

**Whispering Pines Elementary School
Parent/Student Handbook
2012-2013**

**Tamela Brown
Principal**

**Ruth Pando
Assistant Principal**

The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida

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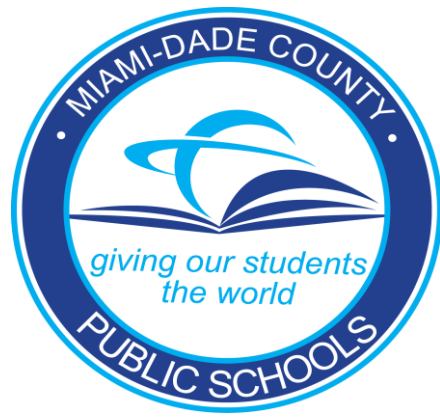


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Miami-Dade County Public Schools

Vision Statement

We are committed to provide educational excellence for all.

Mission Statement

We provide the highest quality education so that all of our students are empowered to lead productive and fulfilling lives as lifelong learners and responsible citizens.

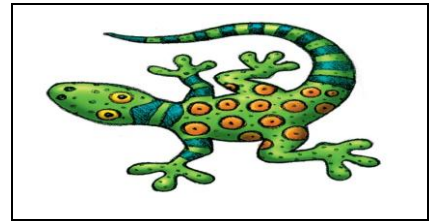
Message from the Principal

Message from the Principal (Customize/Optional)

Welcome to the 2012-2013 school year at Whispering Pines Elementary School! Your child is an integral component in our community of learners and we strive to provide a safe and nurturing educational facility. This is an exciting time in your child's life. Children who know their families are interested in and support their school program are less likely to have difficulties in school and are more likely to enjoy greater success. We want your child to be happy and successful at school and in life, and believe you play one of the most important roles as your child's initial teacher. We want you to continuously support your child's educational endeavors by communicating high expectations, assisting with homework, reading with your child, supporting our school's initiatives and joining our PTA. We believe communication among parents, students and teachers helps students succeed. Please share with your child's teacher any information that will help us better serve your child. It is important to keep your telephone number current so we can inform you about the great things happening at our school, provide information to you about your child's progress and contact you if a concern or emergency arises. Thank you for joining the Whispering Pines Elementary School Family. Let's work together to ensure your child's success!

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the 2012-2013 school year. I am excited to continue to be a part of the Whispering Pines Elementary Family. Our faculty and staff are determined to continue our tradition of educational excellence. I am certain that with the tireless work of our teachers, the outstanding effort of our students and the dedication of our parents we will not only be an A school again, but meet and exceed state and district standards. I look forward to seeing all of our boys and girls in school, on-time and ready to learn each and every day. Together we will foster life-long learners.

**Whispering Pines Elementary School
Mission Statement**



Whispering Pines Elementary is a school which fosters life-long learners in an atmosphere of shared respect, achievement and teamwork.

School Motto

Working Efficiently
Promoting Success
Educating Young Minds

School Information

Whispering Pines Elementary School was constructed in 1967 on 7.64 acres. The school is located at 18929 Southwest 89th Road, Cutler Bay, Florida. Whispering Pines Elementary School has proudly achieved, and maintained, an A status for ten consecutive years. Our goals for this year include a minimum of 85 percent of our students meeting high standards in reading and mathematics, 90 percent in writing and 67 percent in science.

Website

Pertinent information about our school may be found at our website located at www.wpines.dadeschools.net.

Important Dates

Interim Report Distribution	Report Card Distribution
9/18/12	11/13/12
12/4/12	2/5/13
2/19/13	4/16/13
5/7/13	6/27/13

Activities

Clubs

Miami-Dade County Public Schools' students may participate in a wide variety of activities, including student council, subject-area clubs, honor societies, service clubs, school publications and class activities. School-sponsored clubs may be curriculum-related or noncurriculum-related.

Curriculum-related clubs are student groups whose goals are an extension of the activities and objectives in a particular subject area within the school's curriculum. Conversely, noncurriculum-related clubs are student groups whose goals are special interest oriented and not directly related to the curriculum. Meetings of noncurriculum-related clubs may be scheduled only at times when instruction is not taking place, either before or after school.

Fieldtrips and Special Activities

Participation in fieldtrips requires that the student present a fieldtrip form signed by the parent/guardian to his/her teacher(s) in advance. In addition, at times vendors who have a "no refund" policy will require schools to pay the full amount of the fieldtrip prior to the event. In this case, students/parents will be notified in advance of the vendor's "no refund" policy.

Parties in School

Whispering Pines Elementary School is an educational facility and parties are not allowed during school hours. In addition to this, party treats and favors are not allowed to be distributed to students.

Fundraisers – Board Policy 5830

Fundraising activities must be conducted during non-instructional class time, preferably before and after school. An *Application for Fundraising Activity*, M-DCPS Form 1018 must be completed. Regional Center approval is required for any fundraising activity where collections take place outside of school grounds. This approval can be obtained by completing M-DCPS Form 5656, *Region Center Approval for Fundraising Activity (Community Sales)*.

Fundraising activities involving students working or providing services for community events or outside business organization for which compensation, monetary or otherwise, will be given, either to the students or the school, **are not** allowed to be conducted as school-sponsored /student fundraisers. Elementary school students are not allowed to participate in the sale of magazines.

