

# MURDOCK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

2025-2026

STUDENT / FAMILY HANDBOOK



It's a Great Day to be a Mallard!

# Welcome to Murdock Elementary School!

Dear Murdock Students and Families,

On behalf of our entire staff, **welcome to the 2025–2026 school year!** We are so glad you're here. Whether you're returning or joining us for the first time, we want you to know that Murdock Elementary is a place where you are **valued, supported, and encouraged to grow.**

Our amazing team of teachers and staff is dedicated to creating a school where **every child can learn, feel safe, and reach their full potential.** We believe in the power of high expectations, caring relationships, and strong partnerships between home and school.

This **Student Handbook** will help you and your family understand how things work at our school. Inside, you'll find information about our rules, routines, safety procedures, and how we work together to support student learning. Please take some time to review it together.

At Murdock Elementary, we follow three simple,  
but powerful overarching expectations every day.

**Be Respectful. Be Responsible. Be Safe.**

We also want you to know what drives our work as a school team:

*"Strong leadership supports teachers, advocates for students, keeps communication open, builds a safe school culture, and believes all children can learn at high levels."* This is our guiding belief and commitment to you.

If you ever have questions, concerns, or just want to connect, please don't hesitate to reach out by phone, email, or ParentSquare. We are here to help—and we're excited to partner with you this year!

With gratitude,

**Ms. Stacy Lanzi** – Principal

?? [slanzi@willowsunified.org](mailto:slanzi@willowsunified.org)

**Ms. Sara Cervantes** – Teacher on Special Assignment

?? [scervantes@willowsunified.org](mailto:scervantes@willowsunified.org)

**Murdock Elementary School**  
**655 French Street Willows, CA. 95988**  
**Principal: Stacy Lanzi**  
**VP-TOSA: Sara Cervantes**  
**Phone: (530) 934-6640**

## **OFFICE HOURS**

**8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. - Monday through Friday**

### **School Description**

**WE ARE LOCATED AT 655 FRENCH STREET IN WILLOWS, CALIFORNIA, AND PROUDLY SERVE OVER 480 STUDENTS IN GRADES TK THROUGH 4. OUR DEDICATED TEAM INCLUDES 33 TEACHERS WHO ARE COMMITTED TO CREATING A SUPPORTIVE, ENGAGING, AND HIGH-QUALITY LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL CHILDREN.**

At Murdock, we are dedicated to building upon our learning community where students become responsible citizens and lifelong learners. We value and celebrate our differences, and we work closely with families and the greater community to help each child learn at high levels, all means ALL!

Our core curriculum includes instruction in English language arts, reading, mathematics, science, social studies, music, and physical education. These subjects follow the California State Standards and the guidelines set by our school district. While all students are taught the same essential content, our instructional approaches are flexible and designed to meet the diverse needs of all learners.

We use a variety of strategies to support student success, including program adjustments, differentiated work, cooperative learning, peer tutoring, team teaching, and collaboration with families and specialized staff. Our support team may include our wellness coach, school counselor, psychologist, speech and language therapist, behavior specialists, educational therapists, clinicians, social-emotional re-set room (The Nest), and behavior aides, all working together to provide the best possible support for each student.

**At Murdock Elementary, we believe in the power of partnership between school and home. Together, we can help every child thrive.**

### **Our Mission and Vision**

#### **Mission:**

Success Begins at Murdock: Growing confident, creative, and caring citizens for tomorrow.

#### **Vision:**

Murdock Elementary School provides a safe, respectful, and responsible environment where each student is:

- Empowered to reach high levels of learning; all means ALL.
  - Supported in their social, psychological, and character development. ●
- Inspired to become lifelong learners.

# ACADEMIC SUPPORT PROGRAMS

## COUNSELING

Murdock has a *full-time counselor* who works with our students and staff in creating a safe, positive learning environment for all. Our counselor works with students in small groups and individually, reinforcing positive behavioral expectations through problem-solving, restorative practices, and mindful activities. We also have a *wellness coach and behavior aide* who support quickly according to each student's needs. If you are interested in finding out more about our counseling program, please call the office or visit the Murdock Elementary School website.

