

Parent and Student Handbook



MARY B. AUSTIN ELEMENTARY

150 Provident Lane, Mobile, AL 36608

WWW.MARYBAUSTINELEMENTARY.COM

#AUSTININNOVATORS

LEARNING FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

CRITICAL THINKING - COMMUNICATION

COLLABORATION - CREATIVITY - CITIZENSHIP - COMMUNITY

2024-2025

History of Mary B. Austin Elementary

Mary B. Austin School has a rich history dating back to its origins as Spring Hill School, established just before 1900 across Stein Street from its current location. The main building moved to its present site in September 1910, initially staffed by a principal and two teachers. Over the years, expansions included additions in 1929 and the construction of the "annex" in 1946, with parent contributions funding a cafeteria in 1947 and additional classrooms in 1959. Renovations in 1967 modernized the facilities, while in 1988, the original Spring Hill School building, known as the Glenys Mason building, was relocated to the campus by the PTA, sadly destroyed by fire in 2017.

In September 2002, Austin transitioned to a new two-story building, with further enhancements completed in March 2003, including a new administration, media center, and classrooms. Elements from the original main building were preserved and incorporated into the school sign at Stein and Provident.

The school was named in honor of Miss Mary B. Austin in 1943, who served as principal for over 20 years, the school has been led by dedicated principals such as Miss Catherine Lining (1943-1966), Miss Flora Mary Pearson (1966-1978), Mrs. Glenys Mason (1978-1989), Mrs. Lexie Barnett (1989-1999), Mrs. Jackie Zeigler (1999-2013), Dr. Amanda Jones (2013-2018), and currently Dr. Melissa Whigham (2018-present).

Austin School embraces a diverse student body and is renowned for its academic achievements and supportive environment, fostered by engaged parents, community members, and staff, past and present. Recognized with accolades such as the NCLB-Blue Ribbon School Award in 2006-2007 and named one of America's Entrepreneurial Schools in 2017, Austin continues to innovate as a digital literacy school. Project-based learning enhances real-world relevance, supported by interactive digital boards and advanced technology labs where students explore coding, 3D design, and digital communication.

Austin Elementary remains committed to its traditions while embracing future opportunities, ensuring every student thrives in a dynamic learning environment.

Welcome to Mary B. Austin Elementary

At Austin Elementary, we are dedicated to achieving academic excellence, thanks to our exceptional team of teachers, staff, parents, and community supporters. Our educational approach integrates leading programs such as the Open Court Reading Program, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Math Program, Phonics First, and project-based learning (PBL). We nurture entrepreneurial thinking, empowering students to envision big dreams, innovate, solve challenges, and communicate effectively.

We focus on developing well-rounded individuals by teaching citizenship skills, encouraging community engagement, and incorporating 21st-century competencies throughout our curriculum. Our 4Cs model—critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication—prepares students to succeed in today's interconnected world.

Since 2017, Austin Elementary has proudly held the distinction of America's Entrepreneurial School within the Mobile County School System, recognized by the National Consortium for Entrepreneurship Education. In 2021, we were honored as the best public school by the Nappies Association. Committed to innovation, we continually integrate cutting-edge technologies to personalize learning experiences for each student. From our core programs and project-based learning to innovative offerings in fine arts and emerging technologies like 3D printers, robotics, and coding, we ensure our students are well-prepared for the future.

Our dedicated teachers and staff are at the heart of our school community, passionately providing exceptional learning opportunities for every child at Austin Elementary. Choosing Austin means more than selecting a school—it means joining a school community where every student thrives. We are proud to be the place to “BEE” in Mobile County.

Thank you for your ongoing support and partnership. We eagerly anticipate another outstanding school year together!

Warm regards,

Dr. Melissa S. Whigham

School Overview

Vision

The vision of Mary B. Austin is to develop life-long learners who graduate from high school prepared for future endeavors.

Mission

The mission of Mary B. Austin is to engage all students through relevant, individualized instruction that empowers students to take ownership of their learning and gain the skills necessary to think creatively, critically, and independently within a safe and encouraging learning environment.

Symbol/Mascot

Our Oak Tree, “Old Ann”

Motto

OUR ROOTS TEACH US TO...

Respect Ourselves and Others

Own our Learning

Own our Actions

Treasure our Talents

Serve our Community

These are our “Roots to Success”

Song

You’re a grand old school

You’re the best of them all.

And together we all sing your praise.

You have brought success and made us one

For learning in challenging ways.

Everyone feels true to the red and the blue

We know effort and honor’s the rule;

As long as “Old Ann” stands so tall,

We’ll be proud of you, Austin School!