Attendance Policy – Board Policy 5200

Student attendance is a means of improving student performance and critical in raising student achievement. Together, the staff of Miami-Dade County Public Schools, students, parents and the community must make every effort to lessen the loss of instructional time to students.

Excused School and Class Absences and Tardies

1. Student illness: Students missing 5 or more consecutive days of school due to illness or injury are required to provide a written statement from a health care provider. The written statement must include all days the student has been absent from school. If a student is continually sick and repeatedly absent from school due to a specific medical condition, he or she must be under the supervision of a health care provider in order to receive excused absences from school.
2. Medical appointment: If a student is absent from school due to a medical appointment, a written statement from a health care provider indicating the date and time of the appointment, must be submitted to the principal.
3. Death in immediate family
4. Observance of a religious holiday or service when it is mandated for all members of a faith that such a holiday or service is observed.
5. School-sponsored event or educational enrichment activity that is not a school-sponsored event, as determined and approved by the principal or principal's designee: The student must receive advance written permission from the principal or the principal's designee. Examples of special events include: public functions, conferences, and region, state and national competitions.
6. Subpoena by law enforcement agency or mandatory court appearance.
7. Outdoor suspensions
8. Other individual student absences beyond the control of the parent/guardian or student, as determined and approved by the principal or the principal's designee. The principal shall require documentation related to the condition.

Unexcused School Absence

Any absence that does not fall into one of the above excused absence categories is to be considered unexcused. Any student who has been absent from school will be marked unexcused until he/she submits required documentation as specified above. Failure to provide required documentation within three school days upon the return to school will result in an unexcused absence. Unexcused absences include:

1. Absences due to vacations, personal services, local non-school event, program or sporting activity
2. Absences due to older students providing day care services for siblings

3. Absences due to illness of others
4. Absences due to non-compliance with immunization requirements (unless lawfully exempted)

Bringing Pets to School

Please refrain from bringing pets to school as pets are not allowed.

Arrival/Dismissal

School Hours:

Pre-K, Kindergarten and First Grade- 8:20 a.m. – 1:50 p.m.

All Gifted/Discovery Students, First, Second, Third, Fourth and Fifth Grade: 8:35 a.m. – 3:05 p.m.

*****All students will be dismissed at 1:50 p.m. on Wednesdays.**

Before and After School Care Program

Before School Care – 7:00 a.m. – 8:15 a.m.

Story Hour – 1:50 p.m. – 3:05 p.m.

After School Care – 1:50 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Late Arrivals

Students who are tardy to school must report to the office to secure an admit. Excessive tardies may result in loss of privileges, detention, parent conference, and/or suspension. Late arrivals may be accrued and count towards unexcused absences.

Early Sign Out- Board Policy 5200

The early release of students causes disruption to the academic performance of all students and may create safety and security concerns. No students shall be released within the final 30 minutes of the school day unless authorized by the principal or principal's designee (i.e., emergency, sickness).

Student Dismissal

A form which allows parents to indicate the method in which their child will return home each day is sent home with students on the first day of school. Parents must complete this form and return it to their child's teacher. **Parents are permitted to wait in the courtyard area of the school to pick their children up 10 minutes prior to dismissal. Upon student release from class, parents and students must promptly exit the building within five (5) minutes. If parents would like to wait on siblings whom are released at alternate times, the designated waiting area is located at the main entrance of the building as there are several benches conveniently available. Due to safety and legal regulations, these procedures must be followed. Anyone who fails to follow these procedures will be considered a trespasser and is subject to arrest.**

Comprehensive Reading Plan

Elementary students are required to read at least five books or their equivalent during each nine-week grading period, including in-class independent reading and at-home reading. Students must also read for 30 minutes at home as part of their daily homework assignment. The length of the books and the complexity of the content may be taken into account when satisfying this requirement.

Messages and Use of Telephones

The office staff is not be responsible for delivering messages to students. Please make arrangements with students before they leave home. If an emergency arises, contact an administrator.

Lost and Found

Lost and found items are collected and stored in bins in front of Cone 100. If your child misplaces an item, please check the lost and found immediately as items that are not claimed are disposed of on a monthly basis.

Cafeteria

Food Cost

Breakfast

All Students	No charge
Adults	\$2.00

Lunch

Students	\$2.25
Reduced Price, Students	\$0.40
Adults	\$3.00

Free Breakfast

The National School Breakfast Program was enacted to ensure that school children are being served a nutritious breakfast daily. **Miami-Dade County Public Schools offers breakfast at no charge to all M-DCPS Students.** The breakfast at no charge is not dependent on the student qualifying for free/reduced meals at lunch and will be served in our cafeteria from 7:45 a.m. – 8:15 a.m.