## LIBRARY / MEDIA

The library is available to all students during their class library time, before school, or after school. It is the student's responsibility to return his/her library book when it is due. If a student loses or damages a book, the student and their family are responsible for the cost of replacing that book. The Murdock Library's goal is for all students to access, evaluate, use, and integrate information and ideas found in all forms of print. Student Chromebooks are issued for 4 years, including through the summer. Families are held responsible for damage to their student's Chromebook. The following are estimated costs of parts and replacements:

- Chromebook replacement - traditional screen \$275, touchscreen \$350
- Chromebook Screen - \$75 for traditional screen, \$150 for touchscreen ●
- Chromebook keyboard/touchpad -\$60
- Chromebook Power Cord -\$20
- Bezel &/or other components - at cost. tbd
- T-mobile HotSpot replacement - \$50
- Complete Chromebook Use Agreement available at the WUSD office.

## MUSIC

We offer a *music program* for all students in grades TK-4. Students learn music fundamentals in a supportive, nurturing environment. Students will learn using the State Standards for Music Education, which includes instruments, music history, music theory, beats, and rhythm. Our Music program is an engaging, hands-on opportunity to play instruments, participate in school musicals, study music history, and so much more. Link to her webpage <https://sites.google.com/willowsunified.org/mrsstreetsmusicclass?usp=sharing>

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

We offer a P.E. program for all students in grades TK-4. Students learn cooperative and competitive games. They are also instructed in health-related issues and work on team building activities. The Murdock Elementary Physical Education goals include creating a fun environment to learn about movement and the importance of a healthy lifestyle, teaching students new skills to help build self-confidence, an opportunity for students to learn about sportsmanship and the value of hard work, and for students to set goals and work toward achieving those goals. They will learn through main units like volleyball, soccer, basketball, flag football, hockey, and badminton. We start our workouts with a warm-up, and each student has the opportunity to lead the classes in a series of dynamic and static stretches. Our main goal for elementary PE is for students to enjoy physical fitness in a safe and encouraging environment. We want students to gain a passion for living an active lifestyle that they can take with them throughout their lives. RESPECT & SPORTSMANSHIP are #1.

## **PROGRESS REPORTS**

PROGRESS REPORTS ARE SENT HOME MIDWAY THROUGH EACH TRIMESTER TO KEEP FAMILIES INFORMED, AND REPORT CARDS ARE DISTRIBUTED AT THE END OF EACH TRIMESTER. OUR FIRST PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES ARE SCHEDULED FOR THE WEEK OF NOVEMBER 17–21, 2025. FAMILIES ARE ENCOURAGED TO CONTACT THEIR CHILD'S TEACHER AT ANY TIME IF THEY HAVE QUESTIONS, CONCERNS, OR WOULD LIKE TO SCHEDULE AN ADDITIONAL CONFERENCE. STRONG COMMUNICATION BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL IS KEY TO SUPPORTING STUDENT SUCCESS.

## **TEXTBOOKS**

Murdock complies with the Williams vs. The State of California lawsuit, and textbooks are always provided for each student. Students will be held responsible for the care of textbooks assigned to them. If a book is lost or damaged, it is the responsibility of the student to pay for the book. All books must be accounted for before a report card is provided.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Murdock Elementary School's **web page** is accessible at <http://www.willowsunified.org/mes>. Parents will find up-to-date information about school activities, copies of important documents, a list of staff members with links to email addresses and much more. From the WUSD homepage at [www.willowsunified.org](http://www.willowsunified.org), click on the "Schools" icon to find Murdock Elementary.

### **Murdock News**

We use **Parent Square** through our **Aeries** portal to notify parents of upcoming events and school news. Please ensure you have a **current phone number** with the front office. Through the Parent Square, we can also communicate with direct messages and we ask that all families include an email address in their **emergency contact information**.

