

# *Ready. Set. Start Smart*

*A Families Guide to Safe School Reopening*



*Mission*

*To Be The Best School District in the State*

# WELCOME to Midway Heights Elementary School

The entire staff of Midway Heights Elementary School wishes to welcome all our students and their families. This school year offers many opportunities as well as challenges for students and their teachers to find success and happiness. We want this year to be full of learning for everyone—students, staff, and parents. When we all work together as partners, learning and problem solving becomes a way of life.

To make sure it is a great year for all, please take the time to read the Family and Student Handbook and the District Elementary Student Handbook with your child. That way you and your child will know our expectations at Midway and in the Columbia Public School District. This handbook is provided as a quick reference for information you will need. Please keep it and the district handbook readily available for your use during the school year. The Midway Family and Student Handbook is available on our web page, <http://www.cpsk12.org/Domain/24>. The District Elementary Student Handbook for PK-5 is available here: <https://www.cpsk12.org/cms/lib/MO01909752/Centricity/Domain/47/StudHandELEM.pdf>

Our K-5 faculty consists of regular classroom teachers plus specialists in Special Education, Physical Education, Art, Vocal Music, Guidance and Counseling, and Media Center/Technology personnel. Our business/education partnerships are with Midway Optimist Club, Midway Electric, Spectrum Utilities Solutions, Boone County Fire Department, and D&H Drug Stores.

As the principal, my role is to provide your child with the best educational setting possible. Let me know how we are doing, please feel free to send me a note or call to set up a visit. Parent input is invaluable. I look forward to working with you in the most important job we have - educating your child.

We invite you to join us, and together, we will share the power of knowledge on our journey of learning. Our best wishes for a successful year at Midway Heights Elementary!

*Angie Gerzen*  
Principal



# Parents/Guardians

## Before I send my child to school, I will:

- Check their temperature and assess their symptoms; if they have a fever of 100.4 or higher, or a cough, shortness of breath, loss of taste or smell, chills, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea, or if they have been in direct contact with someone who has COVID-19, they will stay home and I will contact our medical provider.
- Make sure they have their mask, reusable water bottle, iPad, keyboard, and headphones in their backpack.

## General School Safety:

- I will discuss the importance of social distancing with my student prior to the start of school. It will be difficult to ensure students maintain distance, but it is necessary for staff and students to understand the importance of doing so to prevent exposure.
- If sending birthday treats to school, I will only send pre-packaged individually wrapped treats for the class. I will also contact the teacher ahead of time to see when would be a good time to send the treats. I understand I will not be able to go to the classroom to help celebrate.
- I will send my child with a reusable water bottle with their name on it because water fountains will only be used to fill water bottles.
- In order to minimize the exposure of all students and staff to others outside of their assigned small groups, non-essential visitors and parents will not be permitted beyond the secure vestibules at school buildings.

# Students

## Getting ready for and to school safely, I will:

- Practice social distancing while waiting for the bus and on the bus.
- Wear my mask on the bus.
- Use hand sanitizer as I board the bus and on the bus, I will wear my face mask and sit in my assigned seat.
- Wear my mask, enter school and grab a breakfast, if needed, and then go straight to my classroom.

## To stay safe at school, I will:

- Bring a reusable water bottle to school, as water fountains will be closed for drinking from; water fountains may only be used to refill water bottles throughout the day.
- Avoid touching my face with unwashed hands.
- Cough or sneeze into my elbow or a tissue. I will then throw the tissue in the trash. Then I will wash my hands or use hand sanitizer.
- Wear my face mask (it is required) and practice social distancing when moving about the classroom.

### Expectation for mask breaks:

- For mask breaks to occur you must be able to social distance.
- If you can go outside, go outside for the mask break. Stay 6 feet away and not more than 15 minutes.

- ❑ Sit in my assigned seat in the classrooms.
- ❑ Use my own headphones/earbuds for the iPad. I will use hand sanitizer before and after using my iPad.
- ❑ Wash my hands frequently or use hand sanitizer throughout the day. I will use these handwashing strategies that include washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. I will make sure my hands are washed during all the following:
  - ❑ After going to the bathroom.
  - ❑ After playing outside.
  - ❑ Before eating.
  - ❑ After blowing my nose, coughing, or sneezing.
  - ❑ If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
  - ❑ I will try to remember not to touch my eyes, nose or mouth.
  - ❑ I will remember to not share cups, eating utensils, food or drinks with others.
- ❑ Wear my mask and practice social distancing in the hallway. This means I will walk on the blue line always on the right side.
- ❑ Eat lunch in my classroom and clean up my space afterwards.
- ❑ Take my iPad and keyboard home each night and bring it back to school the following day. I will make sure I keep it charged.

