

Miami Springs Middle School

Faculty & Staff Handbook

2011-2012

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ATTENDANCE - EMPLOYEES

Reasonable regularity of attendance is expected from all Miami-Dade County Public Schools employees in order to maintain efficiency and productivity. Both the school board rules and labor contracts contain provisions which address both good attendance incentives and excessive unauthorized absences.

- **Notification of Attendance Procedures**

Work site supervisors and principals are responsible for communicating attendance procedures to employees, including appropriate and timely procedures for reporting absences. Work site supervisors and principals are also expected to apprise all employees of good attendance incentives through faculty handbooks or similar staff guidelines, as well as by review in faculty and staff meetings.

- **Attendance Incentives and Benefits**

Good attendance provisions entitle eligible full-time employees to “cash in” sick leave days accrued each year at 80% of value, provided no more than three sick/personal leave days were used during the fiscal year and at least 21 accrued sick leave days remain after cash-in.

Terminal pay provisions reward employees who have maintained regular attendance by payment for accrued sick leave days upon resignation or normal retirement. (This benefit is paid to beneficiaries if services are terminated by death.) Under specific conditions set forth in each labor contract, and in school board rules for exempt employees, eligibility is initiated when an employee begins to accrue sick leave, and is maximized after twelve years of service.

A primary related benefit exists to assist employees in maintaining good attendance: the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). The EAP provides for service such as consultation, treatment, and rehabilitation to help employees prevent personal problems from negatively affecting job attendance and performance. The EAP is completely voluntary and is strictly governed by confidentiality of records.

- **Probationary Service**

Non-certified employees new to Miami-Dade County Public Schools are employed in probationary periods of varying lengths depending on applicable labor contracts; during this time, performance and attendance are monitored carefully. During the probationary period, employees may be terminated without recourse. After the probationary period, such employees are considered annual contract employees and are subject to annual reappointment.

- **Excessive Absences – Faculty/Staff**

All employees are governed by Chapter 231.44 of the Florida Statutes: school board employees who are willfully absent from duty without leave shall forfeit compensation for the time of such absence, and his/her employment shall be subject to termination by the school board.

Specific procedures by which each school district implements this law are enumerated in labor contracts and (for confidential and managerial exempt personnel) School Board Rules. Principals and work location supervisors are required to report absences properly and consistently on leave and payroll records. Documented communication should be held with employees whose attendance is irregular, in order to apprise such employees of the effects and impacts of their absences on the total school program and the continuity of operations at the work location. When absences become excessive and cause a detrimental impact upon program continuity, appropriate disciplinary action should be taken. For members of the AFSCME and MDCSMEC bargaining units, definitions and procedures are cited in those labor contracts. For instructional, certified employees, attendance and punctuality are included among the Professional Responsibilities criteria Performance Standard 7 of the Instructional Performance Evaluation and Growth System (IPEGS).

- **Teacher Work Day**

The employee workday shall be seven (7) hours and twenty (20) minutes for employees at the secondary level. The workday shall include lunch and planning preparation periods. **The established workday at Miami Springs Middle School is 8:30 a.m. to 3:50 p.m. for teachers, unless a faculty meeting is scheduled.** With no exception, teachers are expected to arrive at school on time and to meet classes on time.

In the case of late arrival or early departure from the work location, an employee present more than one-fourth (1/4) and less than three-fourths (3/4) or more of the workday is considered as working one half (1/2) day; an employee present three-fourths (3/4) or more of the workday is considered as having worked a full day, upon prior notification and *approval* by the principal or the designated supervising administrator.

- **Abandonment of Position**

After unauthorized absences by exempt personnel or members of AFSCME, UOPD, UTD, MDCSMEC, and FOP bargaining units for three consecutive work days, work location supervisors may after, having made reasonable efforts to contact the absent employee, refer the employee to the Division of Professional Standards and fill the position with a provisional replacement until a final disposition is determined.

- **Sick Leave**

Each full-time employee is entitled to accumulate one day of sick leave per month of employment. Such sick leave is to be accrued in the following manner:

Four days of sick leave will be provided to each employee as of the first day of employment of each fiscal year, and thereafter each person shall accrue one day of sick leave for each month of employment creditable to the member at the end of the month.

- **Personal Leave**

Full time employees who are eligible to accrue sick leave may use up to a maximum of six days personal leave, with pay, per year.

ABSENCES

If it is possible to notify Ms. Nikky Arrechea of your absence in advance, you are encouraged to do so in order to allow adequate time to secure quality substitute coverage for your classes. However, if an emergency should arise, **please contact Ms. Arrechea the night before your absence at (786) 838-2926 before 9:00 p.m.**

If you need to report your absence the same morning, please call **Ms. Arrechea (786) 838-2926 between the hours of 5:30 a.m. and 6:30 a.m.**

Please report your absence directly to Ms. Arrechea. You may make suggestions as to which substitute you prefer, but **do not** secure the substitute yourself. Make sure all lesson plans are secured with Ms. Arrechea.

When you are absent from work, you must notify Ms. Arrechea by 2:00 p.m. whether you will report to work the following day. Failure to do so will result in the substitute being retained and you being charged for the day.

If it becomes necessary to leave the building when classes are in session, please:

1. Notify an Administrator.
2. Notify the Principal's secretary for payroll purposes.

3. Sign out on the sign out book located in the Main Office.

SIGN IN AND OUT

All faculty members are required to “sign-in” at the start of the school day and “sign-out” before leaving at the end of the day. **The roster is located on the bulletin board in the Main Office.** Any blank spaces appearing next to a faculty member’s name will be recorded as an absence when the payroll is prepared.

If a teacher should need to leave the building during the school day, it is the teacher’s responsibility to inform an administrator and sign out on the log sheet located in the Main Office. Teachers must also sign in upon returning to the building.

Special announcements will be posted for your attention on the “sign-in” bulletin board.

TEMPORARY DUTY REQUEST PROCEDURES

1. Fill out the form completely, in ink. This should be done at least **one week** in advance. Attach any documentation related to the temporary duty request with substitute funding structure if available. Indicate also if NO substitute is required.
2. The form will then be forwarded to the principal for an approval signature and then returned.
3. When the form is returned to you, please submit to the Principal’s Secretary and personally inform her of the temporary duty.

If you require a substitute for temporary duty, please inform the Principal’s Secretary as soon as possible. Do not wait until you receive the necessary approval signatures. If your temporary duty is NOT approved, or is cancelled for some reason, you should immediately inform the Principal’s Secretary or you will be charged for the day.

MORNING ANNOUNCEMENTS

When school is in session, announcements related to school concerns will be made at designated times on the public address system and/or the television news broadcast. Times designated for announcements are: each morning during homeroom and five minutes prior to school dismissal. Announcement forms are to be used for all P.A. and announcements. The forms must be approved by an administrator. Announcement forms are available in the Teacher Mail Room. Only authorized personnel will conduct the morning exercises and make announcements at established times.

EMERGENCY ANNOUNCEMENTS may be made when necessary and only by authorized personnel.

ASSEMBLY PROGRAMS

All assembly programs presented during the school day will pertain to related classroom activities. The administration will announce assembly programs at least one week in advance so that teachers can prepare their classes for attendance. Teachers must accompany students to the assembly program and remain with them. Faculty members should not assume responsibility for more than a single class at a time.

ACTIVITIES APPROVAL

Any club/organization activity that is planned before, during, or after school requires approval from the administration. For activities at night, please be reminded that fees for security and/or police may be assessed.

BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT/ PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES (See also Section II)

The presence of every teacher is required for one scheduled Back to School Night activity each year and four Team Parent Conferences.

CAFETERIA PROCEDURES

Lunches are served in the cafeteria for students and staff. Lunches for teachers are \$3.00 per full meal. Lunches for students are \$2.50. Miami Springs Middle School participates in the free and reduced lunch program for students who cannot afford full price.

In an effort to improve building security and to comply with health regulations, the kitchen area in the cafeteria is restricted to authorized personnel only.

CARE OF THE ROOMS

Classrooms are to be kept in good condition at all times. At the close of the day, boards should be erased and desks arranged. The bulletin board should be neat and attractive and should display students' work. Please check daily and deal effectively with any property damage. Additionally, all microwaves and refrigerators are to be located in the teacher workrooms and not in individual classrooms. Due to the sensitive nature of our fire alarm system, **all** burning candles are PROHIBITED. Teachers should instill in the students a pride in keeping the rooms clean, orderly and attractive.

CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT (See also Section V)

A limited number of Code of Student Conduct booklets are available for distribution to administrators, counselors, other staff designated by the principal, and to students entering school who are new to Miami-Dade County. An outline listing the highlights is included in the appendix of this handbook.

TELEPHONE USE

Every telephone in the building is a business telephone. Teachers are requested to keep personal calls to a minimum. Do not call 411 or the operator for assistance, as the school is charged for these calls. Please use the directory. Teachers are requested to make personal calls only when necessary. Long distance telephone calls are to be made in the main office, utilizing the telephone designated for this purpose. Long distance calls of a personal nature are not to be charged to the school telephone number. Please charge all personal long distance calls to your home number or your calling card. Any unauthorized calls will be traced and charged to the appropriate individual. Please log all long distance phone calls on the long distance log located with the principal's secretary.

DUPLICATION OF MATERIALS

Please DO NOT send students to the Main Office/Teacher's Workroom during instructional time to run copies. The copy machine is located in the Teacher's Workroom.

CLASSROOM SUPPLIES

All general classroom supplies (pencils, paper clips, thumbtacks, tape, etc) are to be obtained from Ms. Carvajal. Please submit a list of the items needed at least two days in advance to Ms. Carvajal.

FIELD TRIPS (See also Section II)

Trips for students are permitted which have value in meeting educational objectives, are directly related to the curriculum, or are necessary to the fulfillment of obligations to the interscholastic athletic and activity programs.

In the planning of field trips, absences from school should be restricted to the least number of school days possible. The educational reason and length of the field trip must be approved by the principal. Provisions for students to make up assignments for classes missed due to participation in field trips must be in accordance with procedures outlined in Board Rules 6Gx13-5A-1.04 – Student Attendance. A signed parental permission form must be on file at the school prior to student's participation.

Students shall not be denied the privilege of participating in a field trip because of financial need. A roster is to be submitted along with the field trip application request that includes the names, addresses, and telephone number of all students who are eligible to participate in field trips regardless of the student's decision to participate in said trip. Clubs and/or organizations shall provide funds from fund-raising activities to assist students with demonstrable needs. Provisions shall be made, when necessary, to finance the field trip through fund-raising activities.

School-sponsored trips involving students traveling by air must be with a Federal Aviation Administration-certified air carrier.

School-sponsored trips involving students traveling by ship must be with a carrier certified by the U.S. Coast Guard.

School-sponsored trips involving students traveling by train must be with a carrier certified by the Federal Railroad Administration.

School-sponsored out-of-state trips involving students traveling by bus must be with a carrier certified by the Bureau of Motor Carrier Safety; local and intrastate trips involving students traveling by bus must be in accordance with Florida Statutes and School Board Rules.

Provisions must be made for proper supervision of students by school employees. Parents are permitted to assist in such supervision. The adult/student ratio is 1:10 or less.

All chaperons must obtain at least a level 2 volunteer clearance for fieldtrips and a level 3 volunteer clearance for any over night trip.

Permission for students to participate in any of the following events within the state may be granted by the principal:

- Scheduled Florida High School Activities Association Events
- Scheduled Vocational Student Organization Events
- Scheduled Interscholastic Athletic Events

Requests for student groups other than those indicated above or pre-approved by the Board to leave the county for events shall be directed by the principal to the Regional Center assistant superintendent for approval or disapproval prior to the formulation of plans for the trip.

An ad hoc committee consisting of a representative from the Miami-Dade Council of Parent-Teacher Association/Parent-Teacher-Student Association, the Family and Community Involvement Advisory Committee, the United Teachers of Dade, Regional Center and district administration, students and principals, will be appointed annually, by the Superintendent of Schools, or his/her designee, to develop a list of recommended out-of-county and out-of-state trips for submission to the Board for action prior to September 1. Approval of this list by the Board would permit students to participate, providing the trip is recommended by the principal. All other out-of-state and out-of-county trips will require specific Board

approval and shall be directed to the Superintendent of Schools, and shall include the recommendation of the District Director of the Division of Athletics/Activities and Accreditation for approval and disapproval.

Field trip requests to be approved by the School Board may be submitted to the District Director of the Division of Athletics/Activities and Accreditation at any time, but no later than 30 school days before the Board meeting prior to the anticipated trip. In cases of emergency the Board may, upon request, permit exceptions to this requirement.

- **FIELD TRIP PROCEDURES** (See also Section III)

** Prior to making any commitments to students, parents, teachers, etc, secure permission from the principal/designee to conduct the field trip.

All personnel involved with submitting approved field trip requests must carefully review Board Rule 6Gx13-6A-1.22, Field Trips, and follow the procedures listed below:

- I. Sponsor's Responsibilities:
 - A. Secure approval from principal/designee to conduct the field trip.
 - B. Ensure that adequate funding is procured to fund the trip.
 - C. Secure completed and signed parent permission form (includes transportation information) from each student who will participate in the field trip. Emphasis should be placed on complete medical information.
 - D. Complete the Field Trip Permission Request Form, FM-2431 (Rev. 07-05) attaching the following information and submit to the activities director for approval:
 1. Letter of invitation
 2. Objectives of the trip
 3. Complete itinerary, including coordination of transportation
 4. Field trip roster FM-3530 (Rev. 08-98).
 5. Signed parent permission form for each participating student
 6. A list of the names of the chaperones. The maximum ratio of 1:15 applies to chaperones aged 21 or older.
 - E. Follow-up with the activities director concerning the progress of securing approval for the trip. Allow three days for approval (in county).
 - F. Upon approval, ensure that the appropriate information is available and accessible to chaperones during the trip:
 1. Field trip roster.
 2. Copy of all parent permission forms which provide emergency contact information for each student.
 3. Evacuation/Fire Protection Information
 4. Any other information which will assist them in their responsibilities for students during the trip.
- II. Sponsors must remain with the group during travel.
- III. All out-of-state trips not specifically listed on the Field Trip Request Form and all out-of-county field trips must have Board approval. Field trip requests must be submitted to the Division of Athletics/Activities and Accreditation with all supporting documentation and approval signatures no later than 30 days preceding the Board meeting prior to the anticipated trip. The division of Athletics/Activities and Accreditation will prepare the Board agenda item and notify the principal of the Board's decision.

TRANSPORTING STUDENTS IN A PRIVATE VEHICLES

Transporting students in a private automobile is emphatically discouraged. However, there are times when the principal may feel it is necessary, particularly if the student is seriously ill and must be provided medical attention. An individual school board employee who transports a student in his/her personal automobile must be acting within the scope of employment. Any employee acting in bad faith with malicious purpose or with willful disregard of human rights, safety, or property will be held liable.

FACULTY DRESS

All faculty members are expected to dress in a manner appropriate for a professional in the business community. Casual attire is to be reserved for workdays and sporting events.

FOOD SALES

In keeping with Board policy, no food, drinks, candy, etc., may be sold on school property during school hours. Sales before and after school are acceptable. You can avoid problems by simply adhering to District policy. Also, sales *must be school sponsored*: no sales for outside agents. **All food sales must be approved as listed below under Fund Raising.**

FUND RAISING (See also Section III)

Fund-raising activities must be approved by the principal/or designee. Approval forms may be secured from the treasurer. The sponsor is to prepare the form and return it to the treasurer, who will assume the responsibility to secure all the required approval signatures. In projects involving fund raising in the community, the principal must submit a written request to the North Central Regional Center office for approval of the activity. *Operating reports must be filed immediately after the activity is completed.*

PROPERTY INVENTORY

The Miami-Dade County Public Schools has strict guidelines for property control. Adherence to these guidelines is mandatory for **all** school personnel.

Any single item of property costing \$999.00 or more must have a property control bar (PC#) affixed to it by District Personnel. All computers and radios, regardless of value, must have a property control bar code. Many items purchased through Furniture, Fixture and Equipment (FF&E) have not been PC'd. The PC process will continue throughout the year. We are responsible for all items. Because it is more difficult to keep track of items without the PC number, please be vigilant.

Any item of property that is purchased with funding provided by the school, Regional Center, District, activities, athletics, or booster clubs and exceeds \$999.00 must be PC'd. Also, no property should be removed from the building without proper paperwork being completed. The computer specialist is responsible for our property inventory audit and for releasing equipment to be taken off-campus. Please see him/her for the forms and make your requests at least twenty-four hours in advance of checking out the equipment.

Also, no property should be moved from one location to another on-campus without first informing the computer specialist. Forms are available in his/her office for this purpose.

LOST AND FOUND

Found articles belonging to students should be taken to Office 606, at the end of the school day. Found articles belonging to faculty or staff should be taken to the Principal's Secretary immediately.

FACULTY/STAFF CLUB

The faculty/staff club is a voluntary organization funded by the members of the faculty and staff who pay dues at the beginning of each year. The annual fee is \$20.00 for faculty and \$15.00 for non-instructional staff. The goals of the faculty/staff club are to provide opportunities for the Miami Springs Middle School family to participate in activities throughout the year, such as the beginning of the year breakfast and the Holiday party. Additionally, the faculty/staff club provides support and gifts for many different employee occasions.

MAILBOXES (See also Section II)

The teacher should check his/her mailbox two times a day - the beginning and end of the school day. ***All correspondence to be placed in the mailboxes must have administrative approval.***

PARKING

The parking area for faculty is on the west side of the school. The Guest parking is also located on west side of the school. Teachers are not permitted to park in the cafeteria loading area. Those spots are reserved for cafeteria and custodial parking.

PARTIES

Party-type activities MAY NOT be held during school without administrative approval. When approved, party-type activities will be held in the cafeteria or outside dining areas. Absolutely, no party-type activities are to be conducted inside classrooms.

PLANNING DAYS

The majority of the time during teacher planning/preparation is to be used by the employee for instructional planning, recording of grades, reviewing student cumulative folders, and/or instructional material or activities. **The length of a workday may not be reduced or increased on planning days.** A one hour lunch period may be authorized within the planning day.

PURCHASE OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

The purchase of teaching supplies (material to be used in the classroom) is based on student enrollment and special funding sources. The department chairs along with staff members should:

1. Establish short and long-term program objectives
2. Examine all resource materials on hand
3. Determine priorities for budget expenditures
4. Prepare purchase requisitions
5. Secure advance approval of designated assistant principal

Any supplies acquired without advance approval of the administration will be paid for by the teacher. All purchase orders are channeled through the department chairs to the administration. The teacher must have an approved purchase order on hand, with a P.O. number assigned by the treasurer, when placing an order with an outside vendor. Teachers should never order materials in the name of the school unless proper procedures have been followed. **Without having prior administrative approval for a purchase, the teacher is responsible for the payment.**

DISMISSAL OF CLASSES (See also Section II)

The bell schedule must be strictly adhered to regarding the dismissal of classes. Classes are not to be

dismissed before the sound of the bell ending each particular class period. In the event of a bell malfunction, teacher should wait for verbal dismissal.

