



Supplemental Middle School

Parent – Student

Handbook

2009-2010



August 2009

Dear Parents:

I am very pleased that your family will be joining us for another wonderful year at Keys Gate Charter School. As many of you know the middle school grades can be very challenging and exciting for our students. We would like to ensure that our students have a successful learning experience. For this reason we have developed this supplemental handbook to provide parents and students with more in-depth and specific guidelines for our middle school families. Please note that the Middle School Supplemental Handbook does not replace our Keys Gate Parent Handbook. For this reason it is important that you refer to both documents when necessary.

Please read this additional handbook with your child and discuss with them the opportunities they will have to make this a positive and successful year. We also encourage you to set academic and/or behavioral goals with your child to motivate and guide them towards academic success! After reviewing the handbook, please complete the last page and return it to your child's homeroom teacher by Friday, August 28th.

We look forward to partnering with you throughout the school year. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the supplemental handbook, please contact the school's office.

Sincerely,

Keys Gate Administration

ABSENCES:

Whenever a student is absent, he or she has missed 7 different lessons and has potentially acquired 6 to 7 makeup assignments to do for the following day. With this in mind we strongly discourage absences unless absolutely necessary.

*Any time a student returns to school after an absence, a note **MUST** be sent in to the homeroom teacher within 48 hours. After this 48 hour period, this absence will be recorded as unexcused. Notes will not be accepted after this time period.*

It is the student's responsibility to request any makeup work from their teachers on the day they return to school. Students will have the same number of days to turn in their work as they had of absences (2 days absent is equivalent to 2 days to turn in makeup work).

Students are allowed a total combination of 20 unexcused absences, tardies and early releases. When a student has accumulated more than 20, he or she will lose placement at Keys Gate Charter School for the following academic year.

If a family has a particular situation arise, it is recommended that you contact administration for clarification or guidance prior to an absence.

ACADEMIC RESPONSIBILITIES

*At KGCS, we hold our students to a high academic standard. We expect our students to complete all of their assignments in a timely manner as directed by their teachers. **Students who do not turn in their assignments will receive a zero.** A student that fails to turn in multiple assignments may be in danger of academic failure. In order to avoid this problem, we request that our parents carefully monitor their child's progress through the use of SIS, agendas, communication with the teacher and progress reports. **After meeting with teachers and administration, students that have a chronic problem meeting their academic responsibilities will be suspended from school and may lose the opportunity to recommit the following academic year.***

AGENDA BOOK:

A student's agenda is a vital part of their academic success in middle school or high school. In their agendas, students should write down their nightly home learning assignments, project due dates and any important deadlines.

Agenda books are also used as a hall pass. Teachers write the hall pass in the agenda and the security monitor confirms the student has been given permission to leave the classroom.

*Teachers use this as a communication tool. Many times teachers will write notes to parents or staple important school notices in the agenda. We strongly recommend that the agenda book be **signed each night** by a parent/guardian to ensure that all communication has been seen.*

The Keys Gate PTSO provides every student with a free agenda. If a student misplaces an agenda book, he/she will be required to purchase another one from the PTSO for \$10.00. No other agenda books will be accepted, as the school has ordered these books with specific items and information.

Students are not allowed to tear out pages from the agenda or intentionally damage their agenda in any way. Students that tear out or damage pages from their agendas will receive consequences.

AFTER SCHOOL CARE (ASC):

During dismissal all middle school ASC students must remain in their assigned room until the announcement is made that dismissal has concluded. At that time middle school teachers will release the students and they will meet the ASC leader in the hallway by the cafeteria.

Middle school students that are enrolled in the ASC program are expected to attend daily. If a student is participating in tutoring or enrichment program, they must wait in their dismissal room until dismissal has concluded, check-in on time with their ASC leader and then report to their activity.

ASC students are never allowed to wander in the hallways, visit other classrooms or visit with friends by the bus during dismissal. Students that do not follow ASC rules may be expelled from the ASC program.

ARRIVAL:

Students are allowed to enter the building at 8:00AM. Students that are dropped off at that time or later are expected to promptly enter the building and report to homeroom unless having breakfast. Please refer to the breakfast guidelines.

During homeroom, students will be required to complete a short FCAT assignment, which will be graded and applied to their academic average.

