

22025 SW 87 AVENUE – CUTLER BAY, FLORIDA 33190

PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK MIDDLE/UPPER 2026-2027

Dear Parents and Students,
Welcome to an exciting year at Mater Bay Academy Middle/Upper School. Parents are an integral part of our school's success, and we gladly welcome your input and suggestions throughout the year. Your collaboration is essential in promoting our school's mission, as we continue to place an emphasis on individual student achievement by nurturing a positive learning environment. We are looking forward to a rewarding and exciting new year. On behalf of the administration, faculty and staff we assure you that we are committed to Mater's vision to provide an innovative challenging curriculum in a learning environment that promotes individualized instruction for all our students. We are honored and thank you for selecting us as your ***School of Choice***!

CHARTER SCHOOL INFORMATION

Charter schools are non-profit, self-managed entities which enroll Miami-Dade County Public School students. They must be approved and monitored by the local school board, yet they are run independently. Charter schools are funded by state and local monies and are open to any student residing in the Miami-Dade County School District who would otherwise qualify to attend a regular middle/upper school in Miami-Dade County. Charter school students are Miami-Dade County Public School students.

MISSION & VISION

Mater Bay Academy Mission

The mission of Mater Bay Academy is to deliver a rigorous and innovative academic program-producing students who have the knowledge and skills to be self-directed, lifelong learners, which integrate technology and a wide range of educational resources within a safe learning environment. Students are expected to perform at or above grade level availing success in education.

Mater Bay Academy Vision

Our vision is to provide a structured, creative environment that enables students to ask questions, solve problems, and take risks as they gain the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful members of a global society. Mater Bay Academy is a collaborative teaching and learning environment, which encourages students to develop meaningful interactions within the curriculum.

Mater Academy, Inc. Mission

Meaningful achievement of
Academics facilitated by
Teachers, administrators, parents & the community
Enabling students to become confident, self-directed &
Responsible lifelong learners

Mater Academy, Inc. Vision

The Vision of Mater Academy, Inc. is to provide a structured, creative environment that enables students to ask questions, solve problems, and take risks as they gain the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful members of a global society. Mater Bay Academy is a collaborative teaching and learning environment which encourages students to develop meaningful interactions within the curriculum.

SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Mater Bay Academy follows the standards and objectives stated in the Florida Standards and Common Core State Standards. It encompasses the core subject areas of Reading, Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. In addition, we offer classes in several electives to include but not limited to: Foreign Language, Dance, TV Production, Theatre, Art, Music and Physical Education. Please see the school's website for detailed information on curriculum. Additionally, some classes may require a class fee.

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Brenda Cruz, Principal
Adalyn Benavente, Vice Principal
Gil Lora, Assistant Principal
Cesar Pulido, Assistant Principal

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Idalia Suarez, Director & Board Chair
Yasmeen Hasan, Director & Secretary
Maureen Sotero-Balmaseda, Director & Student Alumni Representative

Procedures for adding items to the board meeting agenda and filing complaints:

Positive relations between the School and its parents and families are a primary concern. For that reason, every effort will be made to handle disputes in the most positive way possible. The following steps have been outlined in order to facilitate resolution of such issues:

Step 1 - Make an appointment to clarify issue with your student's teacher (if applicable).
Step 2 - Make appointment to clarify issue with the school administrator.
Step 3- Contact Educational Support Provider (Academica)
Phone - 305-669-2906
Email - parentsupport@academica.org
Step 4 - Educational Support Provider will put you in contact with the Board Appointed Parent Liaison for your school.
Step 5 - State concerns at a scheduled Governing Board meeting. If you want the Board to resolve or address some dispute or issue that you have with the school, then you must describe the matter in writing (assistance available upon request from Kelly Mallon / Board Liaison whose contact information is below) at least 3 days prior to a regularly scheduled meeting. Your matter will be added to the Board's agenda. Please understand that: A public board meeting is the only forum in which Board Members should be addressed for disputes and the only forum in which they will respond to you. Board Members cannot respond to any other direct means of contact because an individual charter school board member, even the Chairman, does not have the authority to make decisions on behalf of Mater Academy, Inc.

Kelly Mallon
Board Liaison
Email: kmallon@academica.org
Mailing Address: 6340 Sunset Drive, Miami, Florida 33143
Fax: (305) 669-2906

Note: This policy does not replace or change any proceedings that is governed by the Code of Student Conduct or the Parent Contract.
Step 6 - Contact the Charter School Compliance and Support at your local school district.

SCHOOL HOURS

Middle/High	
Regular School Day	**7:05AM – 1:30PM**
Early Release Day	**7:05AM – 11:00AM**

Mater Bay Academy is NOT responsible for students who arrive more than thirty (30) minutes prior to the start of school. Students may not be dropped off or left unattended outside the school building prior to the start of our school day. Students will remain supervised for 15 minutes after dismissal. Students who are not picked up 15 minutes after dismissal time will be sent to the Aftercare Program and issued a fee of **$10.00 per day**.

Early Release Dates

November 20*
December 17*
March 19*
June 1*, 2*, & 3*
*No After Care available

Teacher Planning Days

August 6-12
September 21
November 3
December 18
January 15
March 10 & 29
June 4

MATER BAY ACADEMY

2026-2027 A-B BLOCK SCHOOL CALENDAR

JULY 2026				
M	T	W	R	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	31

AUGUST 2026				
M	T	W	R	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13A	14B
17A	18B	19A	20B	21A
24B	25A	26B	27A	28B
31A				

SEPTEMBER 2026				
M	T	W	R	F
	1B	2A	3B	4A
7	8B	9A	10B	11A
14B	15A	16B	17A	18B
21	22A	23B	24A	25B
28A	29B	30A		

OCTOBER 2026				
M	T	W	R	F
			1B	2A
5B	6A	7B	8A	9B
12A	13B	14A	15B	16A
19B	20A	21B	22A	23B
26A	27B	28A	29B	30A

NOVEMBER 2026				
M	T	W	R	F
2B	3	4A	5B	6A
9B	10A	11	12B	13A
16B	17A	18B	19A	20B
23	24	25	26	27
30A				

DECEMBER 2026				
M	T	W	R	F
	1B	2A	3B	4A
7B	8A	9B	10A	11B
14A	15B	16A	17B	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30	31	

JANUARY 2027				
M	T	W	R	F
				1
4A	5B	6A	7B	8A
11B	12A	13B	14A	15
18	19B	20A	21B	22A
25B	26A	27B	28A	29B

FEBRUARY 2027				
M	T	W	R	F
1A	2B	3A	4B	5A
8B	9A	10B	11A	12B
15	16A	17B	18A	19B
22A	23B	24A	25B	26A

MARCH 2027				
M	T	W	R	F
1B	2A	3B	4A	5B
8A	9B	10	11A	12B
15A	16B	17A	18B	19A
22	23	24	25	26
29	30B	31A		

APRIL 2027				
M	T	W	R	F
			1B	2A
5B	6A	7B	8A	9B
12A	13B	14A	15B	16A
19B	20A	21B	22A	23B
26A	27B	28A	29B	30A

MAY 2027				
M	T	W	R	F
3B	4A	5B	6A	7B
10A	11B	12A	13B	14A
17B	18A	19B	20A	21B
24A	25B	26A	27B	28A
31				

JUNE 2027				
M	T	W	R	F
	1B	2A	3B	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30		

August 2026
- 5-12 Teacher Planning Days
- 12 PK, K and 7-12 New to Bay: Soft Opening
- 13 First Day of School: Beginning of First Grading Period

September 2026
- 7 No School: Labor Day
- 21 Teacher Planning Day

October 2026
- 19 Start of Second Grading Period

November 2026
- 3 Teacher Planning Day
- 11 No School: Veteran's Day
- 20 Early Release Day
- 23-27 No School: Thanksgiving Break

December 2026
- 17 Early Release Day
- 18 Teacher Planning Day
- 21-31 No School: Winter Break

January 2027
- 1 No School: Winter Break
- 15 Teacher Planning Day
- 18 No School: MLK
- 19 Start of Third Grading Period

February 2027
- 15 No School: President's Day

March 2027
- 10 Teacher Planning Day
- 19 Early Release Day
- 22-26 No School: Spring Break
- 29 Teacher Planning Day
- 30 Start of Fourth Grading Period

April 2027

May 2027
- 31 No School: Memorial Day

June 2027
- 1-3 Early Release Day
- 3 Last Day of School: Early Release Day
- 4 Teacher Planning Day
- 18 Holiday

Days in Grading Period
1-45
2-46
3-42
4-47

Early Release Days
20-Nov
17-Dec
19-Mar
1-Jun
2-Jun
3-Jun

Teacher Planning Day · Beginning of Grading Period · Early Release Day · PK, K & 7-12 New to Bay
Holiday · First Day of School · Recess · Last Day of School

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REGISTRATION INFORMATION

APPLICATIONS

Current Mater Bay Academy students do not need to apply to the existing school as their seat is already reserved. All new applicants, including siblings, must apply on the school's website WWW.MaterBayK12.COM for the correct incoming school year. A random selection (lottery) process will be used to select applicants. Selected applicants will be notified via the email provided on the application. Failure to respond to an offer of acceptance by the specified timeframe voids the applicant's acceptance. Applications for the following school year are available by November 15th. Notification of acceptance begins on or approximately February 15th.