Free/Reduced Lunch Program

The National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs as administered by Miami-Dade County Public Schools provide free and reduced priced meals for children unable to pay the full price. Applications must be filled out every school year; forms are sent to all homes with a letter to parents or guardians the first week of school. Meal benefits begin on the day the application is approved and continue throughout the school year in which the application is approved, the summer, and approximately **the first twenty days of the next school year.**

PAYPAMS

Miami Dade County Public School's Department of Food and Nutrition allows parents/guardians the convenience to pay on-line via the internet or by telephone for their child's/children meals with a credit or debit card. The parent/guardians will create a lunch account on-line for the child and will be able to access the following:

- a. view the account balance
- b. schedule automatic payments
- c. receive low-balance e-mail reminders
- d. view a report of daily spending and cafeteria purchases

Cafeteria Rules

Be Respectful

1. Stand quietly in line.
2. Speak in a soft voice when seated.
3. Use good manners at all times.

Be Prepared and Responsible

1. Clean up your eating area.
2. Know your lunch number.
3. Bring all items and money needed for lunch.

Be Safe

1. Wash and dry hands properly.
2. Keep hands and feet to yourself.
3. Stay seated until you are dismissed.

Cafeteria Procedures

1. Enter the cafeteria through the front doors in a single file line.
2. All students that purchase school lunch must walk directly to the assigned serving line, obtain lunch, walk to assigned table and sit down.
3. All students that bring lunch from home or do not desire to purchase school lunch must walk directly to the assigned table and sit down.
4. Students are to remain seated until their class is called by the cafeteria monitor or their teacher instructs them to place their trash in the cans and exit the cafeteria.

Registration Procedures

Our office processes student registrations on school days from 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Please call during regular school hours if you have any questions pertaining to student registration procedures.

Confidential Information

Parents, guardians and students are protected by The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and the Florida Statutes from individuals' access to information in students' educational records, and are provided the right to challenge the accuracy of these records. These laws provide that without the prior consent of the parent, guardian or eligible student, a student's records may not be released, except in accordance with the provisions listed in the above-cited laws. The laws provide certain exceptions to the prior consent requirement to the release of student records, which include, but are not limited to, school officials with a legitimate educational interest and lawfully issued subpoenas and court orders. Each school must provide to the parents, guardians or eligible students annual notice in writing of their right to inspect and review student records. Once a student reaches 18 years of age or is attending an institution of post-secondary education, the consent is required from the student only, unless the student qualifies as a dependent under the law.

Parent-Teacher Association (PTA)

The Whispering Pines Elementary School Parent-Teacher Association works with state and national PTAs to support and speak in the schools, in the community and before governmental bodies and other organizations that make decisions affecting youngsters. The PTA supports the faculty and administration in their efforts to improve educational and extracurricular activities in the school. The PTA encourages parent, student and public involvement at the school as a whole. The PTA hosts General Meetings throughout the school year. General meetings during the 2012-2013 school year will be held on August 28th, November 5th, January 8th, March 5th and May 7th. All General Meetings will be held at 7:00 p.m. in the cafeteria.

Emergency Contact Information

Student Data/Emergency Contact Cards are distributed during the first week of school. Students are expected to bring the cards home and present them to their parents or guardians. The card must be carefully completed and then returned. The information provided on the Student Data/Emergency Contact Card will enable school staff to contact the parent/guardian immediately in the case of an emergency. Students may only be released from school

to the persons listed on the emergency contact card after presenting a picture identification. No persons, other than school staff, will have access to the information submitted.

Code of Student Conduct

Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) is committed to providing a safe teaching and learning environment for students, staff, and members of the community. On March 12, 2008, the School Board approved a newly revised Code of Student Conduct (COSC). The revised COSC identifies, recognizes, and rewards model student behavior within a framework of clearly established and enforceable rules and policies. It advocates a holistic approach to promoting and maintaining a safe learning environment and requires active participation from students, parents/guardians, and school staff. Students and parents/guardians can access the English and Haitian/Creole versions of the document on the M-DCPS Website located at:

<http://ehandbooks.dadeschools.net/policies/90/index.htm> or you may request a copy from the main office.

BEHAVIORS AND RANGE OF CORRECTIVE STRATEGIES

BEHAVIORS

LEVEL I Behaviors are acts that disrupt the orderly operation of the classroom, school function, extracurricular activities or approved transportation.

LEVEL I

Disruptive Behaviors

- Unauthorized location
- Confrontation with another student
- Cutting class
- Disruptive behavior (including behavior on the school bus and at the school bus stop)
- Failure to comply with class and/or school rules
- Possession of items or materials that are inappropriate for an educational setting *
- Inappropriate public display of affection
- Repeated use of profane or crude language (general, not directed at someone)
- Unauthorized use of electronic devices
- Violation of dress code



Special Notes

- * See Sexual Offenses (Other), Level IV, for obscene or lewd material.
- Administrators must contact Miami-Dade Schools Police for any criminal conduct regardless of whether Schools Police Automated Reporting (SPAR) is indicated.
- If the victim of a crime requests a police report, the principal or designee must report the incident to the Miami-Dade Schools Police.

RANGE OF CORRECTIVE STRATEGIES

The principal or designee **must** select at least one of the following strategies from **PLAN I**. Principals may authorize use of **PLAN II** for repeated, serious or habitual Level I infractions.

PLAN I

- Parent/guardian contact **
- Reprimand
- Student, parents/guardians/staff conference
- Peer mediation
- Revocation of the right to participate in social and/or extracurricular activities
- Confiscation of wireless communication devices
- Detention or other Board-approved in-school program
- Temporary assignment from class where the infraction occurred
- Student contract
- School Center for Special Instruction (SCSI) ***
- Replacement or payment for any damaged property (if appropriate)
- Temporary loss of bus privileges (if appropriate)
- Participation in an informal counseling session related to the infraction
- Behavior Plan

Special Notes

- ** Good faith attempt must be made immediately to contact parent/guardian by telephone.
- *** Send written notice to parent/guardian within 24 hours via U.S. mail.

