

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL...

We're off to a GREAT start!



FREE Breakfast!

Parents, thank you so much for your part in having a great start to the 2009-2010 school year. We are looking forward to the Middle Years Programme Visit on Monday, October 26, 2009 and Tuesday, October 27, 2009.

Parents that you so much for taking advantage of the free breakfast offered by all Miami-Dade County Public Schools! During the month of September the rate of students eating breakfast at school increased by 35%! Thank you for bringing your child to school early.

Code of Student Conduct

Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) is committed to providing a safe teaching and learning environment for students, staff, and members of the community. On January 16, 2008, the School Board approved a newly revised Code of Student Conduct (COSC). The revised COSC identifies, recognizes, and rewards model student behavior within a framework of clearly established and enforceable rules and policies. It advocates a holistic approach to promoting and maintaining a safe learning environment and requires active participation from students, parents/guardians, and school staff. Students and parents/guardians can access the English and Haitian/Creole versions of the document on the M-DCPS Website located at: <http://ehandbooks.dadeschools.net/policies/90/indes.htm> or you may request a copy from your child's school. The Spanish version of this document will be forthcoming.

Please ensure you review the Code of Student Conduct with your child.

This is a reminder that breakfast is free for all students. Please encourage your child to come by the Cafeteria in the morning and to take advantage of the free breakfast provided for every student.

Breakfast is served until 7:30 a.m. - 8:15 a.m.

School breakfast improves student behavior and learning environments.

- Schools that provide breakfast in the classroom to all students show decreases in tardiness and suspensions as well as improved student behavior and attentiveness.
- Providing students with breakfast in the classroom setting is associated with lower tardy rates and fewer disciplinary office referrals.
- School breakfast programs can lower absence and tardiness rates and improve standardized achievement test scores.

Parent and Student Handbook

The Parent and Student Handbook was provided to all parents on the first week of the 2009-2010 school year. The Parent and Student Handbook outlines district and school policies on attendance, conduct, grading, arrival/dismissal, lunch, peanut/nut free policy and many more important topics. Please note the Acknowledgement Receipt at the end of the Parent and Student Handbook, sign and turn this form into your child's teacher. Thank you.

Hispanic Heritage Activities

The PTA is planning several activities in order to recognize Hispanic Heritage Month. At Ada Merritt K-8 Center, we will highlight Hispanic Heritage during the week of October 12 -16, 2009.

More information about the activities is forthcoming.

Lincoln's 200th Bicentennial Celebration

This year is the birth bicentennial of President Abraham Lincoln.

Miami is one of the eleven cities chosen by the congressionally established Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission for a series of events celebrating the life and achievements of President Abraham Lincoln.



The Lincoln Bicentennial Event will take place on Sunday, November 1, 2009. The tickets are free. If you are interested in securing your free tickets, please visit <http://www.arshtcenter.org> and following the links.

Attached is a flyer with more information regarding other activities and events that will take place during the month of October and November.

FCAT Parent Workshops

We have scheduled several parent workshops for October. All parents are invited to attend any workshop that has been scheduled. However, we have identified a target audience for each workshop.

Science Fair Orientation for Parents
Thursday, October 1, 2009 at 8:45 a.m. in the Media Center

FCAT Math Workshop
Thursday, October 8, 2009 at 8:45 a.m. in the Media Center
Target Audience: Third through Eighth Grade Parents

FCAT Writing Workshop (Fourth Grade)
Tuesday, October 13, 2009 at 8:45 a.m. in the Media Center
Target Audience: Fourth Grade Parents

FCAT Writing Workshop (Eighth Grade)
Thursday, October 15, 2009 at 8:45 a.m. in the Media Center
Target Audience: Eighth Grade Parents

FCAT Reading Workshop
Tuesday, October 20, 2009 at 8:45 a.m. in the Media Center
Target Audience: Third through Eighth Grade Parents

Parent Volunteers/Visitors

Effective immediately, parents, students, employees and community members who wish to volunteer at your school should register online through the M-DCPS portal(s).

Parents, please remember to sign-in if you plan to be in school after 8:30 a.m. A Volunteer / Visitor's Badge can be obtained from the Main Office. Please use the same procedure when visiting the park while physical education classes are in session. Please assist us in keeping our students safe.

