"Excellence Through Caring"

Proud Home of the Panthers

Our mission at Margate Elementary School is to create a nurturing environment so that our students will become independent, successful, lifelong learners by providing a high quality, differentiated, and innovative curriculum based on the B.E.S.T. Standards.

Welcome to the Margate Elementary 2026-2027 School Year

Thomas J. Schroeder
Principal

Donna Rucker
Assistant Principal

William Hartner
Assistant Principal

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School Website:
margateelem.browardschools.com

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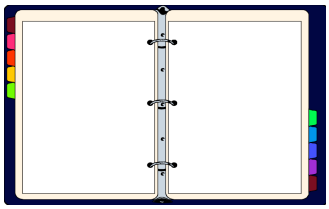
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WELCOME TO
MARGATE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Dear Panthers,

Welcome to the 2026-2027 school year! We know that this will be an incredible year full of countless successes for our students and their families. This handbook is filled with important information you need to know to make this the best school year ever. We hope you and your parents will spend time reading it together.

The planner which has been given to you is very important. Please use the daily calendar pages to record your assignments. This organizational tool will help you to be a better student. Mom and Dad can use the daily pages to communicate with your teacher.

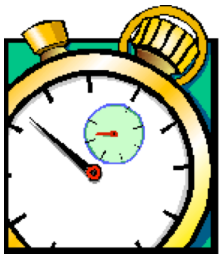
You are beginning a new school year, which means new teachers, new friends, and many new learning experiences. We are incredibly happy to have you here with us and want you to have a safe, enjoyable, and rewarding school year. If you try to do your best in school, your parents and teachers will appreciate your hard work. Believe in yourself. Be proud to be the best you can be!

If you or your parents have any questions about school that is not answered in our handbook, ask your teacher, our office staff, or me. We are all here to help you. Do not forget our school motto, “Excellence Through Caring.” At Margate Elementary School we genuinely care about you!

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Schroeder, Your Principal
Donna Rucker, Your Assistant Principal
William Hartner, Your Assistant Principal

DAILY SCHEDULE



Welcome Center (OFFICE) HOURS: 7:15 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.
STUDENT HOURS: 7:50 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.

7:15 A.M.	-	Students may enter the campus, supervision is provided, and breakfast begins.
7:30 A.M.	-	Students report to assigned arrival locations.
7:50 A.M.	-	Student activities begin and the first bell rings.
8:00 A.M.	-	Gates close.
8:00 A.M.	-	Tardy bell rings.
2:00 P.M.	-	Dismissal time.

TARDINESS:

Students who are not in their seats and ready to learn by 8:00 AM will be considered tardy. Student arrival after this time is disruptive and results in the loss of valuable academic time.
Tardy students must be signed in at the front office by a parent.

BREAKFAST PROGRAM:

Students may enter the cafeteria at 7:15 A.M., but no later than 7:45 A.M. Students who are **NOT** eating breakfast should not be on campus prior to 7:15 A.M., as there is no adult supervision until then. Breakfast is free for all students in Broward County.

SCHOOL INFORMATION

MASCOT: PANTHER (MARTY)
SCHOOL COLORS: ROYAL BLUE AND WHITE

SCHOOL MOTTO & SONG

"EXCELLENCE THROUGH CARING"

When away from home, I often think
of a place I'd like to be,
A place where sharing and Excellence through Caring
makes knowledge important to me.
Margate Elementary, school of my choice.
Margate Elementary, I raise my proud voice.

When I leave school, I know
I'll be among the very best,
Because throughout these many years,
With great teachers I've been blessed!
Margate Elementary, school of my choice.
Margate Elementary, I raise my proud voice.

TOP TEN WAYS TO SHOW PANTHER PRIDE

At Margate Elementary School, we believe that all our panthers will show Panther Pride. The following is the student-generated top ten ways to show appropriate and model behavior at our school.