HALL PASSES

The safety of all students is a professional responsibility and the prime concern of all school personnel. Upon the dismissal of each class, **it is imperative that each teacher stands at the door to his/her classroom in a position where he/she can simultaneously monitor the classroom and hallway.** This is required of all teachers.

Teachers are discouraged from granting students permission to leave the classroom except in cases of personal emergency or disruptive classroom behavior. In either instance, an official yellow pass will be provided for each teacher. The passes are to be used any time a student leaves your class and is expected to return. Please fill in all information on the official yellow hall passes.

Students are not allowed to leave class to meet with a counselor unless a conference has been previously scheduled and an official hall pass has been issued by the student services office. An exception may be allowed in an emergency if a student expresses an immediate need to meet with a counselor or when illness is evident and the student should report to the Student Services Office.

HANDBOOKS

Teachers should become thoroughly familiar with all aspects of the **Parent/Student Handbook** and the **Faculty Handbook**.

INJURIES TO STUDENTS

In the case of an injury, teachers should contact the office immediately. Press the emergency button and wait for a response. If the office fails to respond, send a reliable student to the office immediately for assistance. Once security arrives, they will transport the student to the office or call for administrative support.

* When a student is injured in any way, the supervising teacher must be certain that an accident report is completed and filed in the attendance office.

CLINIC

The school clinic is located in Office 608. The following procedures are in place:

1. Students must obtain a pass from the classroom teacher. The Office 608 personnel will determine the appropriate action. Students will be permitted to remain in the clinic for a short time only or go home. No medications can be dispensed in accordance with state law.
2. Parents will be notified by the Office 608 personnel if the recommendation is for the student to go home. A permit to leave school with a parent/guardian signature is required.

SEATING CHARTS

Every teacher is required to maintain an up-to-date seating chart for each class assignment. These charts should be placed on top of the teacher's desk, in or with the plan book.

SECURITY OF PROPERTY - GUIDELINES FOR LOSS PREVENTION

- Store valuable property in a secure area.
- Maintain a current list of the following:
 - property name, make, and model number

- property serial numbers
- property control numbers
- Report all burglaries and thefts.
- **Never loan school keys to anyone, especially students.**
- Secure doors and windows upon leaving the room.
- Close blinds and shades when leaving for the day.
- Report all faulty doors and windows immediately.

REMEMBER THAT SECURITY IS EVERYONE'S CONCERN.

TUTORING

The following rules shall apply to any public school employee who engages in independent tutoring, for a fee, of any student enrolled in the public school.

- An employee shall not arrange to tutor, for a fee, any student currently enrolled in his/her class, nor solicit any student on behalf of a private school.
- An employee shall not tutor any student, for a fee, during the regular working hours of the employee, nor on public school property.
- An employee who accepts a tutoring engagement shall make his/her own arrangements with the student's parent (s)/guardian(s) regarding fees for tutoring services.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE/TARDY POLICIES

TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

Encourage good class and school attendance with challenging and rigorous instruction and curriculum and by demonstrating an interest in the welfare of students.

Among the teacher's responsibilities as defined by School Board Rule 6Gx13-5A-1.041 Student Attendance—Specific Responsibilities he/she is expected to:

- Take and record attendance/tardiness in the Electronic Gradebook for the students enrolled in each class. The record should reflect excused or unexcused absences/tardiness.
- Upon request of the student or the parent/guardian, provide make-up assignments for excused absences/tardiness.
- Make recommendations to the Attendance Review Committee regarding quarterly, semester and final grades when the student has accumulated ten (10) unexcused absences in an annual course or five (5) unexcused absences in a designated grading period or semester course.

Course Make-Up

Teachers are to provide within two days requested student/parent make-up assignments for all excused absences/tardiness. It should be noted that all course work, due to the nature of instruction, is not readily subject to make-up work.

Students are to complete make-up assignments within three school days. Failure to make up all assignments will result in lower assessment of the student's academic and/or effort grade.

Unexcused absences do not require that the teacher provide make-up work for the student. However, the Attendance Review Committee may assign educationally-related activities to mitigate the loss of instructional time.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Present, Tardy, Absent

The presence or absence of each student shall be officially checked between 9:10 a.m. – 9:27 a.m.

- **Present:** Present is the presence of a student during between 9:10 a.m. – 9:27 a.m.
- **Tardy:** Tardiness is the absence of a student after the first ten (10) minutes of the instructional day. NOTE: If a student is absent after the first ten (10) minutes of the instructional day or when attendance is taken but is present later in the school day, that student must be considered in attendance, but tardy, and the absence should be changed. A student who is tardy should never remain on record as being absent; especially as attendance eligibility is the basis for FTE (Full-Time Equivalent) funding.
- **Absent:** The non-attendance of a student on a day in which school is in session. NOTE: The student is not present for any part of the school day.

CLASS ATTENDANCE

Students are to be counted in attendance if they are physically present in class or have been excused by the teacher on a class-related assignment, or have been requested by a member of the school support staff for an approved school activity.

Present, Tardy, Absent

The presence or absence of each student shall be officially checked during the designated class scheduled time. The attendance of students shall be reported as follows:

- **Present:** Present is the presence of a student during the scheduled class in which school is in session. The student must be actually engaged in an educational activity which constitutes part of the approved school program for that student. Each student who is scheduled at a school center, and who is present or tardy, shall be considered present.
- **Tardy:** Tardiness is the absence of a student at the designated time class is scheduled to begin, provided that the student is in attendance before the close of that class. A student who is tardy should never remain on record as being absent; especially as attendance eligibility is the basis for FTE (Full-Time Equivalent) funding.
- **Absent:** The non-attendance of a student on a day in which class is in session. NOTE: The student is not present for any part of the class.

EARLY SIGN-OUTS

Early sign-out of students causes disruption to the academic performance of all students and create safety and security problems. No students shall be released within the final thirty (30) minutes of the school day unless the principal's designee determines it is an emergency.

TYPES OF ABSENCES

Excused Absences

School Board Rule 6Gx13-5A-1.041, Student Attendance—Specific Responsibilities defines Excused School Absence as:

- **Student Illness:**
Students missing five (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.
- **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.
- **Death in Family**
- **Religious Holiday:**
Observance of a religious holiday or service when it is mandated for all members of a faith that such a holiday or service be observed: The religious holiday must be listed on the district's approved list of religious holidays.
- **School- sponsored Event or Educational Enrichment Activity:** Written permission must be written from the principal or the principal's designee.
- **Subpoena by law enforcement agency or mandatory court appearance.**
- **Outdoor Suspensions**
- **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 Absences

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 absence until he/she submits required documentation as specified above. Failure to provide required documentation within three (3) days upon the return to school will result in an unexcused absence.

Unexcused absences included:

- Absences due to vacations, personal services, local non-school event, program or sporting activity
- Absences due to older students providing day care services for siblings
- Absences due to illness of others
- Absences due to non-compliance with immunization requirements (unless lawfully exempted).
- **Excessive Absences**
A student accumulating ten (10) or more class unexcused absences in an annual course or five (5) or more class unexcused absences in a designated semester course will have quarterly, semester and final grade(s) withheld pending an administrative screening and completion of assigned interventions by the Attendance Review Committee. Unexcused absences do not require that the teacher provide make-up work for the student. However, the Attendance Review Committee may assign educationally-related activities mitigate the loss of instructional time. Grades that are temporarily withheld will be reflected 'NG' on the report card and in ISIS.

TEACHER GRADEBOOK

Attendance eligibility for collecting FTE is based on the official recording of school attendance. Official School Daily Attendance (OSDA) will be taken daily from the Electronic Gradebook of the teacher. Attendance will be taken during Homeroom (00) between the hours of 9:10 a.m. – 9:27 a.m. Attendance information will be programmatically transmitted from the Electronic Gradebook to ISIS. Attendance adjustments to the ISIS system will be done by the attendance manager, Ms. Hall.

Electronic Gradebook

The teacher’s gradebook is a legal document required by state law. It can be summoned in any court case as a legal record of grades and attendance. It must be accessible at the school site while school is in session. Emphasis must be placed on accuracy, consistency, and recording. **Designated persons will check gradebooks periodically, and may adjust gradebooks, provided that the teacher has input relative to any adjustment; there must be a coordination of efforts to maintain the integrity of the gradebook.**

Recording of Attendance Codes for Electronic and Traditional Gradebooks

Official Daily School Attendance (OSDA) will be taken daily from the gradebook of the Homeroom Teacher.

Teachers recording attendance must use the following attendance codes:

Code	Description	Attendance Weight
A	Excused Absences	1
U	Unexcused Absence	1
T	Excused Tardy	1
TU	Unexcused Tardy	1
ENT	Entered Class	0
WD	Withdrawn from Class	0
NS	No Show. Did not enter- on roster but, not in attendance	0

PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY:

IT IS A VIOLATION OF SCHOOL SITE AND DISTRICT POLICY TO WITHHOLD A STUDENT FROM ANOTHER TEACHER’S CLASS WITHOUT PRIOR APPROVAL FROM THAT TEACHER.

CRITICAL INCIDENTS (See also, Section II)

The potential for disruption of daily activities within a school necessitates a contingency plan to ensure student and faculty safety. An institution, such as Miami Springs Middle School, requires a comprehensive outline of individual duties dictated by the nature of a given situation. To signal an impending crisis, an administrator will make the following announcement over the P.A. system: “Code Red.” At this time the following guidelines MUST be adhered to:

1. Listen carefully to all announcements.
2. Keep students in the classroom. Bells will be turned off.
3. Lock classroom doors.
4. Control rumors and continue to conduct a normal class routine.
5. **DO NOT DISMISS UNTIL DIRECTED TO DO SO VIA THE P.A. SYSTEM**
6. Do not allow students to use any electronic devices such as cell phone.

TOBACCO-FREE WORK PLACE

The Miami-Dade County Public Schools, Tobacco-Free Work Places Rule, approved by the School Board on August 23, 1989, states, in part:

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS WILL ACHIEVE A TOTALLY TOBACCO - FREE STATUS BY JULY 1, 1991. As of July 1, 1991, there will be no use of tobacco products in any owned or leased school board property or vehicles.

FIRE DRILL PROCEDURES

Teachers are expected to:

- Teachers must bring their RED EVACUATION ROSTER FOLDER containing current class rosters per period.
- Assist and cooperate with the principal in the development and use of fire exits or emergency evacuation drills.
- Effect and lead a prompt and orderly evacuation of assigned classes by having full control of all students.
- Account for all students upon reaching the termination point of evacuation or drill, and report any discrepancy to the school official in charge.
- Supervise and assist in the evacuation of any physically handicapped students.
- Be acquainted with the use of fire alarms, fire department notification, exit facilities, and fire extinguishers.
- Acquaint each student with procedures to be followed in the event egress routes are not usable, the proper use of fire alarms, and the subsequent procedures of notifying the administration.
- Notify the teacher in the adjoining room of departure when absence from the room is necessary, and return to provide evacuation supervision at all times.

PROTECTION FROM ELECTRICAL STORMS

This section provides information for protection from electrical storms. It is estimated that at any given moment, some 1,800 electrical storms are in progress over the earth's surface. The frequency with which these giant generators of local weather occur, the quantity of energy they release, and the variety of forms this energy may take make electrical storms great destroyers of life and property.

Protective Action

The following protective action shall be taken by faculty and students in the event of a storm in the vicinity, or when lightning that is associated with thunderstorm activity is present. (Weather-alert radios provided to all schools can be used to determine severe weather conditions approaching your area.)

School Grounds

- a. Get out of the open areas and into an enclosed building as quickly as possible upon the approach of a storm.

- b. DO NOT seek shelter under isolated trees or close to wire fences, playground equipment, or shelters located in exposed locations.

School Buildings

- a. Stay indoors and do not venture outside unless absolutely necessary.
- b. Stay away from open doors and windows, metal objects, electrical appliances, and plumbing until the storm has passed.
- c. Keep telephone use to a minimum during storms.
- d. Do not handle flammable materials in open containers.
- e. TV sets, other electrical equipment and appliances should be unplugged to the extent possible.

Athletic Events

- a. Seek shelter in buildings.
- b. Avoid open fields and high objects in the area when there is no shelter.
- c. Keep twice as far from isolated trees and objects as the trees/objects are high and get into a crouching position when caught in the open.
- d. Avoid open spaces, wire fences, sheds or shelters not fully enclosed and any electrically conductive elevated objects such as overhead wires.
- e. Leave the water during swimming events and go into the nearest shelter.
- f. Do not use metal objects like fishing rods and golf clubs.

In Transit

- a. Stay inside of vehicles. Vehicles offer excellent lightning protection. DO NOT TOUCH EXPOSED METAL PARTS.
- b. DO NOT park vehicles under electrical lines or isolated trees.
- c. Persons using scooters, motorcycles, bicycles and other open vehicles should seek immediate protected shelter.

Field Trips or Hiking

- a. Move from high ground as quickly as possible and avoid lone trees and small sheds.
- b. Stay away from metal fences.
- c. Seek shelter in thick timber, a ravine, ditch or in an enclosed vehicle or building, if possible.

Pre-Planning

Pre-plan activities to consider lightning storm activity whenever possible. Desirable pre-planning should include first-aid procedures for electric shock and burns.

Posting

A copy of this procedure must be permanently posted in all physical education teachers' offices and on all school safety bulletin boards.

FLAG AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

In light of the recent judicial opinion in the case of Frazier v. Alexandre, et al, USDC Ct. Case No. 05-81142-CIV-RYSCAMP, dated May 31, 2006, which held unconstitutional a state statute requiring parental permission for a public school student to be excused from reciting the pledge of allegiance, it is advised that school principals not adhere to the provisions of section V(A) of School Board Rule 6Gx13-6A-1.08 (Guidelines for Instructional Pertaining to the Flag and the Pledge of Allegiance). Any questions regarding

this issue should be presented to the appropriate Regional Center, and discussed with counsel from the School Board Attorney's Office.

The flag and the pledge of allegiance to the flag are important symbols of the democratic heritage of the United States. It is required that the pledge of allegiance be said at the beginning of the day in every elementary and secondary public school.

The public school system is one of the major social institutions responsible for the transmission of our democratic heritage to present and future generations. In fulfilling that responsibility, each school through its instructional programs and activities will provide knowledge of and encourage respect for the important symbols of our nation.

Board Rule, Florida and federal statutes, and court decisions provide the bases for the following guidelines to be observed by each school in carrying on instructional activities in regard to the flag and pledge of allegiance.

- I. Teachers will direct their instructional efforts toward understanding patriotism and appreciation of freedom in our country.
- II. The essentials of the United States Constitution and flag education, including proper flag display and flag salute will be taught in all schools.
- III. In pledging allegiance to the flag, the following pledge will be used: "I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

Students will be taught not to pause after one nation when reciting the pledge of allegiance to the flag.
- IV. The pledge of allegiance will be rendered by standing with the right hand over the heart.
- V. Students who, because of religious or other deep personal conviction, do not participate in the salute and pledge of allegiance to the flag will stand or sit in silence.
 - A. The staff will counsel with students who do not participate in the pledge and flag salute. The main purpose for counseling would be to assist students in understanding our democratic heritage and in respecting the rights of all citizens.
Parents are to be contacted to determine the reason for the student's behavior. Parents will be asked to provide a written request to excuse the student from reciting the pledge.
 - B. Students who do not participate in the pledge and salute, who stand or sit quietly, even though failing to get written parental permission, may not be disciplined.
 - C. Students not participating in the pledge and salute to the flag who interfere with others doing so will be considered disruptive. Any gestures, words, or actions other than those officially prescribed above will be considered interference with the rights of others and disruptive. In those instances where interference or disruption occurs, the school staff will take appropriate disciplinary action.

SECTION II

PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- Professional Personnel
- Code of Ethics
- School Police
- Generic Job Descriptions
 - Principal
 - Assistant Principal
 - Department Chairpersons
 - Media Specialist
 - Instructional Staff (I, III, IV)
 - Union Stewards
- Other Staff Assignments and Duties
 - Office Manager
 - Custodians
 - Zone Mechanics
 - Cafeteria Manager
- Child Abuse Laws
 - Reporting Procedures
- Sexual Battery
- Employee Assistance Program
 - Program Objectives
 - Program Services
 - Employee Rights
 - Treatment of Employee with AIDS
 - People with Positive HIV
 - Pertinent Phone Numbers
- Sexual Harassment
 - Liability of School District
- Civil Rights and Diversity Compliance Office
- Americans with Disability Act (ADA)
- Academic Freedom
- Liability
- Honor Code Faculty and Staff Responsibilities
- Professional Organizations
- Lesson Plans
- *Back to School Night/Parent-Teacher Conferences
- *Mailboxes (I)
 - Intra-School Mail
 - E-mail
- Personnel Files (I)
- Gradebook (IV)

PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL:

The board is proud of its professional staff. It endeavors to select new personnel as needed to maintain the high regard enjoyed by its teachers, supervisors, and administrators in the District and surrounding areas.

The Board reaffirms its wish that all professional personnel enjoy the full rights and privileges of residency and citizenship in this community and in the state. Because of its high regard for the school system's professional staff, the Board endorses the Code of Ethics of the Education Profession, with special emphasis upon the expectation that its members will adhere to any reasonable pattern of behavior accepted by the community for professional persons.

Teachers are entitled to full rights of citizenship, and no religious or political activities of any teacher or the lack thereof will be grounds for discipline or discrimination with respect to the professional employment of such teacher, provided such activities do not violate the Constitution and laws of the United States or the State of Florida.

The private and personal life of a teacher is not within the appropriate concern of the Board so long as it is consistent with the high standards which the teaching profession has set, and except as it may reflect adversely on the teacher's responsibilities and relationships with students, parents, and the community. Board Rule [6Gx13-4c-1.01](#)

CODE OF ETHICS

6B-1.001 Code of Ethics of the Education Profession in Florida

1. The educator values the worth and dignity of every person, the pursuit of truth, devotion to excellence, acquisition of knowledge, and the nurture of democratic citizenship. Essential to the achievement of these standards are freedom to learn and to teach and the guarantee of equal opportunity for all.
2. The educator's professional concern will always be for the student and for the development of the student's potential. The educator will therefore strive for professional growth and will seek to exercise the best professional judgment and integrity.
3. Aware of the importance of maintaining the respect and confidence of one's colleagues, of students, of parents, and of other members of the community, the educator strives to achieve and sustain the highest degree of ethical conduct.

SCHOOL POLICE

The school system is responsible for providing necessary law enforcement services to all of our students. It provides services for more than three hundred thousand students, employs thousands of individuals, and has the responsibility for public property valued in excess of a billion dollars.

All school personnel share in the responsibility for the maintenance of a secure and safe school environment, protection of school personnel and property, prevention of interference in school operations, and prevention of violations of school laws and policies.

However, certain specialized services are necessary to support district, Region Center III and school staffs in fulfilling these responsibilities. Therefore, the Board authorizes the Superintendent of Schools to establish the required school system security services.