Students must stay in their assigned homeroom at all time. Visiting friends from room to room is not allowed. Students that are found wandering the halls, in an unauthorized location or in the wrong homeroom will receive consequences.

Students are expected to be seated in their homeroom class no later than 8:30AM. Any student that reports to homeroom after 8:30AM will be marked tardy, regardless if they were dropped off at 8:00AM- no exceptions. It is the student's responsibility to be in class on time.

BREAKFAST:

Our program serves breakfast from 8:00AM-8:20AM. It is strongly recommended that a student report to breakfast no later than 8:05AM. This will allow enough time for a student to eat breakfast and report to homeroom on time.

When a student has finished eating breakfast, they must clean-up their area, throw away their trash and promptly report to homeroom. If a student reports to homeroom late due to breakfast, they will be marked tardy- no exceptions.

Each morning our cafeteria is used for Before School Care (BSC) and our breakfast program. Students are only allowed in the cafeteria during arrival time when they are enrolled in BSC or having breakfast.

CAFETERIA PROGRAM:

Occasionally students may forget to bring their lunch to school. When this occurs the cafeteria will provide the student with cereal and milk. Students may not call home during lunch time.

Since we are trying to promote healthy eating habits, parents will not be allowed to bring their child any fast food. Student are never allowed to meet anyone in the rotunda area to pick up lunch. When necessary, lunches must be delivered to the main office at least 30 minutes before a student's scheduled lunch time. On the way to lunch, students will stop by the office and pick up their lunch.

Any parent wishing to have lunch with their child in the cafeteria must check in with the main office to obtain a pass. Any parent that does not have a pass will be immediately directed to the office.

Cafeteria Behavior:

Conduct in the cafeteria reflects a student's home training. Students should eat in an atmosphere that is pleasant and conducive to good habits. Please discuss good cafeteria manners with your child. Students will receive a detention for improper cafeteria behavior and/or clean-up detail. Students with chronic misconduct in the cafeteria may be suspended.

CELL PHONES:

Cell phones and other electronic devices are not allowed on school campus. Students may not bring a cell phone to school. School phones are available for emergencies. All cell phones or other electronic devices will be confiscated by school personnel and kept in the main office until the last day of the school year. Parents are discouraged from text messaging and/or calling their children on their cell phones during school hours as it will result in the cell phone being confiscated.

The only exception to the cell phone policy is for those students that ride the bus, walk or bike ride home. Those students must give their cell phone to their homeroom teacher for storage throughout the day. At the end of the day, during homeroom, students will retrieve their phones before going home. If at anytime student that rides the bus, walks or rides their bike home is found with a cell phone out in site, turned on and/or in use while on campus, will have their phone confiscated until the end of the school year.

Keys Gate Charter School and its staff are not responsible for the loss, theft and/or damage of any cell phone or electronic devices.

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURE:

Discipline is the process of changing a student's behavior from inappropriate to exemplary. We are never satisfied with merely stopping poor behavior; we desire to teach the student to do what is right. We do not discipline a student out of anger or for the sake of convenience, but with a loving desire to help the student to do what is right. Though few students desire discipline, they often need it in order to reach their full potential.

*Each teacher will establish appropriate procedures for discipline in his/her classroom based on these guidelines. **The following list is not all-inclusive.***

- 1. Students are expected to respect the authority of school personnel which includes but is not limited to: administration, teachers, staff and substitutes.*
- 2. Malicious destruction of school property results in the replacement, repair or payment for damages by either the student or his/her parents. The placement of stickers on school property is forbidden.*
- 3. Students shall help keep the school clean at all times. There is to be no gum chewing in the school building or on the school grounds.*
- 4. Items such as water pistols, matches, lasers, "iPod's", Game Boys, electronic devices, toys, weapons of any sort, etc. are not permitted at school.*
- 5. Students may not possess notebooks, albums, magazines, lunchboxes, bookbags, etc. that carry pictures or slogans referring to the drug culture or alcohol. Use of profane, abusive or slang language is prohibited at all times.*
- 6. All cell phones should be turned off once at school. School phones are available for*

emergencies. Any student whose cell phone rings, vibrates, is found text messaging or taking photos will have the cell phone taken to the office. This student will also lose the privilege of bringing a cell phone to school. Absolutely no cell phones may be used during school hours. Please do not call your child at school via cell phone.