1. Display all eight-character traits.
2. Accept responsibility for your actions and learn from your mistakes.

3. Be kind, respectful to adults and classmates, and treat others the way you like to be treated.
4. Show your school spirit.
5. Do your homework and read each night.
6. Wear your school uniform.
7. Be in your classroom ready and prepared to learn by 7:50 a.m.
8. Walk in a Margate line segment.
9. Always do your best by giving 100%.
10. Follow all cafeteria procedures.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS (R.O.A.R.)

At Margate Elementary School, we have clear and positive expectations for our students. As part of our School Improvement Plan, our school has collaborated and created a positive behavior plan. The plan can be found on our website. In our positive behavior plan, we have a simple acronym, (R.O.A.R.), to represent our most vital expectations. The explanation of the acronym is below:

- R-Respect
- O-Own My Behavior
- A-Act Responsibly
- R-Ready to Learn

ABSENCES

It is the parent or guardian's responsibility to notify Margate Elementary School to report a child's absence. Parents must call the school at 754-322-6900, or the attendance line at 754-322-6902, or may report an absence online by 9:00 AM. As our attendance reports are entered into the county's database at this time each day, all absences not reported by 9:00 AM will be entered on the student's permanent attendance record as "unexcused" for that day. You must make a call **EACH** day your child is out. The unexcused absence will remain on the student's permanent records unless a parent or guardian calls the school or sends a note within 48 hours of the "unexcused" absence. **Vacations are recorded as "unexcused" absences.**

If you know your child will be out of school for an excused absence for more than a week, you may request make-up work in writing. For absences less than a week, the make-up work should be done when the child returns, and he/she will be allowed two (2) days for each day absent to complete it. Teachers must have a minimum of 24 hours' notice to prepare make-up work for absences due to an illness. School is not a good place for children who are ill. Often children miss several days from school when the absence could have been prevented by keeping the child home at the onset of the illness. Allow the child at least 24 hours to recover from illnesses such as fevers. A good attendance record is essential for maximum educational progress.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Our school hours are 7:50 A.M. - 2:00 P.M. Supervision of students begins at 7:30 A.M. Students are required to enter in an orderly fashion and report immediately to their assigned grade level location. Front gates will close at 8:00 AM. Except for the first day of school, parents are not permitted to walk their children to class.

REGULAR DISMISSAL
All students will be dismissed at 2:00 P.M. and will go directly to the appropriate area for dismissal.

To maximize the safety and efficiency of our drop-off and pick-up procedures for our car riders, parents and students should adhere to the following procedures:

- Parents are asked to use the **FRONT PARKING AREA ONLY** to drop off and pick up students. **NO PARENTS' AUTOMOBILES WILL BE ALLOWED IN THE BACK PARKING**

LOT. This lot must be reserved for staff, daycare vans, and buses only. Bike riders may exit through front or rear gates.

- Bus students arrive and leave using the North entrance (rear of school).
- Students should only exit their cars from the right side of the car onto the sidewalk.
- Cars must pull all the way forward in our Car Lane during pick-up/drop off. All cars are required to have the official blue car rider sign. Without such a sign, cars will be asked to pull over and parents must sign out their children in the front office.
- Walk-up pick-up (parents who park off campus and pick up their students on foot) will be at the following gates per grade level:
  - Kindergarten and First Grade: Gate #5
  - Second and Third Grade: Gate #4
  - Fourth and Fifth Grade: Gate #2
- All the above gates are located at the front of the school. All parents are required to have the official Curb Smart Sign/Number walk-up pick-up sign or blue car rider sign, or one of the signs pictured on a mobile device.

Private day care vehicles will be required to pick up students in the back parking area.

WALKERS AND BICYCLE RIDERS

Students who walk or ride bicycles should not arrive at crossing points more than one half hour before the start of school, as the crossing guards will not be present. The crossing guards are in authority and are to be obeyed. Bicycle riders are expected to observe the following rules:

- Students must walk their bikes when on school grounds.
- Students should lock their bikes with individual locks to discourage theft. The school is not responsible for stolen or lost bikes.
- Parents should be sure to record the bicycle serial number for reference in case of theft.
- Students are required to wear bicycle helmets to comply with state law and for safety purposes.