The functions of the Division of the School Police shall include providing assistance in the following areas:

1. The prevention and detection of crime and the enforcement of the penal laws of this state as the violation occurs on or to the properties of the Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

2. The protection of students, staff members, and the school public.
3. The protection of school property.
4. Investigations of staff personnel.
5. Liaison with local law enforcement agencies.
6. Preventative and consultant activities in the areas of safety and security.
7. Assistance to other law enforcement agencies as specified in the Mutual Aid Agreements.
8. Enforcement of all traffic laws of this state when such violations occur on or about properties or facilities which are under the control of the district school board.

The specific policies and procedures relative to the organization and responsibilities of security services for the school system are found in the publication, "Departmental Manual, Special Investigation Unit", issued by the Bureau of Personnel Management, and incorporated by reference in this rule as a part hereof.

GENERIC JOB DESCRIPTIONS

• PRINCIPAL

The school principal assumes the leadership for developing and supporting the services available for all students within the school by:

1. Organizing the student services program in the school.
2. Supervising the operation of the program.
3. Selecting the necessary personnel.
4. Ensuring that the faculty is aware of the goals of the program and is involved in the development of these goals.
5. Authorizing the coordination of the program through the designated assistant principal and the student services chairperson.
6. Promoting the objectives of the program by limiting those duties which are not closely aligned to the job functions of the student services staff.

• ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS

The assistant principals, at the direction of the principal, will perform the following duties related to the program:

1. Coordinate the total student services program.
2. Establish policies and procedures for the supervision and monitoring of the total student population.
3. Assist in the selection and supervision of essential personnel.
4. Develop time frames for the implementation of specific student services activities.
5. Plan and coordinate all school programs.
6. Work cooperatively with other assistant principals to coordinate all other elements of the total school program.

• DEPARTMENT CHAIRPERSONS

Instruction:

1. When possible, check with the main office/substitute locator to determine which teachers are absent.
2. Supervise substitute teachers. Make sure they are given emergency lesson plans, seating charts, class rosters, teacher's schedule, etc.
3. Attempt to ensure that all classrooms are open on time and properly staffed. Assist, if possible, in arranging for class coverage in the event of a sudden teacher illness.
4. Serve as facilitator in the department (curriculum, classroom organization and management).
5. To the extent possible, provide teachers with the support they need to improve classroom instruction, through supervision, demonstration, selection, and organization of instructional material.

6. Review teacher gradebooks for compliance with School Board policies (e.g., attendance taking, appropriate number of grades)
7. Ensure that student folders are being maintained in each classroom supporting instructional objectives.
8. Conduct informal classroom visitations.
9. Assist as peer observers in PACES professional growth as designated by the administration.
10. Serve as mentors for new teachers as requested.
11. Help ensure that students are properly placed within the department. Make recommendations, advise students, make lateral schedule changes as necessary.
12. Help ensure that adequate instructional planning is taking place in all courses. When necessary, assist teachers in developing syllabi/lesson plans.

Materials/Supplies/Funds:

1. Provide supplies and materials (when available) as needed by department members.
2. Maintain a department inventory of all instructional materials.
3. Organize and coordinate department textbook orders.
4. Inform Principal's Secretary of textbook orders received.
5. Supervise "03" budgetary funds, when applicable.
6. Inform Treasurer of supplies orders received.
7. Maintain a department inventory of all PC'd items.

Information and Organizational Planning:

1. Attend meetings of the Instructional Improvement Team and relay relevant information to department members through published minutes.
2. Assist the Instructional Improvement Team and administration in developing school-wide and departmental curriculum policies.
3. Circulate relevant subject area information to department members.
4. Act as intermediary between administration and teachers both in conveying information and in helping to resolve individual and group needs as they arise.
5. Complete departmental administrative reports, forms, surveys, property audits, educational plans, etc.
6. Organize, call, and chair departmental meetings.
7. Develop departmental offerings for Curriculum Bulletins (for upcoming school year and summer).
8. Assist in interviewing and selecting prospective teachers.
9. When necessary, be able to serve as advisor to parents, students, and teachers in departmental matters. (Be able to explain, describe, and interpret department policies and rules, teaching methods used, curriculum, objectives, etc.)
10. Ensure that departmental course objectives and requirements are communicated to parents and students in writing.
11. Make recommendations regarding department personnel assignments.

• **MEDIA SPECIALIST**

1. Plans information skills instruction correlated with subject-area curricula with teachers and shares in delivery of instruction.
2. Works with teachers to develop educational objectives, to plan learning experiences, and to identify media appropriate to the particular instructional design.
3. Evaluates, selects, and orders appropriate library media materials and equipment.
4. Works with other educators to plan and evaluate library media programs and services.
5. Organizes and delivers library media services in the school.
6. Administers the library media center budget.
7. Organizes the collection for easy and quick access and efficient circulation of materials and equipment.
8. Plans for and stimulates effective use of media facilities, materials, and equipment.
9. Maintains the collection including materials and equipment and inventories the collection annually.
10. Keeps accurate budgetary and inventory records.

11. Assists teachers and students in designing and producing learning materials and supervises the design and production of materials.
12. Trains students and teachers in the use of equipment necessary for effective utilization of materials.
13. Plans and implements inservice training for teachers in selection and use of appropriate learning resources.
14. Assists students and teachers in selection and use of appropriate learning resources.
15. Promotes reading, listening, viewing, and computing.
16. Coordinates district media services in the school.
17. Supervises the clerical staff of the media center.
18. Performs related work as required or as assigned by the supervising administrator or his/her designee.

- **INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF** (Please refer to UTD contract for additional responsibilities.)

1. Teacher workday begins at 8:30 am.
2. If you are arriving late to school, please notify the appropriate office staff as soon as possible so that coverage can be secured.
3. Teachers must sign in and out on a daily basis. (See also Section I)
4. Check mailboxes on a daily basis. (See also "Mailboxes" in this section, and Section I)
5. Take daily attendance in each class and record it in your gradebook using codes approved by the district. (See also Section I)
6. Check the attendance bulletin daily and make necessary corrections.
7. Develop weekly lesson plans that reflect the objectives, activities, assessment, and home learning assignments. Place weekly lesson plans sequentially in a lesson plan notebook. (See also "Lesson Plans" in this section.)
8. Record at least two grades per week. A minimum of eighteen grades are needed for each grading period. (See also "Gradebook" in this section and Section IV.)
9. Call parents and hold conferences as needed. (See also Section IV)
10. Prepare an interim progress report midway through each grading period. (See also Section IV)
 - This progress report should provide information on the student's performance ranging from excellence to failure.
 - This progress report meets district requirements for notifying parents of their child's unsatisfactory progress.
11. Keep the students involved in meaningful activities.
12. Support Student Services Department efforts on behalf of your students.
13. If possible, notify the appropriate office staff of your absence in advance. (See also Section I)
14. Prepare emergency lesson plans for **FIVE** days with an up-to-date seating chart, class rosters, teacher schedule, etc.
15. Issue hall passes only when necessary. Use one pass per student. (See also Section I)
16. Dismiss classes at the sound of bell and not before. (See also Section I)
17. The presence of every teacher is required for one scheduled Back to School Night activity each year. This special evening program encourages parents to visit their child's school, and is usually scheduled during the first semester. (See also Section I)
18. Attendance at faculty and departmental meetings are required. (See also "Meetings" in this section)
19. Teachers planning field trips, see Section I, Policy and Procedures "Field Trip Procedures".
20. Teachers planning fund raising activities, see Section III, "Internal Funds".

- **UNION STEWARDS** (Please refer to official UTD documents for a complete listing of responsibilities.)

1. Hold at least one monthly union meeting at the work location.
2. Form a membership committee at the worksite.

3. Make union members aware of their contractual rights and benefits.
4. Represent all union members in the resolution of problems at the worksite with administration.
5. Explain the union's positions on issues to the entire faculty.
6. Promote the professionalization of education initiatives.
7. Provide an opportunity for members to become knowledgeable on educational reform issues.
8. Serve as a resource person for questions on health coverage, pension, retirement, and other matters that concern members.
9. Maintain the UTD Bulletin Board with current materials.
10. Work with parent groups.
11. Take a lead in seeking and ensuring that the health, welfare, and rights of members are protected.
12. Disseminate UTD materials via members' mailboxes.

OTHER STAFF ASSIGNMENTS/DUTIES

- **Office Manager/Principal's Secretary**

The office manager is a clerical staff member who is responsible for assisting and offering instruction to office personnel, which is consistent with school requirements. In addition, this person will follow board instructions and established regulations. Additional responsibilities will be to direct and/or supervise other clerical employees as delineated by the principal.

- **Head Custodian/Lead Custodian**

The head custodian is directly responsible to the principal or assistant principals and is to supervise all other custodial employees. The head custodian is responsible for establishing work schedules and adding specific tasks to be completed on a daily basis by other custodial workers at the school site. The head custodian is also responsible for supervising and/or assisting maintenance workers who report to the school site, receiving and checking all regular deliveries, and assisting any health department surveyors in relation to water or customary health checks. Further responsibilities include the start-up and shutdown operations of school cooling/heating systems and other major equipment. Additional responsibilities may be assigned by the principal.

- **Zone Mechanics**

The zone mechanics are responsible for the performance of planned preventive maintenance, initial troubleshooting, corrective maintenance, and proper equipment operation for assigned building/plant.

- **Cafeteria Manager**

The cafeteria manager is responsible for the organization, planning, and supervision of the food services program.

CHILD ABUSE

Current Law and Practice

Section 415.504, Florida Statutes, requires mandatory reporting of all cases of child abuse. This statute applies to suspected or confirmed reports against any person alleged to be involved or any person who is alleged to have committed any act of child abuse. School personnel are not exempted from mandatory reporting of child abuse even when a fellow employee is suspected or confirmed as the abuser.

When in Doubt, Report Child Abuse! Any person, including, but not limited to, physician, nurse, teacher, social worker, or employee of a public or private facility serving children who has reason to believe that a child has been a subject of child abuse, shall report or cause reports to be made to the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF).

Knowing and willful failure to report or cause to be reported suspected or confirmed abuse, and knowing and willful prevention of another from making such a report is a crime punishable by up to two months in jail and up to a \$500.00 fine, Section 775.082 and 775.083, Florida Statutes. Once a report is made, the principal or appropriate school administrators are to be notified.

Child abuse is defined to include harm or threatened harm to a child's health or welfare and/or willful or negligent acts which result in: neglect, malnutrition, sexual abuse, physical injury, mental injury, or failure to provide sustenance, clothing, shelter, or medical treatment.

- **Reporting Procedures**

Anyone aware of child abuse, suspected or confirmed, shall immediately make a report by calling the Miami office of the Florida Department of Children and Families, Single Intake, (Telephone 305-634-4074) or the State of Florida, Child Abuse Registry, Tallahassee, Florida (Telephone 1-800-342-9152) - Toll Free.

Reasonable Force and Child Abuse. In some instances, a need may exist to differentiate reasonable force and child abuse. Florida Statute 232.27 provides that, subject to law and to the rules of the district school board, each teacher or other member of the staff of any school shall have such authority for the control and discipline of students as may be assigned by the principal or designee and shall keep good order in the classroom and in other places in which the teacher or other staff member is assigned to be in charge of students.

The statute further provides that: "Except in the case of excessive force or cruel and unusual punishment, a teacher, or other staff member, a principal or his designee, or a bus driver shall not be civilly or criminally liable for any action carried out in conformity with the state board and district school board rules regarding the control, discipline, suspension, and expulsion of students."

An administrator must report to the School Board Police Department (SBPD) all cases involving School Board employees where:

- Excessive physical force or physical contact was greater than necessary.
- Use of unauthorized School Board employee-initiated physical action, which results in an injury to a student.
- Physical force is used against the student when the circumstances in School Board Rule 6Gx13-5D-1.07 (Corporal Punishment) are not present.
- A Board employee uses corporal punishment without explicit authorization by the principal.

When child abuse is suspected from an outside source (non-School Board employee), an administrator must report within 48 hours. REPORTS TO DCF OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE FROM OUTSIDE SOURCES ARE NOT TO BE REPORTED TO THE SCHOOL BOARD POLICE DEPARTMENT.

Reporting of incidents to DCF and/or SBPD is not prima facie evidence that child abuse has taken place. A subsequent investigation or administrative review will ensure protection for the School Board, the employee, and the student.

Should a Board employee or citizen report a suspected case of child abuse to the principal, it becomes the responsibility of the principal to make a report to DCF, based upon the information received. The principal, within 48 hours, shall confirm the oral report in writing to the local DCF office. The report should include the child's name, and other identifiable information, i.e., date of birth, ethnicity, sex, reporting date, and a very brief narrative of the alleged abuse. All written reports are confidential and shall NOT be placed in the student cumulative record folder. Also, the name of the person reporting child abuse or neglect shall in no case be released to any person other than employees of DCF responsible for child protective services.

The principal may elect to provide the Court Liaison Officer of the Miami-Dade County Public Schools with written notification of child abuse cases that are brought to his/her attention and which have

been referred to DCF. A copy of the written report that is required to be reported within 48 hours may be used for this purpose. This report is optional.

When investigating child abuse cases, representatives of DCF or a law enforcement agency may come to the school for the purpose of conducting an interview with a student on school premises during the school day. Although DCF or a law enforcement agency may grant school staff members the right to be present at the interview, their presence is not mandatory. The right of school officials to be present at an interview applied only if:

- Representatives of DCF or the law enforcement agency believe that a school staff member could enhance the success of the interview.
- The alleged abused child requests or consents to the presence of the school staff members during the investigation.

School staff, in this context, does not include secretarial support staff. All information pertaining to child abuse cases is confidential, and no separate record shall be created and maintained by the school or school staff members during the investigation.

When it has been determined that an interview will be conducted on campus, it should be done in an area which ensures confidentiality and avoids embarrassment to the student. If it is determined that the student is to be removed from the campus, this shall be done in the most inconspicuous and expeditious manner.

Representatives of DCF may come to the school and take a child into custody when DCF personnel determine there are reasonable grounds to believe a child is suffering from illness, or is in immediate danger from his/her surroundings, and that the student's removal is necessary or the custodian of the child has violated a condition imposed by the courts.

School-site administrative personnel willfully failing to report, screen, prevent, or cause child abuse reports not to be made to DCF when brought to their attention may be subject to disciplinary action.

The Administrator, DCF, District XI, has been informed that all contact with school personnel by DCF representatives shall be with the principal or designee and under no circumstances shall a DCF representative proceed directly to a classroom or other portion of the school plant without the specific authority of the principal or designee.

SEXUAL BATTERY

It is imperative that all incidents of sexual battery be promptly reported to the appropriate police agency by the school teacher, school official, or other school personnel who initially receives the information. The school administrator must be made aware of the reported incident. *Administrators and school employees who fail to adhere to this procedure may be subjecting themselves to criminal prosecution.* Please follow the outlined procedures when information involving a sexual battery is received:

- The Division of School Police Resource officer, if assigned to your school site, must be contacted immediately.
- While awaiting the arrival of the police, preserve the entire scene. Isolate the victim from staff and other inquisitive individuals. **No one except the police are to interview or take statements from the victim or other individuals involved in the case.**
 - Provide immediate and total cooperation to the responding police agency personnel. Abide by the recommendations and procedures of the police on the scene.
 - School administrators should not conduct their own investigations.

The immediate response to incidents of sexual batteries, along with your total cooperation, will protect the School Board and you. It will also assure an expedient and thorough investigation of the incident.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Miami-Dade County Public Schools recognizes that a wide range of problems not directly associated with an employee's job function can have an effect on an employee's job performance. In most instances, the employee will overcome such personal problems independently and the effect on job performance will be negligible. In other instances, normal supervisory assistance will serve either as motivation or guidance by which such problems can be resolved so the employee's job performance will return to an acceptable level. In some cases, however, efforts of neither the employee nor supervisor have the desired effect of resolving the employee's problems and unsatisfactory job performance persists over a period of time, either constantly or intermittently.

The Employee Assistance Program is intended to help employees and their families who are suffering from such persistent problems as may tend to jeopardize an employee's health and continued employment. The problems may include alcoholism, drug abuse, emotional or other concerns, such as health, family, financial, legal, or vocational difficulties. Miami-Dade County Public Schools recognizes behavioral disorders and mental health problems as illnesses that can be successfully treated. Employees who need help in those areas of concern will be given the same considerations as those employees with other illnesses. The program goal is to help individuals who develop such problems by providing for consultation, referral to treatment, and rehabilitation to prevent their condition from progressing to a degree at which they cannot work effectively and to provide physical and mental health promotion activities to enable prevention of such problems.

- **Program Objectives**

To provide employees with the humanitarian viewpoint of behavioral/medical disorders and to encourage an enlightened attitude toward these health problems.

To help those individuals who develop behavioral medical problems by providing for consultation, referral to treatment, and rehabilitation to prevent their condition from progressing to a degree at which they cannot work effectively.

To provide supervisors with policy and procedural guidelines for the management of behavioral/medical problems affecting job performance.

To direct managers and supervisors toward prompt corrective action where deterioration in an individual's work performance is related to behavioral/medical disorders.

To identify, develop and implement the Wellness Program to promote physical and mental health for Miami Dade County Public Schools' employees.

- **Program Services**

The Employee Assistance Program (305-995-7111) offers consultation to supervisors and employees through ongoing training programs and instructional materials. It provides diagnostic evaluation services for treatment and implements the Wellness Program to ensure ongoing strides to prevent employee's behavioral/medical health problems.

Appropriate measures will be taken to ensure the confidentiality of records for any person admitted to the program, according to established personnel guidelines and Board Rule (6Gx13 - 4D-1.11). These records are on file in the Board Office, the Citizen Information Center, and the Office of the School Board Clerk.

The Superintendent of Schools will report annually to the Board regarding the impact of the Employee Assistance Program. School Board Rule 6Gx13 - 4D-1.11

- **Employee Rights**

Job security will not be jeopardized by referral to the Employee Assistance Program, whether the referral is considered a voluntary referral in which an employee elects to participate in the program, or a supervisory referral in which a supervisor uses adopted guidelines to refer an employee into the program.

An employee has the right to refuse referral into the program and may discontinue participation at any time. Failure by an employee to accept referral or continue with treatment will be considered in the same manner as any other factor that continues to affect job performance adversely.

NOTE: Should you have need for further clarification regarding the Employee Assistance Program, you may call 305-995-7111.

- **Treatment of Employees with AIDS (REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION)**
(Report submitted to the School Board on January 21, 1986)

Procedures for determining an employee's fitness to work are in place in both Board Rule and LABOR contracts, and should be utilized in any AIDS issue. A separate formal AIDS policy is not required.

Each case should be handled individually through the Offices of Professional Standards.

Each labor contract, as well as Board Rules concerning managerial and confidential exempt employees, should have provisions for reassignment of employees at the Superintendent's discretion. Following specific medical fitness evaluations, alternative work assignments in isolated environments would be arranged.

All activities directly relating to the medical status of an employee must be handled in the strictest confidence, in compliance with federal and state regulations, Board Rule, and applicable labor contract provisions.

Education about AIDS must be two-fold:

- a. Miami-Dade Public Schools must continually receive accurate and timely "state-of-the-art" information about AIDS from public health, legal, research, and related sources. The AIDS issues and receipt of accurate information from state health officials and qualified resources provides a means for this educational input.
- b. Education about AIDS should be provided to administrators, staff, students, and parents through multi-media approaches, including the use of films and printed materials as well as in-service programs and information about additional community resources.

