

# A MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL...

## MAY 2016

### Reminders About Attendance

Parents,

Attendance continues to be a major component of your child's success in school. We need your support to ensure that students are in school on time every day.

Students in kindergarten and first grade should be in seated in class by 8:20 a.m. Second through eighth grade students should be in class by 8:35 a.m.

Students will not be dismissed 30 minutes before dismissal times.



### VALUES MATTER

Parents,

As part of the Values Matter Districtwide Initiative, each month of the 2015 - 2016 school year is dedicated to one of the core values. During the month of April, Ada Merritt K-8 Center will be infusing the core value of "Integrity."

### Farewell

We would like to send off Ms. Lydia E. Sabatier, Assistant Principal with our very best wishes as she finishes her last day at Ada Merritt K-8 Center on Friday, May 13, 2016.

We thank Ms. Sabatier for her dedication, support and commitment to all our students, faculty and staff. We also welcome back our very own Ms. Martin as she returns back with us on this day.

### After School Care Program / Community School Classes

Parents we're excited about the new added classes to our After School Care Program. These classes include: Portuguese, Math, Reading, Writing, Yoga, Karate, Chess, Guitar, Art, Ballet, Flamenco, Hip Hop, and Fit Kids for a very low fee of \$6.00 if you are enrolled in the After School Care Program and \$10.00 if you are not. We're looking forward to adding Modern Dance. In addition, we will be updating our media access parent contact information in

order to send emails as needed to keep parents current and updated. Additionally, beginning Monday, January 16, 2016, we are revising dismissal procedures in the After Care Program by dismissing students at 5: 30 p.m. at the circular driveway area. Detailed information will be sent home and posted on the Ada Merritt K -8 Center website.



## MASA SUMMER CAMP 2016

*Grades 1 - 8  
June 20-24, 2016  
Time 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.*

MASA is a program that provides opportunities for high achieving and gifted students to be in a comfortable and safe environment with likeminded peers to; comprehend, apply, explore, analyze, discover, and evaluate concepts while motivating one another. The organization provides an environment where high achieving and gifted students can challenge themselves and exercise their critical thinking skills by using higher order thinking. MASA nurtures the unique needs of every student while encouraging the development of our future scientists, mathematicians, writers, and thinkers to delve deeper and reach their true potential

## Edible Garden



### 2015- 2016 Second and Third Grade Edible Garden

#### Spring Update from Diane Davis

Our 2015- 2016 Second and Third Grade Edible Garden was planted on January 26th, 2016. I would like to thank the teachers, parents, and students for their patience and efforts in caring for the garden, as well as everyone's enthusiasm in bringing additional ingredients to add to the greens and herbs. Thank you parents who always assist our teachers with the preparation, serving, and clean up, during our various tastings.

At this time, all second and third graders have had edible garden tastings, on different occasions. I am pleased to observe the curiosity and delight that our students exhibit when trying the various greens from the garden. The tomato plants are producing cherry tomatoes and they are ripening on the vines! We also have spinach, parsley, red and green leaf lettuce, arugula, mint, a basil plant, cilantro, collard greens, and green peppers. Our raised beds are a cornucopia of greens and herbs.

On Wednesday, April 6th, 2016, we harvested some of the collard greens. The next day, Ada Merritt's Cafeteria Manager, Maria Gutierrez, cooked the greens and helped me to serve approximately 80 samples to distribute to some of the second and third grade classrooms. it was fun and I really appreciated her assistance- a truly delicious garden to table experience!

Later this week, Dr. Palenzuela, second grade teacher, and Ms. Vanessa Tovar, parent, will

be harvesting more greens and some tomatoes for another classroom tasting. Thank you to Ms. Tovar for her time spent planting and tending the garden. Thank you to Ms. Alexandra Colio, parent, for also providing some of the plants and gardening materials to help us get our garden growing.

It has been a TEAM effort- and Together Everyone Achieves More! Stop by to witness the beauty.