Bike racks are locked after the final bell in the morning and opened just prior to dismissal. **Margate Elementary School cannot guarantee the security of bicycles in the bike racks or be held liable for any property stolen from them.**

EARLY DISMISSAL

Early dismissal should be avoided. Please try to schedule appointments (doctor, dentist, etc.) after school if possible. **Students may not be signed out after 1:30 P.M**. They will not be released for early dismissal after 1:30 P.M.

Students will be released only to the adults (18 years or older) who are listed on the student enrollment card. **Any person picking up a student must provide proper photo identification**. All students must be signed out through the school office.

It is impossible to call all parents in the event of an emergency dismissal. Please have a prearranged plan with your child and see that he understands it fully, as phone lines will not be available for outgoing calls at this time. For the school to help you with this plan, an Emergency Information Card will be sent home with your child. Please complete the form and return it to your child's teacher as soon as possible.

RAINY DAY DISMISSAL

A "Rainy Day" dismissal is not considered an emergency dismissal. Therefore, parents should not request an early dismissal on rainy days due to congestion in the office and the parking lot. **Parents are to inform their children if they are to be picked up or walk home on rainy days. Since there are many students in our school, it is impossible to allow the children the use of the school phone for this purpose.**

SEVERE WEATHER DISMISSAL

On days when we experience severe weather at dismissal, our dismissal will be changed for the safety of our students. Parents will be notified of a Severe Weather Dismissal through identification of the Severe Weather Green Flag flying on the flagpole. Please see the information below regarding dismissal methods:



Sunshine Care Students: These students will dismiss to their Sunshine Classrooms.

School Bus Students/Private Day Bus Riders: These students will be dismissed from the cafeteria when the weather permits their release.

Car Riders/Walk-Up Pick Up

Our Severe Weather procedures have changed. Instead, children will wait in secure locations until they are called for. Please make sure to have your walk-up pick-up signs to pick them up.

Walkers/Bike Riders: These students will remain in designated locations until the weather permits their release, or when any individual with one the proper dismissal signs (car rider or walk-up pick-up) picks them up.

BIRTHDAYS



In all grades Pre-Kindergarten through fifth, student birthdays will be observed on designated dates. At that time, each child's birthday will be recognized with a monthly birthday celebration hosted by our P.T.A. There will be refreshments provided by the P.T.A. with a wonderful celebration held in their honor. No individual birthday treats will be accepted for any students.

BUS DISCIPLINE POLICY

It is important that students travel safely between home and school. Students who are eligible for Broward County School Board transportation must adhere to the following rules:

- Always obey the bus driver.
- Always stay in your seat.
- Do not eat or drink on the bus.
- Always keep your arms and head inside the bus.
- Animals, glass containers, sharp objects, balls, bats, balloons, or other similar objects may not be brought on the bus.
- No loud noises are permitted.

The above rules must be followed. Failure to follow these rules may result in a referral. The following procedure will be used for bus referrals:

LEVEL ONE OFFENSES

- **First Referral** – A verbal or written reprimand will be given.

- **Second Referral** – Student may be suspended from school bus transportation.
- **Repeated Offenses** – A suspension from the bus for the remainder of the school year and/or possible suspension from school may occur.

LEVEL TWO OFFENSES

- **First Referral** - Student's bus privileges will be suspended for up to ten school days. Parents will be notified of the suspension.
- **Second Offense –** There will be a suspension of school bus transportation for the remainder of the school year.

LEVEL THREE OFFENSES

- **There will be a suspension from school.**

CAFETERIA/BREAKFAST/LUNCH

Wholesome and nutritional meals are served in our school cafeteria each day. This school year, our school will have both free breakfast and free lunch. We are a Community Eligibility Provision School which means that all students with have both free breakfast and lunch. Families will not need to complete a meal application for free lunch. You may still complete an application for additional benefits.



Unfortunately, we cannot accept checks. If you have any questions or concerns with this policy, please contact the administration.