Colors

Red and Blue

Mary B. Austin Elementary Uniform Policy

Red or White Uniform Tops

- Preferred: Solid Red or White MBA patched polo shirt from Zoghby's
OR Solid White buttoned oxford MBA patched shirt from Zoghby's
- Option #2: Solid Red or White polo shirt or white button-up Oxford (Peter Pan collar acceptable for girls) - No Logos
- Option #3 Solid Red or White T-shirt SOLD BY PTA ONLY
- Fridays ONLY: TREEHOUSE Shirt or PTA/School Event T-Shirt

Navy Uniform Bottoms

- Navy Classic Twill UNIFORM pants or shorts; shorts MUST NOT be shorter than 2 inches above the knee. (Zipper and Button Required on Pants) No Leggings/Tight Pants

Additional Girls' Options

- Zogby's Austin Plaid Jumper (178-82 and 162-82)
- Solid Navy Jumper (NO Polo OR Knit Materials) or Solid Navy Uniform SKORT
- Zogby's Plaid Skirts/Skorts (143-82)
- Skirts/skorts MUST be NO SHORTER than 2 inches above the knee and MUST have shorts underneath skirts.

Outerwear Jackets/Sweatshirts

- Solid red, navy, or white (MBA Logos allowed only)
- Navy Blazers: Students may also wear navy blazers on Wednesdays for "Innovators for Success", but this is not required. (Patches can be purchased at Zoghby's)

Other Clothing Items

- Belt: Brown or Black leather-style belt must be worn with uniform (1st – 5th grade)
- Socks: Solid White, Black or Navy
- Shoes: Solid or Combination of the following colors: White, Black, Navy, Gray, or Red
Tennis Shoes or OXFORD Style (Black/White or Navy/White) No other combinations are allowed. Velcro or laces are accepted.
- Backpacks: Clear Bookbags are Optional or Age-Appropriate Designs (No Rolling Backpacks)
- Jewelry: Stud earrings only. (No other jewelry should be in view.)
- Girl's Tights/ Under Jumpers must be Long-Length Solid White or Navy
- Girl's headbands and bows must be school colors (Red, Navy, White, or School Plaid)
- Undershirts: Solid White only and not seen below shirt sleeves

Items NOT Allowed

- *Hats/ Hoods/Bandanas (MCPSS and School Polic) This will be enforced.*
- Unnatural hair color (Examples: Blue, Pink, Red) or body adornments that will serve to distract from the instructional program.
- Fake nails, make-up, and strong-odor perfumes, colognes, or lotions

The uniform is mandatory for grades K-5. Repeated Uniform Infractions (3 or more notices) may lead to Disciplinary Action for Willful Disobedience and will be documented in PowerSchool.

Arrival PROCEDURES

Breakfast will be provided in the cafeteria daily from 7:40 a.m.- to 8:10 a.m. daily.

Carpool Line will be from 7:40 a.m. to 8:10 a.m. (Students arriving between 7:40 a.m.-and 8:00 a.m. will be held on the outside benches unless a student is eating breakfast in the cafeteria.

*Students who arrive **before** 7:45 a.m. must be enrolled in Before-School Care. If a student arrives before 7:40 a.m., they will be escorted to Before-School Care, and the parent will be charged the drop-in fee.*

School begins promptly at 8:15 a.m. Students should be in their classroom ready to learn before the tardy bell.

Students arriving after the **tardy bell at 8:15 a.m.** must be checked in the front office by a **parent or guardian**. The gate closes promptly at 8:15 a.m. Parents should make an effort to have students arrive on time. It disrupts the classroom and the instructional process when students are tardy. We encourage all students to be in their classroom by **8:10 a.m. to complete morning assignments**.

Dismissal PROCEDURES

Afternoon announcements will begin at 2:55 p.m. Walkers will be dismissed promptly after announcements. Carpool will dismiss at approximately 3:00 p.m. from the front of the building and must exit campus with the crossing guard. Bus and Van Students will be dismissed at 3:10 p.m.

- Display carpool tag daily for afternoon pick-up. This is for the safety of all children. Students who do not report to carpool timely will be sent to the fenced area by the playground for pick-up. A teacher will walk the student to the car.
- Once your child is in the car, it is important to remove the carpool number from sight so that staff knows when it is safe to move vehicles.
- Failure to display a carpool number may result in the need to show identification. Please note that only those who are on a student's pick-up list will be allowed to pick up the child.
- If a student is not picked up by 3:40 p.m., they will be sent to After-School Care and charged the afternoon drop-in rate. School personnel are required to notify the proper authorities when parental obligations are not being met.
- When in the carpool line, please follow the lanes in front of the school, even if you have already picked up your child. Driving straight ahead is not allowed to avoid accidents.

Please note, teachers are officially on duty from 7:45 a.m. to 3:20 p.m. Please remember punctual attendance (both before and after school) is a part of your child's transfer, if applicable.

Parents are encouraged to schedule all medical and dental appointments after the regular school day. **No early dismissals after 2:25 p.m.** will be granted without prior approval. Parents must come to the office to pick up students. If a child receives an early dismissal before 11:30 a.m., the

student will be marked absent for the day. A photo ID is required from all parents /guardians before the student will be released.