## ART Matters



We are so ecstatic to have such talented artists here at Ada Merritt K-8 Center. Please see below the names of our amazing artists and the recognition for their works of ART.

Three of our 8th Grade students have been selected as state finalists for Between Dream and Reality 2016 Florida Surrealist Art Exhibit organized by The Dali Museum. The students selected are Matthew Grand, Antonella Carlessi and Christine Chade.

For this art project, students learned about the art movement of Surrealism and the art and life of artists Salvador Dali and Rene Magritte. They also learned about the 6 techniques Surrealist artists used to create their artwork, and explored the "surreal" element in their everyday lives using Mixed Media and non-traditional art materials.

Congratulation to four of our 6th grade students have been accepted into the Find Your Park student art exhibit organized by the Dade Heritage Trust, the National Park Service, and the Everglades Foundation.

The students are Bianca Silva, Hector Schmidt, Arianna Garcia, Izabela Cookson, and Mar Garcia.

Congratulations to two of our 4<sup>th</sup> grade students who have been awarded prizes in the "8<sup>th</sup> Annual Every Drop Counts" art exhibit /contest. Clara Bombicci has been awarded Honorable Mention-District 5 and Moises Vega awarded First Place-District 5. Their artwork will be on view at the Miami-Dade County building in Downtown.

Four of our 5th grade students (Sophia Ortega, Gabriel Alencar, Nora Gomez-Langseth, and Natalia Parras) have been selected as district-finalists for the Art Abilities student art exhibition organized by M-DCPS.

Congratulations to our 4<sup>th</sup> Grade student, Carolina Castro who once again has been awarded 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Elementary in the "All Kids Included Art Exhibit and Contest." Judges recognized the hard work and dedication in her work to demonstrate the celebration of inclusion, empathy, and understanding.

Congratulations to five of our 3rd grade students, Mateo Silvestre, Felipe Salles, Sophia Silva, Matias Correa, and Jesus Madrigal, which have been selected as district-finalists for their artwork submitted to the Figuring Aesthetic Forms: Figures in Motion student art exhibit.

For this art challenge, students learned about the Pop-artist and graffiti artist Keith Haring and learned about how to draw human figures in motion, and created artworks based on his style.

The artworks will be on display at the Miami International Airport from May through October, 2016.

Congratulations to Rebecca Alcalá (5<sup>th</sup> Grade) for having been selected as a District Finalist in the Imagination Creation: Dreams and Illuminations Art Exhibit. The Exhibit will be on view at the Miami

International Airport, Concourse E- Gallery until May 2016.

Congratulations to our four students, Josuhua Sherman (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade), Lucas Barros (4<sup>th</sup> Grade), Hector Schmidt (6<sup>th</sup> Grade), and Theo Urquiza (8<sup>th</sup> Grade) who have been selected as district finalists into the Annual Countrywide Student Art Exhibit at the Bakehouse Art Complex.

Congratulations to Jimena Howell, Olivia Diaz, Emily Chea, Carolina Castro, and Gabriela Laithert for their acceptance to the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual All Kids Included Family Arts Festival Art Contest. Each student will have their artwork displayed as the AKI "Traveling" Art Exhibition on the following Storytelling Festival dates:

Saturday, April 16, 2016:  
North Dade Regional Branch Library

Saturday, April 30, 2016:  
South Dade Regional Library

The winners will have their work displayed during the AKI Festival on May 7, 2016 at South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center.



## Gifted Updates

### *Summer Institute for the Gifted (SIG)*

The Division of Academics, Department of Advanced Academic Programs is providing principals of Elementary, K-8 centers, Middle and Senior high schools with information on

the Day, Residential, and Extended Commuter Program for the Summer Institute for the Gifted (SIG).