BEHAVIORS AND RANGE OF CORRECTIVE STRATEGIES

BEHAVIORS

Level II Behaviors are more serious than Level I because they significantly interfere with learning and/or the well-being of others.

LEVEL II

Seriously Disruptive Behaviors

- Cheating/Misrepresentation
- Confrontation with a staff member
- Defiance of school personnel
- Distribution of items or materials that are inappropriate for an educational setting *
- Failure to comply with previously prescribed corrective strategies
- False accusation
- Fighting (minor)
- Harassment (non-sexual or isolated)
- Instigative behavior
- Leaving school grounds without permission
- Joining clubs or groups not approved by the School Board
- Libel
- Petty theft (under \$300.00)
- Use of profane or provocative language directed at someone
- Prohibited sales on school grounds (other than controlled substances)
- Possession and/or use of tobacco products
- Slander
- Vandalism (minor)

Special Notes

- * See Sexual Offenses (other), Level IV, for obscene or lewd material.
- Administrators must contact Miami-Dade Schools Police for any criminal conduct regardless of whether Schools Police Automated Reporting (SPAR) is indicated.
- If the victim of a crime requests a police report, the principal or designee must report the incident to the Miami-Dade Schools Police.

RANGE OF CORRECTIVE STRATEGIES

The principal or designee **must** select at least one of the following strategies from **PLAN II**. The use of appropriate strategies from previous PLAN may be used in conjunction with this PLAN. Principals may authorize the use of **PLAN III** for repeated, serious or habitual **Level II** infractions.

PLAN II

- Parent/guardian contact **
- School-based program that focuses on modifying the student's inappropriate behavior or promotes positive behavior
- Suspension from school for one to five days***
- Diversion Center



Special Notes

- ** Good faith attempt must be made immediately to contact parent/guardian by telephone.
- *** Send written notice to parent/guardian within 24 hours via U.S. mail.

BEHAVIORS AND RANGE OF CORRECTIVE STRATEGIES

BEHAVIORS

LEVEL III Behaviors are more serious than Level II because they endanger health and safety, damage property, and/or cause serious disruptions to the learning environment.

LEVEL III

Offensive/Harmful Behaviors

- Assault/Threat against a non-staff member
- Breaking and Entering/Burglary
- Bullying (repeated harassment)*
- Disruption on campus/Disorderly conduct
- Fighting (serious)
- Harassment (Civil Rights)**
- Hazing (misdemeanor)
- Possession or use of alcohol and/or controlled substances
- Possession of simulated weapons
- Sexual harassment**
- Trespassing
- Vandalism (major)

Special Notes

➤ All Level III, IV, and V infractions, unless otherwise noted, require Schools Police Automated Reporting (SPAR). Administrators must contact Miami-Dade Schools Police. *

* Bullying infractions do not require a SPAR

** Harassment Civil Rights and Sexual Harassment do not require a SPAR, but must be reported to the Miami-Dade County Public Schools Office of Civil Rights Compliance at 305-995-1580.

RANGE OF CORRECTIVE STRATEGIES

The principal or designee **must** select at least one of the following strategies from **PLAN III**. The use of appropriate strategies from previous PLANS may also be used in conjunction with this PLAN. Principals may authorize the use of **PLAN IV** for repeated, serious or habitual **Level III** infractions.

PLAN III

- Parent/guardian contact***
- Suspension from school for one to ten days****
- Permanent removal from class (placement review committee decision required)
- Diversion Center
- Recommendation for alternative educational setting
- Recommendation for expulsion



Special Notes

*** Good faith attempt must be made immediately to contact parent/guardian by telephone.

**** Send written notice to parent/guardian within 24 hours via U.S. mail.

BEHAVIORS AND RANGE OF CORRECTIVE STRATEGIES

BEHAVIORS

LEVEL IV Behaviors are more serious acts of unacceptable behavior than Level III. They seriously endanger the health and well-being of others and/or damage property.

LEVEL IV

Dangerous or Violent Behaviors

- Battery against a non-staff member
- Grand theft (over \$300.00)
- Hate crime
- Hazing (felony)
- Motor vehicle theft
- Other major crimes/incidents
- Sale and/or distribution of alcohol and controlled substances
- Sex offenses (other) (including possession and/or distribution of obscene or lewd materials)

Special Notes

- All Level III, IV, and V infractions require Schools Police Automated Reporting (SPAR). Administrators must contact Miami-Dade Schools Police.

RANGE OF CORRECTIVE STRATEGIES

The principal or designee **must** use the following strategies from **PLAN IV**. The use of appropriate strategies from previous PLANS may also be used in conjunction with this PLAN.

PLAN IV

- Parent/guardian contact*
- Suspension from school for one to ten days**
- Recommendation for alternative educational setting
- Recommendation for expulsion.



Special Notes

- * Good Faith attempt must be made immediately to contact parent/guardian by telephone.

