

PRAIRIE ELEMENTARY

NEW FAMILY HANDBOOK

2026-2027



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WELCOME TO PRAIRIE ELEMENTARY!

Message from Mrs. Jones

Welcome to Prairie Elementary! Prairie is truly the best place for children to learn and grow. Our community has provided a strong foundation for students to flourish since 1866. Our PTA and Prairie Fund organizations actively support our teachers and staff to provide high quality academic and social excellence. I encourage you to volunteer and be an active member of your child's educational development. You will make memories that last a lifetime!

Please reach out to me if you have any questions. We look forward to serving your family!

Vision

To educate and inspire, moving into the future as a united community.

Mission

We will build positive relationships, set high expectations and cultivate an engaging and innovative learning environment for our students and staff.

Prairie Pledge

I am the only person who can decide what I will do and be. I am in charge of my learning and behavior. Today I pledge to do my best. I will practice kindness and love in all I say and do.

School Song

Stand up for Prairie Panthers
Stand up and give a song
Yay!
We are the very best
We'll stand the test
Proudly we venture ahead

Stand up for Prairie Panthers
We'll reach our goals somehow
So give a cheer
Yay!
Let's all cheer for Prairie
Prairie School





SCHOOL CALENDAR

To access the school calendar go to: <https://prairie.smsd.org/about/calendar>

SCHEDULE

REGULAR SCHOOL HOURS

Kindergarten----- 8:10 a.m. - 3:10 p.m.

Elementary School ----- 8:10 a.m. - 3:10 p.m.

EARLY DISMISSAL HOURS

Kindergarten ----- 8:10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Elementary School ----- 8:10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

LUNCH SCHEDULE

Grade	Regular Dismissal	Early Dismissal
K	11:00-11:30	10:00-10:30
1	11:15-11:45	10:45-11:15
2	12:15-12:45	11:30-12:00
3	12:30-1:00	11:00-11:30
4	11:30-12:00	10:30-11:00
5	12:00-12:30	10:15-10:45
6	11:45-12:15	11:30-12:00



CONTACT INFORMATION

- Main Line: 913-993-4400
- Attendance Line: 913-993-4488
- SMSD Website: [SMSD.org](https://www.smsd.org)
- SMSD Prairie Website: [Prairie.SMSD.org](https://prairie.smsd.org)
- Staff Directory: <https://prairie.smsd.org/about/staff-directory>
- PTA: Email us at prairieelementary@gmail.com

COMMUNICATION

Skyward (<https://skyward.smsd.org/>)

- This online portal allows parents to access to attendance, grades, state testing, assignments, and schedules
- Teachers may post messages and updates in Skyward
- You may also email a teacher from within the Skyward application

Remind App

- Many teachers use the remind app as their primary communication platform and will provide a specific login for your class at the start of the year
- It can be used to send two-way text messages between parents and teachers

Email:

- Some teachers choose to email a weekly or monthly newsletter
- Email addresses for all teachers and staff are listed at the staff directory link above
- Mrs. Jones emails a monthly newsletter. This is separate from the weekly PTA newsletter

INCLEMENT WEATHER

For school closing information, call the district's 24-Hour Information Hotline at (913) 993-7380, visit www.smsd.org, watch district cable television channels, sign up for SMSD text Alert at [smsd.org](https://www.smsd.org), or join the district's social networking pages found on Twitter (<https://x.com/thesmsd>) and Facebook (www.facebook.com/thesmsd).



PRAIRIE PTA

Who We Are

The Prairie PTA is a volunteer-led organization that seeks to create a village that enhances the experience of every student and strengthens our community. Our PTA is all about fun, educational clubs, programs, and events for our families to foster an amazing elementary school experience.

What We Do

Programs that we support include:

- Community building events such as Art in the Garden, the Carnival, Special Guest Day, and STEAM Night
- Student programs and clubs
- Teacher and staff appreciation
- Grade level experiences and field trips
- Family engagement and volunteer opportunities such as library and art volunteers, room parents, and more

How To Get Involved

Whether you commit for an hour per year, or an hour per week, we have a volunteer role that is perfect for you! Email us at prairieelementary@gmail.com.