- **People with a positive HTLV-III antibody test should:**

- a. Seek regular medical evaluation and follow-up (especially persons who develop signs or symptoms suggestive of AIDS).
- b. Either avoid sexual activity or inform your partner of your test results and protect him or her from any possibility of transmission (contact with body fluids) during sexual activity.
- c. Be careful of personal hygiene. Toothbrushes, razors, or other implements that could become contaminated with blood should not be shared.

- d. Consider the risk to your baby before you become pregnant. Women with a positive blood test, or women whose sexual partners have a positive blood test, are at increased risk of acquiring MDS. If they become pregnant, their offspring are also at increased risk of acquiring MDS.
- e. Clean blood or other body fluid soils on household or other surfaces with household bleach freshly diluted 1 part to 10 in water. (Do not use bleach on wounds.)
- f. Inform your doctor, dentist, and eye doctor of your positive HTLV - III test status so that proper precautions can be taken to protect you and others.

Recommendations for health care workers are available in another Public Health Service publication (Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, Nov. 5, 1982; Sept. 2, 1983; Nov. 14, 1985).

Testing for antibodies to the HTLV - III virus should be offered to persons who may have been infected as a result of their contact with individuals with a positive blood test (i.e., sexual partners, persons with whom needles have been shared, infants born to HTLV - III antibody positive mothers).

Revised recommendations will be published as additional information becomes available and additional experience is gained with the test for HTLV -III antibodies.

- ***Pertinent Telephone Numbers***

Employee Assistance Program	305-995-7111 Monday – Friday 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Dade County Public Health Department -Sexually Transmitted Diseases	305-324-2413 Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Florida AIDS Hotline	1-800-FLA-AIDS Daily - 24 Hours
Health Crisis Network	305-634-4666 Monday-Friday
Switchboard of Miami	305-358-HELP Daily - 24 Hours

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination that violates Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when submission to or rejection of this conduct explicitly or implicitly affects an individual's employment, unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Sexual harassment can occur in a variety of circumstances, including but not limited to the following:

- The victim as well as the harasser may be a woman or a man. The victim does not have to be of the opposite sex.
- The harasser can be the victim's supervisor, an agent of the employer, a supervisor in another area, a co-worker, or a non-employee.

- The victim does not have to be the person harassed but could be anyone affected by the offensive conduct.
- Unlawful sexual harassment may occur without economic injury to or discharge of the victim.
- The harasser's conduct must be unwelcome.

It is helpful for the victim to directly inform the harasser that the conduct is unwelcome and must stop. The victim should use any employer complaint mechanism or grievance system available.

When investigating allegations of sexual harassment, EEOC looks at the whole record: the circumstance, such as the nature of the sexual advances, and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred. A determination on the allegations is made from the facts on a case-by-case basis.

Under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, no individual may be discriminated against on the basis of sex in any education program receiving Federal Financial Assistance. Sexual harassment of students is a form of prohibited sex discrimination.

Title IX protects any "person" from sexual discrimination. Accordingly, both male and female students are protected from sexual harassment, even if the harasser and the person being harassed are members of the same sex.

There are two types of sexual harassment:

1. **Quid Pro Quo** – a school employee explicitly or implicitly conditions a student's participation in an education program or activity or bases an educational decision on the student's submission to unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, or other verbal, non-verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Quid Pro Quo harassment is equally unlawful whether the student resists and suffers the threatened harm, or submits and avoids the threatened harm.
2. **Hostile Environment** – Sexually harassing conduct, such as unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature, by an employee, another student, or by a third party, that is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive to limit a student's ability to participate in or benefit from an education program or activity, or to create a hostile or abusive educational environment.

- **Liability of A School District for Sexual Harassment Of A Student By An Employee**

A school district will always be liable for even one instance of quid pro quo harassment by a school employee in a position of authority, whether or not it knew, should have known, or approved of the harassment at issue.

A school district will also be liable for hostile environment sexual harassment by its employees if the employee acted with apparent authority or was aided in carrying out the sexual harassment of students by his or her position of authority with the school district.

In situations not mentioned above, the school district is liable for sexual harassment of its students, by employees, if the district fails to take immediate and appropriate steps to remedy known harassment.

Prevention is the best tool to eliminate sexual harassment in the workplace. Employers are encouraged to take steps necessary to prevent sexual harassment from occurring. They should clearly communicate to employees that sexual harassment will not be tolerated. They can do so by establishing an effective complaint or grievance process and taking immediate and appropriate action when an employee complains.

CIVIL RIGHTS AND DIVERSITY COMPLIANCE (CRDC)

The Civil Rights and Diversity Compliance Act (CRDC) performs a two-fold function: (1) to provide technical assistance to Miami-Dade County Public Schools personnel focusing on compliance with various federal laws, state statutes and regulations, and School Board rules regarding equal opportunity and access in employment and in the provision of educational services and programs; (2) to investigate complaints and/or charges of discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment, filed against the District by applicants, employees, students and their parents.

If any student, employee, or applicant has a complaint of discrimination/harassment that **cannot** be resolved with the appropriate school system administrator, said complaint can be made to:

Civil Rights and Diversity Compliance, SBAB Annex: 1500 Biscayne Boulevard, Suite 234. The telephone number is (305) 995-1580.

THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990 (ADA)

School Board Rule # (s): [6Gx13-4A-1.01](#)

It is the policy of the School Board that no person will be denied access, employment, training, or promotion on the basis of gender, race, color, religion, ethnic or national origin, political beliefs, marital status, age, sexual orientation, social and family background, linguistic preference, or disability, and that principles of merit will be followed (see Americans with Disabilities Act).

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 prohibits employment discrimination against “**qualified individuals with disabilities.**” A **disabled** individual, under the ADA, is a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; has a record of such an impairment; or is regarded as having such an impairment. “Major life activities” include such things as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working. Other examples of major life activities include sitting, standing, lifting, and mental and emotional processes, such as thinking, concentrating, and interacting with others. The law requires employers to make “reasonable accommodations” to the physical or mental limitations, known about by the employer, of a qualified individual with a disability unless doing so would impose an undue hardship on the institution or business. Additionally, under certain circumstances, applicants for jobs may also require reasonable accommodation in the application process. The District Consultative Committee (DCC) has been designated the responsibility of determining an individual’s eligibility under the ADA and reviewing requests for accommodation from employees and job applicants.

All work site administrators are required to:

- Post in visible areas the “nondiscrimination” and ADA District Functions and Responsibilities posters disseminated by the Civil Rights and Diversity Compliance office;
- Refer employees seeking assistance under the ADA to the Office of Employee Support Programs, at 305-995-4650.
- Provide appropriate information, as requested, to facilitate the District Consultative Committee’s assessment of the merits of the request. This may entail, but is not limited to, providing technical assistance to determine essential functions of a job, attending DCC meeting(s); and providing job performance information.
- Maintain confidentiality of medical records submitted to the site administrator.

- In order to file a complaint, call 305-995-1580 to request an Employee Complaint Package or a Student Complaint Package.

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Academic freedom shall be granted to teachers, and no special limitations shall be placed upon study, investigation, presenting, and interpreting facts and ideas concerning man, human society, the physical and biological world, and other branches of learning, subject to accepted standards of professional educational responsibility, good taste, and the realizations that teaching in a secondary school places special responsibility upon the teacher to carefully consider the maturity level of the student and special circumstances which surround the teaching/learning relationship.

While the teacher must be free to live according to his/her own conscience, so must the students and the public be served. The teacher may not infringe upon the freedom of those served. Proselytism has no place in the public school. Opinion and theory should be clearly stated as such. Board Rule [6Gx13-4c-1.011](#)

Section 1. Role of the Board

The board acknowledges that a free society is dependent upon the education afforded its people and therefore affirms the right of its teachers to freely pursue truth and knowledge. Further the Board has the authority to establish educational policy and the guidelines for utilization of instructional materials of any nature in the classroom.

In establishing said guidelines, the Board shall provide for and consider:

- A. Course content
- B. Maturity level of students
- C. Needs and abilities of students
- D. Teacher judgment

Section 2. Academic Freedom Guidelines

Teachers shall be guaranteed freedom in classroom presentations and discussions and may introduce political, religious or other controversial material whenever, in the teacher's professional judgment, it is appropriate to the instructional objectives and the age level of the student.

Teachers shall be guaranteed freedom of choice and flexibility with respect to teaching styles and methodology to be used in the instruction of children within Board objectives. Where a principal has substantiated a need for an improved teaching style and methodology, through personal conferences and classroom observations, teachers shall develop a methodology and teaching style more suitable for the attainment of Board objectives.

In performing their teaching function, teachers shall be guaranteed freedom in expressing their personal opinions on all matters relevant to the course content provided; however, when doing so, they will indicate they are expressing personal opinions. Teachers shall not be censored or restrained in the performance of their teaching functions on the grounds that the material discussed and/or opinions expressed are distasteful or embarrassing to those in authority. Nothing in this article shall exempt teachers from their duties as described in the Florida Statutes.

LIABILITY

Except in the case of excessive force or cruel and unusual punishments, a teacher shall not be civilly or criminally liable for any action carried out in conformity with State Statutes and School Board Rules regarding the control, discipline, suspension, and expulsion of students. NOTE: SHOULD A TEACHER HIT, SLAP, OR PUSH, ETC., A STUDENT, HIS/HER ACTION MUST BE REPORTED. If a student has violated a school rule, classroom regulation, or is a classroom discipline problem, there are a variety of disciplinary actions open.

1. The teacher may assign a detention, giving 24 hours notice to the student and his/her parents.
2. All students begin the grading period with an "A" in conduct. This grade may be lowered due to misconduct.
3. If a teacher is unable to gain the student's cooperation, the student's parents shall be contacted by the teacher.
4. If the preceding methods do not bring an improvement in the situation, a referral to the student's assistant principal may be necessary.
5. After conferring with the student, the assistant principal may decide on the following courses of action.
 - a. administrative detention
 - b. exclusion from class
 - c. indoor suspension from all classes
 - d. assignment of student work assignment in lieu of suspension
 - e. suspension from school (not to exceed ten days)
 - f. recommend placement in alternative school
 - g. recommendation for expulsion

The punishment will depend on the situation and the judgment of the assistant principal. In cases involving suspension from school, *The Code of Student Conduct* is the guideline for disciplinary procedures.

NOTE: All employees of the Miami-Dade Public Schools are under an affirmative duty to report any criminal act and/or disruptive behavior occurring on School Board property to *the administrator or designee*.

A good relationship with parents and with the immediate community is extremely important. Scheduling conferences when appropriate is an excellent way to establish and maintain good rapport. Teachers are encouraged to communicate with the home of individual students as often as necessary. Communication should occur for positive, not just negative, feedback.

HONOR CODE

FACULTY/STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

The members of Miami Springs Middle School believe that the fundamental objective of the school is to provide the students with a quality education while developing in them a sense of ethical purpose and social responsibility. Honesty and trust are integral parts of the learning process and every instance of dishonesty hurts the entire school community. Faculty and staff are expected to foster an environment where honesty and ethical conduct are expected. In doing so, faculty and staff members are expected to do the following:

- During the first week of school make known to your classes the importance of the Honor Code and the repercussions of breaking it.
- Make known to your classes what constitutes appropriate academic conduct as well as what constitutes academic misconduct.
- Attempt to avoid the re-use of exams, quizzes, etc.
- Report instances of academic misconduct to the appropriate faculty/staff members.

In addition to the expectations listed above, each faculty/staff member has the authority to decide on specific elements of academic conduct including, but not limited to, the following:

- use of notes and/or books on tests, quizzes, etc.;
- contents of formula sheets permitted for tests, quizzes, etc.;
- use of calculators;
- collaboration on out-of-class assignments;

- use of previously submitted out-of-class assignments.

It is critical that the faculty and staff uniformly adhere to and enforce the Honor Code. Please see your department chairperson or an administrator if you have any questions about enforcing the Honor Code.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Membership in professional organizations is encouraged by your administrative team. There are many such organizations to consider at the district, state, and national levels that offer opportunities for professional involvement. These organizations may also provide professional resources related to your area(s) of interest.

LESSON PLANS (See also “Teacher Responsibilities” in this section)

Lesson planning is an essential part of the teacher process and a proper subject for evaluation. The principal or supervising administrator has the authority to determine whether or not instructional objectives and related content are consistent with Board educational policy decisions and established instructional guidelines. The format or organization of lesson plans is best determined by the individual teacher. Principals or supervising administrators may suggest, but not require, a particular format or organization. Only where a principal has documented deficiencies through classroom observations using the Instructional Performance Evaluation and Growth System (IPEGS) may a teacher be required to use a set form in preparation of lesson plans.

Lesson plans shall reflect objective(s), activity(ies), a way of monitoring student progress, and home learning assignment(s). It is agreed that the manner in which these components are to be reflected in a lesson plan shall be left to the discretion of the individual teacher except as noted above. Teachers shall not be prohibited from reflecting required lesson plan components through utilizing abbreviated notation and/or referencing techniques. Similarly, a subject area reference and a M-DCPS objective number would adequately indicate the objective of a lesson in social studies, science, or other subject areas. The objective need not be written out in its entirety.

Teachers are required to develop weekly plans but not yearly or nine-week plans except on a voluntary basis. It is agreed that lesson plans are for the use of the teacher and any procedure for assessing lesson plans shall be consistent with agreed upon observation/evaluation procedures and shall not require the teacher to spend time making an extra copy(ies) of a lesson plan.

The lesson plan notebook is to be utilized by classroom teachers to contain weekly lesson plans for each nine-week grading period. The department chairperson should develop an appropriate procedure for a weekly review and documentation of lesson plans acceptable to the teachers assigned to a particular department. The weekly lesson plans should be placed in the notebook in a sequence that is consistent throughout each nine-week grading period. Teachers assigned more than one course preparation may prefer a sequence based on the course designations rather than one by the order of class periods. The record keeping system employed by each department chairperson for monitoring of lesson plans should be made accessible upon request by an administrator.

BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT/ PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES (See also Section I)

The presence of every teacher is required for one scheduled Back to School Night activity each year. This special evening program encourages parents to visit their child’s school, and is usually scheduled during the first school term. In addition, every teacher is required to attend two Parent-Teacher Conferences on scheduled Early Release dates and on two scheduled evening dates.

MAILBOXES (See also Section I)

Teachers are responsible for checking their mail daily.

- **School Mail** – Teachers should check their mailbox at least two times a day – at the beginning and the end of the school day. All correspondence to be placed in the mailboxes must have administrative approval.
- **E-mail** – Teachers are required to check their electronic mail daily. Use e-mail as a means for communication whenever possible. Administrative correspondence will be sent via e-mail.

PERSONNEL FILES (See also Section I)

The personnel file of each employee shall be open to inspection subject to the procedures manual, entitled “Procedures, Personnel Files” which is on file in the Board office of the School Clerk.

GRADEBOOK (See also Section IV)

The teacher’s electronic gradebook should be clearly marked to indicate the semester number, subject, attendance code, conduct code, grading scale, and source of each grade. A minimum of two grades per week should be recorded as evidence of student progress.

SECTION III
INTERNAL FUNDS

Fund Raising
Internal Funds
 Club Accounts
 Fund Raising
 Purchase Orders and Payments
 Fieldtrips and Conferences
 Donations
 Banquets and Luncheons
 Treasurer's Office

FUND RAISING

Fund-raising activities must be approved by the principal or assistant principal. The sponsor is to prepare the form and return it to the activities director, who will assume the responsibility for securing all the required approval signatures. In projects involving fund raising in the community, the sponsor must also submit a community sales report to be approved by the principal, who then forwards it to the Regional Center III office for approval. *Operating reports must be filed immediately after the activity is completed.*

INTERNAL FUNDS

- The principal must approve all purchases, sales, and functions in advance of the event/sale.
 - All financial records are property of the school, are subject to audit, and must be retained. The treasurer will retain the records for audits.
- I. Club Account Book
 - A. Account balances will be given upon request after the last Friday of each month.
 - II. Fund Raising
 - A. Application for Fund Raising Activity
 1. Submit to treasurer two (2) weeks prior to activity
 2. Wait until the application has been approved
 3. Sell only during the approved time and dates
 4. Only one fundraiser at a time
 - B. Distribution of Goods
 1. Distribution sheet is kept when merchandise or tickets are issued to students or staff to sell.
 - a. Student/staff member signs sheet for merchandise received
 - b. Items not sold and returned to sponsor should be noted on the distribution sheet and have the student initial
 - C. Collection of Money
 1. A Recap of Collections can be signed by students if the amount being collected is less than \$15.00, except for the following:
 - a. Pre-sale transactions of tangible items.
 - b. Class Fees
 2. MDCPS serialized receipts must be issued for \$15.00 and over
 - a. Employee receipt book (M-DCPS only). (See treasurer)
 1. White copy to payee
 2. Yellow copy with recap sheet
 3. Green copy stays in the book
 - D. Depositing Money
 1. Deposit with the school treasurer
 2. Deposit in the same form as collected
 3. Deposit with recap sheet and receipt book when used
 4. Deposit same day or next day: DO NOT HOLD MONEY
 - E. Operating Reports
 1. Required 10 days after completion of fundraiser with all applicable documents attached
 - F. Final Reports (attached to the operating reports)
 1. Distribution Sheet – Merchandise or tickets issued to students
 2. Continuous Sales Operating Report – monthly
 3. Certificate of loss – Merchandise or money is lost or stolen
 4. Certificate of Disposal – Goods are damaged, spoiled, etc.
 5. Complimentary Form – Goods are issued at no charge
 - III. Purchase Orders and Payments

- A. ALL purchases require a purchase order regardless of amount
 - 1. Obtain from school treasurer
 - 2. For purchases of \$1,000 but less than \$5,000, at least (3) documented telephone quotes are required. For purchases of \$5,000 but less than \$25,000, at least three (3) written bids are required. For purchases of \$25,000 and over, formal bid procedures must be followed, including advertisement in newspapers and opening of sealed bids on a specified date. Consult the Bureau of Procurement and Materials Management. Items for which a District awarded bid is available, items must be purchased from the bid through the Bureau of Procurement and Materials Management.
 - a. Name of vendor
 - b. Name of contact
 - c. Telephone number
 - d. Quote
 - 3. Sales tax 7.0% must be paid on all fundraising items relating to an approved fundraising activity. Sales tax cannot be reimbursed on items purchased for school use (supplies, furniture, equipment, etc.) School employees making purchases, on behalf of the school, with their own personal funds, may not be reimbursed sales tax unless it is for a fundraiser. Only items purchased with a school check, qualify for tax exempt status.
 - 4. All purchases for reimbursement must have an **original** itemized invoice. Please note: A fax is not an original!
 - a. Sign, date, and forward to the treasurer's office
 - 5. Check requisition required for payment of goods
 - a. Complete all necessary blanks
 - b. Allow five working days to process check
- B. Purchase Order Chain of Approval
 - 1. Purchase order can be obtained from the school treasurer
 - 2. Complete, sign, and forward to the school treasurer
 - 3. Minimum of three days to process purchase orders
 - 4. A purchase order number will be issued after verification of funds
 - 5. Purchase order will be sent to administration for approval
 - 6. After the approvals, the treasurer will put the purchase order in the requester's mailbox
 - 7. When approved purchase order has been placed in the mailbox, the order may be placed

IV. Fieldtrips and Conferences

- A. Fieldtrip approval
 - 1. Travel Approval forms – see Activities Director
 - 2. Forward completed forms to Activities Director for approval routing
- B. In-County Fieldtrips and Conferences
 - 1. Purchase order required: list the following
 - a. Name of attraction
 - b. Entrance fees
 - c. Transportation
 - 2. Copy of the approved Temporary Duty form
 - 3. Copy of the approved Travel Approval form
 - 4. Information attached as to date, time, cost, etc.
 - 5. All monies and requests for checks must be forwarded to the school treasurer five (5) days prior to the fieldtrips
- C. Out of County Fieldtrips, Banquets and Conferences
 - 1. Requires a request for travel/expense form when accompanying students (to be used in lieu of a purchase order). This form goes to the

North Central Regional Center for approval. Please submit to the treasurer at least three (3) weeks prior to travel

2. Submit a copy of approved Temporary Duty form
3. Submit a copy of approved Travel Approval form
4. Attach information as to date, time, cost, etc.
5. All monies are to be forwarded to the school treasurer five (5) school days prior to the trip
6. Requests for checks must be forwarded to the school treasurer with the required documentation attached
 - a. Allow a *minimum* of five (5) school days to process checks

V. Donations

- A. Requires a letter/memo from donor indicating the purpose of the donation
- B. Issue a receipt to donor from the M-DCPS receipt book
- C. Deposit funds with recap and receipt book to the school treasurer

VI. Treasurer's Office

- A. Open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. – Closed for Deposits from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.
- B. Do not send students down during class time to clear financial obligations.
- C. No personal checks cashed.
- D. Collect cash or money orders only. Do not accept checks.