STUDENT ENROLLMENT/LOTTERY PROCESS

Students will be admitted to Mater Bay Academy regardless of race, gender, religion or ethnic origin and our admission and dismissal procedures will be equitable for all students. The following policies apply:

1. If the number of applicants is less than or equal to the number of available slots, each qualified applicant will be accepted and enrolled.
2. If the number of applicants meeting the established criteria of the charter exceeds the stated capacity of the school, or individual classroom or program, each child will be placed on a waitlist and a random lottery will take place as spots become available.
3. There will be at least one school administrator plus a member of the board and/or a representative from an independent auditing firm present at the Lottery.
4. After the Lottery is completed, students will be contacted in the rank order in which names were randomly drawn and established on the waiting list.
5. As openings arise throughout the year, the students on the waitlist will be selected from a random drawing based on the grade or program availability.
6. The parent has 48 hours (or time date listed on the acceptance letter) to accept/refuse the space and complete all required documentation for admission into program. If the parent is not able to do so, the space will go to the next child on the waiting list (lottery based). Applicant names for parents who do not respond within 48 hours or who do not accept the available space will be removed from the list and requested to reapply in the future if they would like to be considered at a later date.
7. If there is more space than applications, the school may accept all students after the registration period has ended. If the school continues to accept applications after the initial registration period, the school will:
   A) Conduct subsequent registration periods with advertised due dates and determine whether a lottery is necessary at the end of that period; or,
   B) Conduct a "rolling" registration weekly. At the end of each week, determine whether a lottery is necessary.
   1. If the school receives more applications that week than the available seats, the school will:
   a) conduct a lottery;
   b) Notify families if selected by lottery, and
   c) Place remaining applications on a waitlist in the rank order their numbers are randomly selected OR let the families know they will be included in the next lottery when spaces become available.
   2. If no lottery is necessary at the end of each week or as long as the school continues to accept applications for each school year.
   3. Repeat steps a and b above at the end of each week or as long as the school continues to accept applications for each school year.
8. The school may choose the option of maintaining a waiting list application pool rather than a rank ordered waiting list. When the school chooses this option, it will conduct the lottery for all available applications received to date and stop when all available spaces have been filled. Each time the school has available space; it will conduct a new lottery.
9. The school may implement limited enrollment periods to target specified student populations in accordance with Florida Statute, Section 1002.33(10)(e).

All students enrolled at Mater Bay Academy Charter School are students of Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

HEALTH SCREENINGS

Tuberculosis Clinical Screening – Each student shall have proof of a tuberculosis clinical screening and appropriate follow-up prior to initial enrollment in any grade in a Miami-Dade County Public School. This screening is to be administered at the time of the Student Health Exam and within twelve (12) months prior to initial enrollment in any grade in a Miami-Dade County Public School. If the screening indicates that a follow up skin test is needed, a student can be admitted but only with a health provider's statement that the student is free of communicable tuberculosis and can attend school.

Immunizations (Requirements for School Entry)

1. A complete Florida Certification of Immunization – Blue Card Form DH 680 - according to grade level.
2. State of Florida School Entry Health Exam – Yellow Form DH 3040 - no older than 12 months.
3. Tuberculosis Clinical Screening, PPD or Chest X-ray.

Note: Students that do not meet these requirements must be removed from school until all the requirements are met.

Medical Updates

It is essential to, and the parent's responsibility, to notify the school immediately of any medical updates or changes in your child's health. This includes new diagnoses, medication changes, or any conditions that may affect your child's well-being during the school day. Please ensure that any updates are accompanied by proper documentation from the attending physician.

Student-Athletes Health Forms

Instructions for Athletic Physical may be found in the Athletic section of this handbook.
Physicals are required to try out for any sport, along with enrollment of athletic insurance and completion of the four required NFFHS videos. School insurance is available to students during the first week of the school year.

The FHSAA/MDCPS Physical form is designated to be printed on both sides (do not print one sided).
Please review the packet and pay attention to what needs to be signed and notarized before submission.
Physical Examination MUST BE DATED AFTER JUNE 30th to be eligible for the incoming school year.

Parents: If your child suffers from asthma, epilepsy, seizures, or any other chronic medical condition, please note that in their Physical and advise the athletic trainer on the personalized Emergency Action Plan for your child.

All physicals must be completed with your PCP or at a clinic, the physician **MUST STAMP** where appropriate on the form. Without the physician's office stamp, the form **WILL NOT** be accepted.
Please **DO NOT** drop off completed physicals to the front office. They will only be accepted by the Athletic Director, Mr. Florin.

SCHOOL INSURANCE

The Student Protection Plan is designed as supplemental coverage for students for injuries received while participating in school sports, extra-curricular activities, before/mini/after care, while traveling to and from school or when involved in accidents while engaged in supervised activities on the school premises. Participation in this program is voluntary; however, all students taking part in athletic activities must carry the student accident insurance. The school insurance is available for purchase online at the school store. There is a $20 annual fee for this insurance.

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Middle/Upper School	
Regular School Day	**7:05AM – 1:30PM**
Early Release Day	**7:05AM – 11:00AM**

Mater Bay Academy is NOT responsible for students who arrive more than thirty (30) minutes prior to the start of school. Students may not be dropped off or left unattended outside the school building prior to the start of our school day. Students will remain supervised for 15 minutes after dismissal. Students who are not picked up 15 minutes after dismissal time will be sent to the Aftercare Program and issued a fee of **$10.00 per day**.

Early Release Dates

November 20*
December 17*
March 19*
June 1*, 2*, & 3*
*No After Care available

Teacher Planning Days

August 6-12
September 21
November 3
December 18
January 15
March 10 & 29
June 4

BLOCK SCHEDULE

Mater Bay Academy Middle/Upper operates on an alternate A/B block schedule. Students are given five (5) minutes to travel from one class to the next.
"A" Days are periods 1, 3, 5, 7 & "B" Days are periods 2, 4, 6, 8

7:05 a.m.	Students must be seated and ready for class.
7:05 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.	Block I (Period 1/Period 2)
8:35 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Block II (Period 3/Period 4)
10:05 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	Block III (Period 5/Period 6)
11:35 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Includes Lunch	Block IV (Period 7/Period 8)
A Lunch	11:50 a.m. – 12:20 p.m.
B Lunch	12:25 p.m. – 12:55 p.m.
C Lunch	1:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Early Release Bell Schedule

7:05 a.m. – 8:05 a.m.	Block I (Period 1 / Period 2)
8:10 a.m. – 9:05 a.m.	Block II (Period 3 / Period 4)
9:10 a.m. – 10:05 a.m.	Block III (Period 5 / Period 6)
10:10 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	Block IV (Period 7 / Period 8)

BEFORE AND AFTER-CARE SERVICES

Mater Bay Academy has established Before and After School Care Services to be available on campus for students in the elementary and middle school. It is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to register the child and pay for such services at their discretion. Please contact the school office for detailed information on how to register for the Before and After School Care Program at our school. Any student enrolled in Before and/or After Care MUST purchase student school insurance. This program is offered for Elementary and Middle School students only. Please refer to the Before and After Care handbook for additional information.

Sibling Care	1:30 pm – 3:30 pm
After Care	1:30 pm – 6:00 pm (Middle School – Grades 6-8) No After Care is available for High School Students

Due to the high demand and safety of our students, space for all Before and After Care Services is limited. Once the enrollment has reached capacity, the program will close its enrollment.

ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL

ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

- All vehicles must enter the school from the south driveway and drive to the designated drop-off area.
- Under no circumstances will parents be allowed to park or leave their vehicles unattended in the drop-off areas.
- Students may not exit vehicles or be dropped off from the entrance lane of the school driveway or from 87th Avenue.
- Parents may not park or drop students off on the north side, back driveway of the campus.
- During arrival, the internal campus street is a one-way street, entering campus at the south gate and exiting at the north gate.

DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

- All vehicles are to enter the school from the south driveway. All vehicles must enter the property through the south gate and must exit through the north gate once you have picked up your child.
- Students will be dismissed by their teacher in the designated dismissal area.
- Parents are discouraged from picking up students enrolled in the After Care Program during regular dismissal times.
- Under no circumstances will parents be allowed to park or leave their vehicles unattended in the dismissal (pick-up) areas. No vehicle will be allowed to park in the grass area to wait for another dismissal. If a parent needs to do an additional pick-up for another dismissal time, the vehicle needs to exit the property and re-enter through the south entrance for the following dismissal time and procedures.
- During dismissal, the internal campus street is a one-way street, entering campus at the south gate and exiting at the north gate.

We ask parents to refrain from holding parent conferences during dismissal as this does not allow the teacher to provide adequate supervision to the students they are responsible for dismissing.

The following acts are prohibited and may jeopardize student safety and the continuance of our Charter School contract:

- Dropping students off along 87th Avenue, or entrance driveway
- Blocking the Entrance/Exit of any driveway
- Vehicles may not stop or stand at any time on 87th Avenue to pick up or drop off
- Vehicles may not stack up on 87th Avenue at any time to wait for arrival/dismissal to begin
- Drop Off and Pick Up may only be via vehicle

In addition to the issuance of citations from local law enforcement, Mater Bay Academy will implement the following consequences for violation of these rules:

1. Documented Warning
2. Incident Report/Administrative Meeting

UNAUTHORIZED VEHICLES/DISMISSAL

Mater Bay Academy prioritizes the safety and well-being of all students and, as such, will not release students to Uber, Lyft, or similar ride-share drivers. Students will only be released to parents, legal guardians, or individuals in vehicles displaying the school-issued car decals. Releasing students to unauthorized persons poses a significant and safety concern; therefore, it will not be permitted under any circumstance. We appreciate your cooperation in helping us maintain a secure environment for all students.

The above procedures may change based on the campus needs and adjustments will be made as needed to best keep the safety of our students.

SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

CONTACT INFORMATION

It is critical that the school office be notified of any change of address and/or telephone number, custody agreements or changes to the household **immediately**. During the opening of schools, official documents will be shared with parents via the school website. All forms sent home will need to be returned to the school. Please ensure that the email address on file is up to date and that any blocks or filters are removed to allow for communication from the school. Failure to return the required forms by the specified deadline will be deemed acknowledgment and acceptance by the parent/guardian of the school's policies, procedures, and requirements as set forth by the school.

Mater Bay Academy will communicate news and events via the school's official website, social media pages and School Messenger:
Website: www.MaterBayK12.com
Instagram: @materbayacademy
Facebook: Mater Bay Academy

Private communication chats, social media pages and/or other communications not affiliated to the school are not official sources of communication and are not monitored by school officials or any other personnel. Please obtain accurate information from official school accounts only.

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Parents, guardians and students are protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Acts and the Florida Statutes from individuals' access to information in student's educational records and provide the right to challenge the accuracy of these records. These laws provide that without the prior consent of the parent, guardian, or eligible student, a student's records may not be released, except in accordance with the provisions listed in the above-cited law. The laws provide certain exceptions to the prior consent requirement to the release of student records, which include, but are not limited to, school officials with a legitimate educational interest and lawfully issued subpoenas and court orders.

PARENT TO SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

A prime factor in our operation is the importance we place upon communication between home and school. The lines of communication must be always kept open so that we may be properly tuned into your child's needs.

Please notify us immediately if:
1. Your child has developed a communicable disease.
2. You will be out of town.
3. Your telephone number (home or work) has changed.
4. You wish to change or add to the emergency contact numbers we are to use.
5. **IF THERE IS ANY CHANGE IN TRANSPORTATION.** We will not allow a child to deviate from their regular departure routine without written or verbal verification. If there is a change in the person who is picking up your child, we require the name of that person in writing.

PARENT/TEACHER COMMUNICATION

Conferences with individual teachers must be arranged by contacting the teacher directly.
Please make appointments for conferences before or after school hours. Teachers may also be available during their planning time; however, you must make an appointment during their allotted time.
PLEASE DO NOT ENGAGE IN PARENT CONFERENCES DURING ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL OF STUDENTS. Teachers will have up to 48 business hours to return your call or reply to your email.

Always attempt to resolve issues/conflicts with your child's teacher first. If you are unable to resolve issues or conflicts with your child's teacher, you may contact the main office to schedule an appointment with the administration.

PARENT PORTAL

Parents/guardians of all Miami-Dade County Public Schools students, including employees, have access to the Parent Portal. In order to access the information in the portal, you must first establish a parent user account. At this time, you can see and update personal information, see your child's information - including grades and attendance. Visit www.dadeschools.net for further details and instructions.

PARENT VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Mater Bay Academy highly encourages all parents/guardians to participate in volunteer opportunities throughout the academic year. Parent involvement helps strengthen the school community and enriches the educational experience for all students.

In accordance with Miami-Dade County Public Schools policies, all parents wishing to volunteer must complete the School Volunteer Registration Screening and be cleared before participating in any volunteer activities. This includes clearance for events such as field days, fundraising activities, and school assemblies or sponsored school event/activity. For safety reasons, children not enrolled at Mater Bay Academy are not permitted on campus during school hours or on school-sponsored events while parents are an assigned volunteer.

Parents who are interested in volunteering are encouraged to reach out directly to their child's teacher(s) to coordinate available opportunities. Volunteer spots will be assigned through a random selection process, with priority given to parents who have not yet participated in an event during the current school year.
Parents may volunteer in various ways, here are a few examples:

- Classroom teacher assistance (decorating or event)
- Guest speaker
- Attend Parent Teacher Organization meetings
- Assist with school events
- Donate items

Any parent/guardian who would like to volunteer in the classroom must coordinate with the classroom teacher **at least one week prior** to volunteering. All volunteers must be cleared. In addition, parents/visitors must sign in at the main office and obtain a visitor's pass. To ensure the safety of all of our students, **NO PARENTS/VISITORS WILL BE ALLOWED BEYOND THE MAIN OFFICE WITHOUT A VISITOR'S PASS. NO EXCEPTIONS! ALL VISITORS MUST BE CLEARED AND ACCOMPANIED BY A SCHOOL EMPLOYEE AT ALL TIMES!**

A student's family plays an extremely important part in his/her education. The following are areas in which parents are asked to offer support and/or assistance:

- Provide a loving, nurturing home environment which motivates the child to succeed in school
- Instill a respect for others
- Ensure punctual and regular attendance
- Become familiar with school policies and procedures
- Attend parent/guardian meetings at Mater Bay Academy
- Provide an environment conducive to learning
- Support the school's Home Learning Policies
- Stress the importance of reading on a daily basis
- Communicate with your child's teachers on a regular basis

All volunteer hours must be submitted by March 30th.
We look forward to working together to create and foster a supportive and engaged school community!

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

Although our school is tuition-free and provides a high-quality education at no cost, there are certain optional activities and programs that may require a fee. These can include field trips, extracurricular clubs, athletics, special events, and other enrichment opportunities. Participation in these activities is voluntary, and any associated costs will be communicated in advance.

Fees may include but shall not be limited to lost books, lunch accounts, before/after care fee, class fees and all fees which may accrue in the normal course of the school year. All financial obligations incurred, i.e., school/class fees, lunch fees, textbooks loss or damage, including electronic devices (iPad's, laptops, etc.), club activities, club fees, must be paid on the school's website by the deadline provided. Failure to make payment will result in the loss and/or suspension of extracurricular activity privileges.

All payments made to Mater Bay Academy are final. There are no refunds, no exchanges and no transfers.

CLASS FEES

Some classes require a class fee. A list of the fees associated with each class will be available in the students' syllabus at the beginning of the school year. Failure to pay outstanding fees may result in the loss and/or suspension of extracurricular activity privileges.

FEES MAY APPLY TO BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO: Field Trips, Athletics, Clubs, Honor Societies, Competitions, etc.

SCHOOL LUNCH

Students are required to bring their lunch in the morning or purchase lunch from the cafeteria. Lunch costs **$4.00**. Students may qualify for free or for reduced-price meals. Guidelines and free/reduced lunch applications will be disseminated at the beginning of each school year. All the information received is confidential. The reduced price is **.40 cents** for lunch. Additional school lunches will be charged at a cost of $5.00 per meal. If a student participates in the free or reduced lunch program and chooses to purchase an additional lunch, he/she will be charged $5.00 for any additional lunch purchased. Parents may not drop off lunch for their child during school hours. Students who do not bring lunch and/or lunch money will be provided with a school lunch and will be required to pay the money owed on the following day. After 3 days of non-payment, students will be provided with an alternate lunch option. **It is the parent's responsibility to monitor the student's lunch account and make sure that the student has sufficient lunch money. All lunch payments must be made via School Wallets from on the school's website. No cash or checks will be accepted for lunch payments.**

Additionally, all students must have their school ID to purchase lunch. One Free School Issued Student ID will be provided to each student at the beginning of the school year. All replacement ID's will have a $5.00 replacement fee.