## Safety Procedures for Everyone:

- ❑ Students are required to bring and wear their own masks and bring a spare. They must be school appropriate. We will have a few disposable masks if someone forgets their mask.
- ❑ Recess schedules will limit the number of students on the playground or within a specific area (zone) of the playground.
- ❑ Parents who will be picking up a child for early dismissal due to illness or a medical appointment will be expected to call the front office when they arrive at the school and remain in their vehicle in front of the main office. A staff member will bring the child to the vehicle, check your identification, and assist you in signing out your student. There is no dismissal within 15 minutes of the regular end of the school day, and only parents, guardians, or other individuals identified on the student's contact list, with appropriate identification, will be allowed to leave with the student.
- ❑ The school nurse will have a designated care area in the event that a child or a staff member comes to school and presents covid-19 symptoms. Parents will be contacted to pick ill students up immediately. Contact tracing will be used to identify students or staff members who may need to quarantine for 14 days.
- ❑ Disinfectant and hand sanitizer will be placed in every classroom. Staff and students will be expected to support cleaning and disinfecting of classroom surfaces and supplies as needed.
- ❑ The goal is to limit exposure to as few other students and staff members as possible. Staff and students must do their very best to maintain as much distance as possible from others within the school building.

- ❑ Assigned seats will be given within classrooms, when occupying common areas, and for riding the bus. Additionally, small groups will be utilized to the extent possible. This will assist with contact tracing efforts if needed.
- ❑ Field trips will be limited to virtual learning opportunities aligned to the Missouri standards.
- ❑ Any assemblies and special events will also be virtual.
- ❑ Parents who can transport their students to/from school are encouraged to do so to help minimize the number of students riding the bus and to allow for minimal contact.
- ❑ STA bus drivers will make sure buses are sanitized before and after each route.
- ❑ Students will only be able to ride the bus they are assigned to.
- ❑ Family members will be seated together on the bus.
- ❑ Bus drivers will assign seats the first day and the students are expected to sit there for the entire route.
- ❑ All buildings and work spaces will be cleaned nightly.

# Midway Heights Elementary School Staff

Gerzen, Angie - Principal  
Rentel, Casie - Secretary to the Principal  
Kasman, Michelle - Secretary/Health Aide Provider  
Verslues, Jan - Nurse (RN)

Creasy, Lottie - Kindergarten  
McCormack, Bobbi - Kindergarten  
Peters, Stacey - 1<sup>st</sup> Grade  
Roop, Shayla - 1<sup>st</sup> Grade  
Hufendiek, Lynnea - 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade  
Weber, Anne - 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade  
Crawford, Kelsey - 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade  
Redig, Trish - 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade  
Lenz, Suzanne - 4<sup>th</sup> Grade  
Wade, Brent - 4<sup>th</sup> Grade  
Bozoian, Linda - 5<sup>th</sup> Grade  
Stewart, Sheri - 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

Powell, Geoffrey - Learning Specialist/Educational Diagnostician  
Weaver, Carrie - Speech/Language Pathologist  
Moses, Kristin - School Psychologist Examiner

White, Erin - Media Specialist  
Colborn, Stephanie - Media Specialist IA  
Carter, Emile - Art  
Kennedy, Kristen - Counselor  
Buzbee, Sherrill - Music (Vocal)  
Richardson, Kelli - P.E.

Ballard, Shanna - Classroom Aide  
White, Ashlyn - Classroom Aide

LeBel, Susan - Cafeteria Manager  
Donahue, Pauline - Cafeteria Cashier  
Lake, Tim - Head Custodian  
Herman, Peri - Night Custodian

## Important Numbers

Midway Office: 573-214-3540  
Midway Fax: 573-214-3541  
Adventure Club: 573-214-3543  
CPS Board Office: 573-214-3400  
STA Transportation: 573-214-3860



## Midway's Mission

*Learning Together To Achieve Success  
For All*

Midway Heights Elementary School  
is a partnership of staff, parents, students and community  
with the following vision...