- SIG is a 501 (c)(3) organization dedicated to advocating and providing programming for gifted and academically talented students.
- SIG is a program that combines academics with social, cultural, and recreational opportunities for a truly engaging summer.
- SIG has been offering day and residential summer programs since 1984 in various universities throughout the nation.
- This summer, the SIG Program is offering a Day Program from July 18th to August 5th for ages 5-8 at the University of Miami.
- The SIG Program is also offering a Residential/Commuter Program from July 17th to August 6th for ages 9-17 at the University of Miami.
- For more information please visit [www.giftedstudy.org](http://www.giftedstudy.org)

## Running Club



We are excited to start a new Running Club at Ada Merritt K-8 Center. We are looking forward to having our students in Grades 5-8 actively running and exercising for the benefit of a healthier life style. Parents are welcome to join.

# Media Center Hours



Please be informed that the Media Center will be available to parents from 7:30 a.m. to 8:45 a.m. daily and 3:10 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. daily; except for Wednesdays, 1:55 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

The Media Center hours were revised to make the Media Center more available to students and teachers during school hours.

We thank you for your cooperation.

## SAFETY



Parents,

As you know, the safety and security of our students is our #1 priority. I would like to remind you of the following as you work with us to keep our students safe and secure while they are here in school:

- As always the school opens two entrances every morning at 7:30 a.m. If you prefer to drop your child off without parking, please utilize the circular driveway.
- If you would like to accompany your child to class or breakfast, please park.
- For dismissal, please utilize the:  
Circular Driveway: Drive-up dismissal. Parents must remain inside their vehicles when picking up their children in the circular driveway. This is not an entry point at dismissal time, parents are not allowed to walk up and pick up their child at dismissal

time. Parents must remain safely in their vehicles.

**Elementary Walkers:** Parents walk up to students on the North Side of the school. Parents must park their vehicles and walk towards the stairs to pick up their children. Students will not be released to parents waiting in the middle of the street.

**Middle Walkers:** Parents walk up to students on the West Side of the School adjacent to Riverside Park on SW 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

- For your convenience, parents with elementary and middle school students may utilize the Elementary Walkers.
- If you see any suspicious persons or activities as you drop off and pick up your child from school, please call City of Miami Non-Emergency Number (305) 579-6111 and report it to school administration. **In case of an emergency, please call 911.**



## 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. The School Board approved a newly revised Code of Student Conduct (COSC). The revised COSC identifies,

recognizes, and rewards model student behavior within a framework of clearly established and enforceable rules and policies. It advocates a holistic approach to promoting and maintaining a safe learning environment and requires active participation from students, parents/guardians, and school staff. Students and parents/guardians can access the English and Haitian/Creole versions of the document on the M-DCPS Website located at: <http://ehandbooks.dadeschools.net/policies/90/index.htm> or you may request a copy from your child's school. The Spanish version of this document will be forthcoming.

The school district believes that standards for student behavior must be set cooperatively through interaction among the students, parents/legal guardians, staff, and community members creating an atmosphere that encourages students to grow in self-discipline. The development of this atmosphere requires respect for self and others, as well as for district and community property on the part of students, staff, and community members. Since students learn by example, school administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers will demonstrate appropriate behavior; treat others with civility and respect, and refuse to tolerate bullying or harassment (M-DCPS Code of Student Conduct).

Miami-Dade County Public Schools has an Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy. Please speak to your child about reporting any bullying or harassment to a school official. All allegations will be investigated.

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



## Parent and Student Handbook

The Parent and Student Handbook is available on the Ada Merritt K-8 Center website. The Parent and Student Handbook outlines district and school policies on attendance, conduct, grading, arrival/dismissal, lunch, peanut/nut free practice and many more important topics.

We encourage you to take the time to review the Parent and Student Handbook with your child.

All students should return the Parent and Student Handbook Acknowledgement Form to their teacher.

## Fifth Grade



## Activities

### *Fifth Grade "End of Year" Activities:*

Fifth Grade Class Pictures on May 12, 2016. Students are to wear their uniforms.