** Send written notice to parent/guardian within 24 hours via U.S. mail.

BEHAVIORS AND RANGE OF CORRECTIVE STRATEGIES

BEHAVIORS

LEVEL V Behaviors are the most serious acts of misconduct and violent actions that threaten life.

LEVEL V

Most Serious, Dangerous or Violent Behaviors

- Aggravated assault
- Aggravated battery against a non-staff member
- Armed robbery
- Arson
- Assault/Threat against M-DCPS employees or persons conducting official business
- Battery or Aggravated battery against M-DCPS employees or persons conducting official business*
- Homicide
- Kidnapping/Abduction
- Making a false report/threat against the school*
- Sexual battery
- Possession, use, sale, or distribution of firearms, explosives, destructive devices, and other weapons.*

Special Notes

- All Level III, IV, and V infractions require Schools Police Automated Reporting (SPAR). Administrators must contact Miami-Dade Schools Police.
- The possession of firearms or other weapons on school property may result in criminal penalties in addition to expulsion.
- * Mandatory one year expulsion.

RANGE OF CORRECTIVE STRATEGIES

The principal or designee **must** use the following strategies from **PLAN V**. The use of appropriate strategies from previous PLANS may also be used in conjunction with this PLAN.

PLAN V

- Parent/guardian contact **
- Suspension from school for ten days ***
- Recommendation for expulsion



Special Notes

- ** Good faith attempt must be made immediately to contact parent/guardian by telephone.
- *** Send written notice to parent/guardian within 24 hours via U.S. mail.
- This level of infraction may result in an expulsion requiring School Board action.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

The rights and responsibilities presented in the Code of Student Conduct reflect the need for providing students with greater opportunities to serve themselves and society, and allow students maximum freedom under law, commensurate with the schools' responsibility for student health, safety, and welfare.

Dress Code – Board Policy 5511

Students are expected to come to school with proper attention having been given to personal cleanliness, grooming, and neatness of dress. Students whose personal attire or grooming distracts the attention of other students or teachers from their school work shall be required to make the necessary alterations to such attire or grooming before entering the classroom or be sent home by the principal to be properly prepared for school. Students who fail to meet the minimum acceptable standards of cleanliness and neatness as determined by the principal and as specified in this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary measures.

Uniform Policy

Whispering Pines Elementary School is a mandatory uniform school. Uniform colors are **red, white, light blue, hunter green, khaki and navy blue**. The following items constitute the official Whispering Pines Elementary uniform:

Top

Students may wear red, white, light blue or hunter green polo shirts and/or sweatshirts. Students may also wear a Whispering Pines T-shirt.

Bottom

Students may wear khaki or navy blue slacks, shorts, skirts or skorts. Jeans may only be worn on Fridays.

Cell Phones

Possession of a cellular telephone is not a violation of the Code of Student Conduct (CSC). However, the possession of a cellular telephone which disrupts the educational process; the use of the cellular telephone during school hours; and the possession or use of a cellular telephone which disrupts or interferes with the safety-to-life issue for students being transported on a M-DCPS school bus, would be a violation of the CSC.

Internet Use Policy – Board Policy 7540.03

Access and use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and its use must support the educational objectives of the District. Students must always get permission from their teachers prior to using the internet. In addition, the District prohibits the transmission of materials such as copyright material, threatening or obscene material or material protected by trade secret, which violate local, state, and federal law or regulation, as well as the use of the Internet for product advertisement, commercial activities, political campaigning or solicitation.

Health Screening

Tuberculosis Clinical Screening - Each student shall have proof of a tuberculosis clinical screening and appropriate follow-up prior to initial enrollment in any grade in a Miami-Dade County Public School. This screening is to be administered at the time of the Student Health Exam and within twelve (12) months prior to initial enrollment in any grade in a Miami-Dade County Public School. If the screening indicates that a follow-up skin test is needed, a student can be admitted but only with a health provider's statement that the student is free of communicable tuberculosis and can attend school.

Immunizations

Requirements for School Entry:

1. A complete Florida Certification of Immunization – Blue Card Form DH 680 - according to grade level
2. State of Florida School Entry Health Exam – Yellow Form DH 3040 - no older than 12 months
3. Tuberculosis Clinical Screening, PPD or Chest X-ray.

Insurance

The Student Protection Plan is designed to cover students or injuries while traveling to and from school or when involved in accidents while engaged in supervised activities on the school premises. Participation in this program is voluntary. The school will forward the 2012-2013 enrollment application and additional information to parents.

Florida KidCare

Florida KidCare provides high quality, low cost health insurance for uninsured children aged birth to 18. KidCare includes MediKids, Healthy Kids, The Children's Medical Services Network (CMS) for children with special health care needs, and Medicaid.

*Miami-Dade County Public Schools is a recipient of a Boots on the Ground School Partnership contract for marketing and outreach services. In the coming weeks a variety of materials will be provided to schools to families to enroll their children in Florida KidCare. Go to www.floridakidcare.org for enrollment procedures.

Parent Portal

Parents/Guardians of all Miami-Dade County Public Schools students, including employees, have access to the Parent Portal. In order to access the information in the portal, you must first establish a parent user account. At this time you can see and update personal information, see his/her information - including grades, attendance, and bus route information, and have access to the *Parent Resource* link, which takes you to sites such as Parent Academy, School of Choice, etc.