**\*This is IMPORTANT because our teachers also use Parent Square to stay in contact with you as well.\***

**Facebook** - Our school shares exciting and important information for parents' convenience on facebook our page is called ***Murdock Elementary School***. Our Parent Teacher Organization also posts upcoming events and calls for volunteering on Facebook and shares on ***PTO Murdock***. ***We encourage parents to seek these opportunities out.***

**Instagram** - We have also started a daily post on our Instagram page. ***It's a Great Day to be a Mallard***. The goal for this platform is to keep our teachers, parents, and community members alike connected with the daily extraordinary happenings at Murdock Elementary School. We post daily.... Please visit us often! If you don't give permission, please sign the NO photo-consent form on the parent portal.



# OFFICE SUPPORT

## ATTENDANCE

For students to progress academically, it is essential that they are on time and in class daily. We ask that parents notify the office when their child is absent. Please call and tell us the student's name, teacher, date, and duration of absence, as well as the reason for the absence, at 530-934-6640.

If there is no absence verification within 3 school days, the absence will be considered unexcused.

If your child is late to class, please come to the office and check in. The office answering machine is available for you to leave a message during non-office hours. When a student has 10 absences in the school year for illness verified by methods listed (written, conversation, home visit), any further absences for illness shall be verified by a physician. If absences due to illness, beyond the 10<sup>th</sup> absence, are not verified by a physician, the absences will be considered unexcused, which may initiate the Student Attendance Review Board Process (SARB). In lieu of a doctor's note, a parent or legal guardian may bring their student in to see the school nurse to verify illness.

*School attendance and home-to-school communication are important factors affecting the academic success of your child. We look forward to working with you to ensure your child has a successful school year. If you have any questions, please contact your child's school.*

## LATE STUDENTS

Students arriving after their bell time will check in at the office and receive a "turtle" (tardy) slip. It is our goal to reduce the number of late students this school year. Every time a student comes into class late, the classroom is disrupted. By getting students to school on time, you are sending the message to your child that his or her education is IMPORTANT. Thank you for getting your students to school ON TIME.

## STUDENT ATTENDANCE REVIEW BOARD

The Student Attendance Review Board (SARB) is a County program that provides intensive guidance and coordinates community service delivery to students with school attendance issues. Murdock Elementary works closely with the Glenn County SARB to monitor and help our students achieve and maintain good school attendance. Please note the following:

Educational Code Section 48260- Any pupil subject to full-time education who is absent from school without a valid excuse for more than 30 minutes on each of three days in one school year is a truant and shall be reported to the attendance supervisor of the superintendent of the school district.

## HEALTH OFFICE

Our *school nurse or health aide* is on site every day; together, they help injured or ill students and administer medications. The nurse also completes vision and hearing screening and verifies that immunizations are current. Medications need to be accompanied by a **MEDICINE AUTHORIZATION FORM signed by a physician**. If your child must take medication during school hours, an adult must bring it to the office in the original container. This policy includes cough drops, which are considered a medication.

Please make sure that the emergency contact form you fill out at registration is kept current. We will always try to contact parents first and then those noted on the emergency contact form. Please make sure that the people who are listed on the card are able to come and get your child if the need arises. If your child is ill, please keep him/her at home to recover so that infections are not spread to other students and adults. Students should be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school.

## OFF CAMPUS

Occasionally, parents need to pick up students during school hours (doctor appointments, etc.). Parents must stop by the office and provide a photo ID to sign out their student and receive a slip to take to the classroom to show the teacher they have been signed out.

**Only individuals listed on the emergency card are allowed to pick up children.**

## TRANSFERS

If you anticipate a move in or out of Murdock, please notify the office in advance. This enables us to complete the necessary paperwork in a timely manner. To start the process of transferring, you must first enroll in your new school, and then they will request your transcripts from Murdock. Good communication will ensure a smooth transition.