SECTION IV CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

- Competency-Based Curriculum
- Student Progression Plan
 - GPA - Graduation Requirements
- Instructional Performance Evaluation and Growth System (IPEGS)
- *Gradebooks (II)
- Grades and Reporting Student Progress (II)
 - Academic Grades
 - Conduct Grades
 - Effort Grades
- Honor Roll
- Preparing Report Cards
- *Notifying Parents and Adult Students (II)
 - *Teacher/Parent Conference (II)
 - *Written Notification (II)
- Report for Standardized Tests
- Interim Progress Report Procedures
- *Unsatisfactory Notices (II)
- Report Cards
 - Provisions for Limited English Proficiency Students
- Evaluation of Students
- Home Learning Policy
- Resource Persons/Guest Speakers
- School Involvement
- Professional Library
- Use of Video Materials
- Center for Professional Learning (CPL)
 - Policies and Procedures

COMPETENCY-BASED CURRICULUM

In 1994, Miami-Dade County Public Schools adopted the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) for grades K – 12. The Competency-Based Curriculum was developed as a catalyst to improve student achievement at every level. It is intended to act as a trigger which will help increase student performance standards, equalize the academic expectations for all students regardless of the school which they attend, infuse multicultural content throughout the curriculum, expand curricula topics to include emerging technology, and refocus efforts on helping students gain and utilize higher order thinking skills to solve problems.

The Competency-Based Curriculum represents an approach to instruction which emphasizes the application of knowledge in a manner which may be observed or measured. Competency-Based Curriculum guides focus a comprehensive view of each course of study which is delineated into its essential components, a listing of the most important objectives to be mastered, and the competencies which every student should be able to demonstrate after instruction is completed. Competency-Based lessons require students to engage in activities designed to apply learning with an increased emphasis on higher order thinking skills. Students are evaluated not only on knowledge, but primarily on their ability to perform tasks associated with the knowledge acquired.

The Competency-Based Curriculum replaced the Curriculum Frameworks in grades 6 – 12. This innovative approach is designed to increase student performance standards, incorporate state-of-the-art teaching strategies, emphasize the application of learning, prepare students to meet world class standards, allow teachers maximum freedom in the approaches used in the classroom by clearly identifying terminal target performance goals for each component of a course of study, and serve as a comprehensive guide which will assist teachers in identifying areas in which they can utilize alternative forms of student assessment. The CBC is a more complete curriculum because, rather than simply listing objectives to be covered in a course of study, it directly targets what a student should be able to do, thereby identifying the necessary and desired changes that should occur with the learner.

Another important feature of the CBC is that it is spiral in nature. This unique curriculum design allows for certain competencies and objectives to remain similar from one grade level to the next. The significant changes that are observed as students move through the curriculum correspond to changes in the cognitive levels and complexity of the objectives sought. The spiral format of the curriculum promotes the reinforcement of competencies once they are introduced and allows for the exploration of interdisciplinary relationships among the various subject areas.

STUDENT PROGRESSION PLAN

The School Board of Miami-Dade County is dedicated to the total and continuous development of each student. The professional staff of the school system has the responsibility to develop administrative procedures to ensure the placement of each student in the subject, in the grade level, or in the special program best suited to meet the student's academic needs, with consideration given to the student's social, emotional and physical development.

Decisions regarding student promotion, retention, and special placement are primarily the responsibility of the individual school's professional staff; however, the final decision in regard to grade placement is the responsibility of the principal. The county wide standards in accordance with which placement decisions must be made are entitled Student Progression Plan for the Miami-Dade County Public Schools, which is incorporated by reference herein and made a part of this Board Rule. Copies of this plan are on file in the Office of the Recording Secretary of the School Board and in the Citizen Information Center. The standards and the procedures for their implementation, contained in the plan reflect clearly that promotion in the Miami-Dade County Public Schools is based primarily on student achievement and is not an automatic process.

The measures which are employed to implement the standards must clearly reflect the multi-cultural composition of this community. Students must be provided placements that are

appropriate for their English language competency and cultural background. Limited English Proficient students must be provided instruction which is understandable, as well as equal and comparable in amount, scope and sequence, and quality that is provided to English proficient students. The acquisition of English language skills is the highest instructional priority for speakers of other languages. Grade placement and promotion, however, are to be based on the student's performance in the dominant language while the student is in the process of becoming independent in English.

The purpose of the instructional program in the district's schools is to provide appropriate instruction and selected services to enable students to perform academically at their grade level or higher. However, in recognition of the wide range of student's abilities, motivation, interests and development, the Student Progression Plan establishes minimum standards in the basic skills of reading, writing, mathematics, science, computer literacy and social studies which all students must meet as one condition for graduation within the school districts. These standards assure minimally that all students who earn a diploma from a senior high school or adult center have sufficient basic skills to function effectively in the community. The Student Progression Plan provides assurance that all students within the Miami-Dade County Public Schools who receive a diploma have met and/or exceeded all the requirements mandated by the State of Florida and by the School Board.

As part of the Student Progression Plan, procedures are established to achieve parent understanding, cooperation, and acceptance of the student's promotion or placement with the knowledge that within district and state regulations, the final decision regarding grade placement remains the prerogative of the principal. The student, the parent, and other interested patrons must have ample opportunity to understand fully the promotion or placement requirements of the district. When students are from homes where a language other than English is spoken, communications (written and oral) with parents are undertaken in the parent's primary language or other mode of communication commonly used by the parents unless clearly not possible. When it becomes evident that the standards or requirements for promotion may not be met, parents of the K – 12 and adult students must be informed of the possibility of retention or special placement. Student grades, unsatisfactory work notices, parent reports on state assessment and/or standardized testing, parent conferences, and adult student conferences should serve as the primary means of communicating student progress and achievement of the standards.

GPA Graduation Requirements

For a student entering the high school program prior to July 1, 1997, the law increases the grade point average (GPA) and provides the following option for meeting the required minimum GPA for high school graduation:

The student must have a 1.5 on a 4.0 scale or its equivalent in those courses prior to July 1, 1997, and earn a 2.0 or above on a 4.0 scale for courses that apply to the 24 credits required for high school graduation which are taken after July 1, 1997.

INSTRUCTIONAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION AND GROWTH SYSTEM (IPEGS)

At the meeting held on October 19, 2005, the Board authorized the Superintendent to pursue the acquisition and implementation of a competent evaluation and appraisal system for instructional personnel that would serve to replace the Performance Assessment Comprehensive Evaluation System (PACES) currently utilized by the district. A Request for Proposals (RFP) was distributed to various qualified vendors on January 23, 2006. The Board subsequently authorized the Superintendent during the June 14, 2006 Board meeting (Agenda Item B-2) to negotiate and enter into a contractual services agreement with Teacher Quality Resources, pursuant to Request for Proposals No. 070-FF10 – professional consulting services for development of an instructional assessment and appraisal system.

In collaboration with United Teachers of Dade (UTD), three design teams were established representing the following instructional personnel categories: classroom teachers, student

services personnel (e.g., school psychologists, guidance counselors, social workers) and instructional support personnel (e.g., curriculum support specialists, library/media specialists, teachers on special assignment). The teams include corresponding practitioner representatives and district, region and school-based administrators. Team members adhered to a consensus building approach in their work that allowed them to progress through the developmental phase effectively and efficiently. Each design team met a total of seven times from March 20, 2006, through May 18, 2006, to develop recommendations for the design of the new performance evaluation system called the ***Instructional Performance Evaluation and Growth System (IPEGS)***.

Performance standards were developed for teachers, instructional support personnel, and student services personnel with sample indicators. A performance appraisal rubric with a four-level rating scale was developed for each performance standard. Information sources include observation, learner/program progress goal setting, required documentation and parental input as tools to conduct the performance evaluation. The IPEGS handbooks explain the tools and procedures. The following overview provides additional information regarding the evaluation system tools:

Observation: Annual contract employees will have a minimum of two formal observations a year. Professional service and continuing contract personnel will have at least one formal observation a year. An observation lasts a minimum of 20 minutes.

Learner/Program Progress Goal Setting: Instructional personnel will document learner/program benchmarks established at the beginning of the year, set forth strategies to build on strengths, address weaknesses, assess progress at mid-year, and document gains at the end of the year. This approach reflects a contemporary research-based instructional strategy that can yield impressive results in student learning. The process incorporates professional development as a component of the goal-setting, thereby alleviating the need for a separate individual professional development plan.

Required Documentation: A portion of the data used to provide insight on performance can be collected by instructional personnel. Specific items that may not always be observable in an instructional setting may be submitted to demonstrate progress in meeting instructional personnel performance standards. The ability to provide to the assessor relevant evidence, such as a list identifying professional development activities undertaken, encourages instructional personnel to actively participate in ongoing self-assessment tied to established performance standards.

Parental Input: Parental input is gathered through the use of the *School Climate Survey*, the Educational Excellence School Advisory Council (EESAC) participation and the Open House Parent Academy Survey in schools, as applicable. Professionals show evidence of communication with parents as reflected on their communication log.

A four-level rubric depicting a continuum of effectiveness is tailored to each of the performance standards. The levels are: exemplary, proficient, developing/needs improvement, and unsatisfactory. The design teams crafted rubrics that are tailored to each performance standard. Achievement of the performance standard that describes an acceptable level of performance is equivalent to proficient.

A pilot of IPEGS was conducted during the 2006-2007 school year. Thirty-one school sites participated. A series of professional development sessions were provided to principals and their leadership teams (e.g. expert teachers, UTD Stewards) to support the implementation of IPEGS. Additionally, pilot schools received year-round implementation support through site visits by the staff of Leadership Development and UTD staff, web-based resources, and daily e-mail and telephone assistance.

The Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation comprised of M-DCPS and UTD personnel met throughout the year to discuss concerns regarding the pilot; monitor and analyze pertinent data, and issue recommendations for modifications and/or amendments, using a collaborative decision-making process. A sub-committee reviewed the handbook to clarify procedures for professionals in need of performance improvement.

At the end of the pilot year, selected original design team members and others convened to address specific needs identified during the pilot year. Their recommendations were reviewed both by the M-DCPS and the UTD leaderships who then approved the revisions to the IPEGS handbooks. During the 2007-2008 school year, an additional 15 school sites were added to the pilot.

All resources and handbooks can be found at <http://ipegs.dadeschools.net/>

ELECTRONIC GRADEBOOK (See also Section II)

Miami Springs Middle School will be utilizing an electronic gradebook. Student attendance will be downloaded daily, it is imperative that attendance be recorded accurately and timely. Student attendance will be submitted during homeroom.

Teachers must print a Grade Verification Report each nine week grading period and submitted to the grade level counselor at the end of each quarter. The reports will be retained for audit purposes.

Parents will have access to view their child's grades on-line, therefore, accurate and timely grade recording is imperative.

NOTE: It is the teacher's professional responsibility, by law, to take daily student attendance. This record must be accurate. ***No student is ever to take attendance.*** This state law and Board policy will be enforced by this administration.

Additionally the gradebook should be used to log other pertinent information relating to evaluation of students, such as: parent-teacher conferences, referrals, unsatisfactory progress reports, etc.

- Textbook numbers
- Conduct grades - should reflect such items as tardiness, any assignment to S.C.S.I., and general classroom conduct. At no time may a teacher lower an ACADEMIC grade as a penalty for a CONDUCT problem.
- Effort - participation in relation to ability.
- Scholarship - should reflect a) major tests, b) quizzes, c) class participation, d) home learning data, e) final exams, f) written/oral projects, and g) other pertinent material.

GRADES AND REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS (See also Section II)

The School Board of Miami-Dade County has taken major steps to establish standards for the school district for reporting student progress. The steps consist of the adoption of Board Rules 6Gx13- 5B-1.01 and 6Gx13 - 5B- 1.04, the adoption of the Code of Conduct, and the passage of the Student Progression Plan for the Miami-Dade Public Schools.

In Board Rule 6Gx13 - 5B-1.01, it is stated: "The Board directs the instructional staff to use such evaluative devices and techniques as may be needed to (report)...individual achievement in relation to school goals, acceptable norms, and Student potential." In Board Rule 6Gx13 - 5B-1.04, the Board states: "Student grades, unsatisfactory work notices, parent reports on state assessment and/or standardized testing, parent conferences, and adult-student conferences

should serve as the primary means of communicating student progress and achievement of the standards (for promotion)."

The Code of Student Conduct refers to student grades as follows: "A student's academic grade should reflect the teacher's most objective assessment of the student's academic achievement." The code also states: "Students have the right to receive a conduct grade consistent with their behavior in each class."

Specific guidelines for grading student performance and for reporting student progress follow in this section of the Student Progression Plan.

Grading Student Performance

1. Academic Grades

By Board direction, academic grades are to reflect the student's academic progress. The grade must provide for both students and parents a clear indication of each student's academic performance as compared with norms which would be appropriate for the grade or subject. Students performing at a level in the basic skills which meets the requirements for promotion specified in the Student Progression Plan should receive academic grades of A, B, C, D, F, or I unrelated to the student's effort and conduct. The letter grade of I will be reserved for secondary use only. Grades in all subjects other than the basic skills are to be based on the student's degree of mastery of the instructional objectives for the subject. The determination of the specific grade a student receives must be based on the teacher's best judgment after careful consideration of all aspects of each student's performance during a grading period.

In grades 9 - 12, in authorized semester courses, the student's final grade shall be determined by the teacher as follows: 40 percent value for each of two nine week grading periods and 20 percent value for the final examination, with a provision for teacher override. For authorized annual courses, the student's final grade shall include: 20 percent value for each of four nine week grading periods and 10 percent each for the midterm and final exam, with the provision for teacher override.

In grades one through twelve, a common report card grading system is to be used. Academic grades for students shall be A, B, C, D, F, or I. The letter grade of I will be reserved for secondary use only. A brief explanation of the grades used in grades 1 - 12 follows:

A--- A grade of "A" (90 - 100%) indicates that the student has demonstrated outstanding achievement in the subject and/or skills area. The student consistently performs academically at a level that is considerably higher than that of the typical student in the same program or course. The student has mastered skills well above those required for successful completion of the instructional program prescribed for the individual student and has demonstrated an understanding of the ability to utilize the content of the program effectively. An "A" student will have achieved and exceeded all of the instructional objectives established for the subject during the grading period.

B--- A grade of "B" (80 - 89%) indicates that the student has demonstrated good but not outstanding achievement in the academic area. The student consistently performs at a level above that which is expected of the typical student in the same program or subject. The student has mastered skills in content beyond what is required for successful completion of the instructional program prescribed for the individual student. The "B" student will be progressing at a rate that will enable him/her to have achieved virtually all of the instructional objectives/performance standards established for the subject being graded.

C--- A grade of "C" (70 - 79%) indicates satisfactory academic achievement. The student performs at an average level in terms of mastery of skills/performance standards and/or content of the program prescribed for the individual student. The student's rate of progress permits mastery of more that the minimal instructional objectives of the program.

D--- A grade of "D" (60 - 69%) indicates a minimal acceptable level of mastery of skills and other course content and indicates that improvement is needed to achieve a satisfactory level of academic performance. The student's rate of progress is such that the minimal instructional objectives/performance standards for the program will be mastered.

F--- A grade of "F" (0 - 59%) indicates a level of academic performance that is unsatisfactory. Students functioning at this level are not mastering the minimal objectives required in the regular instructional program.

I--- A grade of "I" (0) indicates performance insufficient to permit an evaluation. Secondary school students performing at this level may have their grade adjusted upon presentation of the required assignments. **(May be issued with administrative approval only)**

When a numerical equivalent to an assigned letter grade of A, B, C, D, F, or I is used, the following apply, and shall be communicated to students:

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Numerical Value</u>	<u>Grade Point Interpretation</u>	<u>Value</u>
A	90 - 100 %	Outstanding	4
B	80 - 89 %	Good	3
C	70 - 79%	Satisfactory	2
D	60 - 69%	Minimal - improvement needed	1
F	0 - 59%	Unsatisfactory	0
I	0	Incomplete (Secondary only)	0

2. Conduct Grades

Conduct grades are to be used to communicate clearly both to students and their parents the teacher's evaluation of a student's behavior. These grades are independent of academic and effort grades. The conduct grade must be consistent with the student's overall behavior in class and should not be based on a single criterion.

The conduct grading system for grades 1-12 is as follows:

A - A conduct grade of "A" reflects excellent behavior on the part of the student. These students consistently demonstrate outstanding behavior consistent with classroom, school, and district standards.

B - A conduct grade of "B" reflects consistently good behavior. The student meets established standards for student conduct.

C - A conduct grade of "C" reflects satisfactory behavior. The student's overall behavior is generally acceptable according to established standards of conduct.

D - A conduct grade of "D" shows that improvement is needed in the student's overall behavior. The student does not consistently display appropriate behavior which is acceptable.

issued at the close of the summer program to all students, K-12, who attend any portion of the summer program.