CONNECT WITH US

Student Directory

Free to register for, the directory keeps you in the loop from newsletters to room parent messages. Paid PTA members can access the directory to make connecting with families a breeze!

Weekly Newsletter

Our PTA weekly publication is full of all the important info you need, sent directly to your inbox. Must be registered for directory to receive.

Prairie Panthers PTA Facebook Group

A casual private Facebook group, great for getting reminders about upcoming events as well as bonus photos and content.

PrairiePTA.org

The main hub for all things PTA. Features a one-stop shop for spirit wear, yearbooks, and event tickets. It also holds the yearly calendar and directory.

@PrairiePTA

Our Instagram page has most up to date information on school activities and PTA-sponsored events and programs. Don't forget to tag us!

PRAIRIE FUND

Who We Are

The purpose of the Prairie Fund is to provide resources to supplement the annual shortfall in funding for our children's education. These resources are utilized to promote excellence at Prairie by supporting delivery of special programs and necessary services thereby enhancing the learning environment for all children, increasing the effectiveness of instruction and strengthening ties between Prairie and the community.



- Supports teachers, staff, and students to enhance their overall experience at Prairie Elementary
- Fosters Prairie's community
- Small-scale fundraising



Fundraising Supports:

- Field trips
- Staff Appreciation
- Art in the Garden
- Kindergarten Kickoff
- Student Clubs
- Field Day
- Carnival
- Variety Show
- STEAM Night
- Prairie Fun Run

Working Together



FOR THE KIDS



- Primary Focus: Education enrichment for the kids; Prairie Fund currently supports one community funded position at Prairie
- 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization
- Large scale fundraising



Fundraising Supports:

One community-funded Interventionist position at Prairie Elementary.

Prairie Fund also helps to fund Excellence in Education grants and big ticket items needed at the school.

What We Do

For the 2025-26 school year, the Prairie Fund provides funds for one interventionist position to support education enrichment. Interventionists specialize in reading and math interventions for all grades K-6. They collaborate with teacher teams to provide research-based intervention during WIN (What I Need) time while classroom teachers and aides provide support and enrichment activities. In addition, the Prairie Fund provides funds for Excellence in Education Grants. Teachers, staff, and even students may apply. These grants must be educational, directly impact student learning, and be planned for immediate use.

MY VOLUNTEER PAL

What It Is

The My Volunteer Pal (MVP) program is the volunteer program that connects volunteers with students throughout the Shawnee Mission School District. My Volunteer Pals may assist in classroom or school volunteering as well as chaperoning school field trips.

Who Needs MVP Training

Who needs My Volunteer Pal (MVP) training?

- Any individual who will be solely/directly responsible for Shawnee Mission School District students (other than their own) need MVP training.
- Attending school events and helping with such things as book fairs and carnivals do not require MVP training as the individual would not be solely/directly responsible for students in these capacities.

MVP Training

MVP training sessions are offered at either the District Office or any SMSD school. At the conclusion of the training, all individuals will complete a free online background screening process. Once screened, volunteers will not have to renew for 5 years.

Trainings for the 2025-2026 school year can be found posted here:
<https://www.smsd.org/families/volunteer-mvp>



PRAIRIE EVENTS

Art in the Garden (Fall)

Art in the Garden is a beloved Prairie tradition where students spend time during the school day in the garden at interactive art stations and create installation art. There will be an open house for parents to visit the garden with their student immediately following the school day.

Carnival (Fall)

One of the most fun events of the year, the Prairie Carnival is an all-school celebration where Prairie families come together on school grounds for a ton of games and activities for students to enjoy. There are bounce houses, soda tosses, cotton candy, and more!

Special Guest Day (Fall)

On Special Guest Day each student gets to invite one guest to join them to experience a portion of their day at Prairie and for lunch. This event typically overlaps with the Fall Book Fair.

