoom with any school staff.

### **School Staff Directory**

The School Staff Directory can be found on our school website: <https://www.matsuk12.us/domain/1109> . Teachers are not available for phone calls during the instructional day. Parents can leave voicemails for teachers and can expect a return phone call within 24 hours. If parents need a response prior to 24 hours, they are encouraged to call the office at (907) 352-6100.

### **School Facebook Page**

The school Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/1741PITTMAN>, is maintained by the administrative team and used to keep parents informed of upcoming events/needs at school. Parents needing to communicate quickly with the school regarding questions, or student needs, should use email or telephone versus commenting on Facebook. The Facebook page will also be used as a means to notify parents of school closure, in conjunction with the school website and mass messaging systems.

### **School Website**

The school website, <https://www.matsuk12.us/mle>, is maintained in partnership with school and district office staff. The website hosts contact information, club information, and news about

upcoming events at school. The website will also be used as a means to notify parents of school closure, in conjunction with social media and mass messaging systems.

## **Mass Notifications**

A Mass Notification system enables School District administrators to record, schedule, send and track personalized voice, email, and text messages within minutes to thousands of families in the Mat-Su Borough School District. These messages may be received by parents for three primary reasons: emergency communication (to reach parents in an emergency situation), community outreach (e.g. reminders of upcoming school events, alerts regarding last-minute changes to schedules, information about school initiatives), and student attendance (notification of a child's absence from school).

## **Parent Requests for Student Class Assignment**

Teachers and the administration work together each spring to build balanced classrooms for the upcoming school year. Staff consider the social, behavioral, and academic needs of each individual student to build classrooms that have a balance of strengths. At this time, Meadow Lakes Elementary does not accept requests for specific teachers/class assignments from parents. However, if there is a specific concern needing to be addressed, parents should contact the school principal.

## **School Supplies**

A list of school supplies will be published in the spring of each school year at various sites including the school and district website. Many popular department stores will also have the school supply lists available on location.

## **Technology**

Meadow Lakes Elementary recognizes technology as a productivity enhancement tool. Student use of District information technology is a privilege, not a right. The parent/guardian is responsible for monitoring student use at home, and away from school. The best way to keep students safe and on-task is to have a parent/guardian present and involved. As part of the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) all school districts are required to provide content filtering services while on school property or connected to school networks. Conversely, internet monitoring at home will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

Students at Meadow Lakes Elementary are provided with one Chromebook to be used in the classroom during the school day. During special circumstances (i.e. extended quaritines),

students may be allowed to bring their Chromebooks home with them for at home learning. It is vital that both the Chromebook and power cord return to school with the student. Please note that the parent/guardian/student may be responsible for the cost of repair or replacement at the date of loss if the property is not returned, intentionally damaged, lost because of negligence, or stolen, but not reported to school and/or police in a timely manner (no later than the next school day). The full cost of the Chromebook and power cord is approximately \$360.

## **Volunteer Policy**

Meadow Lakes Elementary encourages parents/guardians and other members of the community to share their time, knowledge and abilities with our students. Volunteers (a person who provides school services without compensation) are an invaluable addition to any school community.

All volunteers will be required to fill out the District Volunteer Application, form SSE03, be positively identified, and checked against the Sex Offender Registry. All volunteers, in addition to the volunteer form and the Sex Offender Registry check, will be required to provide the school principal with an Alaska State Trooper person of interest report. An interest report, when provided, will be acceptable for up to 5 years from the date of the report. This report covers State criminal charges and can be acquired from any Trooper Post.

## **Visiting School during the School Day**

Parents and guardians are encouraged to visit the school. Visits to classrooms must be scheduled with the respective teacher and principal. This will allow the teacher to introduce the parent or observer, review expectations of visitors, and minimize any impact on the classroom climate to which the students are accustomed.

Visitors must report to the main office immediately upon entering the school grounds or building to sign the visitor's log. A visitor's pass is issued to all visitors and must be worn at all times while on school property. This precaution is taken to protect all students and visitors in the event of an emergency.

## **Staff Requirements**

### **Grading**

Teachers of students in grades 1-5 are required to enter a minimum of two grades per week into their online gradebook for parents to be able to monitor progress. A grade report to students and parents is required on a quarterly basis. These grade reports should go to students within six working days after the end of the quarter. All grades report children's progress using a Standards Based Grading System.

## **Mandated Reporting**

All school staff are mandated reporters. If a staff member suspects that a child is a victim of abuse or neglect, he/she is required by law to report their suspicions. It is the duty of the Office of Children's Services to notify parents of any report of harm interview that takes place at school.

## **Curriculum / Instruction**

Teachers provide instruction using district-approved curricula. Parents wanting more information about the instructional materials can visit the district website or contact the school.

- **Language Arts** - Meadow Lakes Elementary uses the Open Court Reading program. Open Court Reading is a research-based comprehensive K-5 reading, writing and language arts curriculum that aligns with the knowledge about how students learn to read. Systematic, explicit instruction helps all students master the foundational skills needed to move towards proficiency and achieve reading independently with confidence. Open Court Reading will be used during the 2021/2022 school year and is anticipated to be used through 2023/2024 school year.
- **Mathematics** - Meadow Lakes Elementary uses the READY Math program. READY Math will be used during the 2021/2022 school year through 2025/2026 school year.  
READY Math:
  - Encourages students to develop a deeper understanding of mathematics concepts
  - Builds on students' prior knowledge with lessons that make connections within and across grade levels and directly address the major focus of the grade

All Meadow Lakes Elementary staff work together as a team to meet the learning needs of our students through proper use of the standards and approved curriculum programs. Standards for each grade level and subject area can be found on the [district website](#).

## **Contractual Working Hours**

Teachers are contractually obligated to work 7.5 hours per day (usually 8:45-4:15), including a 45-minute prep time and a 30 minute duty-free lunch. Though teachers may opt to schedule parent meetings during these times, they are by no means required to do so. Please be mindful that a teacher's lunch break most regularly happens when students are at recess; because of this, they are not available to supervise children unable to go to recess for whatever reason.

# **FUN FACTS ABOUT MEADOW LAKES ELEMENTARY**

**SCHOOL COLORS: **TEAL** AND **PURPLE****

**SCHOOL MASCOT: LYNX**



**MEADOW LAKES ELEMENTARY opened in  
2000**

**WALK THROUGH OUR BUILDING TO see  
AMAZING ART FROM LOCAL ARTISTS!**

**SPIRIT GEAR SHOP:**

**[HTTPS://WWW.SPIRITSHOP.COM/SCHOOL/ALASKA/  
WASILLA/MEADOW-LAKES-ELEMENTARY-SCHOOL](https://www.spiritshop.com/school/alaska/wasilla/meadow-lakes-elementary-school)**