Midway students will grow as independent learners with the skills to make safe and healthy choices. They will have the confidence to be successful emotionally, socially, and academically.

Midway staff will be supportive, collaborative, enthusiastic team members dedicated to the learning of all students.

Midway's principal will keep students' best interests at heart, trust teachers, and create a safe, caring environment for all.

Discipline issues will be handled consistently, efficiently and appropriately.

Midway educators will promote the academic, social and emotional success of all students within a safe, nurturing environment.

Midway teachers will use developmentally appropriate practices to promote high learner engagement and build confident learners. The most important criterion for measuring success will be individual student growth.

Midway will be a place that welcomes family and community members in the educational process.

When students transition from Midway, they will be prepared to make positive choices that will be personally rewarding and purposeful.

## Know the Procedures for Midway Heights Elementary

**A**nimals at School: With respect to people with animal (dog, cat, etc.) allergies, family pets will not be allowed at or in the school.

**A**rrival and Dismissal: School begins at 7:40 a.m. each morning. Your child should arrive at school between 7:20 a.m. and 7:40 a.m. Early arrivals (before 7:20 a.m.) are **not allowed as supervision is not available and students will need to wait outside the building; social distanced with masks on.**

**Students Arriving/Leaving by Car - Before School** - When your child gets dropped off at school in the morning either by you (enter through front doors) or the bus (enter through north doors), he/she will go directly to their classroom and grab a breakfast if they need one and then enter their classroom. We will have morning announcements beginning at 7:40 a.m. If your child gets to school after 7:40 a.m., an adult will need to check the child in at the office to get them a tardy slip before going to their classroom.

**After School** - Dismissal begins at 2:40 p.m. Parents will be provided a card to have posted in their vehicle for staff to see and call out student pickups. If another person comes to pick up your child...Make sure they have the card with them OR Call the office to notify the school of the change (before 2:20 pm) and it will be notated on a blue note. If you choose to pick up your child after school, please do not get out of your car but **stay in the car line along the drive leading up to the school from Trails West** and go through the circle drive by the front doors and your child will come to the car. We will try to keep the line moving as quickly as possible. Children are not allowed to cross any of the driveways around the school due to traffic and insurance regulations.

The north side curb is painted red and is for buses only. This curb must be clear for buses all day. The buses have a separate entrance and exit. Parents should not be parking in the lot on the north side of the building unless there are not enough spots in the east lot.

Parking in front of the building is prohibited due to it being a fire lane (parent pick-up and drop-off lane). The drive in front of the building is for emergency vehicles and delivery trucks only.

**A**ttendance/Tardy Policy (absences and appointments): All students are expected to attend school regularly and to be on time for class to receive the maximum benefits from the instructional program, and to develop habits of punctuality, self-discipline, and responsibility. Absence from a class can never be completely made up because the student will have missed class discussion, teacher presentation, and his or her own opportunity to participate.

If your child will be absent from school, please call the school office at 573-214-3540 by 8 a.m. The attendance secretary will call families who have not called school to verify a child's absence.

The school will review the attendance records of students with chronic attendance issues. In these situations, parents will be contacted by phone to resolve the situation. Prompt arrival at school greatly assists a child in having a positive start to the school day. School doors open at 7:20 a.m. and supervision of students is provided at that time. Students are considered tardy beginning after 7:40 a.m. and will need to report to the office for a late pass to be given to their teacher.

Students riding on a bus that arrives after 7:40 a.m. will not be considered tardy. Parents picking up their students early during the school day should park in the fire lane in front of the school. Call into the office and let us know you are there to pick up your child. We will then call them to the office and walk them out to you.

## **B**ehavior:

**Serious Behavior:** Students who have serious behavior that disrupts learning or is unsafe will be referred immediately to the principal and removed from the classroom to discuss and solve the problem. If serious behavior concerns continue through the year, parents will be asked to partner with the school to problem solve.

**Consequences:** The consequences for office referrals may be loss of privileges, time spent in the office, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, meeting with the teacher and parents, a behavior plan, and/or referral to a school-based counseling group. We always try to find a natural consequence for the situation.