All late charges, fees and/or monies owed to the school or any school sponsored program, must be paid by the last day of the school year, or in the event of a withdrawal. Financial obligations may include but are not limited to: outstanding lunch balances, class fees, athletic fees, etc.

Financial obligation notices will be sent as reminders throughout the school year. Outstanding balances may affect and prevent participation in extra-curricular activities or events.

During senior year, cap and gowns for graduation will not be released until all financial obligations have been met.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Mater Bay Academy will abide by the MDCPS Student Attendance Reporting Procedures. There are probably no factors more important to a student's progress in school than regular and punctual attendance. MDCPS and Mater Bay's vision whereby each student engages in a rigorous course of study which prepares him/her for a myriad of successful post-secondary options. Students are expected to:

- Be present at school each and every day
- Attend class as scheduled and be prepared
- Arrive at school on time and be seated in class by the ringing of the bell
- Demonstrate appropriate behavior and a readiness to learn
- Students leaving before 9:05 a.m. or arriving after 11:30 a.m. will be considered absent.
- MDCPS requires a minimum of 2 hours present in school to obtain the day attendance.

Attendance Defined

A. School Attendance – Students are to be counted in attendance only if they are actually present or engaged in a school-approved educational activity which constitutes a part of the instructional program.
B. Class Attendance – Students are to be counted in attendance if they are physically present in class or have been excused by the teacher on a class-related assignment or have been requested by a member of the school support staff for an approved school activity.
C. Tardiness – It is a reasonable expectation that for a learning activity to exist, each student must arrive to class on time (punctually). Accumulated unexcused tardies will be counted towards the threshold for initiating attendance review.
D. Early Sign-outs – The early release of students causes disruption to the academic performance of all students and may create safety and security concerns. No students shall be released within the final 30 minutes of the school day.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

All absences will be marked unexcused until the student presents an excusable note, within 72 hours of an absence, submitted to their homeroom teacher (see make-up assignments section for detailed information on completing missed assignment when an absence is excused). School Board Rule 6Gx13-5A-1.041, Student Attendance - Specific responsibilities define Excused School Absence as:

- Student Illness
  Students missing 5 or more consecutive days of school due to illness or injury must provide a written statement from a health care provider. The written statement must include all days the student has been absent from school.
- Medical Appointment (Doctor's note showing date and time of appointment)
- Death in the immediate family
- Observance of a religious holiday or service when it is mandated for all members of a faith that such a holiday or service be observed and recognized by Miami-Dade County Public Schools
- Official summons to appear in court
- School sponsored event or educational enrichment activity
- Outdoor Suspensions
- Other individual student absences beyond the control of the parent/guardian or student as determined and approved by the principal or the principal's designee. The principal shall require documentation related to the condition.
- Family vacations will **NOT** be excused
- Non-school sponsored athletic/extra-curricular events will **NOT** be excused.
- Transportation issues and parent and/or sibling illness will **NOT** be excused.

Original documentation must be submitted for all attendance-related absences, including but not limited to doctor's notes, court notices, and other official records. Photocopies, scanned copies, screenshots, or altered documents will not be accepted. Failure to provide original and proper documentation may result in the absence not being excused.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Any absence that does not fall into one of the above excused absence categories is to be considered unexcused. Any student who has been absent from school will be marked as an unexcused absence until he/she submits written documentation as specified above. Failure to provide the required documentation within three (3) days upon the return to school will result in an unexcused absence. Unexcused absences do not require the teacher to provide makeup work for the student. See Absence Form (Excuse Form) section for details on how to excuse an absence. The student is responsible for turning in the absence form and documentation.

Unexcused absences include:

- Absences due to vacations, personal services, local and non-local non-school events, programs, or sporting activities.
- Absences due to older students providing day care services for siblings
- Absences due to illnesses of others
- Absences due to non-compliance with immunization requirements (unless lawfully exempted)

Mater Bay Academy Attendance Review Committee (ARC) will schedule a parent meeting for any student who accumulates 10 or more unexcused absences. A *Student Case Management Referral Form* will be issued to document actions taken to prevent continued absences. Documentation will be filed in the student's folder.

Students who have 10 or more total absences (whether excused or unexcused) will be required to provide healthcare provider documentation to have absences excused and to complete any make-up work.
In addition, Mater Bay Academy follows Miami Dade County Public Schools truancy procedures.

EARLY DISMISSAL

The early release of students causes disruption to the academic performance of all students and may create safety and security concerns. No students shall be released within the final 30 minutes of the school day. Students who are dismissed early (on a regular school day) must be signed-out by a parent or guardian in the main office. Students will not be released to people whose names do not appear on the emergency contact card kept on file in the main office. A photo ID must be shown to release a student from the premises.
In case of an emergency, if a person not listed on the emergency contact card must pick up a student, the parent must email a signed statement with a copy of their driver's license allowing that person to pick up their child on that specific day. This email can be sent to the attendance clerk in the main office. It is the parent's responsibility to come to the main office and add the person to the emergency contact card for subsequent days.

- Parent/guardian must come to the reception area to request a student for early dismissal.
- Parent/guardian must present picture identification which must be consistent with the information on the Emergency Contact card; after a student's 5th early dismissal, a doctor's note will be required for make-up work to be provided.
- **NO student will be released after 1:00pm**
- Early dismissal will count as absences and will affect the student's attendance record for the class missed.
- A parent/guardian must come in person to add or delete names to the Emergency Contact Card.
- No one under the age of 21 may sign-out any students.

During lunch times, parents must wait until lunch is over to sign-out a student. Students will not be called from the lunchroom to dismiss. Students will only be dismissed through the main office; they may not be contacted directly by a parent for dismissal. **Students will not be dismissed early on any early release day (refer to school calendar for dates). Students will not be dismissed during their scheduled lunch time for safety reasons. Students will not be dismissed 30 minutes prior to dismissal time. NO EXCEPTIONS.**

TARDINESS/LOCKOUT PROCEDURES AND POLICY

Middle and Upper School students arriving after 7:05am will be locked out of their first period of the day and sent to the cafeteria. This will be considered an unexcused absence from that period.

- According to the MDCPS Attendance Policy, there are no excused tardies. Tardies are counted cumulatively. Excessive tardies will be monitored daily and result in the following:
    - **Every 5 tardies:** Results in lunch detention per tardy.
    - **10 tardies:** Results in a referral and parent conference.

- **Tardies 11–19:** Each tardy results in in-school suspension (ISS) and not allowed to participate in extra-curricular activities.
- **20 tardies:** Results in a second referral, ISS per tardy, and parent conference with referral to the state.
- **Over 20 tardies:** Mater Bay Academy reserves the right to assign additional disciplinary measures at its discretion.
- **Failure to attend detention may result in outdoor suspension.**

Attendance Review Committee

The Attendance Review Committee (ARC) is comprised of a minimum of a student services representative and an administrator designee and will provide guidance and support to students with significant absences. They are expected to:

- Provide early intervention by conveying when students reach an accumulation of five (5) unexcused absences in a semester or ten (10) unexcused absences in an annual course or ten (10) tardies in a semester course or twenty (20) tardies in an annual course.
- Convene a minimum of two (2) times per year.
- Consider all the extenuating circumstances surrounding student absences. The ARC is charged with the responsibility of prescribing activities designed to migrate the loss of instructional time and has the authority to recommend the following:
  - Issuing of semester or final grades
  - Temporary withholding of semester or final grades. The following are among possible options:
    - Make-Up assignments
    - Attendance probation for the following grading period(s)
    - Completion of a school service project
  - Permanent withholding of semester or final grades or credit.
- Review attendance history of student(s) exhibiting patterns of excused and/or unexcused absences and provide appropriate referrals and counseling support.

MAKE-UP ASSIGNMENTS

Students granted an **excused absence** have the right to make up all course work within 72 hours upon their return to school. After successful completion of all make-up assignments, grades will be updated.
Make-Up work turned in after 72 hours will not be graded. No late work will be accepted after the 72- hour window. It should be noted that failure to make-up assignments will result in lower assessment of the student's academic and/or effort grade.

All attendance policies can also be found with MDCPS School Board Rule 6Gx13-5A-1.041, Student Attendance—Specific responsibilities.