Meal menus are also available online on our school's website. Students bringing their own lunches to school should bring straws and napkins, as they will not be provided by the cafeteria. **For the safety of our students, canned or bottled drinks, or metal containers with pull tabs, are not allowed at school. These items will be returned home unopened. Due to safety, as well as space limitations, parents are invited to have lunch with their students on a limited basis. If you would like to have lunch with your child, please fill out the lunch request form a day in advance.**

FOOD FOR SPECIAL EVENTS

According to Section 64E-II of the Florida Administrative Code, any food items prepared in a private home are not permitted to be served in school. All items served in our classrooms must be store bought, wrapped individually, and unopened.

CLINIC AND MEDICATIONS

All First Aid, if feasible, is administered through the Clinic. Parents must fill out the Coordinated Health Services Consent form for students to receive treatment in the clinic and/or isolation room. A minimum of two people on our staff are certified in First Aid and CPR.

If your child becomes too ill to remain at school, you will be notified immediately so that you may make arrangements for the child to be picked up. It is vital that we know where we can reach you**. It is essential that the school office has a current telephone number (home and work) and an emergency telephone number in case of illness or accident while your child is at school.** Clinic forms should be completed carefully and returned to your child's teacher as soon as possible. Please notify the school office if there are any changes to this form during the school year. Medications are to be brought to school by the student's parent or guardian. Medication must be received in the original container. The container must be labeled with the student's name,

physician's name, pharmacy's name and phone number, name of medication, directions for dosage and administration, and date of the prescription.

Under School Board Policy 6305, students may not have medication of any kind, including over-the-counter medications, at school unless an Authorization for Medication Form has been completed and is on file in the school office. The Authorization for Medication Form is available in the school office should your child need to be administered any medication during the school year.

CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

The 2026-2027 Broward County Public Schools Code of Student Conduct handbook will be distributed electronically in English, Spanish, Haitian Creole, and Portuguese. The Code of Student Conduct handbook will also continue to be available on the district's website, (**www.browardschools.com**). A limited number of printed copies of the handbook are available to parents. Parents/guardians may contact our office to request a printed copy.

CURRICULUM

Margate Elementary maintains a comprehensive curriculum program, which places emphasis on English Language Arts/Reading, Writing, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. Additional studies are in the areas of computer science, art, music, and physical education. Programs are also available for students who qualify for Exceptional Student Education and Gifted Programs. The Margate Elementary School staff works with the total child and the child's family, promoting intellectual, social, emotional, and physical development. A strong emphasis on academic skills builds a good foundation for future learning. Students will also be utilizing a variety of digital curriculum through our online student management system, Clever.

EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION & STAFFINGS

As a parent, you are entitled to information about your rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The following information is critical to ensuring that you can be a partner in the educational decisions made regarding your child. We will be scheduling all staffings this year with at least two weeks of prior notification. Staffings will take place daily from 7:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS & PRIVACY ACT

This act became a Federal Law in 1974. The law protects the accuracy and privacy of students' educational records. Without the prior consent of the parents or eligible students (over 18 years of age), only parents of such students and authorized individuals having legitimate educational interests will have access to a student's records if the student is under 18 years of age. An appointment may be made in person or by telephoning the school at **(754) 322-6900**.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are a valuable addition to the educational program and are planned as an extension of the regular curriculum. Field trip permission forms will be sent home to be signed and returned to the teacher before the child may participate in a field trip. Permission slips and fees must meet the established deadlines. **SPECIFIC DEADLINES ARE SET AND MUST BE ADHERED TO.** Parents wishing to chaperone must contact the classroom teacher by the permission slip deadline date. Chaperones will be selected by the classroom teacher. Attendance on a field trip is based on the student's behavior up to and including the day of the trip. For the safety of the students,

teachers have the option to leave at school those students whose behavior would be disruptive on the trip. If your child is prohibited from attending a field trip based on inappropriate or unsafe behavior, you will be informed. It may be necessary to notify a parent or guardian to pick up their child if his or her behavior on a field trip creates a disturbance or unsafe situation.
NOTE: Only students attending Margate Elementary will be allowed to go on the field trip. Parent chaperones may not bring younger or older brothers and sisters along because of insurance regulations.