7. Students are expected to treat fellow classmates with respect. Any student found to be bullying or harassing other classmates may be suspended.
8. Students may not incite others to act aggression by spreading rumors, gossiping.
9. Cursing or use of inappropriate language on school campus is prohibited.
10. Zero tolerance for aggression, drugs and alcohol. (Students that push, hit, bite, fight or kick may be suspended)
11. Students are expected to stay on task in class and complete their assignments as directed. Students that repeatedly fail to turn in assignments will receive consequences which may include suspension. Please carefully read the section entitled "Academic Responsibility."

Detentions are served on Thursdays for students receiving this consequence. Administration, teachers or school staff can assign detentions.

Students missing a detention will receive an additional detention day. Leaving a detention early will result in another day being assigned. Students that do not serve their assigned detention or do not bring their notice signed and returned to the teacher are subject to suspension.

Detentions will be given for the following infractions, but not limited to the list below:

Missed Homework: *On the third homework assignment not turned in on time the teacher will assign a detention. For each occurrence after the third missed assignment, the child will receive an additional detention. Children with chronic homework infractions are referred to the school administration for possible suspension.*

Uniform: *The first time a student is out of uniform guidelines, a warning will be given to the parent and child. A warning can be verbal or written. The second time a student is out of uniform, a detention will be issued. After three detentions for uniform infractions, a suspension will be issued. Each time a student comes to school out of uniform, a parent will be required to bring a uniform to school. Please check your child's uniform each morning before arriving at school.*

Behavior/Conduct: *Each teacher enforces classroom rules and expectation with their students. Students are required to adhere to these expectations. When a student misbehaves, the teacher will provide the student with a verbal or written warning. When the student receives a second warning, the teacher will again warn the student and notify the parent that further misconduct will result in a detention. Parents will receive this notification in their child's agenda book, via email or phone call.*

The third time a student receives a warning (either verbal or written), the teacher will assign the student a detention. If misbehavior or misconduct continues, the teacher will assign another detention or may refer the student to school administration for disciplinary action which may result in suspension.

Once the detention has been assigned, it is the child's responsibility to return the signed detention notification form to the teacher. Failure to return the signed detention form will result in additional consequences.

Please note- *Certain misconduct or misbehavior may warrant an immediate consequence. Numerous verbal and written warnings during the same school day may lead to the assignment*

of a detention and/or administrative referral. Depending on the misconduct, parent notification prior to the assignment of a detention or referral may not be required.

Consequences:

Consequences that are given to students may vary depending on the infraction. Below are a list of consequences that may given to a student

- *Verbal or written Warning*
- *Detention*
- *Lunch detention*
- *Zero assigned as a grade when a student is found cheating*
- *Suspension or removal from school sponsored events such as field trips*
- *Temporary Removal from class*
- *Cleaning detail (cafeteria misbehavior or damaging of school property)*
- *Indoor suspension*
- *Outdoor suspension*
- *Expulsion (see expulsion guidelines)*

The Miami-Dade County School Board established a Code of Student Conduct that lists violations and disciplinary actions that may be taken in order to deal with student misconduct. The following website link will allow you to view the complete MDCPS Code of Student Conduct online.

<http://www.dadeschools.net/ehandbook/Code/index.htm>

DISMISSAL:

In order to ensure the safety of our students, it is imperative that students, parents and staff carefully follow the KGCS dismissal procedure. Any student that does not adhere to the dismissal procedures will receive immediate consequences.

Once dismissed, students that ride the bus must board the busses immediately and stay seated. Standing around the side of the building is not allowed unless you are waiting for a late bus.

Students that walk home must leave school grounds as soon as they are dismissed. Students may not wander around campus including the P.E. field, basketball courts or bus area. They may not visit with friends in the rotunda area.

Students that are picked-up by their parents must wait in their assigned classroom until their name is called. Parents cannot call their child on the cell phone and ask them to head out front. Students found using cell phones during dismissal will have their phones confiscated. Students are not allowed to walk unescorted to their parent's car in the parking lot.