Primary Years Program (PYP)  
Student Exhibition on May 19 - 20, 2016

End of Year Field Trip to Islands of Adventure, Orlando, Florida on  
May 21, 2016

End of Year Awards Program on  
June 3, 2016 at 9: 30 a.m. at the

Rusty Pelican Restaurant

End of Year Award Program Pictures  
on June 3, 2016

Fifth Grade End of Year Program Video  
on June 3, 2016

## **Eighth Grade Activities**



Eighth Grade Fieldtrip to Washington D.C. is scheduled for May 17 - 20, 2016. Payments will be due soon. The first NON REFUNDABLE deposit of \$150.00 was due by Tuesday, November 24, by 9:00 a.m. The second deposit of \$300.00 was due in January 2016. The third deposit of \$300.00 was due in February 2016. All payments must be accompanied by a *Deposit Payment Form*. Monies cannot be accepted unless the specified form is attached. Cash and money orders are acceptable; no personal checks please. Money Orders are payable to Ada Merritt K-8 Center. The opportunity to participate on this trip will be closed on Tuesday, November 24, 2015.

### **Eighth Grade Field Trip to Washington, D.C. on May 17 - 20, 2016.**

The final cost for the students is \$1,175.00. The cost for the parents participating will be the same amount quoted above for the students plus \$40.00 (for triple occupancy), or \$114.00 (for double occupancy) or \$340.00 (for single occupancy). Please send your \$425.00 NON-REFUNDABLE final deposit in cash or Money Order(s) made payable to Ada

Merritt K-8 Center only, along with the FINAL DEPOSIT FORM attached between Monday, April 18, 2016 through Thursday, April 21, 2016 by 9:00 a.m. Parents participating on the trip must be cleared and approved through Miami-Dade County Public Schools. If you need assistance with the volunteer clearance process, please see Ms. Forero-Pinilla. All payments are to be submitted with the Deposit Form, directly to Ms. Ferrandiz, Secretary/Treasurer in the Main Office by 9:00 a.m. Cash or Money Order made payable to Ada Merritt K-8 Center only. Please understand all deposits and payments are non-refundable. Ensure that your child and yourself, if attending, are 100% committed to participating on the trip otherwise no monies will be refunded.



## **FREE Breakfast!**

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 Volunteers/Visitors

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

Parents, please remember to sign-in if you plan to be in school after 8:35 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 every day.

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.



## 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.

## 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.

## "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.



## 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 3<sup>rd</sup> in the nation for pedestrian injuries and fatalities. Our students participated 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.

Elementary students will dismiss by SW 3<sup>rd</sup> Street near the area of the stairs. Middle School students are to dismiss by the gates located on SW 7<sup>th</sup> avenue.

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 (SW 4<sup>th</sup> 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 in the Cafeteria by 8:30 a.m. 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 8:20 a.m. and or 8:35 a.m. and we need your support in maximizing instructional time.

## Circular Drive Pick-Up



Parents who chose to utilize the Circular Drive Pick-Up must remain in their cars. School personnel will dismiss students to your car. Students will not be dismissed to parents who "walk-up" to the Circular Driveway.

Parents who wish to "walk-up" may do so at the "Walkers" Dismissal Area located at the North Side of the school on Southwest 3<sup>rd</sup> Street for elementary students and on 7<sup>th</sup> avenue for middle school students.

In order to continue to have a safe and smooth daily dismissal, it is important that all parents support the school guidelines on Dismissal. Thank you in advance for your support.

## Student of the Month



The purpose of the Student of the Month Ceremony is to recognize students in Kindergarten through Fifth Grades, 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 March, April, and May Student of the Month Celebration will take place on **Tuesday, May 10, 2016.**

Currently, we are exploring different opportunities to recognize our Middle School Students. As soon as those plans are finalized, we will share with you.

Thank you.