Variety Show (Winter)

The Variety show is a school-wide event where students can sign up to perform a variety act on stage as an individual or in a group. The students will perform during the day for the entire building and after school for friends and family.

Snowball Project (Winter)

Each year, Prairie Elementary partners with Operation Breakthrough to sponsor families in need during the holiday season. Before Thanksgiving Break, participating students select a "snowball" that contains a gift wish for one of the children of a sponsored family.



PRAIRIE EVENTS

Read-A-Thon (Fall)

The Prairie Read-A-Thon is a kid-driven fundraiser where kids track minutes read and friends and family have a chance to pledge their support, allowing us to shine a light on reading as well as raise funds to continue to offer great opportunities at Prairie.

STEAM Fair (Winter)

STEAM Night is a hands-on experience at Prairie Elementary, featuring activities that celebrate Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math. This event is free.

March Madness (Spring)

March Madness is a PTA fundraiser that consists of 4v4 Coed parent basketball tourney, a kid free throw contest, and a kid shooting contest as well as food, beverages, sign-making, cheering, and fun for the whole family.

Prairie Fun Run (Spring)

The Prairie Fun Run is a annual fundraiser for the Prairie Elementary PTA. Prairie Families and the community come together to participate and enjoy being active together.

Book Fair (Spring and Fall)

The Book Fair occurs twice during the year, once in the fall and once in the spring. The book fair is held in the gym. Students have an opportunity to visit the fair with their classroom during the day and with their parents before and after school.

Field Day (Spring)

Field day is an outdoor, all-day event where each grade has a chance to participate in many games and activities. It is hosted by the school in conjunction with PTA support and volunteers.

2026-2027 SAVE THE DATE

prairie elementary

AUG



11th - Ice Cream Social
12th - First Day of School 1st-6th
14th - First Day of School K & Coffee
& Kleenex
26th - Back to School Night

SEP



3rd - Picture Day
7th - No School
10th - Lancer Day
18th - No School
24th - PTA General Meeting
25th - Art in the Garden
30th - All School Skate Party

OCT



8th - Carnival
9th - No School
15th - 16th Parent/Teacher Conferences
16th - No School
30th - Halloween Parade & Parties

NOV



1st - Read-A-Thon Begins
2nd - No School
5th - 6th Book Fair
6th Special Guest Day
18th - Ruby Bridges Walk to School
Day
23rd - 27th - Thanksgiving Break

DEC



18th - Holiday Sing Along & Early
Dismissal
21st - Winter Break Begins

JAN



5th - School is Back!
15th - No School
18th - No School
29th - STEAM Day

FEB



5th - No School
9th - All School Skate Party
12th - Valentine's Parties
15th - No School
25th - Variety Show
26th - No School

MAR



12th - 19th Spring Break
25th - PTA General Meeting
29th - Sock & Underwear Drive
Begins

APR



1st - 2nd Book Fair
9th - No School
15th - Kindergarten Kickoff
21st - All School Skate Party

MAY



3rd - P.A.W. Week Begins
6th - Field Day
7th - No School
15th - Fun Run and Pancake
Breakfast
26th - Last Day of School

*Dates Subject to Change

PRAIRIE FUND EVENTS

Prairie Fund Class Parties (Fall)

Grade level parties kick off our Prairie Fund fundraising. Families from each grade host a party for parents in that grade to come together, socialize , eat, drink, and raise funds.

Prairie Fund Auction

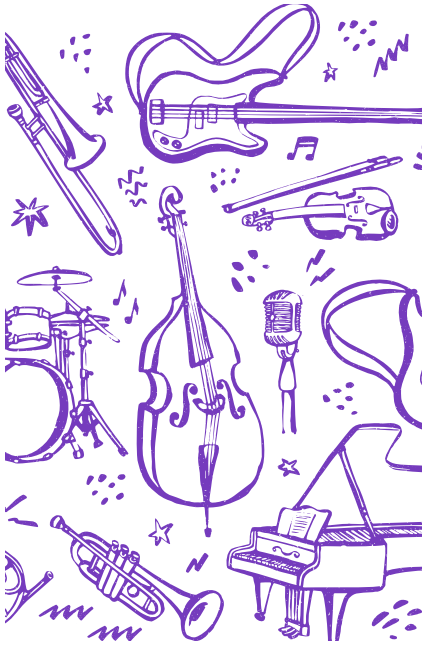
This is our largest fundraising event of the year. It is planned and coordinated by the Prairie Fund and benefits the Prairie Fund. This adult-only event is a great way to socialize with other Prairie Families. It includes both a live and silent auction. Drinks are provided and fun is had by all.