*In case you missed this... here is our QR for Instagram.*

*Please share it with your family as well.*



# VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

## CLASSROOM VOLUNTEERS

Classroom Volunteers provide HUGE support to our teachers and students. We invite all parents to take an active role in their child's education by volunteering at school. There are many ways to participate (e.g., support learning in the classroom, parent helpers, field trip chaperones, parent drivers, Parent Teacher Organization (P.T.O.) fundraiser volunteers, assist with clerical work at home, etc.). **All volunteers** are required to sign in with the front office and obtain a visitor's pass, which clears them to be on campus and work with students. **Please make sure you wear your visitor's pass at all times while on campus.** Adults without a visitor's pass will be asked to go to the office for a pass.

## E L A C COMMITTEE

Murdock's English Learner Advisory Committee is composed of parents and staff members whose focus is to advise on and support programs and services for our English learners. This committee meets multiple times throughout the year. The responsibilities of the ELAC include advising in the development of the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) and the School Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) with a focus on services for English learners.

## PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

Murdock Elementary has a Parent-Teacher Organization. Participating in the PTO at Murdock is a great way to make a difference!

The goals of this organization are:

- Organize parents for special events that benefit Murdock Elementary School •  
Fundraise to support classroom learning
- Provide parent education/information and community relations

The Murdock PTO sponsors several events throughout the school year. These events include book fairs, student assemblies, the annual BBQ Pulled Pork Dinner, Jog-A-Thon, and a Fall Festival. They also support the school by selling Murdock "Swag" (clothing, hats, etc.) at Back to School Night and Open House. You can get up-to-date information on Facebook or in our front office. SWAG can be ordered in our office as well.



## SCHOOL SITE COUNCIL

Each WUSD school must have an elected School Site Council (SSC) to represent parents, students, community members, and school staff in the school governance process.

The SSC has several important responsibilities, including:

- Reviewing and analyzing student achievement data
- Gathering parent and community input
- Advising in the development of the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP), Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA), and the categorical program budgets (Title I and Title II)
- Monitoring the implementation of the various plans and budgets

## VISITING

We encourage parents to visit their child's classroom. If you wish to spend time in your child's class, please contact the teacher ahead of time and make arrangements. Please check in at the office for a visitor's pass. If you need to contact your child during school hours or if your child needs to leave school, please check in at the office to sign them out for the day. The office staff will then contact the teacher, and he/she will send your child to the office. If you wish to visit a classroom that is not your child's classroom, please contact the principal or vice principal.



### \* DAILY SCHEDULE \*

#### **TK & Kindergarten**

8:20 am - 1:45 pm

#### **Primary Grades 1 – 3**

8:20 am – 2:20 pm

#### **Grade 4**

8:15 am – 2:30 pm

## ARRIVAL TIMES

**Supervision for students on campus will begin at 7:40 am.**

We ask that students arrive at school as close to the starting time as possible.

- Breakfast is served from 7:40 a.m. to 8:20 a.m.
- Students are not to play on the blacktop/playground until supervision is present
- School begins at 8:15 am for 4th grade students and 8:20 am for TK-3rd grade students
- Drop-offs are allowed in front of the school (in the yellow drop-o zone) into the cafeteria & in the back parking lot for TK & Kindergarten students. If you want to walk your child, please park in a parking zone.

## DISMISSAL TIMES

Students who do not ride the bus are to go directly home or be picked up by parents at dismissal time. **We do not have student supervision after school, so please pick your child up promptly.** We ask that students make all arrangements for going home before the school day (i.e., going to a friend's after school), **as the office gets busy.**

- Transitional Kindergarten & Kindergarten students are dismissed at 1:45 pm. They must be picked up at this time. Front gates & back gates will be closed until 1:45.
- Students attending SPARK must report to SPARK immediately following dismissal.
- We ask that parents and caregivers arrive no earlier than 2:15 pm. to pick up students at the end of the day (1:40 pm for TK & Kindergarten).
- Please remember that our 4th-grade classes are not released until 2:30 pm. ●

Students riding the bus must go directly to the bus loading area.

- Please DO NOT PARK in the front of the school, we have a yellow pick up zone that works as "drive-thru" style... when a car pulls forward, so do you. Thank you.