You will also have access to electronic books for each subject; free and reduced lunch applications with balance renewal capability; access to a new *Choice* application that will allow parents to indicate preferential school choice via the portal; and access to the *Supplemental Educational Services (SES)* component of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). Please use the following steps to access the Parent Portal:

1. Obtain your child's Student Identification Number
2. Obtain your 6 Digit Parent Identification Number (PIN).
3. Create a parent account by logging in to <http://myportal.dadeschools.net/parent>
4. It is recommended (after 24 hours) to reset your password with password management P-Synch.
5. Log in to the Parent Portal to access student grades, attendance and important information.

Grade Reporting

Academic Grades

Academic grades are to reflect the student's academic progress based on the competencies/benchmarks for the grade level/course in which the student is enrolled. The grade must not be based upon student's effort and/or conduct.

KINDERGARTEN GRADES	NUMERICAL VALUE	VERBAL INTERPRETATION	GRADE POINT VALUE
E	90-100%	Outstanding progress	4
G	80-89%	Above average progress	3
S	70-79%	Average progress	2
M	60-69%	Lowest acceptable progress	1
U	0-59%	Failure	0

K-12 GRADES	NUMERICAL VALUE	VERBAL INTERPRETATION	GRADE POINT VALUE
A	90-100%	Outstanding progress	4
B	80-89%	Above average progress	3
C	70-79%	Average progress	2
D	60-69%	Lowest acceptable progress	1
F	0-59%	Failure	0
I	0	Incomplete	0

Conduct

Conduct grades are to be used to communicate to both students and their parents/guardians the teacher's evaluation of a student's behavior and citizenship development. These grades are independent of academic and effort grades.

Grade Point Average

When calculating the grade for a semester or an annual course, the following grade point averages are to be used:

- A = 3.50 and above
- B = 2.50 – 3.49
- C = 1.50 – 2.49
- D = 1.00 – 1.49

Honor Roll Qualifications

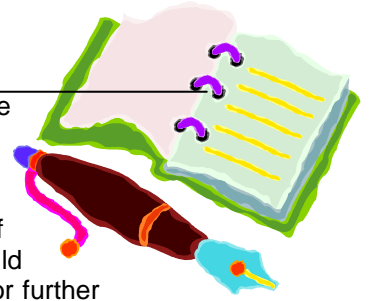
	Principal's Honor Roll	Superior Honor Roll	Regular Honor Roll	Citizenship Honor Roll
Academic Average	4.0	3.6	3.50 – 3.59	
Academic Grades	All As	All As and Bs	All As and Bs	
Effort	All 1	All 1 and 2	All 1 and 2	All 1 and 2
Conduct Average	4.0	3.6	3.0 or higher	4.0
Conduct Grades	All As	All As and Bs	All As and Bs	All As

Interim Progress Report

Interim progress reports will be sent home **at any time** the student is performing unsatisfactorily in academics, conduct, or effort, and are disseminated to all students at mid-grading period.

Homework / Make-up Assignments

The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida recognizes regular purposeful home learning as an essential component of the instructional process in the Miami-Dade County Public Schools. Home learning is an integral factor in fostering the activities into the home and the community. Regular home learning provides opportunities for developmental practice drill, the application of skills already learned, the development of independent study skills, enrichment activities, and self-discipline. Home learning should provide reinforcement and extension of class instruction, and should serve as a basis for further study and preparation for future assignments.



Student's Responsibilities:

1. Completing assigned home learning as directed.
2. Returning home learning to the teacher by the designated time.
3. Submitting home learning assignments which reflects careful attention to detail and quality of work.

Parent's Responsibilities:

1. Providing continued interest and concern for the child's successful performance in school through encouraging and supporting the child in his/her performance of home learning assigned.
2. Indicating an interest about assignments and assisting, if possible, when requested by the child, but not to include performing the work for the child.
3. Supporting the school in regard to the students being assigned home learning.
4. Requesting assignments for students when short term absences are involved.

Home learning assignments will be appropriate for the child's grade, and serve the following purposes:

- to provide reinforcement on a skill already taught.
- to provide real life application of skills.
- to develop and enlarge the personal culture of the student.

The recommended daily home learning averages are as follows:

<u>Grade Level</u>	<u>Frequency of Assignments</u>	<u>Total Daily Average (All Subjects)</u>
K-1	Daily (5 days a week)	30 minutes
2-3	Daily (5 days a week)	45 minutes
4-5	Daily (5 days a week)	60 minutes

To be most beneficial, home learning should not become the cause of family conflict. It is important for teachers and parents to work together to help students develop positive attitudes about completing home assignments. The ultimate beneficiary of a good home learning policy will be your child. Your input and involvement are earnestly solicited and will be deeply appreciated.

Teachers are required to provide students with make-up assignments once the absence has been excused; however, it is the responsibility of the student to request the assignments from the teacher(s).

Out of Area Student Transfer – Board Policy 5131

Students in the regular school program (K-12) are assigned to attend school on the basis of the actual residence of their parent or legal guardian and the attendance area of the school as approved by the Board. A student may request an out of area transfer if the student resides with parent or legal guardian, and a change of residence occurs. The Region Superintendent (or designated Region Director) may administratively assign or approve the reassignment or transfer of students when the Florida Inventory of School Houses (FISH) capacity of the receiving school is below 100 percent.