Additional CARPOOL PROCEDURES

Attention carpoolers! We have made some adjustments to the morning and afternoon carpool times, which now run from 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. and from 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Please be aware that Provident Lane is a one-way street that permits northbound traffic only from Old Shell Road to Cedars. Once you exit the carpool line, remember to turn left onto Cedars. Thank you for your cooperation!

To reduce traffic congestion, please arrive only 20 minutes before morning and afternoon carpool times. When lining up, maintain one car length from the Provident/Stein stop signs and avoid blocking driveways, mailboxes, and intersections. Remain in your vehicle during carpool. Austin staff or traffic guards will direct two carpool lines forming at 7:40 a.m. (morning) and 2:45 p.m. (afternoon). Pull up to the white line in the driveway during afternoon dismissal and display your carpool number. For safety and traffic flow, students must be picked up directly in the carpool line; parking on surrounding streets is not allowed. Thank you for helping keep our carpool process safe and efficient.

Carpool Guidelines:

1. Avoid texting or talking on cell phones while in the carpool line.
2. Keep music volume low; loud music is not permitted on campus.
3. Smoking is prohibited anywhere on campus, including the carpool line.
4. Follow directions from traffic guards and teachers regarding carpool procedures.
5. Stay in your vehicle during student drop-off and pick-up; staff and Safety Patrol will assist students.
6. Help your child learn and remember their carpool number for efficient line movement.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Truancy

Definition: Alabama Department of Education Prevention and Support Services- (May 2004)

A parent, guardian, or other person having charge of any child officially enrolled in Alabama public schools (K-12) shall explain in writing the cause of any and every absence of the child no later than three (3) days following the return to school. A failure to furnish such an explanation shall be evidence of the child being truant each day he/she is absent.

The child shall also be deemed truant for any absence determined by the principal to be unexcused based on the State Department of Education's current School Attendance Manual. Five (5) unexcused absences within a school year constitute a student being truant to file a petition with the Court.

Tardiness

Please remember that when students are tardy, they are missing classroom instruction. A child arriving late for school must be accompanied by their parent/guardian. Excessive tardiness may result in transfer revocation (if you live outside Austin's zone) or a home visit if your address is recorded to be inside our school zone.

Absences for Students

School attendance is important to success. In case of an absence, a dated written or email excuse must be sent the day the student returns to school. The note or doctor's excuse must be sent to the school within **three (3) days** of the student's return to school to be counted as an excused absence. If this excuse is not filed with the teachers, an unexcused absence will be marked against the student's record **and cannot be changed!**

Excused absences include illness, death in the family, inclement weather that is hazardous to the child, legal quarantine, *prior* permission of the principal and consent of a legal guardian, or an emergency condition as determined by the principal. As described above, a written note from parents or guardians will excuse absences for up to but not exceeding eight (8) absences.

In addition, transfer students who accumulate more than 8 absences, have excessive tardiness, and/or have excessive early dismissals may have their transfer revoked.

The attendance officer from the Central Office will investigate excessive absences and tardies. It is helpful to us if parents call the office when a child is absent since some illnesses must be reported to the Nurse's Office. It is the student's responsibility to complete any work missed due to absences. The student will have **three (3) days** to complete this work. Please note: Suspensions are considered UNEXCUSED ABSENCES as per the MCPSS Student Code of Conduct.

A dated written excuse is also required when a student is sent home by the school for illness. Students are counted absent if they miss more than half of the school day, even if sent home by the school for illness.

Absences cause us to lose valuable instructional time and teacher allocations. Let us work together to have our students in school, on time, and for the full school day every day for maximum learning.

Parental/Custody Issues

Due to the overwhelming number of custody issues involving students, all Mobile County Public School System employees will follow the same procedures as outlined below relating to noncustodial parents' access to records and visitation.

At the advice of school system attorneys, the Student Online Registration, completed by the enrolling parent, should govern issues relating to pick up, visits, etc. of students at school. The custodial parent who completed the Online Registration at the time of enrollment may complete the Parent/Legal Guardian #2 sections for the noncustodial parents. All other contacts should be placed in the Emergency Contact section. Unless otherwise prohibited by a judge, the noncustodial parent has the right to their child/children's records, copy of report cards, and conference with the administrator or teachers at the school. Visitation of children by the noncustodial parent at school is not allowed. This includes lunch, field trips, class parties, etc. unless the noncustodial parent's name is in the Guardian #2 sections.

The primary role of our school is to provide a safe learning environment for all students in which their attention can focus on instruction. The schools will not become the environment for adult custodial disputes. These types of issues must be dealt with away from the school campus.

Emergency School Closing

During emergencies, we must know how each child is to get home. The phones will not accommodate a large number of calls or could be out of order. Please talk to your child now about how he/she is to get home in case of an emergency school closing. Be certain to keep the Emergency Closing of School card updated with your child's teacher. If you check "walk home" or "ride the bus", be sure your child can get in the house or can stay with a neighbor. Announcements of an early closing will be made on local radio, television stations, and FACEBOOK. Please do not call the school.

GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

Teacher Conferences and Classroom Visits

Parent conferences may be scheduled by a written request to the teacher. Should you need to speak with a teacher, please leave a message with the front office staff so your call can be returned during the teacher's planning period, or send an email to your child's teacher. ***All teacher conferences and/or classroom visits must be prearranged.*** **Conferences and/or classroom visits must be kept to a maximum of 30 minutes to ensure that the instructional day is not interrupted.** Please understand teachers may not be available to respond to emails or phone calls immediately. A 24-hour response time is acceptable.

Administrator Conferences

Administrator conferences **must be scheduled**. Should the need arise, call the office to schedule administrator conferences or email the principal or assistant principal with your concerns.

Visitors on Campus

All visitors are **required** to sign in at the school office and obtain a visitor's pass. This is for the protection of the children. Volunteers coming to assist at the school must sign in and wear an identification tag. As an added security measure Austin has doorway cameras and a "call" button at the front door. Press the call button to reach a staff member who will assist you before entering the building. **All visitors are required to present a driver's license and must be listed on the student's contact information.**

Media Access

*PUBLIC NOTICE TO PARENTS WITH CHILDREN IN MOBILE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Occasionally, news media representatives seek access to public schools within the Mobile County Public School System. Quite often these visits involve filming, taping, and interviewing students. Furthermore, students are sometimes filmed, taped, or interviewed in the production of educational or promotional material for use by the Mobile County Public School System. If you object to your child or children being filmed, taped, or interviewed, you must notify your child's teacher in writing. Be advised, that while every effort will be made to honor your written request, parents must explain to their children that they are not to be filmed, taped, or interviewed. The parents should also make sure teachers and administrators are aware of their objections.

Lost and Found

Money or other valuables found should be submitted to teachers or administrative personnel.

Please label all outer clothing. Please be aware that expensive items or those with personal worth need to stay at home. **Lost items are the owner's responsibility.** The school will not be

able to take the time to recover lost items. Items accumulated and unclaimed in lost and found will be donated to a local charity at the **end of each quarter.**

School Fees

The general school fee of **\$10.00 per student** will allow the school to purchase first aid items and supplies, computer maintenance, postage, and a school treehouse shirt for each student. The **Literacy and Numeracy Fee of \$15.00 is waived this year due to Title 1 Funds for the 24-25 School Year. However, if you would like to contribute to the Literacy and Numeracy Fund for additional supplemental materials for teacher requests, it will be considered a school donation.** Student Fees are to be paid by cash, money order, cashier's check, **E-funds**, or personal check. All checks must include two (2) telephone numbers and a driver's license number. *If a family writes two NSF checks at the school (including cafeteria, PTA, fundraiser, etc.), no further checks may be written for the remainder of the school year. All additional items must be paid in cash. The family will also incur a \$30.00 service charge for processing. There will be no exceptions to this policy.*

Health Room/First Aid

We are only permitted, by state law, to administer medication that has been prescribed by a physician. Forms are available in the office and must be completed before medication can be administered. Directions on medications and forms must have the same information or the medicine will not be administered. Over-the-counter medication must also be labeled with the physician's instructions and accompanied by a doctor's prescription and other forms required by the school.

Each teacher will send students to the office to receive medication prescribed by a physician. **Students should never have medications on their person or in their book bags.** This is a violation of the MCPSS Student Code of Conduct. It is also unsafe for our students. *Please notify the school immediately of phone/address changes during the school year. In case of an emergency, the school must have the phone number of someone to contact at all times.*

Textbooks

The majority of subject matter is taught through a variety of resources. There is not one specific text that covers all standards.

If an assigned textbook is damaged or lost, the student/parent is responsible for the cost of repairing or replacing the damaged or lost textbook. *Please understand* that teachers use a variety of resources for their instruction and do not simply teach directly from a textbook. All standards are not covered directly in a textbook. Should you need additional resources for your child, place this request in writing to your teacher and they will assist where possible.

County-Issued Computer-Technology

Mary B. Austin is privileged to announce that we will be a 1:1 school as it relates to technology. Students will have their school-issued devices to collaborate, research, and complete online tasks assigned by their teacher.

Parents will sign a contract of responsible use through the registration portal. Students must take responsibility for the correct use of the device. Students who maliciously damage a computer will be liable for damages.

Library

Books can be checked out for a “two-week” period during the student's scheduled classroom time. Additionally, books can be borrowed more frequently or re-borrowed on request. Overdue book notices will be sent home when necessary. After three (3) overdue notices, the student is expected to pay for the book. No refunds will be given if the book is found after payment has been made to the library.