HOMEWORK

Our schoolwide policy at Margate is to read each evening for at least thirty minutes. Additionally, we have technology support programs, such as i-Ready. These programs will be shared by the teacher. We advocate for students to utilize these programs as part of their home support. Parents may request additional resources to assist their children with the implementation of the standards. Additionally, individual teachers may send home learning assignments/projects which should take no more than twenty minutes each night.

INSURANCE PROGRAM

A STUDENT ACCIDENT INSURANCE POLICY is offered. You have a choice of two plans:

- School time Accident Protection
- Around the Clock Protection

A Student In-Hospital Sickness Policy is also available. Proper forms will be sent home. The forms must be sent directly to the Insurance Company.

Health insurance forms for Healthy Kids are also available in the office.

LOST AND FOUND

Children's uniforms, sweaters, coats, lunch boxes, etc. should have their names on them. Lost items will be turned into the office. Lost and found items are displayed at the end of the month in front of the cafeteria.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT GROUPS

- **THE PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION** plays an important role in strengthening the relationship between home and school. Membership is open to all Margate Elementary parents and staff. As a member of the PTA, you can provide much needed help and support to the school.



- **THE SCHOOL ADVISORY FORUM** assists administration in the operation of budget, curriculum, and facilities. Through this committee, you can learn about your local school, investigate problem areas, help establish school goals, review the school's budget, and assist with the school's annual progress report.

- **THE SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL** is responsible for setting long and short-range goals for school progress. Strategic objectives are developed through input from staff, parents, and other members of the school community. **A copy of our school improvement plan, along with our Parent Involvement Plan, is available on our school's website or through a hard copy request in the front office.**

READING EXPECTATIONS

Every K-5 student is expected to read for thirty minutes each evening. Increased daily reading is a vital habit that has direct results on overall academic success. Teachers will monitor daily reading requirements through a variety of methods. Additionally, it is vital that our students actively participate in our digital text resources through a variety of electronic methods.

REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS

REPORT CARDS are issued to all elementary students (grades K-5) on the Focus Website at the end of each marking period. A student must be in attendance a minimum of twenty-five school days to receive a progress report. The report card should be examined carefully and reviewed with your child.

- **INTERIM REPORTS** are issued midway through the marking period for students who are having difficulty such as failing, a drop of two or more grades, unacceptable behavior, or excessive absences. Parents must sign and return the interim report. These reports may be used by either teachers or parents to request a conference. Teachers may also use interim reports to indicate good performance.

- **PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES** are a very important part of our reporting system. Parents are encouraged to meet with their child's teacher at least twice each school year. If you are unable to attend a conference, please notify the school.

SCHOOL SAFETY PROCEDURES

Safety and security are our top priorities. Please make sure to remember the following safety procedures:

- All visitors must report to the front office.
- All visitors must go through our Raptor Visitor System.
- All visitors must have an I.D. to gain access to the school.
- All parents must have a Curb Smart Walk-Up Pick-Up Sign to pick-up their child by foot. A picture of the sign on your mobile device is acceptable as well.
- All parents must have a Curb Smart Car Rider Sign to pick up their child by car.
- Students must always wear their I.D.s while on campus.
- Parents must update their contact information with the front office.
- All students should be in uniforms. Our uniform policy is listed in this newsletter and our website.
- Consistency with dismissal is critical. Please alert the teacher and office ASAP of any changes.
- Help build your student's independence by ensuring they come to school prepared with their lunch, materials, etc. If you find it necessary to bring them the items they forgot at home, the front office will take such items from 8:00 to 8:30.
- Early student sign-outs will cease at 1:00 p.m.
- Please review the new severe weather procedures.



SCHOOL PHONES

To better serve the students and you, we are asking for your cooperation in eliminating the use of office phones for personal calls and messages to individual students. Classes **WILL NOT** be interrupted with messages to students except in extreme emergencies. Use of the school telephone by students is discouraged. **ONLY** emergency calls will be allowed.