In the event a student with an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) requests to attend a school other than the school in which the student is enrolled, parent(s)/guardian(s) must meet with Region Center special education personnel to ensure that the programmatic needs of the student can be met at the requested school.

Textbooks

Textbooks are available and issued to all students. Students are responsible for ensuring their textbooks are kept safe and free from damage. Students are not required to take textbooks home on a daily basis; therefore, large backpacks are not necessary.

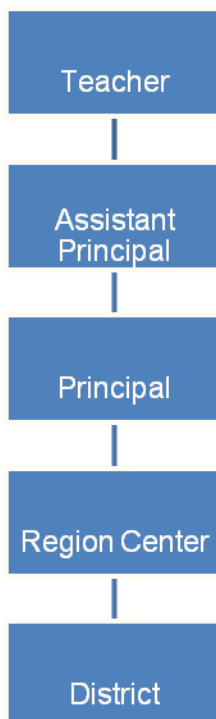
Permanent Records

Miami-Dade County Public Schools maintains the records of students in PK-12 and adult/vocational students enrolled in high school completion programs or vocational programs of 450 hours or more. Permanent records consist of the following student information:

- a) pupil's or student's full legal name
- b) authenticated birth date, place of birth, race, and sex
- c) last known address of pupil or student
- d) names of pupil's or student's parent(s) or guardian(s)
- e) name and location of last school attended
- f) number of days present and absent, date enrolled, date withdrawn
- g) courses taken and record of achievement, such as grades, credits, or certification of competence
- h) date of graduation or date of program completion, including a statement of diploma, that is, standard, special, certificate of completion, or General Equivalency Diploma
- i) State and/or District standardized assessment/achievement test results, if required for graduation
- j) written records of access to the student's record
- k) Home Language Survey

Procedures for Addressing Concerns

For issues involving an individual teacher or class, parents address their concerns to the following individuals in the order below.



Transportation Eligibility

Students will be assigned for transportation to and from school on a M-DCPS bus if the distance between the home and the school exceeds two miles (2), or if the distance between the home and the nearest bus stop exceeds 1 ½ miles. Students who do not meet these distance requirements are not eligible for transportation services. Special provisions may be made for Special Education students based on the requirements of their Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

Safety and Security

The Emergency Operations Plan

Student and employee safety is a primary concern of the Miami-Dade County Public School (M-DCPS) System. The Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) was created to provide school personnel with the necessary leadership skills and knowledge needed to respond to critical incidents or other related emergencies that may occur in our schools /community. All schools have a site specific plan to address all types of critical incidents. These plans address the individual needs of the school, and provide guidelines for devising methods for communicating with the staff, students, parents/guardians, and the media during a critical incident or an emergency. Some of the protective action procedures include the evacuation of students/staff from the building(s), evacuation of the disabled and if necessary the relocation of students/staff from the school campus, lockdown procedures and holding/dismissing students during school and community emergencies. Some important tips for parent/guardians to remember during a Critical Incident are as follows:

- Remain calm;
- Monitor media outlets for updates and official messages from M-DCPS;
- Do not flood the school with telephone calls; and
- If the school is on lockdown, wait until the lockdown is lifted before going to the school.

All school administrators, Region Center Superintendents/Directors and all M-DCPS Police officers have been adequately trained in the school EOP and are prepared to respond immediately during a critical incident or emergency to provide safety for all children.

Accident Reports

Any student who witnesses an accident or is injured in school should report it immediately to the nearest staff member.

Code Yellow/Code Red

In the event of an emergency, the primary responsibility of all school personnel is to provide for the safety of all students. In the event a school administrator announces a possible threat to students and staff safety exists within the community (Code Yellow), or an imminent threat to students and staff safety exists within the school (Code Red) students, faculty and staff will comply with all the procedures outlined in the Miami-Dade County Public Schools Critical Incident Response Plan and remain on lockdown until a school administrator makes an "All Clear" announcement.

Closing of School

The emergency closing of a school for any cause, such as weather or in which the safety of individuals may be endangered, is only at the discretion of the Superintendent of Schools.

Fire Drills

Ten fire drills will take place according to the Miami-Dade County Public Schools Policy and Emergency Procedures. At the sound of the emergency bell, students must stop what they are doing and follow the teacher's

instructions. They must clear the building promptly by the prescribed route. Any student who is in the hallway or the restroom at the sound of the emergency bell must proceed to the nearest exit and locate the teacher. Students, teachers and staff must remain outside the building until permission is given to re-enter.

Visitors

Due to legal regulations, students are not permitted to have guests attend school with them at any time. Tours may be arranged to view the school. Classroom visits require a 24-hour notice. Visitors must first sign-in and produce photo identification in the main office prior to entering the building for any reason. Anyone who fails to follow these procedures will be considered a trespasser and is subject to arrest.

Media Center

The Media Center is open for all students to check out books and take Accelerated Reader assessments. Students may use the Media Center during the hours of 8:45 a.m. – 3:05 p.m. and parents may accompany their child to the Media Center after school from 3:05-3:20. **All adult visitors must report to the office prior to entering the Media Center to sign-in and receive a visitor's pass.**

Special Education

The School Board of Miami-Dade County ensures that all students suspected of having a disability are identified, evaluated, and provided appropriate, specially designed instruction and related services, if it is determined that the student meets the state's eligibility criteria and the parent consents to initial placement.