Field Trips

- Field Trips are educational excursions that occur during school hours. These excursions are planned by a teacher to correlate with the regular classroom instructional program. In planning a field trip, the following guidelines and procedures should be followed:
- Permission slips: Our legal responsibility requires that we obtain parental permission for each field trip that must be turned in before the trip. Students may not participate without a permission slip.
- Trips that require students to pay entrance fees or any other monies are kept to a minimum. *Please contact your child's teacher if you are unable to pay for a field trip.*
- Students must wear school uniforms on all field trips.
- **No refunds** are given when students are unable to attend field trips. Buses/tickets are reserved and paid for in advance; therefore, we are unable to make refunds.
- **Parents chaperoning field trips must ride the bus with students.** Parents/Chaperones MAY NOT follow in personal vehicles per the MCPSS field trip policy. Chaperones must sign stating they agree to follow MCPSS procedures.
- ***Siblings are NOT allowed on field trips.*** When attending as a chaperone, make arrangements for siblings.
- Field trips are considered a privilege. We desire for all students to have the opportunity to attend educational excursions. **However, the school reserves the right to withhold field trips for students who have frequent student tickets or office referrals.**
- When parking at Austin Elementary to accompany a student on a field trip, parents/guardians should park on side streets, not blocking intersections, driveways, or mailboxes.

Classroom Interruptions:

Our primary concern is the safety, well-being, and education of our students. Classroom interruptions **MUST** be kept to a minimum. Please make every effort to send all needed materials to school with your child each day and avoid bringing items to the office for delivery (snacks, bookbags, homework, lunch, messages, etc.). We do not have the office personnel to make

deliveries throughout the day, and deliveries or “calling” students to the office disrupt instruction. We recognize that emergencies arise and occasional mistakes happen, but this should be a rare occasion. We will not interrupt instruction to call students or make deliveries except on rare occasions or in case of a family emergency. Please plan accordingly.

Classroom Parties:

Only two class parties are allowed during the school year. These are scheduled parties at the end of the first and second semesters. Class parties must be conducted on campus in the teacher’s classroom and may not last for more than one hour. Any other social activities requiring time from instructional activities must be approved by the principal. Mobile County adheres to a health and wellness plan to promote student wellness. The number of unhealthy snacks must be kept to a minimum. *We have students with extreme nut allergies. Review information sent home with your child’s teacher regarding snacks or lunch items that may not need to be sent to school.

Student Birthday

- Birthday parties are not allowed on campus. Parents are welcome to **send** a “special prepackaged snack” as long as it has been **prearranged with the child’s teacher**.
- Parents/guardians may not attend during the special snack time.
- Birthday invitations can be exchanged on campus if **ALL** students enrolled in your child’s class receive an invitation.
- Balloons, flowers, guests, and presents are not allowed to be given or delivered on campus.

Holiday Activities, Presents, Etc.

Children are not allowed to receive delivered presents (i.e., balloons, flowers, stuffed animals) at school for any occasion (birthday, Valentine’s Day, etc.). This can serve as a disruption to the school day and may pose difficulties during dismissal.

Dismissal Changes:

ALL changes in the dismissal routine **MUST** be made in **writing or by email before noon**. **SEND THESE CHANGES TO YOUR CHILD’S TEACHER THE MORNING OF OR THE DAY BEFORE THE NECESSARY CHANGE**. We cannot accept dismissal changes over the phone or through REMIND. Again, this disrupts the instructional day when having to call or deliver messages regarding changes. We understand emergencies arise, but we will not accommodate the constant day-to-day changes. Please plan accordingly.

Snacks

Most days students will be allowed time within the instructional day to eat an additional snack. Please understand that instructional time must be safeguarded, and students will often eat snacks while learning and/or working on a task. Please be mindful of the type of snack you provide for your child, and students may not consume more than one snack in a sitting. **Candy is not allowed as a “snack”**. Snacks should be something your child can manage on his or her own and **NOT** cause mess or distraction. Also, please understand that occasionally the day may not lend itself to

an additional snack time. **Snacks should come to school with the child. Do not drop snacks/lunches by the office.** *We have students with extreme nut allergies. Review information sent home with your child's teacher regarding snacks.

*Students are encouraged to bring a labeled water bottle (**metal water bottles are not allowed due to the distraction of the learning environment**).

Physical Education

The Physical Education Department at Austin consists of two Physical Education (P.E.) Specialists and one paraprofessional of organized P.E. daily. The focus of our program revolves around locomotor and manipulative skills at the K-3 level and team sports and physical awareness at the 4-5 grade levels. Classroom teachers also provide weekly recess when possible.

Safety Patrol

Fifth-grade students will be selected to participate in the Austin Safety Patrol. These students will assist with arrival and dismissal procedures and help monitor student safety under the direction of teachers.

Safety Patrol Times: 7:45 a.m.- 8:05 a.m. in the mornings and 3:00 p.m.- 3:20 p.m. in the afternoons.