**Missouri Safe Schools Act:** The purpose of this act is to ensure that school is a safe place for students and employees. It is important to know that this law means that no drugs, no weapons, and no malicious physical contact will be tolerated in school, on school grounds, or on school buses. **If weapons are brought to school by students, mandatory suspensions and/or long-term expulsion are consequences.** Specifics about this act and consequences for children are included in the District Elementary Student Handbook.

**Bullying:** This is considered **repeated** and **systematic** intimidation, harassment and attacks on a student or multiple students by a student or group of students. Bullying includes, but is not limited to: physical violence, verbal taunts, name-calling or put-downs, threats, extortion or theft, damaging property, or exclusion from a peer group. Midway takes bullying seriously and will follow state and district guidelines.

**B**irthdays: It is not permissible for a child to pass out party invitations at school unless they are inviting the whole class to the party. You may send birthday treats this year but they may only be pre-packaged, individually wrapped items. We will celebrate and recognize student birthdays through our morning announcements.

**Bus Conduct:** Busing is provided by Student Transportation of America.

Questions regarding bus numbers, pick-up times, late busses, etc. should be directed to Student Transportation of America by calling 573-214-3860. To ensure each child's safety and comfort on the bus, we ask that you go over the following expectations with your child.

- Obey the bus driver. Follow directions the first time they are given.
- Keep head, hands, and feet inside the bus.
- Keep the aisles clear.
- Remain seated in your assigned seat. (Back to back, seat to seat, feet on the floor).
- Do not eat, drink, or throw trash on the floor of the bus. Keep food in your backpack.
- Keep all your belongings to yourself and inside of the bus.
- Use respectful language. No loud talking or noises.
- Keep your mask on.
- Use hand sanitizer when you get on and off the bus.
- Bullying will not be tolerated and will be reported to school officials.

It is a privilege to ride the school bus. Students are subject to losing their riding privilege for infractions of the above rules. If it becomes necessary for the driver to refer a student for repeated infractions of bus expectations or any other form of behavior deemed inappropriate by the driver, the driver will complete a School Bus Conduct Report which will be delivered to the principal at the earliest possible time.

**Bus Consequences:**

- Step 1. Bus driver offers verbal directives for inappropriate behaviors.
- Step 2. Bus driver takes corrective action by assigning seats.
- Step 3. Bus driver generates a Bus Conduct Report producing corrective action by a building administrator.
  - a. 1st conduct report - Principal gives verbal directives with parent contact.
  - b. 2nd conduct report - Principal gives verbal directives with one day suspension from bus riding privilege.
  - c. 3rd conduct report - One to three-day suspension from bus riding privilege.
  - d. 4th conduct report - Five-day suspension from bus riding privilege.
  - e. 5th conduct report - Ten-day suspension from bus riding privilege.
  - f. Future conduct reports - Ten-day suspension from bus riding privilege.
  - g. Severe behaviors (fighting, bullying, aggressive behavior towards other passengers or the bus driver) results in a minimum 10-day suspension from bus riding privileges and potential revocation of bus riding privileges.

**Cell Phones (students):** We understand that students may need a cell phone before or after school for safety reasons, however, they do not need them during the day at school. Cell phones must stay in the student's backpack, always turned off. If as a parent, you feel your child is responsible enough to have a phone, then they will need to be responsible for it on the bus and at school. If the cell phone is lost or stolen, the school will not be held liable.

## **C**ommunications:

APP store: download Columbia Public Schools app on your phone

Midway Website: <https://www.cpsk12.org/Domain/24>

Twitter: @MidwayEagles

Midway PTA Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=midway%20heights%20elementary%20pta>

Teacher Communication: Schoology, Class Dojo, or email

Principal Communication: Class Dojo, email, or ParentLink

Flyers for Clubs/Camps/Sports, etc: Peachjar

CPS District: Family Portal

**E**mergencies: In the case of an emergency or accident involving your child, you will be notified immediately. If you have an emergency and need to get in touch with your child, please call our office at 573-214-3540.

If there is weather or a community emergency, please follow the guidelines outlined below:

- Do not call at the time of the emergency. We will be busy making sure that your child is safe.
- If you feel that you must come to school, please report to the office area and you will be directed to a safe area in which to wait for your child.
- If you feel that you must check your child out immediately, only your own child will be released to you after you sign them out.