ABSENCE FORM (EXCUSE FORM)

All absence excuses must be submitted with the school's absence form. The form must be sent with the student and submitted to their homeroom teacher (Period 1 or 2). The form may be found on the school's website under the Attendance Policy tab. The absence form must be completed to process any absences from school. The form will be used to submit any parent notes.

If a doctor's note is needed, please print the form and attach the Doctor's note to the form. Keep note that any student who has obtained 10 absences (excused or unexcused), must turn in this form with medical documentation.
Please be aware that this DOES NOT guarantee an excused absence.

MANDATORY SCHOOL UNIFORM

UNIFORM POLICY

Our school has a mandatory uniform policy and school uniforms must be worn daily. All students are required to wear the approved school uniform each day as part of our commitment to maintaining a focused, respectful, and safe learning environment. Uniform guidelines must be followed consistently, and details regarding approved attire is provided by the school below.

For dress down events, the school will notify parents and students of the event guidelines through email and by posting the information on the school's website. School Spirit Shirts will be on sale in the school's Spirit Store during store hours. Please purchase at least one Spirit Shirt since they will be required for Field Trips, Field Days and special events. Students may also wear their Spirit Shirts and jeans on designated "Jean Days" for an additional fee. Jeans must be of solid blue color and may not have any rips, patches, or any color other than blue.

SCHOOL LOGO IS TRADEMARKED AND TAMPERING WITH THE LOGO IS A VIOLATION OF COPYRIGHTS.
ALL LOGOS MUST BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICIAL SCHOOL UNIFORM STORE.

Middle School Uniform		Upper School Uniform
Girls		**Girls**
Grey Short Sleeve Polo or Dri-Fit with School Logo		White Short or Long Sleeve Polo or Dri-Fit with School Logo
Grey Long Sleeve Polo or Dri-Fit with School Logo		Academy Polo's with Academy Logo (Purchased only at the Ray Campus Store)
Khaki or Navy-Blue Pants with School Logo *NO Shorts*		Khaki or Navy-Blue Pants with School Logo *NO Shorts*
Black or Ribbon Belt – Mandatory		Black or Ribbon Belt – Mandatory
All Black Sneakers (No Logos) or Black Converse or "Nike-Dunks-Panda's" Sneakers with Laces		All Black Sneakers (No Logos) or Black Converse or "Nike-Dunks-Panda's" Sneakers with Laces
Solid White or Black Socks (solid color - no designs)		Solid White or Black Socks (solid color - no designs)
Solid Navy-Blue Sweater or Cardigan (No Hoodie)		**Solid** Navy-Blue Sweater or Cardigan (No Hoodie)
School-store purchased sweatshirt (Grey)		School-store purchased sweatshirt (White)
		High School Bio-Medical students may wear Uniform Store purchased Scrubs with School Logo
Boys		**Boys**
Grey Short Sleeve Polo or Dri-Fit with School Logo		White Short Sleeve Polo or Dri-Fit with School Logo
Grey Long Sleeve Polo or Dri-Fit with School Logo		White Long Sleeve Polo or Dri-Fit with School Logo
Khaki or Navy-Blue Pants *NO Shorts*		Khaki or Navy-Blue Pants *NO Shorts*
Black Belt (Shirt must be tucked)		Black Belt (Shirt must be tucked)
All Black Sneakers (No Logos) or Black Converse Sneakers with Laces		All Black Sneakers (No Logos) or Black Converse Sneakers with Laces
White or Black Socks (solid color - no designs)		White or Black Socks (solid color - no designs)
Solid Navy-Blue Sweater or Cardigan **(No Hoodie)**		**Solid** Navy-Blue Sweater or Cardigan **(No Hoodie)**
School-store purchased sweatshirt (Grey)		School-store purchased sweatshirt (White)
		High School Bio-Medical students may wear Uniform Store purchased Scrubs with School Logo
PE Uniforms can be purchased from the school spirit store on campus.		

Mater Bay Academy reserves the right to interpret these guidelines and/or make changes during the school year.

All Students

1. Students may not wear cargo pants with pockets, unusual tailoring and/or labels are not permitted and pants may not be manufactured from jean material and must fit the student correctly. *Pants that are too big or too tight for the student are not acceptable and will be deemed in violation of the uniform code. Skinny style pants are not permitted.*
2. Belts must be worn at all times; belts must be black and fastened securely at waist level. *Loose or low pants will not be tolerated. Ribbon belts sold at the school uniform store may also be used.*
3. All students must have their shirts always tucked correctly into pants and secured in place with the belt.
4. During cooler weather, a plain white or gray long-sleeved shirt may be worn underneath polo shirts. Additionally, school approved sweaters may be worn. (*Sweaters must be solid navy blue* ***ONLY****. Sweaters may be purchased at the uniform store school campus store ONLY.*)
5. Shoes must be closed solid black with matching laces and always fastened tightly. No other colors or stripes/logos may be on the shoes. Students can wear black converse or Nike "Dunks-Panda's).
6. Jewelry is limited to one watch, one ring and one small chain. Chains must be worn inside shirts. Facial piercings are not part of the school uniform.
7. All uniforms must be clean and pressed at all times; good grooming of hair, skin and fingernails is expected at all times.
8. Hair may not be dyed with unnatural colors, worn unusually or maintained in unacceptable condition. Male students: Hair length must not exceed student's neckline nor cover their ears. *No Dreadlocks, No "Mohawks", "Frohawks" or designs of any kinds are permitted.* **The administration will send home any student whose hair is unacceptable in condition or length.**
9. All facial hair must be properly groomed and kept neatly. It is up to the Administration's discretion what is deemed appropriate.
10. All headgear (hats, scarves, bandanas) is forbidden on school property.
11. No buttons, tags or labels may be worn on the school uniform, unless school approved.
12. No visible body piercing or tattoos are allowed. No facial piercings or any piercing covered with band-aids.

Boys Uniform

In addition to the above, boys may **NOT:**

- Wear earrings (real or clip-on).
- Wear any additional jewelry or clothing except as specified above.

Girls Uniform

In addition to the above, girls may **NOT:**

- Wear make-up other than clear lip gloss and light powder.
- Wear more than one pair of earrings. Earrings must be plain stud type or small hoops (total size must be smaller than a dime).
- Hair should be maintained with clips, rubber bands or soft hair bands only (see item 8).

Students should have enough uniform tops and bottoms that laundry issues should not interfere with the uniform policy. **Any student not wearing a complete school uniform or is in violation of any of the above-mentioned infractions, will be issued a warning.** If a parent does not bring the uniform, disciplinary consequences will be issued to the student. A referral will be issued for continued violations of the uniform policy. After three referrals of any kind, the student may be placed on a waiting list for the following school year. Continued violation of our uniform policy will be addressed with an administration meeting.

Uniforms must be worn from the **first day of school to the last day of school.**

All school polos and pants must be purchased at the school uniform store – All Uniform Wear

Official School Uniform Store Location

ALL UNIFORM WEAR
18705 SOUTH DIXIE HWY
CUTLER BAY, FL 33157

RAYS CAMPUS STORE
(Spirit Gear Only) On-Campus
See school calendar on website
for available dates & times.

GRADING AND REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS

Instructional staff uses evaluative devices and techniques as needed to report individual achievement in relation to school goals, acceptance norms and student potential. Student grades, unsatisfactory work notices, parent reports on state assessments and/or standardized testing, parent conferences, and adult/student conferences should serve as the primary means of communicating student progress and achievement of the standards for promotion.

A student's academic grade reflects the teacher's most objective assessment of the student's academic achievement. Students have the right to receive a conduct and an effort grade consistent with their overall behavior and effort.

Specific guidelines for grading student performance and for reporting on student progress are provided below and detailed in the *Student Progression Plan.* To view the plan, go to *http://ehandbooks.dadeschools.net/policies/93/index.asp*

Academic Grades: Academic grades are to reflect the student's academic progress. The grade must provide for both students and parents a clear indication of each student's academic performance as compared with norms that would be appropriate for the grade or subject. The academic grades of "A," "B," "C," "D," or "F," are not related to the student's effort and conduct grades. Grades in all subjects are to be based on the student's degree of mastery of the instructional objectives and competencies for the subject. The determination of the specific grade a student receives must be based on the teacher's best judgment after careful consideration of all aspects of each student's performance during a grading period.