If a student's name is not called, he/she may not leave the dismissal classroom. If dismissal has concluded and a student has not been picked up, he/she will be sent to the designated classroom for ASC. Student phone calls will not be allowed. The ASC staff will make the phone calls if needed as soon as the student has checked into ASC.

ASC students please refer to the section titled "After School Care."

Students that fail to follow the dismissal procedure will be given immediate consequences.

DRESS CODE:

A higher standard of dress encourages greater respect for individuals, students and others, and results in a higher standard of behavior. Our dress code guidelines indicate appropriate school uniform during normal school days. KGCS reserves the right to interpret these guidelines and/or

make changes during the school year. Students are expected to follow these guidelines. Every student in attendance shall wear the KGCS official school uniform from **All Uniform Wear**.

Hair: Hair must be neat and clean with no "unnatural" colors, i.e. fluorescent, bright green, etc. Students may not have hair hanging in their face that obstructs their eyes. Hairstyles disruptive to the learning environment will not be permitted. No hats or bandanas may be worn to school. Headbands may only be worn if holding hair back and may not be worn across the forehead.

Makeup/Nail Polish: Students may not wear makeup that is dark colored or excessive. Students wearing make up that is deemed to be excessive or distracting to the learning environment will be asked to wash their face clean. Nail polish should be lightly colored. Black or dark colored nail polish is not allowed.

P.E. Uniforms: Students taking P.E. must be in the assigned P.E. uniform every single day- no exceptions. Due to the nature of the course, it is expected that the P.E. uniform will get quite dirty. It is recommended that students have more than one set of P.E. uniforms to ensure proper hygiene.

Shoes: Students must wear closed shoes at all times. No heavy military type boots or shoes with metal tips may be worn. Shoes must be worn with Velcro properly fastened and/or laces tied. Student written messages or drawings are not allowed on shoes.

Shirts: All shirts must be tucked in at all times and must have the KGCS logo. Only plain white undershirts may be worn under the uniform shirt.

Slacks/Shorts: All uniform slacks/shorts must be worn with a belt at the waist and be in good repair at all times. Excessively baggy pants are not allowed. Pants that are deemed to be too large for a student will be asked to call home for a change of uniform. Shorts may not be shorter than a finger length above the knee. All uniform bottoms must have the KGCS logo.

Skorts: All skorts must be no shorter than a finger length above the knee.

Jackets: Only solid navy jackets or sweatshirts that have the school logo properly embroidered are allowed. Jackets/sweatshirts may not have hoods, must be appropriately sized and in good repair. Students wearing any other form of jacket or sweater that does not meet these guidelines will be asked to remove it. Chronic violation of these guidelines may result in the confiscation of the jacket/sweatshirt. Parents will be required to pick up their child's jacket/sweatshirt in the office.

Jean Day: During jean days, students are only allowed to wear jean pants. Shorts and/or skirts are not allowed. All jeans should be in good repair. Tears and/or holes are not permitted.

Jewelry: No body piercing other than earrings. Earrings should be stud style only for safety purposes. Students may wear a watch, one bracelet and one thin chain that is tucked into the shirt. Rings are not allowed. No large medallions or flags may be worn around the neck. The faculty will collect/confiscate jewelry that does not meet the guidelines.

General: Please also read the section titled "Cold Weather" for additional information about uniform guidelines during cold winter days.

No sports bands (wrist, head or ankle) may be worn at school. At no time are students to wear anything offensive, immodest or deemed inappropriate by the faculty. Writing or drawing on the body is not permitted at any time.

The first time a student is out of uniform, a verbal warning will be given to the student. The second time a student is out of uniform, a warning will be written in the agenda. Further infractions will result in a detention. After 3 detentions for uniform infractions, a suspension will be issued.

*All uniforms must be purchased through the uniform vendor and embroidered with proper school logos. Uniforms that are altered for length (other than pant legs), belt loops, etc. will be considered a uniform violation. The approved school vendor is **All Uniform Wear**. Parents will be required to bring the proper uniform for a child to be admitted to class when a student does not arrive to school in the proper uniform.*

**Any items that are confiscated from students such as cell phones, iPods and/or inappropriate jewelry must be retrieved by the parent in the main office.*

ELECTRONIC DEVICES:

Electronic devices such as iPod's, MP3 players, gaming devices and personal cameras are not allowed on campus-not even in book bags. (Students that are enrolled in our photography or journalism course are the only students allowed to bring a camera to school for class work purposes)

These items will be confiscated immediately and stored in the main office. Only the student's parent or guardian will be allowed to collect these items from administration. At the end of the school year, all items that have not been picked up will be donated.