## PARKING AND DROP OFF

Murdock has one parking lot available for parents. It is located on the South side of the school on the corner of Washington and French Streets. If you plan on being at our school for more than 10 minutes, please park in the lot or streets near the school.

- The front of the school has a green 10-minute loading zone. **The Yellow Drop-off and Pick-Up, this zone is for loading and unloading only.** Please do not leave your car unattended during these times. At other times, please do not leave your vehicle for more than 10 minutes.
- The rest of the curb is for pick up and drop-off only, and you must remain in your vehicle. ● Please load children from the passenger side once stopped at a curb.
- Do not block the driveways of our neighbors on Murdock Street.
- **The front of the school is a NO U-TURN Zone in both directions.**
- Thank you for being patient and courteous as you pick up or drop off.

## **SCHOOL LUNCH AND BREAKFAST**

Having enough time to eat lunch helps children develop their social skills; they can learn to listen, interact with others, and develop qualities such as empathy and understanding toward others. How meals are shared communicates basic notions of dignity. Lunch should be a time when a child can develop friendships and feel connected and included by others while they eat.

We are excited to share that our new facility for students and staff is working wonderfully! Our state-of-the-art kitchen is ready to provide healthy and nutritious meals that kids love. Our staff has created lots of hand-made & from scratch treats already!

Studies have shown that longer school lunch periods are associated with increased student consumption of healthy food choices, such as more fruits, vegetables, and less plate waste. Additionally, there is a direct correlation between a healthy diet and a student's ability to learn and thrive. Your child will have 3-4 options of fruits & veggies at lunch.

**The cafeteria at Murdock Elementary School serves FREE meals for all students.**

### **Breakfast:**

7:40 – 8:20 (TK-4)

### **Lunch:**

10:45 -11:30 TK

11:00 -11:45 Kindergarten

11:15 -12:00 1st Grade

11:30 - 12:15 2nd Grade

11:45 - 12:30 3rd Grade

12:00 - 12:45 4th Grade

The menu can be viewed on the Willows Unified School District's web page at [www.willowsunified.org](http://www.willowsunified.org) (Click on Schools) or our website at [www.willowsunified.org/mes](http://www.willowsunified.org/mes). *Free lunch & breakfast is provided for every student.*



# STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

## SCHOOL DISCIPLINE PLAN

In order to ensure a quality learning experience for your child and all children at Murdock Elementary School, a discipline plan has been developed by our staff, parents, and students. Every student at Murdock Elementary is entitled to a safe and nurturing school environment. We believe that all of our students will behave in a safe, respectful, and responsible manner at school, and that each student can be held accountable for his/her behavior. ***Please read the school's discipline plan, located on the following pages, and go over it carefully with your child.*** In order to create a safe and positive learning environment, it is important that we all work on following the school rules.

### **Positive reinforcement for good behavior includes:**

1. Our teachers each incorporate their own **classroom economy** and reward system that reflects their classroom rules appropriate for each grade level.
2. We are a **PBIS** school. We promote positive behavior, to improve school climate, and support all students in making good choices through teaching, reinforcing, and rewarding positive actions.
3. **Mallard Bucks** are given to students who demonstrate safe, respectful and responsible behavior. Students can exchange Mallard Buck awards for a variety of incentives available throughout the year at our Monthly Mallard Store.
4. Incentives may also be awarded by the classroom teacher.
5. **Mallards of the Month** awards are earned by two students in each class each month. Students will receive a special treat and a certificate.

### Consequences for inappropriate behavior include:

Minimum consequence – a warning is given and the student is reminded of the behavioral expectations and school rules to be sure of the student's understanding.

1. **Talk time** - WE always take the time to talk with the child to ensure they understand the rules and expectations at school.
2. **THINK -TIME**: giving the student time to understand and solve their own problem, realizing the size of the problem and the options for solving their problem. Help the student realize who or what it affects as well as how it affects themselves.
3. **Restorative Chat** - Finding solutions for the problems, causes of behavior & restoring through conversation. Teachers may be contacting parents as they see fit to keep communication open between school and home.