Honors Ceremony

Awards or special recognitions are given to students for the following accomplishments:

Perfect Attendance (No Tardies and No Absences)

Principal's A Honor Roll & Satisfactory Conduct

A/B Honor Roll & Satisfactory Conduct

National Elementary Honor Society (4th and 5th grades only)

Character Kid (Student of the Month)

Physical Education activities

President's Education Awards Program (5th Grade)

Austin Innovator Award (Creativity and Critical Thinking)

*****Awards and special recognitions will be announced at a later time by grade level.**

Student Council

Our Student Council is affiliated with the American Student Council Association, a student service of the National Association of Elementary School Principals. Officers and representatives from grades two through five are held in the fall. Projects of the Student Council include but are not limited to raising the school flag each morning, planning special school pride activities, and supporting service projects for our community.

System-Wide Testing

The Alabama Department of Education decides on a standardized state assessment.

Testing May Include the Following:

iReady Assessment is a screening tool administered to all students under the same conditions three times a year. It measures student growth and identifies those who may need additional support or follow-up diagnostics.

Alabama Comprehensive Assessment Program (ACAP) is a summative assessment mandated by the state of Alabama for grades 2nd through 8th-grade.

AlaKids is the Alabama Kindergarten inventory of developing skills, intentionally designed to help kindergarten teachers efficiently collect information during the beginning of the school year to assess kindergarten readiness by identifying student knowledge, skills, and behaviors.

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Technology Program (HMH) is a diagnostic math program designed to identify learning abilities and deficits.

Open Court Reading Program is a comprehensive reading program designed to build a solid foundation in literacy skills.

LUNCH

We encourage parents/guardians to occasionally visit and have lunch with their child, which can be a special experience for them! Please note that during these visits, other students are not permitted to join. To maintain a balanced approach, we kindly request that lunch visits remain occasional rather than daily (preferably once a month and arranged in advance). While we value parental involvement in education, we also emphasize the importance of students developing independence and adhering to daily routines.

The long table closest to the cafeteria line is designated for parent visits. Please be aware that federal guidelines prohibit bringing outside food containers (such as fast-food bags or boxes) into the cafeteria. If you bring outside food, please ensure it is in unlabeled bags or packaging. Additionally, anyone wishing to join a student for lunch must be listed as an approved contact on the student's registration form.

All students may receive no-cost breakfast and lunch, or they may choose to bring lunch from home.

***MARY B. AUSTIN IS A NUT-SENSITIVE CAMPUS to safeguard students with allergies.**

MARY B. AUSTIN PRICES

<u>Unit Prices for Breakfast*</u>			<u>Unit Prices for Lunch*</u>		
	<u>Elem/Middle</u>	<u>High</u>		<u>Elem/Middle</u>	<u>High</u>
<u>Student</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>Student</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
2nd Student Meal	<u>1.75</u>	<u>1.75</u>	2ndStudent Meal	<u>3.75</u>	<u>3.75</u>
Adult/Staff**	<u>3.00</u>	<u>3.00</u>	Adult/Staff**	<u>4.50</u>	<u>4.50</u>
<u>Visitor/Child <10 yrs.</u>	<u>3.00</u>	<u>3.00</u>	<u>Visitor/Child <10 yrs.</u>	<u>4.50</u>	<u>4.50</u>
<u>Visitor/Adult</u>	<u>3.25</u>	<u>3.25</u>	<u>Visitor/Adult</u>	<u>4.75</u>	<u>4.75</u>

ADDITIONAL SERVICES

Counselor

Austin has a full-time counselor on staff. The Counselor provides a neutral, non-judgmental, and caring environment in which a child feels comfortable working out his/her problems. The counselor also assists students in their adjustment to school and the development of good study skills for them to meet the challenges of the school year.

Exceptional Education Programs

Austin offers classes for the emotionally disabled, learning disabled, intellectually disabled, and **PACE** (gifted) students. Many of these students are included in the regular classroom. Speech therapy is available for students who qualify. Testing for these programs is a free service performed by the local school system psychometrist and/or speech pathologist. Recommendations for testing must come from the student's teacher, parent, or the principal of the school. The school PST (problem-solving team) meets monthly to examine and promote effective instructional strategies and interventions.

Report Cards/Student Progress

Report cards are issued four (4) times during the school year. Parents are notified of student progress through **mid-quarter** progress reports. Parents may check grades at any time using the Schoology grading portal. A parent conference is required during the school year.

Bullying Protocol

Several measures are taken by the Austin Faculty and Staff to deter bullying and educate students and parents regarding bullying. Austin will work with Social Workers and outside agencies, to promote its anti-bullying campaign. The administrators, counselors, and teachers will instruct students on actions to take when they feel they are being bullied. Students are being instructed to 1) STOP- Tell the bully to stop. If that doesn't work, stop what you are doing and find an adult who can help. 2) WALK- Walk to another adult who can help resolve the situation. 3) TALK- Talk to the adult and let them know the problem so the adult can help you. Bullying will not be tolerated. The student code of conduct will be followed, and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken. Students or parents may file a complaint with the counselor or principal for an allegation investigation.