Grading Scale				
	Middle & High School	**NUMERICAL VALUE**	**VERBAL INTERPRETATION**	**GRADE POINT VALUE**
	A	90-100%	Outstanding progress	**3.50 and above**
	B	80-89%	Above average progress	**2.50 – 3.49**
	C	70-79%	Average Progress	**1.50 – 2.49**
	D	60-69%	Lowest acceptable progress	**1.00 – 1.49**
	F	0-59%	Failure	**0.99 and below**

Effort Grades: Effort grades are utilized to convey both to students and their parent(s)/guardian(s) the teacher's evaluation of a student's effort as related to the instructional program. These grades are independent of academic and conduct grades. In assigning an effort grade, the teacher must consider the student's potential, study habits and attitude. Three numerical grades are used to reflect effort in Grades 6-12:

- An effort grade of **"1"** indicates outstanding effort on the part of the student. The student will, when necessary, complete a task again to improve the results. The student consistently attends to assigned tasks until completed and generally exerts maximum effort on all tasks. The student consistently works to the best of his/her ability.
- An effort grade of **"2"** indicates satisfactory effort on the part of the student. All work is approached with an appropriate degree of seriousness. The student usually finishes assignments on time and usually stays on task. The student usually works at a level commensurate with his/her ability.
- An effort grade of **"3"** reflects insufficient effort on the part of the student. Little attention is paid to completing assignments well and/or on time or to completing them in a manner commensurate with the student's ability.

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

Progress Reports: Individual Progress Reports are issued every four-five weeks and are a progress report of each child on an individual basis. Please study your child's progress with him/her. Please feel free to consult your child's teacher regarding his/her school progress. Report cards are issued at the end of every 9-weeks, on the same days as identified in the Miami-Dade County Public School Calendar.

No Credit (NC): Any student who accumulates 10 or more hours of unexcused absences in an annual course and 5 or more hours in a semester course may be subject to the withholding of credit regardless of the student's academic grade. The school runs on a block schedule which means that students attend classes for 1 ½ hours at a time; therefore, two (2) absences count as three (3) hours. This will also apply to any student who accumulates ten (10) or more tardies in a semester course or twenty (20) or more tardies in an annual course.

All Report Cards and Progress Reports will only be available digitally through the MDCPS student/parent portal. No hard copy will be sent home with students.

HOME LEARNING ASSIGNMENTS

Home Learning Assignments are a very important part of learning since they reinforce concepts that have been learned. It is Mater Bay Academy's policy to assign homework **EVERY** night. This keeps the academic flow and a means of involving parents aligned with our curriculum goals. All students are **encouraged** to use an agenda to keep track of their assignments. Agenda may be a digital or hard copy option.

To improve the effects of Home Learning Assignments:

- Provide your child with a quiet place which is conducive to studying and learning.
- Show an interest in your child's home learning assignments by providing assistance and reviewing completed work. Check your child's agenda daily for home learning assignments and teacher communication.
- Do not complete any part of the home learning assignments for your child. If your child is having difficulty with their assignment, please notify the teacher.
- Read with or to your children daily.

Student responsibilities for completing Home Learning activities:

1. Students are responsible for recording and completing all Home Learning Assignments independently. Parents may provide assistance, but students must complete the work on their own.
2. Home Learning Assignments should be done in a quiet place with good lighting and minimal disturbances.
3. If there is a problem in understanding how to complete Home Learning Assignments, students are to do the very best job possible. If a student does not understand the assignment(s), they are encouraged to bring it in the next day and ask the teacher for assistance. In this case, the homework should be completed that evening along with the regular Home Learning Assignments to the best of their ability.
4. A daily calendar can be used to keep track of Home Learning assignments for each night.
5. If a student is having difficulty in managing their time for homework, the student must ask the teacher for assistance with homework time management.

SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Mater Bay Academy follows the standards and objectives stated by the Florida Department of Education. It encompasses the core subject areas of Reading, Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies as well as elective courses to provide students with a well-rounded education. For specific curriculum, please visit the school's website.

CO-CURRICULAR (ELECTIVES)

Mater Bay Academy offers a vast range of elective courses to spark interest in students. These courses are offered by grade level and students along with parent input will have the opportunity to explore options available to them. Some of these courses include but are not limited to:

- Performing Arts (Music, Dance, Theatre)
- Physical Education and Athletics (Competitive)
- Digital Communications
- Fine Arts (Drawing, Painting, Ceramics)

- Television Production and Photography
- Experiential Learning (Study Abroad Programs for qualifying upper grade students)
- Student Leadership Opportunities
- Student Clubs
- Honor Societies

COLĒGIA (STUDENT PORTAL)

Colegia is a secure, cloud-based educational platform designed to enhance digital learning and communication within Academica-managed schools. It serves as a centralized hub where students can access all their educational resources, including virtual classrooms, email, school announcements, and academic tools. Students at Academica schools are required to log into Colegia daily to access their textbooks and digital platforms, check assignments, communicate with teachers, and access important school updates. The platform ensures a safe online learning environment and streamlines student engagement by integrating various academic applications in one place. Proper and consistent use of Colegia is essential for staying informed, organized, and connected within the school community.

All students must maintain an active Colegia account which includes access to student provided email and links to a variety of educational tools and programs.

TEXTBOOKS

Students will be issued digital textbooks at the beginning of each school year. Students will access all their curriculum via digital license purchased by the school. In order to access the curriculum all students must be able to use the school's iPads. If an iPad is lost, the student must immediately inform teachers.

SUPPLIES

Students are expected to come to school daily prepared with all required materials, which include supplies listed on the class syllabi, homework, lunch money or lunch from home and any other items requested by the teacher. In addition, each student is **REQUIRED** to purchase and daily bring a set of headphones for computer lab usage.

Each Middle and High school student is provided an iPad through our VILS program. This iPad must be in school daily and fully charged daily. Not having the iPad in school daily will impact the students' academic performance.

To encourage student accountability, school supplies, iPads, PE uniforms, outside food, and extracurricular supplies or uniforms cannot be dropped off for students at the main office. Front office staff have been instructed to not interrupt classroom instruction to deliver forgotten items. In addition, the school is not responsible for any item that is left unattended in the main office.

STUDENT ASSESSMENTS

Students will be assessed throughout the school year through classroom, district, state and national assessments. Refer to the Miami-Dade County Public School's website for updates on district and state test dates. Mater Bay will send an annual email with specific test dates well in advance. Some of the assessments that students may take include: FAST, EOC, AP, FSSA (Science), SAT, PSAT, and/or Industry Certification Exams.

Assessments play a vital role in each student's education, so it is important that students are present on all scheduled testing days. **We kindly ask for doctors' appointments to be scheduled outside of testing dates, whenever possible.**

SUMMER ASSIGNMENTS

Students are required to complete and submit posted summer assignments. Our school website will have detailed information on the summer assignments required for each grade level. Students will be responsible for submitting the assignments to their teacher during the first week of the incoming school year. All assignments will be part of the class grade and will impact the students overall academic grade negatively if assignment is not submitted on time.

PROMOTION AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

MIDDLE GRADES REQUIREMENTS (GRADES 6-8)

Required Courses for Students in Middle Grades: The required program of study for middle grades students in MDCPS reflects State and District requirements, as contained in the MDCPS District Pacing Guides. This program of study includes the required courses in Mathematics, English/language arts/ESOL, Social Sciences, Science, Physical Education, and career and education planning, as well as a range of exploratory/elective areas, including but not limited to music, art, theatre, dance, foreign language, and career and technical education.

MIDDLE GRADES PROMOTION REQUIRMENTS

- 3 English/Language Arts courses
- 3 Mathematics courses
- 3 Science courses
- 3 Social Studies courses
- 3 Physical Education courses

UPPER SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS (GRADES 9-12)

Graduation requirements are listed per Florida Statutes § 1003.4282, Requirements for a standard high school diploma. In addition to meeting the requisite courses/credits and statewide, standardized assessments for graduation, students must earn a cumulative GPA of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale to graduate. Note: that all students must participate in Florida EOCs if they are enrolled in the corresponding courses (Algebra 1, Biology, Civics, Geometry, and US History), and the results must constitute 30% of the student's final course grade. Students who did not take a required Florida EOC when enrolled and received a "NG" instead of a final grade in the course, must take the assessment and have the EOC score included to receive a grade in the course.

UPPER SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

All students are required to complete and earn 32 Credits prior to graduation.

- 4 English/Language Arts courses
- 4 Mathematics courses
- 4 Science courses
- 4 Social Studies courses
- 4 Academy courses
- 1 Fine/Performing Arts
- 1 Personal Fitness course
- 9 Elective credits
- 1 Online Dual-Enrollment course (Freshmen Experience/College Success)

ACADEMY COMPLETION (Grades 9-12)

As part of the Academy Program at Mater Bay Academy, students are expected to complete a total of four years of specific coursework to earn the prestigious Academy Stole, which is awarded during their senior graduation ceremony. However, for students who have joined Mater Bay in 10th or 11th grade, some of these required courses may not have been completed yet.