**F**loral/Balloon/Deliveries to School: In order to protect the educational climate in the classrooms and safety on the buses, we do not accept any deliveries for students during the school day. We recognize that birthdays and holidays are special occasions, however, we ask that all deliveries be made to your home address.

## **H**omework Policy - Based on Best Practices:

**Purposes:** Homework for our elementary students instills good work habits for future learning and supports positive attitudes toward studying. It is to reinforce concepts that have been taught in the classroom, responsibility and good study habits.

**General Guidelines:** Homework should be about 10 minutes per grade level per night (i.e. 20 minutes for second grade, 50 minutes for fifth grade). If it is more than that for your child, please let the teacher know.

**Expectations:**

- Homework should be completed on time.
- Homework will be checked for completion but not always formally graded.

**Lunch:** Students get 25 minutes for lunch. Your child's teacher will share the class schedule with you.

- Students will be eating lunch in their classroom with an adult supervising.
- Once at their table eating, students must raise their hand and ask permission to get up.
- We want students to be able to visit with those nearest them and casual talking with others is permitted and encouraged.
- When the lights are off, all talking ceases. Students will be expected to follow the expectations as if they were in the cafeteria. The rules are posted in the cafeteria/classroom and reviewed with the students throughout the year.
- Students are not to share their food with others.
- Students should stay seated until they are dismissed.
- When students finish eating and are dismissed, they should:
  - a) Pick up all paper/trash in their area to be thrown away.
  - b) Students will wipe their spot at the table before transitioning.

**Parent Communication:** Communication between home and school promotes a positive school climate. Please check your child's backpack daily. The school and teachers will communicate electronically with parents through Class Dojo, ParentLink or email. You can expect to receive behavior (individual) and academic (both individual and what the class is doing as a whole) information from teachers. The office will send out a monthly newsletter at the beginning of each month to keep you updated about school activities. Flyers and such will be emailed out through Peachjar or a link is on our webpage.

Please help us by making appointments when the need arises to see your child's teacher or the principal. The best and easiest way to reach a teacher is through email. Teachers will share their school email address with parents. Please understand that they can't always respond right away because they are teaching, and they may not have time to respond before school is out for the day. Most school activities are posted on the school's webpage at <https://www.cpsk12.org/Domain/24>.

**Parent/Teacher Association (PTA):** The Midway Heights PTA has an outstanding tradition. Families are highly encouraged to join and participate in this organization. It is an association that works to provide the school with money to enhance the education of our students and to support the teachers and staff with their responsibilities. All PTA meetings are open to every member and will be advertised ahead of time. Open discussion allows all members to offer ideas and opinions. Members will have an opportunity to participate in long-range planning and

achievement of the group's goals. Attending these meetings will give you an idea of what goes on at school and how our fundraisers are organized, and the money spent. The Fall Festival and Chili Supper is the PTA's major fundraiser ~ it has already been cancelled for this year. Be looking for information from your PTA for fundraising efforts.

**P**ersonal Items/Toys: School personnel will not be responsible for personal items/toys brought to school. Items such as toys, sports equipment, electronic games or devices, fidget spinners, trading cards, or other items that might cause a distraction or problem should not be brought to school. No balls or other playground items should be brought to school this year from home. Personal items that are not part of the instructional program will be confiscated by school personnel and held until the end of the day. Continued incidents will result in the item being held until it is picked up by a parent or guardian. Students are not allowed to bring gum or candy to school unless requested to do so by the classroom teacher. Please check your child's backpack each day and leave any items not school related at home.

**S**nacks: Teachers may make the decision about having mid-morning OR mid-afternoon healthy snacks in their classroom. Students will need to bring their own healthy snacks for snack time.

**W**hat to bring: Student supplies will be the same across the CPS District this year and will be individual - no sharing of supplies. Make sure your student brings their backpack with their iPad, charger, keyboard, water bottle and mask each day to school.

**Y**earbook: A yearbook will be sold each spring. Look for a flyer in February to get yours! If you enjoy taking pictures, please take pictures of your child learning and send your pictures to the school. We would love to include them in the yearbook! We only purchase the number of yearbooks ordered.