Transfer Students:

Students attending Austin on transfer must maintain good attendance with limited tardies/early dismissals and positive behavior. In addition, parents of transfer students must abide by the rules/procedures established for a safe and orderly learning environment and support the school's mission and vision. Transfer students must be transported by a parent/guardian to school. Siblings of currently enrolled students must apply for a transfer.

Resident Assessments for Temporary Living Arrangements:

If you are temporarily living with another person inside our school zone, special permission must be granted by student services to attend our school temporarily.

EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM

Austin's Extended Day Program provides morning and after-school care for currently enrolled students. The hours provided for morning care are from 6:30 a.m. to 7:50 a.m. and afternoon care from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. EDC is only provided for days on which school is in session and will be closed if MCPSS cancels or closes school early. EDC is not offered on holidays, teacher workdays, or the last calendar school day. An annual registration fee must be paid to attend the program.

Students who arrive before 7:40 a.m. and remain after 3:40 p.m. will be charged a fee and placed in EDC for adult supervision. Every Austin Family will be allowed one "Get out of Paying" fee for an emergency only per semester. The morning Fee will be \$15.00 per child and the afternoon fee will be \$20.00 per child.

Sessions	Annual Registration	Weekly Fees
Morning Only 1 st child 2 nd child 3 rd child	\$35.00 \$35.00 \$35.00	\$35.00 \$30.00 \$25.00
Morning and Afternoon 1 st child 2 nd child 3 rd child	\$35.00 \$35.00 \$35.00	\$75.00 \$70.00 \$65.00
Afternoon Only 1 st child 2 nd child 3 rd child	\$35.00 \$35.00 \$35.00	\$55.00 \$50.00 \$45.00
Drop-In (registration fee required) Morning Only Afternoon Only	\$35.00 \$35.00	\$15.00 \$20.00

A separate discipline policy is in effect for before and after-school care. Misconduct or non-payment may result in dismissal and/or refusal from our extended day program.

EDC will be closed on the last day of 1st Semester and 2nd Semester.

DISCIPLINE PLAN

Code of Conduct

Students deserve a safe learning environment. Parents, administration, faculty, and staff share the responsibility of teaching good citizenship. Students are expected to always behave appropriately on campus, on buses, during field trips, and at school events. Please go over this information with your child and keep a copy for reference throughout the school year.

School-Wide Rules

1. Be Prompt: Be on time. Follow directions quickly.
2. Be Prepared: Be Ready for the day. Think ahead.
3. Be Polite: Be Kind. Think before you speak or act.
4. Be Productive: Use your time wisely. Show urgency.
5. Be Patient: Wait your turn. Listen when others speak.

School-Wide Procedures

1. Walk quietly on the right side of the hallway, keeping your hands and feet to yourself.
2. Transitions are to be orderly. (Take-In, Restroom Breaks, Cafeteria Line, and Dismissal)
3. Table manners are to be used in the cafeteria. (Seated flat facing your food, low volume, no food sharing, etc.)
4. An adult will indicate a “zero” sign for not talking with a raised hand.
5. All voices are quiet, and attention is given during announcements.
6. All cell phones will be collected each day and kept in a lockbox until dismissal.
- 7.

Student Codes for Meeting School and Classroom Behavior:

To keep parents informed about your child’s daily behavior, students may receive a rating of 1, 2, 3, or 4 on their behavior calendar. This rating system helps us communicate how their day has gone.

Please note, that if your child consistently demonstrates behaviors that exceed expectations (Goal #4), their behavior calendar may not include specific descriptions. In these cases, "No News is Good News" applies, indicating that your child consistently meets or exceeds behavioral expectations.

Also, each classroom teacher will establish daily routines and procedures for their class. Teachers will follow school and district policies for disruptive behavior. If a student breaks a rule, consequences will be implemented to help them learn. Before a discipline referral to the office, three student tickets will be sent home. However, for Level B or higher actions, students may be referred to the administration directly without parent notification. Throughout the year, students who demonstrate respect and consistently follow rules will be recognized as positive examples of good citizenship.

<p>#4. Exceeds Expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am a role model. • My effort goes above and beyond. • My work was completed on time. 	<p>#3. Meets Expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I follow the rules consistently. • I give my best effort. • My work was completed on time.
<p>#2. Approaching Expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I follow the rules sometimes. • I give my best effort occasionally. • Some work is done on time. 	<p>#1. Below Expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I need to work on following directions. • I am not giving my best effort. • Most of my work is incomplete.

Level 1 Discipline for A Offenses: (handled by classroom teacher)

Teachers will send home parent notifications (Discipline Ticket) to inform the parent of the excessive redirection of the child's inappropriate behaviors in a school setting. After three notices to the parents and parent conference, the child will be referred to the office or counselor depending on the infraction or situation.