STUDENT ABSENCES

Please be reminded that if your child is absent from school; he/she must bring a written note, within three school days, explaining the absence(s) in order to be excused. The following are considered excused absences:

- a. student illness
- b. medical appointment
- c. death in family
- d. observance of a religious holiday or service when mandated for all members of a faith that such a holiday or service be observed
- e. school-sponsored event or activity previously approved
- f. other individual student absences approved by the principal

Parents, we appreciate the great effort being made thus far to have students in school on time. Please continue supporting us as we encourage students to be on time to school everyday.

If you do not provide a written note explaining the absence(s) it will be considered unexcused.

Please review the attached letter regarding the Attendance Plan.

Please note that parents will automatically receive a Connect Ed message once the student has three absences.

H1N1 Swine Flu

Thank you so much to Dr. Judy Schaechter for the H1N1 Swine Flu Workshop Presentation provided to Ada Merritt K-8 Center Parents on Thursday, September 3, 2009.

Please see the attached flyer on several Town Hall Meetings that have been schedule through the Miami-Dade County Health Department

Media Center Etiquette

Remember that there is no eating or drinking in the Media Center. We need to keep the computers clean and in working condition. It is important that we follow the Media Center rules so that the Media Center can be maintained in the best condition for our students. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

"Keep It Neat!" Campaign

*Keep it neat,
Stay in your seat!*

*Don't eat or touch,
Your neighbor's lunch!*

*Check the table and floor,
Before you walk out the door.*

*It's the cool scene,
To keep our school clean!*

Parents, to promote balanced, caring, cooperative, and respectful citizenship, we have initiated the "Keep it Neat!" Campaign. During breakfast and lunch the students are encouraged to make sure they don't drop wrappers, utensils, napkins or other items on the cafeteria floor. In addition, students are

encouraged to talk with friends, read or just enjoy a quiet meal. Students may not walk around the cafeteria. Instead, they are to wait for their teacher during lunchtime to arrive before they throw their tray and/or other items away.

Peanut/Nut Free School



Let's be mindful that Ada Merritt K-8 Center is a peanut/nut free school. Please refrain from sending to school any peanut or nut containing products. In order to avoid accidental contact I am urging all parents to discourage their children from sharing foods, utensils, and containers.

Traffic Safety



Please assist us in respecting all crosswalks and speed limits around our school. Miami-Dade County ranks #1 in the State of Florida and 3rd in the nation for pedestrian injuries and fatalities. Our students will participate in the WalkSafe Program in our continued efforts to reduce the number of pedestrian injuries and fatalities.

Parents, please keep in mind that the "walkers" dismissal area is for parents who stand and wait for their child's class to be dismissed. The teacher acknowledges the parent(s) and the child then walks to where you are.

Please note that if you want to have your child come to your car you must use the **circular driveway** located at the opposite side of the school (4th Street). We need your support and cooperation to ensure the safety of our students during arrival and dismissal.

Additionally, please use caution when dropping off and picking up your child. For safety and convenience, we are recommending that you please use the circular driveway area.

Morning Drop-off

This is a reminder that students whose homeroom classroom is in Building One should wait for their teacher to pick them up at 8:20

a.m. Students whose homeroom class is located in Building Two should wait for their teachers sitting outside their assigned classroom. Security monitors will be supervising the students. Parents are not allowed in classrooms during the morning drop-off. Please understand that school must begin promptly at 8:30 a.m. and we need your support in maximizing instructional time. Accordingly, please ensure your child is in his or her classroom by 8:30 a.m.

Student of the Month

The purpose of the Student of the Month ceremony is to recognize students who have demonstrated attributes from the International Baccalaureate (IB) Learner Profile, for example: being an inquirer, knowledgeable, a thinker, a communicator, principled, open-minded, caring, risk-taker, balanced, and/or reflective. This includes showing the following attitudes: appreciation, confidence, commitment, cooperation, curiosity, creativity, empathy, enthusiasm, independence, integrity, respect and tolerance.

The format of the Student of the Month ceremony has changed. The ceremonies will still take place each month; however, they will take place in the afternoon at 1:15 p.m. in the cafeteria. Students will receive a t-shirt, a pencil, a certificate and will make their own special ice-cream creations.

The October Student of the Month Presentation is scheduled for Thursday, October 29, 2009.