STUDENT ORGANIZATION

Students in kindergarten use the Blue Margate Folder as a tool to communicate with home. Folders contain information which may need to be signed and returned, important notices, and papers your student will share with you reflecting progress in school. Students in grades first through fifth use the Student Planner to record daily and long-term assignments and to communicate messages between the teacher and parents. Both the Margate Folder and the Student Planner are part of our school's organizational plan and provide students with the tools to meet with success. School supply lists for each grade level are available on our school website.

SCHOOL UNIFORMS

Margate Elementary School is a Unified Dress School. All students are expected to adhere to the unified dress policy. Shirts may be burgundy, hunter green, navy blue, light blue, pink, or white, and must have a collar. Shorts, slacks, or skirts may be navy, black, or khaki. Information regarding uniform styles is available in the school office.

Parents seeking a uniform exemption must request the form and submit it to the principal within 10 days of the student's enrollment. Exempt students still need to adhere to the Broward County School Dress Code (see Code of Conduct Book).



STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR

A consistent school-wide student behavior management program operates at Margate Elementary. Teachers and staff promote and maintain student conduct with support from the administration and support staff. A copy of the Student Conduct and Discipline Code Book is available electronically on our website and at www.browardschools.com. **Students and parents are required to sign and return a form to school stating that they have read and understood the rules.** Teachers spend class time reviewing the code book and answering questions to make sure that students understand what is expected of them.

Students must refrain from bringing distracting items to school, such as toys, electronics, collecting cards, etc.

TEXTBOOKS AND BOOKS

The State of Florida furnishes both print and digital text resources. It is the child's responsibility to keep printed books in good condition. Should a student transfer, all textbooks and library books must be returned to the teacher. Books not being returned to the school and those showing abuse are paid for by the student.

VISITATIONS

A visit to the school can be of great value to parents who wish to know and understand more about their child's school, its programs, and its teachers. The following guidelines for visits and observations are presented to avoid disappointments or misunderstandings in making plans to visit the school.

Visits: **All school visits should be preplanned**. Parents will not be permitted in classes during class time without prior arrangement or permission from the teacher or administration. All visitors to the school must enter and sign in at the school office, which is located at the 18th Street side of the school. A visitor's badge will be issued and must be worn after the presentation of a photo ID. When leaving, visitors will return to the office to return their badge and sign out.

Observations: All people who wish to observe a particular class must make arrangements 24 hours in advance to avoid the possibility of schedule conflicts. Arrangements for the observation may be made through the school office or directly with the teacher. The number of observers permitted at any one time is limited to the parent(s) of a single child in the class. Observers shall follow the same procedures for entering and leaving the building as noted in the previous section. All visitors to the school are asked to consider the needs of the students and teachers as paramount, therefore, creating the least possible distraction.

VOLUNTEERS



We welcome any community person who wishes to join the Volunteer Program at Margate Elementary School. The assistance and aid provided is invaluable to the smooth and efficient operation of our school. We encourage anyone interested in joining our Volunteer Program to contact our Volunteer Coordinator through the school office to obtain further information. All volunteers will be required to fill out an electronic application online at https://webapp.browardschools.com/sbbc_volunteer/VolunteerForm.aspx The application will be reviewed. Volunteers are only permitted to assist in the school, classrooms, and on all field trips once their application has been successfully approved.

August 10, 2026

Dear Parents/Guardians,

The Margate Elementary 2026-2027 Student Handbook contains vital information which will assist us in making this a smooth and productive school year. In the handbook, you will find policies and procedures regarding our school's operations. Parents can access the handbook by locating it in the front of the agenda or electronically on our website. Please visit our website and download a copy of the handbook to your computer so that you can reference it throughout the year.

As was just stated, it is essential that each family reviews the contents of the handbook. Once you have thoroughly reviewed the handbook, please return this acknowledgement form to your child's teacher. As always, the strong connection between the school and the home is what makes our school so incredible! Your cooperation and support are greatly appreciated by the entire Margate Elementary Family.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Schroeder, Proud Principal
Margate Elementary School

Child's Name _____ Teacher _____

I have read and am familiar with the contents of the 2026-2027 Margate Elementary Student Handbook.

_____ _____
Parent Signature Date