### Interim consequences –

4. **Loss of privileges** - depending on the situation/student, **natural consequences**.
5. **Parent phone call/message- as needed to keep communication open.**

6. **Behavior Intervention**- if agreed upon by parent & admin.

7. **Parent conference** with teacher and administrator.

Maximum consequence - Student behavior that results in suspension or expulsion from school can only be for breaking Ed Code. Please review **Education Code section 48900** for suspendable offenses or causes for expulsion.

# DRESS CODE

Murdock Elementary School has adopted a policy that states that students' dress and grooming are the responsibility of parents. Since how students dress for school can influence behavior and learning, we encourage parents to dress their children in neat, clean clothing appropriate for elementary school activities. Please follow these guidelines:

- Clothes shall be sufficient to conceal undergarments at all times, **midriffs**, including tummy and back, shall be covered at all times.
- For reasons of health/safety and Education Code provisions, all students will wear appropriate footwear. *Platform, open-toed, heels, and/or backless footwear* are prohibited.
- Extreme Make-up may not be worn at school (extreme refers to anything that distracts the learning environment, including *fingernails* that prevent students from fully participating.)
- Shorts shall be fingertip length.
- Backside (bottom) shall be covered when bending over.
- Hats will be permitted as protection from cold weather and the sun. They may not be worn backwards or inside buildings. Hat privileges may be revoked if students violate the hat policy or if it distracts from learning.
- Crude printing, pictures depicting or encouraging drugs, tobacco, alcohol, racial-ethnic slurs, gang affiliation, or those that are sexually suggestive on any apparel are not acceptable. Your child will be asked to wear the shirt inside out or change if possible.

*The school will notify parents in the event a child's dress or grooming is not deemed acceptable or appropriate for school. \*\*\*\*\****The decision concerning the appropriateness of dress remains with the administration.**

## HARASSMENT- FREE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

All members of the school community, students, faculty, staff, and administrators are protected by state and federal law from discrimination, harassment, and retaliation based on race, national origin, sex, age, disability, and other protected status. Willows Unified School District has a discrimination and harassment policy and a complaint procedure for students, which was developed to provide information and guidelines regarding the law and the proper procedure for addressing inappropriate conduct directed toward them by their peers or district staff. You may request a copy of this policy by calling the District's personnel office at 934-6600 or in the Murdock office.

## LOST AND FOUND

Lost and found clothing items are kept in the halls near the ballroom. Small and valuable items are kept at the office. Please encourage your child to check the Lost and Found regularly. Murdock donates the clothing from the Lost and Found to charities every trimester. **Please label all clothing, lunch boxes and personal school materials with your child's first and last name.**

## SAFETY INFORMATION

Willows Unified School District has developed a School Safety Plan for all schools. The plan includes disaster preparedness drills and emergency plans for students, staff, and members of the public. School plans are practiced monthly and reviewed annually with teachers and students to ensure effective action in the event of a school emergency or disaster.

### ANIMALS

We love animals, but for everyone's safety, please make sure to check with your child's teacher **before** bringing **any** animals to school. We also kindly ask that dogs not be brought on campus during after-school hours or on weekends. Thanks for helping us keep our campus safe and welcoming for all!

### TOYS / PHONES

To help students stay focused and safe, **we ask that toys, games, trading cards, and electronic devices stay at home** unless a teacher has permitted them to bring them for sharing in class. If students bring cell phones to school, they should be turned off and kept in their backpacks during the day. Phones that are **seen or used without permission** will be **held in the office and can only be picked up by a parent**. Students may ask their teacher or an administrator for permission to use their phone when needed. Thanks for helping us keep learning time distraction-free! Thank you for respecting that we have a **NO PHONES** policy, "Bell to Bell, No Cell" inside our school perimeter.

**Please remind your child to keep personal belongings/valuables safe at home, as the school cannot be responsible for any lost or stolen items. Writing student names on items can ensure it's returned.**

**Thank you for helping us encourage students to take good care of their things!**

*If you have any questions or concerns about the content of this handbook, please contact Ms. Lanzi or Ms. Cervantes.*