In conjunction with the above requirements, the following guidelines should be adhered to:

- Report card grades are to provide the student and/or the student's parents with an objective evaluation of the student's scholastic achievement, effort, and conduct.
- Student's academic grades are to reflect their academic achievement. Students who receive passing grades on their report cards can be assumed to be working within a range acceptable for the grade or subject.
- Students are to be advised of the grading criteria employed in the school and in each class prior to the beginning of the grading period. Students and parents are also to be advised of district wide standards for promotion and graduation as applied to the student's grade placement.
- Grades in conduct and effort are to reflect objectively the student's progress independent of academic achievement. Standards for grading in these areas are to be explained to the students; CONDUCT implies the degree to which a student relates to others in socially acceptable ways. EFFORT implies the degree to which a student has demonstrated a desire to learn or to engage in learning tasks that should lead to a mastery of educational goals.
- Students are to receive grades in all approved programs and all courses in which they are enrolled in the secondary school. If a student has not been enrolled in a program for a sufficient length of time for the teacher to evaluate the student's performance, an appropriate notation should be made on the report card.
- If the principal of a school feels it is necessary to change a Student's grade in any subject at the end of a grading period, the principal shall consult with the teacher who issued the original grade, complete the grade change form indicating reasons for the change, and place a copy of the reasons in the Student's Cumulative Record Folder.
- If a change in grade is made, as described above, it shall be recorded as the principal's grade and not the teacher's grade. Students and their parents shall be notified of all such changes.

NOTIFYING PARENTS (See also Section II)

School Board rules require that the parents of students are to be notified at any time during a grading period when it is apparent that the student may fail or is performing unsatisfactorily in any course or grade level. Parents are also to be notified at any time during the grading period when it becomes evident that the student's conduct or effort grades are unsatisfactory.

Review the school board rule related to teacher/parent communication (i.e.: M-DCPS/UTD Contract Article XX, Section 11; School Board Rule [6Gx13- 1B-1.012](#) Parent Involvement -- A Home-School-District-Partnership).

- **TEACHER/PARENT CONFERENCE** (See also Section II)

Teachers are encouraged to communicate with parents at any time during a grading period when the teachers feel, in their professional judgment that such communication may be beneficial to the student. When students are from homes where a language other than English is spoken, every effort should be made to communicate with parents in a language they can understand.

- **WRITTEN NOTIFICATION (See also Section II)**

In order to assure consistency in reporting unsatisfactory progress to the parents, the administration has directed each school principal to implement the following procedures:

- Each school should publish in the Opening of School Bulletin, school newspaper, student handbook, or other communication to parents and students the methods and procedures utilized to notify parents of a student's unsatisfactory progress. The responsibility of parents in this entire process should be specifically stated. Once parents have been notified of unsatisfactory progress through interim reports during the grading period, it is incumbent upon them to contact school officials for further assessment of the student's performance.
- Teacher-parent conferences should take place when students are in need of academic strengthening and when students are judged to possess unique academic potential. Teacher - parent conferences are required when students display a consistent pattern of disruption or demonstrate unacceptable academic achievement through failure to exert sufficient effort. Teachers shall afford parents or guardians of every student an opportunity for a parent - teacher conference.
- Written notification must be sent home by the teacher to the parents or guardians at any time during the grading period when it becomes evident that the student is performing unsatisfactorily in academics, conduct, or effort. Minimally, such standardized written notification shall be sent home prior to the beginning of the eighth week of each of the four nine week periods of the regular school year. Subsequent to the seventh week of the grading period, if an unanticipated reduction in performance becomes evident in academics, conduct or effort, the teacher shall notify the parents or guardian. It is the teacher's responsibility to award a grade commensurate with the student's performance. Additionally, the teacher shall send to the parents of all other students an "Interim Progress Report," at least two weeks prior to the end of each grading period. In order to minimize paperwork, such notification shall be transmitted on a standardized checklist type of form within appropriate guidelines.
- Although every attempt shall be made by the school to communicate directly with parents, the signature of a middle school student on a progress report will constitute documentation that the report was issued with instructions to deliver it to the parent.
- At the discretion of the teacher, parents may be notified by a coded message on the student report card that a teacher-parent conference is requested. A principal may elect to withhold issuing of a report card, for one grading period, pending a conference with the parent when a parent has failed to respond to a previous request for a conference.

REPORTS FOR STANDARDIZED TESTS

Parents are to receive reports on their child's performance on the standardized tests administered as part of the countywide achievement-testing program. Parents of the students tested through the State Assessment Program will receive reports as they are made available by the state. These reports will be distributed through the Office of Educational Accountability.

INTERIM PROGRESS REPORT PROCEDURES

The standardized interim progress report form will include a place for the teacher to indicate that a parent conference is requested. However, if the parent does not respond to the request for a parent conference, it shall be the responsibility of school personnel to take, within reason, action to initiate a parent conference. If these actions fail, obviously a conference cannot be forced upon the parent and the form will constitute verification of the original request.

UNSATISFACTORY NOTICES (See also Section II)

If a student is likely to earn less than a "C" in any subject, the teacher must notify the parents/guardians officially with the *Notice of Unsatisfactory Progress* report. The teacher must send this notice at any time during the grading period the student is, academically or behaviorally, achieving less than satisfactory.

REPORT CARDS

At the completion of each nine-week period the student will receive a report card. The report card issued at the end of the year (thirty-six weeks) represents an average of all grades given for the entire year. The computer will automatically average all grades to determine the annual grade unless there is a teacher override. The teacher must turn in to the chairperson of the guidance department a written rationale for each override. Interim Progress Reports will be sent home midway through each grading period throughout the year.

Grading Scale:	Academic	Conduct	Effort
A= 90 - 100 Outstanding	Outstanding	A= Excellent Behavior	1=
B= 80 - 89 Satisfactory	Good	B= Consistently Good	2=
C= 70 - 79 Insufficient	Satisfactory	C= Satisfactory	3=
D= 60 - 69	Minimal	D= Improvement Needed	
F= 0 - 59	Unsatisfactory	F= Unsatisfactory	
I= 0	Incomplete		

• **PROVISIONS FOR STUDENTS OF LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY**

English for Speakers of Other Languages: Letter grades A, B, C, D, F are to be given which reflect the student's progress during the entire ESOL block, that is, in oral communication as well as in reading and writing skills development.

Other Courses: For courses other than ESOL courses, in fields such as Science or Social Studies, students are given an appropriate letter grade A, B, C, D, F.

Grades are to be given which reflect instructions provided in such a way that the student's lack of command of the English language does not affect progress. If students are receiving instruction in their own language, Comment No. 01, "Receiving bilingual instruction in this subject," is then entered on the report card. Students receiving ESOL strategies in their subjects, Comment No. 05 should be entered on their report card.

The attention of the school principal is specifically called to provisions in the guidelines that are included so grades are given "which reflect instruction provided in such a way that the student's lack of command of the English languages does not affect progress." When instruction is provided primarily in English, it may not be possible to evaluate the student's progress on the basis of course content mastered. Where that occurs, the teacher should enter "I" for "Incomplete" instead of "F". If appropriate, the same procedure should be followed for the second and third grading period, with the awarding of a letter grade being postponed until the last grading period. This option allows the student to later have a grade entered and receive credit for the course when his/her future performance permits an evaluation.

The existence of this option in no way relieves the school of its responsibility to provide content area instruction in the home language where possible. Principals are to make certain that teachers who are working with students of limited English proficiency fully understand and exercise this option in awarding grades.

At all grade levels comment number 34 is to be entered on the report card to certify when mastery of computer literacy standards have been demonstrated. (Sections V and VI, Student Progression Plan)

EVALUATION OF STUDENTS

Student evaluation is an important aspect of the total instructional program. Evaluation devices are to be used for assessment purposes to show the student, the parent(s) or guardian(s), as well as the student's teachers, what the student has mastered, where the student needs help, and how to motivate the student for continued learning.

Teachers' oral and written work, student folders, check lists, and observations are representative of the means to be used to determine student progress. Examinations or unit tests shall be averaged as part of the grading period evaluation in which the examinations or unit tests are given. In no case should the examination grade constitute the entire grade for any given grading period. If final examinations are given at the end of a grading period or semester, the test grade may not receive the weighting of a full grading period.

Examination Regulations:

The following regulations in regard to examinations shall be observed.

- Each secondary school will develop its own schedule for giving examinations. Except under unusual circumstances, no student should be required to take more than two examinations on a given day. Schools must make provisions for students to make up examinations missed due to an excused absence. It is at the student's discretion whether or not the make-up examinations are included in the two examinations per day limit.
- Where appropriate, examinations must include a reasonable number of questions that require an essay response.
- All secondary examination papers must be retained in the school for at least one year.
- Examinations in secondary schools should be meaningful in nature. They should be carefully developed and closely examined so they are appropriate to the scope and sequence of the course and to the ability and maturity of the student.
- Deviations from above procedures or remission from examinations in a school may be authorized by the area superintendent.

Board Rule [6x13 -- 5b-1.02](#)

HOME LEARNING POLICY

The School Board of Miami-Dade County 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 academic achievement of students and in extending activities in the home and in the community. Regular home learning provides opportunities for developmental practice, drill, the application of skills already learned, and the development of discipline. Home learning should provide reinforcement and extension of class instruction, and as a basis for further study and preparation for future class assignments. In light of the major purposes for home learning, it is *not to be assigned as punishment for students for disciplinary reasons*.

Responsibility for home learning should gradually increase for students in grades one through six. Secondary school home learning assignments should recognize that more time and individual

student initiative are expected in order to meet increased instructional demands. Home learning assignments for exceptional education students should reflect the special needs of such students.

In general, home learning assignments will be completed for the following day; however, long range assignments and/or special projects should provide students with an opportunity to develop and refine research and independent study skills, and the ability to work independently. Teachers should review evidence of progress, periodically, before the student submits a long-range assignment.

Teachers shall consider the following factors when making home learning assignments:

- The grade level of the student.
- The level and degree of difficulty with the subject being studied.
- The maturity level of the student.
- The instructional needs of the student.
- The purpose of the assignment and its relationship to the objectives of the course under study.
- The length of the assignment and the amount of time that will be required to complete it.
- Home learning demands being made in other subject areas.

It is the responsibility of the school staff to assure quality and value in home learning by making assignments that are:

- An outgrowth of classroom instruction.
- Clear and definite in purpose.
- Clearly related to the objectives being pursued in the classroom.

Principals will be responsible for:

- Communicating the School Board Rule on home learning to staff members.
- Reviewing the School Board Home Learning Rule with the total school staff.
- Encouraging parents to communicate with the school if a student's home learning assignments are excessive or not sufficiently challenging to the student, according to the parents' views.
- Monitoring the implementation of the home learning rule.

Teachers will be responsible for:

- Teaching independent study skills.
- Making specific assignments.
- Checking, reviewing, evaluating, and/or grading student home learning, according to the teacher's individual methods, in keeping with a system that is clearly explained to the class.

Students will be responsible for:

- Completing all assigned home learning as directed.
- Submitting home learning to the teacher by the designated time.
- Submitting home learning assignments that reflect careful attention to detail and quality of work.

Parents' responsibilities include:

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

It is understood that it is not the parents' responsibility to give a great deal of assistance to the student in completing home learning. It is the school's responsibility to make instructions related to home learning clear and to provide when necessary, a short period of supervised study or a period of questioning to ensure that the students understand the assignment.

Additional Home Learning Guidelines

- Reading should be a part of every assignment. When specific assignments are not given, or when home learning is completed quickly, the allotted time should be devoted to reading.
- Reading to children can take the place of independent reading for students who have not learned to read yet, or who are experiencing difficulty.
- Feedback on home learning should be given to students in a timely manner.
- Home learning instructions should be clear, and supervised classroom study should be provided as necessary to assure student understanding.

[6Gx13-6A-1.23](#)

NOTE: Students can receive additional help through the Dial-A-Teacher program at 995-1600, Monday through Thursday from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

RESOURCE PERSONS/GUEST SPEAKERS

The teachers must secure approval from the administration, through Mr. Leal, the Athletics/Activities Director, before bringing in resource persons to contribute to the instructional program. After engaging the persons, the teacher should confirm with the administration the date and time the speaker will be in the classroom.

SCHOOL INVOLVEMENT

Teachers are encouraged to be involved in, and expected to be committed to, the total school program to the extent that these experiences provide their students with interesting and challenging experiences that transcend individual classroom instruction.

PROFESSIONAL LIBRARY

Copies of the School Board Policies and Rules, State Administrative Rules, M-DCPS Student Progression Plan, and other state, district, and school administrative documents and manuals, are located in the Media Center. Any faculty member who needs to research a particular matter should request the use of these materials through the Media Specialist.

USE OF VIDEO MATERIALS

It is the policy of Miami-Dade County Public Schools to encourage the use of a wide range of instructional materials in teaching and learning. The use of those materials in schools must, however, be both appropriately related to classroom instruction or to in-service education programs and used in a manner that is consistent with Federal Copyright Law.

Teachers or administrators who are seeking video materials to be used in classroom instruction or in-service education should first seek those materials from their school media center. Most school media centers are now building collections of the most used videos, and all media centers can provide information concerning the 10,000 video titles that are available from the school system's instructional television broadcasts and Miami-Dade County Public School's Film and Video Library, or from programs broadcast by public or commercial television stations.

Teachers seeking video materials which are not available from those sources should submit a District Film/Video Request Form available from the school media center. The Division of Media Programs will make every effort to provide video materials on the topics that are requested.

The only video materials which are authorized for use in Miami-Dade County Public Schools are those obtained from the sources, and used under the conditions, listed below.

Video materials that have a specific and direct relationship to content and goals of classroom instruction are:

- videos obtained from Miami-Dade County Public Schools' Film and Video Library;
- videos purchased specifically for use in classroom instruction by individual schools and circulated from school media centers;
- videos viewed on, or copied from, broadcasts on WLRN-TV, Channel 17, or closed-circuit instructional television during the school day. If these programs are not scheduled for broadcast at a time appropriate for classroom use, they may be recorded, held until that use occurs, and then erased;
- original videos produced by teachers or student which do not make more than a minimal use of copyrighted visuals or music;
- videos obtained from rental sources only if used in direct teaching. The use of a rental video as a reward, or for any purpose not related specifically to course objectives and content, is both inappropriate and a violation of copyright law which could subject those using, or permitting the use of the rental video, to both criminal and civil penalties. Any use of a rental video other than the use specifically authorized above is prohibited;
- commercial or public television programs broadcast for use by the general public without charge which are recorded off-air more than once at the request of the same teacher;
 - a. The recording must be made by, or at the request of, an individual teacher. Programs may not be recorded in anticipation of a request from a teacher. No broadcast program may be recorded off-air more than once at the request of the same teacher.
 - b. Off-air recordings must not be used more than once with each of the classes of an individual teacher who uses a video for a relevant teaching activity. That same recording may be repeated once, only, when instructional reinforcement is necessary. These uses are permitted only in classrooms and similar places devoted to instruction within a single school building or campus, or in the homes of students receiving formalized home instruction.
 - c. Classroom uses of recorded programs must occur during the first ten (10) consecutive school days of the permissible forty-five (45) calendar day retention period.
 - d. The programs recorded may not be retained by a school for a period exceeding forty-five (45) consecutive calendar days after the date of

recordings. Upon conclusion of such retention period, all off-air recordings must be erased or destroyed immediately.

- e. After ten (10) consecutive school days, off-air recordings may be used up to the end of the forty-five (45) retention period only for teacher evaluation purposes, i.e., to determine whether or not to include the broadcast program in the teaching curriculum, and must not be used, in the institution which records the broadcast, to show to students or for any other non-evaluation purpose without authorization from the copyright holder.
- f. A limited number of copies may be reproduced from each off-air recording to meet the legitimate needs of teachers. Each such additional copy shall be subject to all provisions regarding the original recording.
- g. Programs may be recorded at home, or any other location if by or at the request of a classroom teacher, but all other restrictions and conditions for classroom use apply to such recordings.
- h. **The viewing of rated "R" materials requires administrative approval and parent permission forms.**

CENTER FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING (CPL)

The purpose of the Center for Professional Learning is to provide teachers and paraprofessionals with greater opportunity for involvement in the development of curricular programs, experimental programs, joint programs with universities, foundations, and related agencies, and an inservice education program to improve the effectiveness of teachers and paraprofessionals and the instructional program.

The policies and procedures for the Center for Professional Learning have been developed pursuant to Florida Statute 231.606 (1) (b) and Florida Statute 231.606 (2) (b) which are, by reference, incorporated and made part of this contract.

Each school shall have a designated representative who will facilitate CPL services at the individual work site.

The CPL shall have a Professional Development Liaison, appointed annually, who will coordinate the CPL. (Article XVIII, Section 21, MDCPS/UTD Contract)

• POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The School Board recognizes that the improvement of schooling through inservice education is best achieved through the active participation of educational practitioners in initiating, planning, conducting, and evaluating programs. The primary objective of inservice education for instructional personnel is to integrate subject matter knowledge and pedagogy into school and classroom practices that enhance the school experiences of students.

The purpose of the Center for Professional Learning is to improve the effectiveness of teachers in the instruction of students by:

- a. facilitating inservice teacher education programs for instructional personnel by responding to state, national, and district policies and program priorities.
- b. providing opportunities for district educators to interact with faculty and staff of the colleges and universities in order to enhance the continuing education of instructional personnel.

- c. providing a vehicle for research studies. The purpose is to be accomplished by:
 - 1. bringing together the technical and human resources that are supportive of a system for effective teacher inservice education.
 - 2. involving the school system, teacher education institutions, and the community in a consortium concept toward the improvement of teacher inservice education.
 - 3. providing opportunities for change in teacher inservice education through experimentation, innovation, and research.

SECTION V

DISCIPLINE/STUDENT BEHAVIOR

- Teacher Expectations
- Classroom Management
- Beginning of the Year Recommendations
- Managing Inappropriate Behavior
- Appropriate Use of Consequences
 - Rewards
- Assertive Discipline
 - Classroom Discipline Plan
 - Positive Reinforcement
 - Disciplinary Consequences
 - Sample Plan
- Student Case Management Plan
- Code of Student Conduct
- Teacher-Parent Communication
 - Current Practices/Procedures
 - Reasons for Conferences
 - Making Conferences Work
 - Telephone Conferences
- Maintenance of Appropriate Behavior
- Corporal Punishment
- Removal and Exclusion of Students from Class
 - Temporary Removal
 - Code of Student Conduct Infractions (I)
 - Exclusion by Teacher
 - Establishment of Placement Review Committee
 - Time Frame and Parent Notification
 - Provisions for Exceptional Students
 - Professional for English Language Learners (ELL)
 - Professional Development Activities
 - Records
 - SCSI

TEACHER EXPECTATIONS

Teachers should make concerted efforts to help students meet expectations in the classroom. To help support your expectations of the students, the following suggestions may be useful:

1. Establish classroom rules that emphasize that students are to report to class on time, ready to work and learn.
2. All students will come prepared with essential materials in order to create a worthwhile learning environment.
3. Keep students involved and occupied in meaningful activities.
4. Establish instructional situations that provide for the individual student's needs.
5. Assign home-learning on a regular basis.
6. Provide make-up assignments for excused absences under the procedures and conditions established by the school upon request of the student. The make-up work assigned by the teacher should be reflected accurately in the course gradebook.
7. Identify and help students with problems that relate to classroom activities.
8. Support and assist the student services department's efforts on behalf of your students.
9. Analyze and use the information available through guidance services (i.e., test results, cumulative guidance records, educational information, bulletins, etc).
10. Schedule conferences or make telephone contacts with parents as needed to foster parental support and enhance the collaboration between the home and the school.
11. Stress, in writing, the educational and vocational outcomes of the instructional program.
12. Become knowledgeable about the Student Progression Plan and the Competency-Based Curriculum, as well the standards to be met as prescribed by the State of Florida Assessment Program as well as, National Education Standards.
13. Emphasize that students are to remain in class except in cases of personal emergency, administrative request, or a scheduled conference with a counselor.
14. Establish clean-up procedures to ensure that the classroom is clean and orderly before each class is dismissed.
15. Dismiss each class at the appropriate time. Emphasize to students the importance of remaining in their seats until you dismiss the class.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT HINTS - EXCERPTS FROM THE PRACTITIONER

- An effectively managed classroom is one in which students accomplish learning tasks with little or no disruptive behavior.
- The real key to good discipline is prevention. Good teachers appropriately manage the classroom environment before student misbehavior becomes a major issue.