Please also refer to the Cell Phone policy for more information about cell phone use.

FIELD TRIPS:

*Participation in field trips is a **privilege**. Students serve as representatives of the school; therefore, they may be excluded from participation in any trip for reasons relating to academics, behavior/conduct and/or attendance.*

Students with fees owed to the school for Before Care Program/After Care Program, lost books, zero service hours etc. will not be permitted to attend field trips until these fees are paid.

Money and permission slips must be turned in according to the teacher's instructions, prior to the field trip or the student will not be permitted to participate in the field trip. Students not wearing the KGCS T-Shirt or assigned attire will be required to remain at school.

Chaperones:

When a parent/guardian chooses to be a chaperone he or she accepts the rules set forth by the school and field trip sponsor for that particular activity. Parents/guardians must follow the directions given by the trip sponsor and be punctual with the assigned schedules/itineraries. It is expected that students be redirected appropriately when needed. Parents/guardians that do not comply will not be allowed to chaperone any other trips.

Out of County & Overnight Trips:

Any student that has been on outdoor suspension for any reason will not be allowed to attend out of county and/or overnight trips.

According to the new law titled the Jessica Lundsford Act, any parent wishing to chaperone on a field trip must be fingerprinted. The fingerprint check must include an FBI background check. Information on how to obtain this will be provided the first week of school. Any parent not fingerprinted will not be permitted to chaperone on a field trip or walk around with the school group.

HALLWAY PASSING:

Students attend 6 courses daily. Hallways become congested when the student move from class to class. In order for students to arrive to class on time, they must move in a swift and orderly fashion. Timely arrival to class will allow the teacher to begin promptly each period. Students that are repeatedly tardy, found "hanging out," socializing and/or wandering in the halls rather than getting to class promptly will receive a detention. Chronic hallway misconduct will result in further consequences.

HOME LEARNING & SCHOOL WORK:

The purpose of home learning is to develop study habits in children early on in their academic lives. It is also used to reinforce concepts that have been taught or to work on projects that have been assigned. If a child does not understand his/her assignment after trying to do it at home, please send a note to the teacher indicating the problem.

Students and parents should expect at least 30 minutes of home learning each night. Students enrolled in advanced and/or gifted courses may have more rigorous home learning commitments.

Assignments must be completed on time and properly written. The only acceptable excuse for not completing home learning is student illness or a written note stating an emergency, which prevented home learning from being completed.

Incomplete Work/Late Work Policy: Students will receive a zero for graded academic assignments not turned in. Make-up work for incomplete or late assignments will be accepted no later than one school day after the due date for a lower grade. Individual teachers have the right to refuse to accept late work when applicable.

Parents may help their child in the following ways:

- *Show an interest in your child's work.*
- *Provide a place and time for quiet study.*
- *Assist in practicing with spelling words and number combinations.*
- *Encourage home reading and listen to your child read.*
- *Review the homework for neatness and completeness.*
- *Refrain from doing the work for your child.*
- *Discuss problems related to home study with your child's teacher.*

It is important to note that home learning is the responsibility of the student. Students will not be permitted to return to a classroom after dismissal to get home learning assignments and projects. This also includes the students participating in the after care program. Assignments will not be accepted at the office from parents.

INTERNET & COMPUTER USE:

Internet service is provided to our teachers and students for educational purposes only. Our internet service contains a filtering system that prevents the viewing of various websites. The following misuse of school computers and internet service will result in immediate suspension:

1. *Use of proxy servers*
2. *Unauthorized downloading and/or viewing of music, videos or pictures from website or personal flash drive*
3. *Downloading and playing of any type of games from websites or personal flash drives*
4. *Use of instant messaging, chatting, My Space, Facebook or similar websites*
5. *Misuse of existing files are documents*

PARENT SERVICE HOURS:

Parent involvement tends to decline in the middle school years even though this is the time that parent participation is needed most. Parents have many opportunities to volunteer their time both at school and at home.