Example Behaviors	Example Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excessive Talking • Minor Acts of Disobedience • Out of Uniform • Non-Participation • Nuisance Items • Tardy • Cheating • Using Cell Phone without permission • Pushing Others Inappropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employ positive reinforcement procedures. • Use verbal correction, reminders, and redirection. • Parent contact (student discipline ticket, phone conference) • Assign students according to the buddy-teacher system for cool-down. • Conference with student/student reflection • Conference with Counselor • Face-to-face Parent Conference • Office Referral for a continuous infraction

Level 2 Discipline for B Offenses: (discipline referral to administration)

The administration will investigate and make an appropriate decision following the Mobile County Public School System policies and procedures.

Example Behaviors	Example Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaving Campus without Permission • Act of Physical Aggression: Fighting • Willful Disobedience • Improper Use of an Electronic Device such as harassing communications. • Bullying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrator Conference • Parent contact • Student/Parent/Teacher/Administrator Conference • Individualized Student Behavior Plan with monitoring and support. • Refer to the Counselor for counseling or conflict resolution. • Referral to the Problem-Solving Team (PST) • Revision to IEP (For Students with Disabilities) • In School Suspension • Out of School Suspension • Request for Alternative Placement if infractions are continuous.

Level 3 Discipline for all C, D, and E offenses: (discipline referral to administration)

The administration and Resource Officer will investigate and make appropriate decisions following the Mobile County Public School System policies and procedures.

Example Behaviors	Example Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theft • Misuse of School Property • Harassment • Assault • Disorderly Conduct 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out of School Suspension • Discipline Contracts/Behavior Plans • Referral to Alternative Placement School • Expulsion

Dress Code Violation

There is a distinct relationship between dress codes and students' behavior, attitudes, and achievements. The uniform dress will be required and monitored daily.

- All uniforms should be clean (not torn, tattered, or with holes)
- Inappropriate attire will be called to the attention of the student and administration will be contacted. Parents must take appropriate measures and correct the uniform dress violation.
- The administrative team of the school will make final decisions about compliance with the policy.
- Students are expected to always display an appearance of neatness and modesty.

Example Actions

- Documented Warning: Parent Notification 1
- Parent Contact: Parent Notification 2
- Parent Contact: Parent Notification 3 to schedule a parent/teacher conference.
- Office Referral/Parent Contact or Conference

***After 3 parent contacts students will receive an office referral for A/B infractions or for non-compliance of school and district policy.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

SAFETY TIPS and REMINDERS

- Students must report directly to their assigned seats and sit down.
- Students are not permitted to stand unless given instructions by the driver.
- Students must move away from the bus as soon as they exit.
- Students are not permitted to walk on the bus, hang body parts out the window, or physically assault another student during transport.
- Students must look to the rear of the bus for oncoming vehicles as they exit the bus.
- Students should never play in the loading/unloading zones.
- Students should never go back to retrieve anything they may have dropped or left behind.
- Students should never bend down near or under the bus.
- Students should always stay where the bus driver can visibly see them.

BUS DISCIPLINE

Riding the school bus is a privilege, not a right. Misconduct on the bus is a safety hazard and may result in a student losing that privilege and subject the student to additional disciplinary consequences.

Austin administrators are authorized to suspend or terminate bus privileges. If a child loses his/her bus-riding privilege, the parents assume the responsibility for transportation to and from school.

Depending on the severity of the incident a student may receive an additional consequence for violations of school rules during transport.

Example Actions

- Administrator/Student Conference
- Parent contact
- Short-Term Bus Suspension
- Long-Term Bus Suspension (up to the remainder of the semester or school year)

PARENT AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Partners in Education

We are very fortunate to have several business partners and community supporters. This group has played a vital role in the smooth operation of our school. Many accomplishments have been made possible through their efforts. We look forward to continuing this wonderful partnership program. We would like to extend an invitation for more business partners and community supporters to join our school family.

Parent Involvement

Parents are strongly encouraged to take an active part in their child's education and join the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA). The member fee is \$20.00 per family per year.

Parental input is necessary and actively sought through both formal and informal means. Parents should understand, however, that the operation of the school is the responsibility of the school personnel.

By choosing to enroll a child in Mary B. Austin Elementary School, you have provided your child with an opportunity to receive an excellent education. In addition, parents have accepted the responsibility to provide the appropriate encouragement, guidance, and home environment to foster the most helpful learning situation possible.

Parents should uphold our school philosophy in the following ways:

- Support the dress code.
- Support the discipline policy.
- Support the attendance policy.
- Use proper channels for contacting school personnel.
- Support teachers when dealing with student performance or classroom attitude.
- Support the Guidance Counselor when dealing with a student's personal or school problems.
- Support the Assistant Principal when dealing with behavior problems or transportation concerns.
- Support the Principal when dealing with school programs or activities.
- Provide a suitable time and place for homework and ensure that homework is completed and turned in on time.
- Ensure the student submits his/her original work.

- Review papers brought home by students.
- Sign and return promptly all school-related papers.
- Maintain mutual responsibility with the child for arriving at school on time.
- Participate in any activities needing parental assistance.

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