- Good management and preventive discipline start before the school year begins. The classroom must be arranged with books, materials, and needed supplies. Good teachers are organized.
- Seat students away from distracting displays. Keep frequently used equipment/material accessible. No one arrangement of space, furniture, storage, and equipment is best for all settings and purposes, but some general principles do underlie any effective and efficient arrangement.
- The teacher must be able to observe all students, as well as monitor their work and behavior.
- Students should be able to see the teacher and presentation area without undue turning or movement.
- Keep aisles clear.
- Commonly used classroom materials (e.g., books, attendance pads, permits, passes, referrals, detention forms) are to be picked up by teachers NOT students. Students' reference materials should be readily available.
- Potentially distracting seating arrangements should be avoided until students have established a pattern of cooperative behavior.
- Some degree of decoration will help the setting, but the emphasis should be on functional use of space.
- Teachers should identify expectations for students behavior and communicate those expectations to the students and their parents in writing. Such correspondence increases communication and support.
- Be explicit in setting specific procedures such as:
 - Beginning and ending class, attendance, behavior
 - Use of pencil sharpener, supplies, and special equipment
 - Teacher-led instruction
 - Seat work
 - Independent group work such as laboratory activities or small group projects.
- School-wide regulations, particularly safety procedures, should be explained carefully. This requires that the teacher have a clear concept of the regulations so that he or she can convey clear expectations to the students.

BEGINNING OF THE YEAR RECOMMENDATIONS

The beginning of school is a critical time for classroom management. Effective managers use the first of the year to help students learn appropriate behavior. Typically the first day begins with a discussion of classroom rules and procedures. This discussion often takes place in the context of introducing course requirements and teacher expectations. It should include a clear explanation of what is expected.

Teacher styles and personalities vary, but **effective** managers are clearly in charge of the class at the beginning of the year. They begin promptly, conduct activities at a reasonable pace, give students something constructive to do, and provide information about what is expected. Effective teachers do not give students the opportunity for deviant behavior. They tend to be pleasant, businesslike, and supportive, rather than harsh, critical, or withdrawn.

Do:

- let students know what is expected of them.
- consider individual differences by designing activities in which students can succeed.
- use mainly whole class and seat work activities until students are following correct procedures.
- stay in charge, be visible, be helpful, and be encouraging.
- monitor student behavior and provide corrective feedback when needed.
- enthusiasm when talking about exciting materials or when acknowledging the students' knowledge in the class.

Don't:

- force students to guess what they are allowed to do or not to do.
- assign difficult work at the beginning of the year until you know the students and are prepared to help those who need assistance.
- use complex or unusual activities until students have settled into regular classroom routines.

MANAGING INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

Most inappropriate behavior in the classroom is not seriously disruptive and can be managed by relatively simple procedures that prevent escalation. Minor misbehavior such as excessive talking, movement around the classroom, play, prolonged inattention, or failure to follow instructions should not be ignored unless they are likely to be of brief duration. How the teacher reacts to unacceptable behavior is a clear signal to students about what will or will not be tolerated. Effective classroom managers practice skills that minimize inappropriate behavior. They monitor students carefully and frequently so that misbehavior is detected early, before it involves many students or becomes a serious disruption. They take prompt action to stop inappropriate behavior, usually unobtrusively, so as not to interrupt the instructional activity or to call excessive attention to the student. Unobtrusive strategies for handling inappropriate behavior include the following:

- Moving close to the offending student or students; making eye contact; giving a nonverbal signal to stop the offensive behavior.
- Calling a student's name or giving a short verbal (instruction) to stop the behavior.
- Redirecting the student to appropriate behavior by stating what the student should be doing; citing the applicable procedure or rule.
- When several students are involved, an effective strategy is to refocus class attention. The teacher might say, *Everyone look at the overhead projector and read the first line with me; I need to see everyone's eyes looking here.* The object of such a strategy is to create a behavior that is incompatible with disruptive activity, but does not cause a disruption of instruction.

More serious disruptive behavior such as fighting, continued interruption of lessons, and refusal to follow reasonable procedures or rules cannot be dealt with in the classroom unobtrusively. They require direct action according to the district/school disciplinary code.

APPROPRIATE USE OF CONSEQUENCES

In secondary school classrooms, the most prevalent positive consequences are intrinsic satisfaction resulting from success, accomplishment, good grades, social approval, and recognition. If the teacher is skillful in motivating students to a level that ensures real interest, student performance and good grades will help promote good behavior.

Frequent use of punishment is associated with poor classroom management and generally should be avoided. When used, punishment should be related logically to the misbehavior.

CONSISTENCY OF ENFORCEMENT IS A KEY FACTOR. If a student receives disapproval or punishment on one occasion, but is reinforced at other times, higher levels of the misbehavior may occur.

One should keep in mind that, in most cases, simple to use, mild punishment can often make it possible to handle inappropriate behavior without seriously disrupting ongoing activities. The more positive approaches described earlier may be the most preventive approaches.

- **REWARDS**

The following are suggested ways to reward positive student behavior:

- Positive note or phone call to parents
- Skip a home learning assignment
- Extra computer time
- Time in class to do home learning
- Excused from pop quiz
- Take a problem off a test

ASSERTIVE DISCIPLINE

It is recommended at Miami Springs Middle School that all teachers develop, post, and use an assertive discipline plan for their classrooms.

The following may be used as a guide when developing and using the plan:

- **CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE PLAN**

The plan is posted in a place that is visible to all students and visitors.

1. The plan contains rules, consequences, and positive reinforcement.
2. There are a maximum of five rules on the plan.
3. The rules are observable and in terms that students easily understand.
4. The consequences are arranged in a hierarchy in order of severity.
5. The plan includes a severe clause for severe misbehavior.
6. The teacher follows the plan consistently.

Give Specific Directions for Classroom Situation

The teacher begins each classroom situation by stating clear, observable directions.

If and when the students are disruptive or off-task, the teacher stops the class and reminds the students of the directions for the situation.

- **POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT**

1. The teacher immediately reinforces students who follow directions.
2. The teacher periodically reinforces on-task behavior during the lesson.
3. Besides praise, the teacher uses a nonverbal method for rewarding individual students and the whole class.

- **DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES**

1. The teacher provides consequences every time students are disruptive or are continually off-task.
2. The teacher provides consequences in a calm, matter of fact, assertive manner (non-hostile, sarcastic).

3. The teacher follows through and provides the promised consequences.
4. The teacher uses a system of names and checks or some other suitable tracking system.

- **SAMPLE ASSERTIVE DISCIPLINE PLAN**

RULES

The student will:

- follow directions the first time they are given;
- be on time for class;
- be prepared to participate in the learning activities of the class;
- keep hands, feet and objects to oneself; and
- complete all assignments on time.

SEVERE CLAUSE: If a student is severely disruptive he or she will be sent immediately to an Assistant Principal for Discipline.

CONSEQUENCES

- 1st offense: warning
- 2nd offense: parent contact
- 3rd offense: referral to the Assistant Principal

STUDENT CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The Student Case Management System is an automated system of recording and reporting data that allows for more efficient delivery of services provided for students and for disciplinary action taken to improve student behavior. The Miami-Dade Public Schools shall maintain a computerized Student Management System to ensure that all students are provided equal access to preventative services consistent with their needs, and afforded fair, consistent disciplinary actions when violations of the *Code of Student Conduct* do occur.

This system shall minimally have the capacity to ensure that the program complies with all federal and state statutes relating to student records; indicates the exact nature of the service the student has received; and develops a database that would assist in making recommendations for the refinement and strengthening of services provided for students.

Administrators, teachers, and student services personnel at the school, Regional Center, and district levels shall be responsible for completing those forms that are required to record student case information. This system shall have safeguards that will ensure the accuracy and confidentiality of student information.

The information on an individual student shall be retained in the active file for a period not to exceed three years, at which time the data shall be transferred to an inactive file. The inactive record shall be destroyed in accordance with the state-adopted schedule of record destruction.

Neither the forms, nor the data generated by the Student Case Management System, shall be made a part of the teacher's personnel file; nor used to initiate disciplinary action against any teacher; nor shall these forms be used as a basis for the assessment of a teacher in any portion of the observation/evaluations forms. Neither the name nor the employee number of the referring teacher shall be entered into the automated data retrieval system.

It is the intent of the Board to utilize the Student Case Management System exclusively for the refinement and improvement of student services. The Student Case Management System is not to be used as a part of the personnel assessment system; nor is it intended to reduce the range

of available student disciplinary actions, pursuant to the *Code of Student Conduct*, nor the availability of the student services provided to students. (Board Rule 6Gx13 - SD - 1.09)

CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

What violations disrupt the educational process?

The Code of Student Conduct defines distinct violations identified by principals, administrators, teachers, students, and community members, which are representative of those acts that frequently cause disruption of the orderly educational process.

It should be pointed out, however, that this list is not all-inclusive and a student committing an act of misconduct not listed will be subject to the discretionary authority of the principal.

A major consideration in the application of the Code of Student Conduct is to identify the most appropriate disciplinary action for bringing about positive student behavior. To that end, the violations have been divided into six groups, and a variety of administrative actions, dependent upon the severity of the misconduct, have been recommended or mandated. Before, during, and after the implementation of any disciplinary action, student services personnel such as counselors, school social workers, and psychologists play a vital role in assisting the student in resolving any problems influencing his/her behavior.

The principal or teacher, or both, consistent with the powers delegated to them, have the authority to take additional administrative action if, in their opinion, the nature of the misconduct warrants it. In addition, school administrators have the prerogative to seek the waiver of any portion of or all mandatory disciplinary action through the Division of Alternative Education and Dropout Prevention. Those parties who are directly involved with the incident shall be informed of the reason(s) for requesting a waiver.

The Superintendent, upon conferring with appropriate school, region, and district staff, the parents, and student, may return a student who was 15 years old or younger at the time of the commission of the offense which led to his/her expulsion or waiver of expulsion and placement in the Work Back Program, to a regular school program after the student has proven to have performed successfully for one semester or more in an opportunity school or other alternative program.

The selected students will be monitored and returned to an opportunity school or an alternative placement at any time their behavior is unacceptable. The student's expulsion or remainder of time under a Work Back Agreement would not expire until the full time prescribed.

All shared-time and dual-enrolled students (i.e. those students who attend both day and evening programs in M-DCPS) are bound by the Code of Student Conduct (Secondary) for any disciplinary issues, including but not limited to those which arise in evening programs.

The following charts describe the violations and the disciplinary actions. When the violation calls for a disciplinary action, all or any part of the appropriate plan is to be implemented. If the violation indicates a mandatory action, all parts of the required plan must be administered unless any part is not applicable.

Code of Student Conduct

A model student who is responsible and practices positive comporment daily becomes a successful student and a mature adult who is worthy of emulating. Students need an environment that is safe and conducive to learning. To help provide and maintain that environment, the **Code of Student Conduct**:

- Describes that positive environment;
- Describes that conduct which is disruptive of such an environment;
- Strives to standardize those procedures which the school will use in responding to conduct problems;
- Assures the rights of students when disciplinary action is taken; and
- Specifies the rights and responsibilities of students.

Violations

GROUP I

General Disruptive Conduct
Use of Provocative Language
Possession of Electronic Devices
Violation of the School's Dress Code

GROUP II

Assault /Threat/Intimidation/Harassment
Cheating
Defiance of School Personnel's Authority
Gambling
Indecency/Obscenity
Smoking
Vandalism (minor)

GROUP III

False Accusation
False Fire Alarm
Fighting
Participation in Non-sanctioned Organizations
Possession, Use, or Sale of Fireworks
Possession of Aerosol/Chemical Weapons
Possession and/or Concealment of a Weapon
Trespassing
Vandalism (Major)

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.

GROUP IV

Assault/Battery
Breaking and Entering/Burglary
Disorderly Conduct
Extortion
Grand Theft: (over \$300 dollars in value)
Motor Vehicle Theft
Possession/Use of Mood Modifiers or Illegal Drugs
Robbery

GROUP V

Continuous Disruptive Behavior
Hate Crimes
Other Major Incident
Possession and/or Concealment of Weapons
Possession/Sale/Distribution of Mood Modifiers or Illegal Drugs
Sex Violations

GROUP VI

Aggravated Assault/Battery
Armed Robbery
Arson
Homicide (murder, manslaughter)
Kidnapping/Abduction
Making a Threat or False Report
Possession, Use, or Sale of Explosives Firearms
Sexual Battery

Reporting of Crimes and/or Disruptive Behavior

It is important that all students and parents understand that, in addition to taking disciplinary action at the school level, certain criminal and/or disruptive behavior must, by Board Rule, be reported to appropriate police authorities and to the Miami-Dade Schools Police (School Board Rule 6Gx13- 4A-1.21). The following incidents **WILL BE** reported:

1. **Armed Robbery** - The taking of money or other property from a person or custody of another, with the intent to either permanently or temporarily deprive the person of the money or other property, when in the course of the taking there is the use of any weapon.
2. **Arson** - Any willful or malicious igniting of a fire that causes damage or is intended to cause damage to school property or the property of another.
3. **Assault** - Intentional verbal or physical threat to do violence to someone by a student who possesses an apparent ability to do so and in doing so, creates a well-founded fear that such violence is imminent.

Aggravated Assault - Assault with a weapon.

4. **Battery** - An actual and intentional touching or striking of another person against his/her will or intentionally causing harm to an individual.

Aggravated Battery - Intentionally or knowingly causing great bodily harm, permanent disability, or permanent disfigurement or using a weapon while committing a battery.

5. **Battery or Aggravated Battery on a Teacher or Other School Personnel** - A battery or aggravated battery, as defined above, on any elected official or school district employee whether it is committed on school property, on school-sponsored transportation, during a school-sponsored activity or while the elected official or employee is on official school business.
6. **Bullying** - Repeatedly using hostile, intimidating, domineering, or threatening behavior with the aim or purpose of physically or mentally hurting another individual.
7. **Bomb Threat** - To threaten to throw, project, place, or discharge any destructive device with intent to do bodily harm to any person or with the intent to do damage to any property of any person.
8. **Breaking and Entering** - Entering or remaining in a structure or a conveyance vehicle with the intent to commit a criminal offense.
9. **False Report** - Making a false report, with intent to deceive, mislead, or otherwise misinform any person, concerning the placing or planting of any bomb, dynamite or other deadly explosive.
10. **Homicide (Murder)** -the unlawful killing of a human being; and **manslaughter** - the killing of a human being by culpable negligence of another without lawful justification.

11. **Inciting Individuals to Disrupt any School Function or Class** - Advising, counseling, or instructing any student or school employee with the intent to disrupt substantially any school function or classroom and the actual occurrence of such disruption.
12. **Kidnapping or Abduction** - Forcibly, secretly, or by threat, confining, abducting, or imprisoning another person against that person's will and without lawful authority, with the intent to:
 - Hold for ransom or reward or as a shield or hostage
 - Commit or facilitate commission of any felony
 - Inflict bodily harm upon or to terrorize the victim or another person
 - Interfere with the performance of any governmental or political function
13. **Mood Modifiers, Possession, Sale, or Distribution of** - Any possession, sale, or transmission on school premises of a mood-modifying substance not medically prescribed for the student.
14. **Possession of Explosives** - The carrying or the concealing of a bomb, dynamite, or other deadly explosives.
15. **Property Damage** - Any willful damage or attempted damage to the property of students, school personnel, or school.
16. **Possession, Use or Sale of Any Explosive Device** - An explosive is any chemical compound or mixture that has the property of yielding readily to combustion or oxidation to create an explosion, blasting caps, and detonators.
17. **Possession, Use or Sale of Any Firearm or Destructive Device** - Possession, use, or sale of any firearm or destructive device on school property, school-sponsored transportation, or during a school-sponsored activity. A firearm is any weapon (including a starter gun) which will, is designed to, or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; the frame or receiver of such a weapon; any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; any destructive device, or any machine gun. A "destructive device" means any bomb, grenade, mine, rocket, missile, pipe bomb, bullet, or similar device containing an explosive, incendiary, or poison gas and includes any frangible container filled with an explosive, incendiary, explosive gas, or expanding gas, which is designed or so constructed as to explode by such filler and is capable of causing bodily harm or property damage.
18. **Robbery** - The taking of money or other property from the person or custody of another by force, violence, assault, or placing in fear.
19. **Sexual Battery** - Oral, anal, or vaginal penetration by, or union with, the sexual organ of another or the anal or vaginal penetration of another by any other object.
20. **Sex Violation** - An offense against chastity or common decency.
21. **Theft** - Taking property belonging to another, from another's possession, or from the possession of some person holding the property for another, without consent, with intent to deprive the owner of the value of the property and to appropriate it to the use or benefit of the person taking the property.
22. **Threat** - It is unlawful to say you are going to throw, place, or explode any destructive device so that it will hurt someone or damage their belongings.
23. **Trespassing on School Property** - Entering a public school campus or School Board facility without authorization or invitation and without lawful purpose for entry, including entry by students under suspension or expulsion, employees not required by their

employment to be at the particular location, and unauthorized persons who enter or remain on a campus or School Board facility after being directed to leave by the chief administrator or designee of the campus or facility.

- 24. Weapon** -Any dirk, metallic knuckles, slingshot, billy, tear gas gun, electronic weapon or device, chemical weapon or device, or any other deadly weapon except a firearm.

TEACHER-PARENT COMMUNICATION

• CURRENT PRACTICES/PROCEDURES

Teacher-parent conferences contribute greatly to improving the public school's relationship with its community. The Board and the United Teachers of Dade agree that improving a public school's relationship with its community and the public in general serves the best interests of students and citizens. Effective teacher-administration-parent communication aids in contributing to, and maintaining, the public's commitment to public education.

Teacher-parent conferences shall occur when students begin to display a consistent pattern of disruption or when students demonstrate unacceptable academic achievement through failure to exert sufficient effort. The principal will exclude from class, for a period not to exceed ten days, a student who has displayed a consistent pattern of disruption, until a teacher-parent conference is held or until the principal determines such a conference cannot or need not be held.

Written or telephone communication may be appropriate alternatives for parent conferences. A student progress report constitutes written communication. Teachers must log teacher-parent conferences in the official gradebook. Where required parent contact is not achieved, evidence of attempts to contact the parents should be recorded and then referred to the designated administrative personnel for follow-up.