Ways You Can Earn Service Hours:

- *Assist in the cafeteria*
- *Assist teachers with bulletin boards, cutting & craft activities*
- *Attend PTSO meetings, day and evening events*
- *Volunteer for field day and/or field trips (6 hours for day time field trip & 10 hours for an overnight field trip)*
- *Purchase items for the classroom or school (aside from general school supplies)*
- *If you are unable to volunteer at the school you may pay for your service hours- \$10 per hour*

Parents are required to volunteer 20 hours per family or prorated to two hours a month if their children are accepted after school has begun.

*Ten hours of volunteer service should be completed by **December 15th**. Students whose parents have not completed the 20 hours by **May 15th** will lose placement for the following academic year. We recommend that families pace themselves- **2 hours a month is easier to accomplish than 20 hours at the end of the school year.***

Students in eighth grade will not be allowed to participate in the following activities if service hours have not been completed:

- *Banquet*
- *Graduation/Awards Ceremonies*
- *Grade level picnics and parties*
- *NJHS and/or Builder's Club Induction/Banquet*

Parents must log their hours on the SIS system. Please be sure to log in your own volunteer hours in a timely manner so the hours can be accounted for each quarter. Teachers will check and approve the volunteer log monthly. The system will automatically link siblings.

PUBLIC DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION, RUMORS & GOSSIP:

It is understood that friendships and socialization is a part of a students' academic experience in any school. It is imperative to remember though that the most important reason students are sent to school is to learn. Learning must be the number one priority throughout the day in order to be academically successful.

While on school campus it is expected that all students respect their peers and may NOT demonstrate the following behaviors:

- *Holding hands*
- *Kissing- any kind*
- *Hugging and/or holding*
- *Playful hitting or touching*
- *Spreading rumors and malicious gossiping*
- *Bullying, harassing and/or making threats to or about peers*

SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION:

The Principal may recommend to the Homestead Charter Foundation Board to expel a student for any of the following in accordance with the Miami Dade County School Code of Conduct:

1. *Possession, use of or transmission of a weapon including, but not limited to, a gun,*

- knife, razor, explosive, ice pick, club or any item that is being used to cause bodily injury to others.*
2. *Possession, use of or transmission of a substance capable of modifying mood or behavior.*
 3. *Using any article as a weapon or in a manner calculated to threaten any person.*
 4. *Committing a serious breach of conduct including, but not limited to, a threat or an assault on school personnel or on another pupil, lewd or lascivious act, arson, vandalism or any other such act, which disrupts or tends to disrupt the orderly conduct of the school activity.*
 5. *Engaging in less serious but continuing misconduct including, but not limited to, the use of profane, obscene or abusive language, inciting others to violence or other acts that are detrimental to the educational function of the school.*
 6. *Any other conduct that warrants expulsion based on the Code of Conduct.*

Suspendable offenses include but are not limited to the following:

1. *Fighting or other dangerous and/or disruptive behavior (hitting, kicking, pushing or biting).*
2. *Possession or use of drugs and tobacco.*
3. *Being under the influence or having alcoholic beverages on school grounds.*
4. *Defacing or vandalism of school property.*
5. *Igniting any flammable substance.*
6. *Defiance or disrespect of school personnel*
7. *Failure to meet academic responsibility*
8. *Inciting others to violence by making false accusations, spreading rumors and/or gossiping*

<http://www.dadeschools.net/ehandbook/Code/index.htm>

VISITORS:

Visitors, including parents, former students and/or older siblings are not permitted to go to a student's class unannounced during school hours because this disrupts normal routines and instruction. For the safety and protection of all students, visitors (including parents) must sign in, present a valid photo ID when entering the building, state who they are visiting, state the purpose of the visit, and obtain a pass before proceeding to a classroom.

We currently have the "Raptor" system in place for the safety of our children. This system will check any person entering the building against a current sexual predator list. At no time will any person be permitted access to the building without presenting a valid photo I.D. (driver's license or state I.D. card). Cooperation will enable the school to provide a safe and orderly learning environment for all students.