Prairie Parties

During the auction, families will have an opportunity to buy tickets to both adult-only and family parties. The parties will occur throughout the year and include favorites such as the Wine Walk, Ties and Tiaras, Mom Son Day at the K, and Tiki Party. Parties are hosted by Prairie Families and all ticket sales benefit the Prairie Fund.



PRAIRIE ACTIVITIES



Band/Strings

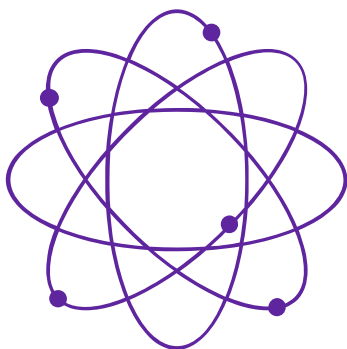
Band and strings are offered at Prairie Elementary for 5th and 6th graders. Students meet on Monday/Tuesday, Wednesday/Thursday and every other Friday, during the school day.

Students are required to provide their own instruments, practice outside of school and maintain average or above average grades to participate. School and district-wide concerts take place several times a year.

Choir

The Prairie Choir gives 5th and 6th students who like to sing an opportunity to refine their choral skills and participate in choral music.

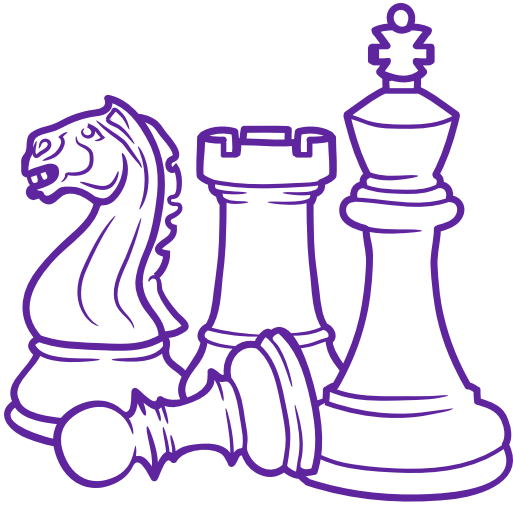
Fifth grade choir meets Thursdays from 7:45 a.m. to 8:15 a.m. Sixth grade choir meets Wednesdays from 7:40 a.m. to 8:10 a.m. Students are to meet in the MPR, and the music teacher will escort the students to the music room.



Mad Science

Mad Science will offer hands-on programs themed on a particular area of science. This paid club will meet Tuesdays after school from 3:15-4:15 for an eight-week session each semester. Limited spots are available.

Chess Club



Chess has been shown to increase students' critical thinking skills as well as problem solving and concentration. Prairie's Chess Club is open to kids in all grades.

The club will meet every Wednesday after school until 4pm. Sign-up at the ice cream social at the beginning of the year or look out for the flyer on PeachJar.

Girls on the Run

Girls on the Run (GOTR) is designed to inspire girls to be joyful, healthy and confident using a fun, experience-based curriculum which creatively integrates running.

GOTR typically meets in the gym from 3:10-4:30 p.m. during the fall semester for girls 3rd through 5th grades. To learn more, visit <https://www.gotrkc.org/>.