Teacher-parent conferences should be scheduled at a time and place and in a manner convenient for the teacher and the parent. Principals and teachers are encouraged to use teacher workdays for teacher-parent conferences whenever possible.

Written notification must be sent home by the teacher to the parents or guardians at any time during the grading period when it becomes evident that the student is performing unsatisfactorily in academics, conduct, or effort. Minimally, such written notification should be sent home prior to the beginning of the eighth week of each of the four nine week grading periods. If an unanticipated reduction in performance becomes evident in academics, conduct, or effort, the teacher shall notify the parent or guardian. It is the teacher's responsibility to award a grade commensurate with the student's performance.

The standardized interim progress report includes a place for the teacher to indicate that a parent conference is requested. The school personnel must make every effort to attempt to schedule the conference, however, if these actions fail, the form will be verification of the original request. Although every attempt shall be made by the school to communicate directly with parents, the signature of the senior high school student on the interim progress report will constitute documentation that the report was issued with instructions to deliver it to the parents.

When, in the professional judgment of the administrator or his/her designee, daily or weekly progress reports may improve behavior of a student who displays a consistent pattern of disruption or improve the academic performance of a student who is in danger of earning a grade of less than a "C", a teacher must comply with the request for the report.

A teacher is required to issue an official report of Student progress once at the end of each grading period. This report is communicated to parents on the official M-DCPS report card.

The greatest degree of parental involvement occurs through teacher-parent conferences. These conferences are often the first contact many parents have with the school. Such conferences are critical from a public relations point of view in that they help both parents and teachers accomplish their goals.

In a teacher-parent conference, the teacher is the professional and should act accordingly. Parents look to teachers to give them the help and guidance they need to extend and enhance the educational process at home. Consequently, the teacher is a helping person and the conference is an opportunity to develop and encourage a viable home school collaboration. Teachers should be positive, prepared, and confident about what they expect to accomplish in the conference.

- **REASONS FOR CONFERENCES**

Some of the reasons for a parent conference are to:

1. Discuss problems related to the child's classroom behavior.
2. Discuss health problems of the child.
3. Inform parents about attendance and tardiness.
4. Discuss items relating to home learning.
5. Explain the teacher's philosophy and school policies.
6. Explain classroom procedures.
7. Review the curriculum. Many parents do not know what their children are being taught or the expectations of their teachers.
8. Develop positive home/school/teacher relationships.
9. Promote a feeling of goodwill with parents.
10. Find meaningful ways to involve parents in school programs.
11. Explain special programs that impact their child.

MAKING CONFERENCES WORK

The following tips or guidelines will help make a parent-teacher conference more effective:

Before the conference:

Plan what you want to say ahead of time.

1. What are your purposes or goals? What do you want to accomplish? What does the parent need?
 2. Gather material to show parent.
 3. Have a plan of action.
 - Gather pre-conference data, if you think it is necessary.
 - Decide where the conference will be held.
1. Your room?
 2. Office?
 3. Parent's home?
- Reconfirm your conference. This can be done by phone or note, and it may save you a lot of time.

For/During the Conference:

Be on time. It helps to be early. This way you can relax or you can begin if the parent is early.

Be prepared. You should have the materials you will need for the conference. These include:

- samples of work
- records
- books
- materials

Bond with the parents. This bonding process includes: getting to know the parents, establishing rapport with them, and generally making them feel at ease. This approach is a good utilization of time, and sets a positive tone for the conference.

Talk the parent's language. This does not mean that you talk down to or are patronizing to the parent. What it does mean is that you employ every effort to use words, phrases and explanations that the parent understands and is familiar with. Remember the following:

- a. Don't use jargon and/or words that the parent cannot understand. Remember, it is much easier to say to the parents that you would like to ask some questions that will help you help the child learn than it is to say that you want to perform a comprehensive diagnostic evaluation that will result in strategies which can be implemented to achieve the highest possible utilization of the child's abilities.
- b. Don't use complicated explanations with the parent. Long, drawn out, involved explanations may be counter-productive to the need to communicate clearly and effectively with the parent.
- c. Use a natural way of communicating with parents. There is nothing worse than someone who is trying to be "with it." This style of talking is often evidenced by people who try to use slang and/or the accent of the parent when it is inappropriate to do so. The only result is a projection of phoniness which leads to suspicion and lack of confidence on the part of the parent and all who are involved.

Don't hide behind your desk. This may cause a parent to feel uncomfortable. You want to open lines of communication, not block them. A good way to conference with a parent is by using two chairs pulled together or by sitting on the same side of a table.

Be positive. Just as you don't like to constantly hear negative things or be constantly reminded about problems, neither does the parent. You should make every effort to show and tell the parents that the child is doing well. Communicating in this manner does not mean that you never talk to a parent about the child's problems. Quite the contrary, it is how you deal with the problem(s) that are important. When you deal with the problems of children, you put them in the proper perspective: what the child is able to do, what the goals and purposes of the learning program are, what specific skills or concepts you are trying to help the child to learn, and what problems the child is having in achieving according to his/her ability. Most important of all, you should discuss what you plan to do to help the child achieve, and what specific role the parent can play in setting goals for achievement. An effective conference should result in a positive plan of action.

Be honest. Don't say you will do something if you can't or do not intend to follow through. Don't hide the truth if you believe the information may be helpful to the parent.

Be firm. You should be in charge of the conference, not the parent.

Stay on task. This is where pre-planning helps.

Give the parent a chance to talk. You really won't learn much if you do all the talking. You probably won't achieve your goals either. Allow the parent the opportunity to express ideas and concerns. A parent may be less verbal than you. If so, you may need

to initiate the discussion in such a way as to convey the importance of the parent's contributions to the discussion.

It also means you will have to **be a good listener**. An active listener: a) holds eye contact; b) uses body language such as head nodding, hand gestures, etc.; c) does not interrupt; d) avoids arguing; e) paraphrases the parent's comments as a way of clarifying ideas; and f) keeps the conversation on track and on the topic.

Bring closure to your conference. This is when you review the relevant points of the discussion and reiterate the commitments made by each participant in the conference.

Never leave the parents with a sense of helplessness or frustration which can result from not having a positive plan of action to which all conference participants can agree and be committed. Every communication with parents should end on a positive note so that all involved will know what needs to be done and what follow up communication may be necessary.

TELEPHONE CONFERENCES

Another frequent and convenient method of parent involvement is the telephone conference. Not every family has or can afford a telephone, so this method does not work with every family, but it does provide an efficient method for contacting parents. The guidelines for communicating with parents on the telephone are similar to those used in face-to-face conferences; however, there are some other things you should do.

Since you can't see the person you are talking to on a telephone, it takes a little longer to build rapport and trust. The time you spend overcoming a parent's initial fears and apprehensions will pay dividends later.

Constantly clarify with the parent what you are talking about and what you and the parent have agreed to do. You clarify by using such phrases as: "What I heard you say..." or "So far we have agreed that," etc.

Don't be in too much of a rush to finish your phone call. There is a limit to the amount of time you can spend on the phone, but you may be the only person who has expressed a personal interest or concern about the child. From the point of view of the parent, you may represent the support system of the school, the person who cares enough to take the time to call and who provides the parent with a convenient opportunity to communicate with the school.

MAINTENANCE OF APPROPRIATE STUDENT BEHAVIOR

The schools are established for the benefit of all students. The educational purposes of the schools are accomplished best in a climate of student behavior that is socially acceptable and conducive to the learning and teaching process. Student behavior that disrupts this process or that infringes upon the rights of other individuals will not be tolerated.

The School Board reaffirms its support of the administrative staff and teachers in taking all necessary steps to enforce and implement all Board rules pertaining to the maintenance of appropriate student behavior. Important among these rules are those in the areas of conduct, corporal punishment, suspensions and expulsions, and climate for learning.

The School Board directs that:

- The Superintendent of schools, through the School Board Rules, shall pursue the investigation and assist in the subsequent prosecution of any adults inciting students to perform violent and unlawful acts in the school; and

- Each individual teacher shall be granted full disciplinary authority over every student in his/her classroom, in accordance with Florida Statutes, Board rules, and administrative regulations.

GUIDELINES

- Guidelines for assisting in the maintenance of appropriate behavior are found in administrative regulations and the following Board rules:

<u>Board Rule No.</u>	<u>Title</u>
6Gx13- 6A-1.09	Climate for Learning -School Symbols
6Gx13- 5C-1.02	Conduct – Standards of Behavior
6Gx13- 5D-1.08	Maintenance of Appropriate Student Behavior
6Gx13- 5D-1.07	Corporal Punishment
6Gx13- 5C-1.031	Dress Code - Specific Regulations
6Gx13 - 1E-1.02	Cooperation with Law Enforcement Agencies - General Policy
6Gx13- 1E-1.021	Cooperation with Law Enforcement Agencies -Specific Procedures
6Gx13- 5A-1.11	Foreign Student Registration
6Gx13 - 3E-1.10	Transportation - Specific Procedures
6Gx13- 5B-1.04	Promotion, Placement and Graduation - Grades K - 12 and Adult
6Gx13- 1D-1.06	School Facilities/Student Dances
6Gx13- 6A-1.33	Special Services and Classes
6Gx13 - 5A-1.062	Suspension, Board Approved Alternatives, Expulsion, and Referral to Health & Rehabilitative Services-HRS
6Gx13- 5D-1.09	Student Case Management System

These Board rules are applicable to all students under the jurisdiction of the Miami-Dade Public Schools and are augmented by the Code of Student Conduct and the Procedures for Promoting and Maintaining a Safe Learning Environment, which are incorporated by

reference in this Board Rule, and are a part hereof. Copies of these two documents are on file in the Board Office, the Citizen Information Center, and the Office of the School Board Clerk, and shall be available in each special center.

Additional guidelines for the maintenance of appropriate student behavior are issued by memorandum from the District Administration. Board Rule 6Gx13 - 5D1.08.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Corporal punishment is NOT to be administered by any staff member at Miami Springs Middle School.

REMOVAL AND EXCLUSION OF THE STUDENTS FROM CLASS

School Board Rules allow for teachers to remove a disruptive student from class if the behavior of the student has an adverse effect on the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with students or the ability of the students to learn. Florida Statute 232.271 provides for the right of the teacher to refuse to accept a student back to class who has been removed for disruptive behavior which adversely affects the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students.

- **Temporary Removal from Class**

The teacher shall have the authority to remove a seriously disruptive student from the classroom. In such cases, the principal or designee shall be notified immediately and the teacher shall be entitled to receive, prior to the student's return to class, a report describing corrective action(s) taken.

- **Code of Student Conduct Infractions**

- The principal or designee will follow the Code of Student Conduct on all disciplinary matters.
- Only those disciplinary problems that disrupt a teacher's instruction, and the teacher requests the student's permanent removal from class, shall be referred to the Placement Review Committee if the request is not resolved by the principal.

- **Exclusion from Class by a Teacher**

A teacher who has removed a student from class for misbehavior which seriously affects the teacher's ability to communicate may request that the student not be returned to class under the following conditions:

- a. A student whose behavior is so unruly, disruptive, or abusive that it seriously affects the teacher-student communication or the student's ability to learn.
- b. A student who has been documented by the teacher for repeated interference with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with students, or the ability of the students to learn.

The following documentation should support the teacher's decision under (b) above:

- a. A teacher-student conference.
- b. A parent conference or evidence of a valid attempt to reach a parent, including both phone calls and a letter, delivered by hand or mail, to the home.
- c. At least two (2) written referrals to school-site administration for behavior which interferes with instruction.

A written referral to site administration must be provided by the teacher upon the removal of the student from class.

- a. The principal must provide an alternative placement for the student until a final decision has been reached by the Placement Review Committee.
- b. The principal has the authority and responsibility to maintain class behavior.

- **Establishment of a Placement Review Committee**

The committee consists of at least:

- a) Three (3) teachers elected by the teaching staff.
- b) Three (3) teacher alternates, elected by the teaching staff.
- c) One (1) staff member appointed by the principal.
- d) One (1) alternate staff member, appointed by the principal.

If a school chooses to have a larger committee, the ratio of committee members must be 2:1 elected teachers to staff members appointed by the principal. Large schools may have more than one committee.

The creation of the school-site Placement Review Committee shall be the responsibility of the individual school. The creation of this committee shall take place annually at the first faculty meeting of the academic year.

- **Time Frames and Parent Notification**

A teacher who requests a permanent exclusion of a student from class must notify the principal no later than twenty-four (24) hours following the initial removal from class.

1. A time limit of five (5) days from the removal of the student from class is set for the Placement Review Committee to render a decision on the placement of the student.
2. Every effort must be made by the school administration to notify the parent immediately upon the removal of a student from class.
3. If a teacher requests a permanent exclusion of the student from class, the parent shall be notified of the time and place of the Placement Review Committee meeting. The parent and student shall have the right of participation.

- **Provisions for Special Education Student**

The Placement Review Committee shall refer to a staffing committee all exclusion requests for students from exceptional education classes. The Placement Review Committee decision must concur with the staffing committee recommendations. If the requesting teacher is teaching a mainstreamed student, the regular process may be followed.

- **Professional for English Language Learners (ELL)**

The Placement Review Committee shall refer an LEP student to the LEP committee. The Placement Review Committee decision must concur with the LEP Committee recommendation. LEP services cannot be denied.

- **Professional Development Activities to Improve Classroom Management Skills**

Any teacher who refers 25% of his or her class is required to complete professional development activities to improve classroom management skills. This percentage pertains to individual students referred for disruptive behavior that interferes with instruction.

- **Records**

Each school should keep appropriate records in order to be able to address the following areas:

- a) Number of disciplinary referrals requiring students to be removed from class by teachers.
- b) Number and percentage of referrals in which the students were sent back to class with the consent of teachers.
- c) Number and percentage of referrals that were sent to the Placement Review Committee because of teacher refusal to readmit.
- d) Number and types of placements (including those returned to class) made by the Placement Review Committee.
- e) Number and percentage of students in each class referred by each teacher to be used in determining staff development needs.

- **SCSI Exclusion (School Center for Special Instruction)**

In addition to the procedures that are in place that address classroom management, Miami Springs Middle School provides teachers with an additional consequence. When students are so disruptive that instruction/learning cannot take place, students could be removed by the teacher from the classroom and sent to SCSI with the appropriate form. Parent contact is required for all exclusions. **DO NOT EXCLUDE STUDENTS FROM CLASS DUE TO TARDINESS.**

SECTION VI STUDENT SERVICES

Counseling Services
Counselor's Responsibilities
Department Chairperson's Responsibilities
TRUST Counselor's Responsibilities
Test Chairperson's Responsibilities
Schedule Changes
Scheduling Appointments with Counselors

COUNSELING SERVICES

The Student Services Department is committed to providing students with a comprehensive program, enabling them to discover their personal potential, and helping them make realistic educational and career choices.

Counselors will encourage and help students develop positive attitudes about school and life.

Counseling services are available to all students for the following:

- Developing strategies to cope with intra- and inter-personal concerns
- Increasing success in school learning
- Making realistic career choices
- Improving behavior problems
- Dealing with emotional, social, and physical problems
- Dealing with language, cultural, or family problems
- Developing a positive attitude about school and life
- Nurturing self-esteem
- Developing good study habits and time management skills
- Group advisement and counseling
- Testing evaluation
- Post secondary planning
- Problem solving and decision making skills

COUNSELOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- Maintain a systematic, on-going program of individual conferences with counsees in the area of educational, personal, social, and vocational counseling, as well as post-secondary planning.
- Keep records of conferences with students.
- Act as a liaison among students, teachers, parents, and administrators.
- Hold parent conferences and respond to parental requests for information.
- Assist in identifying students with special needs for referral.
- Process referrals to other student services personnel and community agencies.
- Seek special program placement for students with special needs.
- Conduct group advisement sessions.
- Provide informational sessions for teachers and parents.
- Assist in the administration of standardized tests.
- Provide group and individual interpretation of test results to students, teachers, and parents.
- Assist students with college admission and scholarship applications.
- Maintain and utilize current effective materials and pertinent related information.
- Participate in articulation and orientation programs.

- Assist in the assessment and evaluation of the student services program by students, parents, and faculty.

DEPARTMENT CHAIRPERSON'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- Supervise the work of the student services personnel within the school.
- Consult with department chairs on proposed curriculum changes.
- Coordinate and conduct orientation programs explaining student services to students, faculty, and parents.
- Coordinate and supervise input of student data.
- Consult with department chairs on proposed curriculum changes.
- Encourage and establish a developmental counseling program.
- Assist in planning and coordinating the articulation program with the feeder schools.
- Schedule group test interpretation sessions with students, teachers, and parents.
- Assist with meeting of the Child Study Teams (CST).
- Acquire and disseminate current and pertinent information and materials to the student services staff and teachers.
- Provide for the assessment and evaluation of the student services program by students, parents, faculty, and counselors.
- Attend district, Regional Center, and student services meetings/workshops as necessary.

TRUST COUNSELOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The TRUST (To Reach Ultimate Success Together) counselor works cooperatively with other student services personnel in the school to provide support services for students, parents, and staff. The TRUST counselor will:

- Implement a substance abuse education prevention program.
- Conduct individual and group counseling sessions with students as needed.
- Establish and coordinate a peer counseling/peer mediation program.
- Provide individual and small group counseling sessions for students whose performance shows evidence of personal problems (family, emotional, truancy, alcohol or other substance abuse, grieving, pregnancy, etc.)
- Provide referrals to local community organizations when necessary.
- Provide follow-up counseling for those students who have attended a treatment program.
- Establish a close relationship with feeder schools.
- Attend district, Regional Center, and student services meetings/workshops as necessary.

- Provide counselors with updated information on TRUST programs.
- Invite community agencies to be guest speakers.
- Develop and implement in-service training programs for school personnel in order to provide them with identification and prevention approaches.

TEST CHAIRPERSON'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The test chairperson will work under the leadership of the designated assistant principal and/or student services chairperson in coordinating the school testing program. The test chairperson will:

- Serve as the liaison between the school and the District Department of Educational Accountability, informing the assistant principal of all procedures
- Aid in developing a plan for the recording and utilization of test results.
- Initiate or assist in statistical studies of test results which will be used by the school.
- Work closely with the assistant principal responsible for curriculum in relating test information for the improvement of instruction and curriculum.
- Offer leadership in developing an in-service training program for the faculty in understanding the purposes and interpretation of each type of test.

SCHEDULE CHANGES

Schedule changes will be granted only if there is a legitimate reason for the change and if there is room available in the class. Recommendations for schedule changes will be submitted to the student services chairperson for approval.

Once school begins, schedule changes will only be granted if there is an error on the schedule or if a course completed in summer school affects the present course selection. No changes will be made in advanced academic classes until the completion of the first nine weeks, and then, only by special permission. This policy includes parent overrides.

SCHEDULING APPOINTMENTS WITH COUNSELORS

Students are assigned counselors according to the student's grade level. Elizabeth Taylor-Martinez will service all sixth grade students. Lazaro Leal will service all seventh grade students. Caridad Hidalgo will service all eighth grade students.