Prior to referral for evaluation, the student must have participated in the school's Progress Monitoring Plan (PMP) program and have been referred to the school's intervention team.

Students with disabilities who are eligible and require special education will have an Individual Educational Plan (IEP). The IEP describes the student's strengths and weaknesses and documents the services and supports the student needs in order to access a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE).

The IEP is a working plan that must be developed by the IEP team at least once every 12 months and reviewed, when appropriate, to revise and address any lack of expected progress toward annual goals, or to consider any new information that has been provided through re-evaluation or by the parent/guardian.

Parent involvement in the special education process is very important. Parents will be asked to participate in the IEP process each year and to consider the need for their child's re-evaluation at least once every three years.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) states that parents of a child with a disability have certain procedural safeguards. The *Summary of Procedural Safeguards for Parents of Students with Disabilities* documents all the information about the rights of parents/guardians. This notice of procedural safeguards is made available to the parent.

Rights that are presented in the procedural safeguard document include, but are not limited to, the right of prior written notice; informed consent; participation in meetings; records, independent educational evaluation, mediation, state complaint; local education agency complaint; due process hearings; resolution meetings; due process; attorney fees; discipline; and private school placement.

As the parent/guardian of a child with disabilities, you are a very important member of the team that plans your child's education. Be informed and get involved. If you have any questions, please contact your child's school. Staff from the special education department and your child's student service provider will help to answer your questions. Additional information may also be found at <http://ese.dadeschools.net/>.

Student Services

One of the most important aspects of the guidance and counseling program is helping the children to develop positive self-concepts and greater understanding of themselves and others. This is accomplished by working with the children in classroom settings, small groups, and/or individually. Students are also encouraged to speak with the counselor whenever the need arises. If you require any additional assistance, please call Whispering Pines Elementary School and ask for our counselor.

Medication

Students are not permitted to administer medication to themselves or others. Students are not allowed to be in possession of any type of medication while on school campus. An authorization for medication form signed by a physician must be on file in the office if your child takes any medication in school. The medication will be administered by designated school personnel. If there are illnesses or conditions which require medication, contact the office for information concerning the procedures.

The Parent Academy

The Parent Academy is a free, year-round, parent engagement and skill building program of Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS). The goals are to educate parents about the importance of their role; strengthen the family unit; unite families and schools; and inform parents of their rights, responsibilities and the educational opportunities available to their children and to them personally.

In addition, The Parent Academy provides classes and workshops for parents/guardians; organizes Family Learning Events; coordinates the availability of M-DCPS and community resources for parents/guardians.

Within this framework, The Parent Academy offers classes and workshops developed around the five subject area strands listed below:

- Help Your Child Learn (*Example: PASSport to Success – 8 module series*)
- Parenting Skills (*Example: Positive Discipline*)
- Arts & Culture (*Example: Enrich Your Child through Arts and Culture in Miami*)
- Health and Wellness (*Example: Preventing Substance Abuse*)
- Personal Growth (*Example: Parent Portal*)

The Parent Academy “campus” is spread throughout every corner of this community, and offers free classes and workshops at over 250 local sites such as public schools, libraries, parks, colleges, private businesses, and neighborhood centers. Monthly calendars are posted in the *Course Directory* section on The Parent Academy’s Web site at www.theparentacademy.net. The Parent Academy staff members are available to provide parents/guardians, students and school sites with guidance and assistance in scheduling workshops. Staff can be reached at (305) 995-2680.

Volunteer Program

The School Volunteer Program is responsible for electronic registration, background checks and trainings of volunteers. There are two different levels of volunteerism.

Level 1 - complete a database background check	Level 2 - complete a fingerprint background check
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Day chaperones for field trips• Classroom assistants• Math and/or reading tutors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Certified Volunteers• Mentors• Listeners/Oyentes• Athletic/Physical Education assistants• Overnight chaperones.

Any individual interested in volunteering in Miami-Dade County Public Schools must:

- Show a current valid government-issued identification with picture.
- Show a social security card (check name and number).
- Complete a background check.
- Upon clearance, attend an orientation at the school.

The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida adheres to a policy of nondiscrimination in employment and educational programs/activities and strives affirmatively to provide equal opportunity for all as required by:

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 - prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, or national origin.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended - prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, or national origin.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 - prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender.

Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA) as amended - prohibits discrimination on the basis of age with respect to individuals who are at least 40.

The Equal Pay Act of 1963 as amended - prohibits gender discrimination in payment of wages to women and men performing substantially equal work in the same establishment.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 - prohibits discrimination against the disabled.

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) - prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in employment, public service, public accommodations and telecommunications.

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) - requires covered employers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to "eligible" employees for certain family and medical reasons.

The Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978 - prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.

Florida Educational Equity Act (FEEA) - prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, gender, national origin, marital status, or handicap against a student or employee.

Florida Civil Rights Act of 1992 - secures for all individuals within the state freedom from discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap, or marital status.

Veterans are provided re-employment rights in accordance with P.L. 93-508 (Federal Law) and Section 205.07 (Florida Statutes), which stipulate categorical preferences for employment.