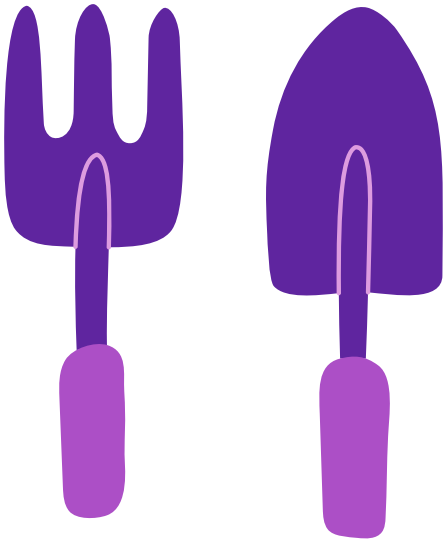
Mathletics



Mathletics is a school-sponsored math club where 4th-6th graders practice higher mathematics equations and play math games after school in the library. Participants meet twice a month during the first semester, and then they compete with other SMSD schools beginning mid-semester.

Sign-up forms will be sent home early in the school year.

Junior Master Gardeners

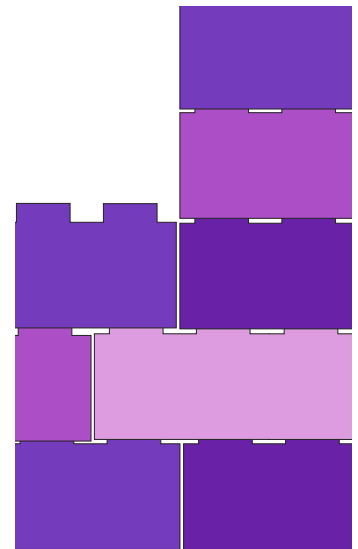


The Junior Master Gardener's Program is open to 4th-6th graders. The program is designed to grow children's knowledge by igniting a passion for learning, success, and service through a unique gardening education. It is taught by a dedicated group of Kansas State Extension Service Master Gardeners, volunteer teachers, and parents.

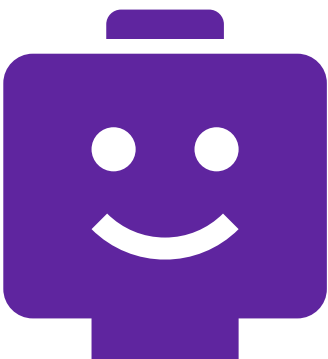
Lego League Jr.

Lego League Jr. is open to 1st-3rd graders. Students learn programming and problem-solving skills to solve current world challenges in a team environment with parent coaches.

Lego League Jr. meets one night a week in the multi-purpose room and ends with a final presentation.



Lego League



Lego League is open to 4th-6th graders. Students learn programming and problem-solving skills to solve current world challenges in a team environment with parent coaches.

Lego League meets in the evening in the multi-purpose room and ends with a final competition.

OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES

Additional activities are formed by parents and separate from the PTA. Here are some examples of where sports are played:

- Soccer: NEU, Sporting Brookside, Leawood
- Basketball: GABL, Upward
- Baseball: The J, 3&2
- Flag Football: The J, YMCA, KCFC

Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts are available for K-6th grade meet 1-3X a month and are sponsored outside of the PTA.

PeachJar is one way that parents and community organizers can send flyers about outside activities. Peach Jar flyers are sent via email to Prairie Parents. For more information check out: <https://www.smsd.org/about/departments/communications/peachjar>

Finally, the PTA will share any Shawnee Mission School District related-activities, such as Shawnee Mission East Lancer camps, in the SMSD Happenings Highlights on our Instagram page.



PANTHER PAWS

What Is A Panther Paw

Panther Paws are Prairie's student incentive program. Simply put, a way to recognize and reward students who are helpful in class or exhibit behavior "above and beyond" what's expected. Incoming Kindergarten students receive their first Panther Paw at Kindergarten Kick-Off.

What Can You Do With A Panther Paw

Students may redeem Panther Paws for a prize of their choice at the school store. The Prairie PTA provides the prizes for the store for the entire school year.





**We are so happy ✨
you are here**

☎ 913-993-4400

☎ 913-993-4488 (attendance)

✉ prairieelementary@gmail.com

🌐 PrairiePTA.org

🌐 Prairie.SMSD.org