To ensure all students meet the criteria for earning the Academy Stole, we are offering an opportunity to make up the missing coursework. Students may either take the remaining courses or choose to opt out if they prefer not to pursue the full Academy Program.

We want to ensure that each student has the opportunity to succeed and meet their goals. Please discuss this matter with your child to determine the best course of action. For further clarification, please contact the Academic Advisor for your grade level.

CAMBRIDGE PROGRAM

ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP) COURSES

Through the Advanced Placement (AP) College board courses and exams, a student can earn college credit, stand out in the admission process, and learn from some of the most skilled, dedicated, and inspiring teachers Advanced Placement courses are offered to Upper School students meeting the requirements set forth by the College Board. Some of the requirements include cumulative academic GPA, standardized test scores and teacher recommendations. These classes are good predictors for college readiness. Scoring well on the end-of-course AP exam is a requirement for the student to be eligible to receive college credit.

SCHOLARS PROGRAM: RAYS GRADUATE PROGRAM AND DUAL ENROLLMENT

The Program is designed to offer highly motivated and diligent students at Mater Bay Academy the opportunity to graduate with their High School Diploma and an Associate of Arts degree from an accredited college. Students earn the AA degree by taking a combination of Advanced Placement courses and Dual Enrollment courses throughout their high school years. The Dual Enrollment program provides a rigorous academic program designed to provide our high school students a chance to accelerate his/her collegiate studies. General requirements to participate in the program may include: an unweighted GPA of 3.0 or above, be recommended for the program by Academic Advisors, provide evidence of college readiness in all areas, as noted in a college readiness exam and complete an application process. Students in 8th grades who do not have a GPA on file may be considered for admission if they have completed at least one high school level course with a "B" average. These students must still meet all other requirements as specified. Dual Enrollment grades become part of the high school student's official transcript and will be listed on their college transcripts upon graduating from Mater Bay.

Taking college courses while in high school will:

- Increase student's College Readiness
- Allow students to begin their College Degree earlier
- Increase Student's Grade Point Average
- Save money towards a College Degree
- Add weight and value on college applications

UPPER SCHOOL (Grades 9-12) COMMUNITY SERVICE/VOLUNTEER HOURS

To complete the community service graduation requirement for Mater Bay Academy and MDCPS, each student must complete a community service project. The project may be completed as early as the summer going into Freshmen year. Mater Bay Academy will require a minimum of 100 community hours for graduation. If working towards *Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program*, each student is required to complete a minimum of 100 hours. Detailed information is available on the school's website. It is the student's responsibility to complete all necessary documents and identify a location to complete their community service hours. It is recommended to complete a minimum of 25 service hours per school year.

Seniors must complete and submit all community hours prior to the deadline date provided to be eligible for graduation.

FLORIDA BRIGHT FUTURES SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The Florida Department of Education's Office of Student Financial Assistance oversees the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program. Students must apply for the scholarship by submitting the Florida Financial Aid Application (FFAA) beginning October 1 of their senior year and by no later than August 31 after high school graduation. Visit the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program webpage for more information.
To qualify for Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program all students must complete volunteer service hours. The requirements vary by scholarship type, visit the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship website to obtain details. These hours must be documented and approved by the student's academic advisor. It's essential to consult with your school counselor to ensure your service or work hours meet the specific criteria set by the Florida Department of Education.

COURSE PLACEMENT

Our administrative staff reviews each student's scores and performance evaluations to provide students with the best possible learning environment. We also consider a student's individual academic discipline, development, and character in our final decisions. Student Progression Plan and placement will occur with consideration given to the student's academic needs and progress as well as teacher and administration recommendation. The MDCPS Student Progression Plan may be found at http://ehandbooks.dadeschools.net/policies/93.pdf. **We are not in any way obligated to honor any special requests for course placements. In addition, students will receive classroom assignments with consideration given to their academic needs and progress. No changes to schedules will be made unless a duplicate or missing course is identified.**

RTI PROCESS

Mater Bay with collaboration with Miami-Dade County Public Schools employs the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework to provide targeted educational assistance to students. The process involves several steps:

1. **High-Quality Core Instruction (Tier 1):** All students receive effective, research-based instruction in the general education classroom. Teachers regularly assess student progress to identify those who may need additional support. rti.dadeschools.net
2. **Targeted Small Group Interventions (Tier 2):** Students not meeting academic or behavioral expectations participate in supplementary instruction in small groups. Their progress is closely monitored to evaluate the effectiveness of these interventions.
3. **Intensive Individualized Interventions (Tier 3):** If students continue to struggle, they receive personalized, intensive interventions tailored to their specific needs. The Student Support Team (SST) collaborates to develop and implement these strategies. rti.dadeschools.net
4. **Ongoing Progress Monitoring:** Throughout all tiers, student progress is systematically tracked. Data collected informs instructional decisions and helps determine if further interventions or evaluations are necessary. rti.dadeschools.net

This structured approach ensures that each student receives the appropriate level of support to succeed academically and behaviorally.

Students facing academic, social, or emotional challenges should be referred to the Academic Intervention process through the Response to Intervention (RTI) system at Tier 2, using the Request for Assistance form. Through the RTI process, students will receive targeted support, including supplemental instruction and recommended classroom strategies. Before a student can be considered for evaluation, academic interventions must be implemented, and consistent progress monitoring must be documented.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

The School Board of Miami-Dade County is committed to ensuring that all students suspected of having a disability are properly identified, evaluated, and if eligible under state criteria and with parental consent, provided with specially designed instruction and related services. Before a formal evaluation is initiated, the student must have participated in the school's Progress Monitoring Plan (PMP), received support through the Response to Intervention (RTI) process, and been referred to the school's Student Support Team (SST) to determine appropriate interventions and next steps.

STUDENT CONDUCT

Mater Bay Academy students are expected to show respect for themselves and others. Each classroom has a climate in which optimal learning takes place. Students are expected to behave in ways that are acceptable to classmates and conducive to learning. Misbehavior on the part of students can be generally corrected when parents and teachers work together.

Teachers and students must foster a mutual respect for one another. Teachers will never use corporal punishment or offensive language toward a student. The school will follow Miami-Dade County Public School's *Code of Student Conduct* http://ehandbooks.dadeschools.net/policies/90/index.htm. The following rules, regulations and due process procedures are designed to protect all members of the educational community in the exercise of their rights and responsibilities. According to the Code of Student Conduct, methods of positive reinforcement/rewards and/or loss of privileges are utilized. Administration will make the final decision on disciplinary actions.
These expectations apply to any student:
1. Anyone who is on the school property.
2. Anyone who is in attendance at school or any school-sponsored activity.
3. Anyone whose conduct at any time or in any place has a direct and immediate effect on maintaining order and discipline in the school.

Types of Disciplinary Action: (not in any order of action)

1. Verbal and Written Reprimand / Referral / Student Case Management Form (SCAM)
2. Contact with parent
3. Loss of privileges or Loss of a School-Related Activity
4. Detention - student will be issued a detention to be served in school, during the assigned time.
5. Work Duty on Campus - student is assigned to a designated staff member to engage in active work such as cleaning, picking up, and organizing
6. In-School suspension – removal from class
7. Outdoor suspension – absence from school – student is not allowed on school grounds or at any school-related function.
8. Expulsion – student may be recommended to MDCPS for an expulsion.

Determination of disciplinary actions will be made by the administration after careful review of specific incidents. Student Case Management (SCM) referrals will be issued at the discretion of the administration. In addition, this handbook serves as acknowledgment that you have reviewed the Code of Student Conduct with your child. The online version of the Code of Student Conduct can be located in the Parent Portal or through the following website address: http://ehandbooks.dadeschools.net/policies/90/index.htm. This link may also be found on Mater Bay Academy's webpage.

BULLYING AND HARRASSMENT

Bullying or harassment of any student or employee of a public K-12 educational institution is prohibited, and in some instances, against the law, Florida Statute 1006.147.

This includes the ongoing and repeated systematical and chronic inflicting of physical or psychological distress, including through the use of technology or electronic communication (cyberbullying). Harassment is defined as any threatening insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, use of data or computer software, or written, verbal, or physical conduct that places the victim in reasonable fear or harm, interferes with performance, and disrupts the orderly operation of the school. The Bullying and Harassment Policy may be found at: FLDOE Bullying Prevention.

ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

Mater Bay Academy promotes a safe and supportive learning environment by protecting students and staff from conduct that poses a threat to school safety. The Zero Tolerance policy for crime and victimization may be found at: Statutes & Constitution: 1006.13

ITEMS PERMITTED/NOT PERMITTED IN SCHOOL

Students are not permitted to bring toys, games or other items of value to school (including personal digital devices). **Mater Bay Academy will not be responsible for any lost or stolen items brought to school or that have been taken away by school personnel.** Students who violate this policy may be issued a disciplinary referral.

In addition, electronic devices used in violation of the Code of Student Conduct will be confiscated and will remain in the office until the end of the following day, in which a parent or guardian must come to the office to retrieve it. The school is not responsible for any inconvenience this may cause. Any lost items will be discarded at the end of the week.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES POLICIES

STUDENT EMAILS

All students will receive a school issued email address which is to be used solely for school communication. It is expected that students will use their school issued email to communicate with staff/faculty. Students are expected to sign in and check their email account on a frequent and consistent basis as students are responsible for all information sent to them via their system-assigned email account. The use of student email is a privilege, not a right.

ALERT: WIRELESS COMMUNICATION DEVICES

Wireless communication devices include two-way communication devices, including cellular phones, mobile phones, portable computers, personal organizers and similar wireless devices are not allowed during instructional time. Effective July 1, 2025, per Florida statue Section 1006.07(2)(f) states that all K-8 students may not use wireless devices from the start to end of the school day. Students in grades 9-12 will also follow the same policy. All devices must be turned off and stored in a teacher-designated area. To assist and to follow state law, all teachers are equipped with a mobile device pocket chart and will have students place and collect their cell phones at the beginning and end of class.

The possession of a wireless device, cellular telephone, smart watches, and/or smart glasses (AI glasses) which disrupts the educational process: the use of the cellular telephone and/or wireless device during school hours; and the possession or use of a wireless devices (cellular telephone, smart watches, and/or smart glasses (AI glasses) which disrupts or interferes with the safety-to-life issue for students would be a violation of the Code of Student Conduct. Use of ear-pods, headphones, ear listening device or other similar device is not permitted during school hours. **In addition any visible item such as cellular telephones, smart glasses (AI glasses) headphones, ear-pods, or electronic devices are subject to confiscation.**

The following rules must be followed regarding the possession, use and display of wireless communication devices:

- Students may possess, display and use wireless communication devices before or after the instructional day.
- Students shall avoid classroom disruptions, by not displaying, using, or activating wireless communication devices during the instructional day. This includes during class, during lunch breaks, during class changes and during any other structured activity.
- Students must ensure that devices are turned off during the instructional day.
- Students shall not use wireless communication devices while being transported on a school bus.
- Students must conceal wireless communication devices in a backpack, pocket, purse or other container during class changes.
- The School is not responsible if a student's wireless communication device is lost or stolen.
- The sole possession of a cellular telephone is not a violation of the Code of Student Conduct.

However, the possession of a cellular telephone that disrupts the educational process, the use of the cellular telephone during school hours, use of a cellular phone to commit a crime, and the possession or use of a cellular telephone that disrupts or interferes with the safety-to-life issue with students are infractions of the Code of Student Conduct. Consequences will be determined based on the severity of the infraction.

INTERNET USE POLICY

Access and use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and its use must support the educational objectives of the school. Students must always get permission from their teachers prior to using the internet. Students who violate the following internet usage policy may lose any and all internet usage privileges.
The school requires the following of its staff, students and parents:

- No recording, either photographic or audio/visual in nature may be made on school property without the express permission of the administration.
- No document or media that exists or is produced in reference to the school, its staff or students including photographs, letters, yearbooks and other material may be published where it is accessible to the public without the express permission of the administration.

- No staff member, student or parent may use the Mater Bay Academy name or any of its logos for identification purposes in any public forum or media. The term "public forum or media" also includes but is not limited to publicly accessible websites and web forums.
- Mater Bay Academy students are prohibited from using the school internet to access "chat rooms" at any time.

Excerpt from: Code of Student Conduct Board Rule 6Gx13-6A1.112

ALERT: UTILIZATION OF THE INTERNET AND INAPPROPRIATE USE OF COMPUTERS

Over the past few years, computers have become common household devices and popular in our schools and media centers. Students are encouraged to use computers, networks, and online telecommunications such as the Internet and electronic mail (e-mail). While exercising the right to use available technology, students must be aware of their responsibility as users. Advancement of technology has enabled many students with the access and opportunity to commit offenses that violate the Code of Student Conduct.

The following are examples of improper uses of technology and are violations of the Code of Student Conduct:

- Using the network to send or receive obscene or lewd material;
- Using the network to make threats against anyone or the school;
- Sending electronic mail that threatens to do bodily harm to another student that might be considered assault or cyber-bullying;
- Downloading pirated software (comparable to stealing);
- Willfully and knowingly obtaining an unauthorized access to or "hacking" into the school's computer system (constitutes vandalism);
- Using, without authorization, school property or a school computer or other electronic device and damaging a school's computer system or causing the computer to "crash" (constitutes a "computer-related" crime leading to criminal charges).

These are only a few examples of violations committed through electronic means. The school administration will evaluate and determine the appropriate level of infraction under the Code of Student Conduct. Refer to the School Board Rule 6Gx13-6A-1.112 for further explanation.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

All Mater Bay Academy students are expected to be honest with what they carry out, present, and submit their work. This means that all parts of all works submitted for assessments, whether internal or external, must either be original to the student or must be properly cited.

Academic Dishonesty/Malpractice may include, but not limited to:

- Copying materials from a textbook, the internet, or another student and presenting it as one's own work.
- Collusion.
- Taking unauthorized materials into an examination room (e.g. electronic devices other than a permitted calculator, notes, smartphones, etc.) regardless of whether this material is used or potentially contains information pertinent to the examination.
- Misconduct during an examination, including any attempt to disrupt the examination or distract another student.
- Exchanging or in any way supporting, or attempting to support, the passing of information that is related to an examination.
- Failing to comply with the instructions of the teacher/proctor or other members of the school's staff responsible for the conduct of the examination.
- Impersonating another student.
- Stealing/Copying examination papers.
- Using an unauthorized calculator during examination.
- Disclosing or discussing the content of an examination paper with a person outside of the immediate school community within 24 hours of the end of examination.

Distinction between legitimate collaboration and unacceptable collusion or plagiarism.

There are occasions when group work is entirely desirable and acceptable. This is a legitimate collaboration. In such a case, each student involved should play a distinct part, so that it is clearly seen how their contribution differs from that of others in the group. Any written work presented must be individual. One student cannot do the writing for another.

Unacceptable collusion occurs when one student copies from another with their agreement, or when one student does the work for another.

Actions to be taken by the school if a student is found guilty of academic dishonesty/malpractice

- Meeting with administration to determine consequences
- Grade Cancelation ("F") for the assignment
- Student placed on academic probation for the school year.

DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

Digital citizenship is a concept which helps teachers, technology leaders and parents understand what students should know to use technology appropriately. With the growth of technology there is a need to talk about responsible use of technology. Digital Citizenship refers to the ability to think critically, behave safely, and participate responsibly in our digital world. The following skills are essential for student users to harness the full potential of technology for learning and for college and career readiness.

- Internet Safety
- Privacy & Security
- Relationships & Communications
- Digital Footprint & Reputation
- Self-Image & Identity
- Information Literacy
- Creative Credit & Copyright

Teachers and staff will promote, model, and establish policies for safe, legal and ethical use of digital information and technology. Students are expected to care for their devices, charge them nightly, handle them with care and keep them clean and dry. Digital Citizenship responsibility may include but is not limited to: refraining from posting something the student may later regret, protecting the student's and the school's integrity, refraining from cyberbullying, use of proper digital etiquette, avoid visiting websites that are not educationally related and avoid sharing personal information.

The School Staff is not responsible for monitoring any Social Media accounts that are not affiliated with the school. Parents are asked to keep a close eye on student's Social Media accounts. We ask that only Social Media accounts provided by the school are used as a reference point for accurate information.

USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) TOOLS (e.g., ChatGPT)

Mater Bay Academy recognizes that artificial intelligence (AI) tools, such as ChatGPT and other AI-powered platforms, are increasingly being used in educational settings. These tools can support learning, creativity, and productivity when used appropriately. However, the use of AI must be aligned with the school's values of academic integrity, responsible technology use, and personal accountability.

<u>Acceptable Use Guidelines:</u>

- Students may use AI tools for brainstorming, editing, or studying **with teacher approval**.
- AI-generated content must be **properly credited** and may not be submitted as original work when assignments require personal effort or understanding.
- Teachers may integrate AI tools into classroom instruction as part of the curriculum where appropriate.

<u>Prohibited Uses:</u>

- Submitting AI-generated work (in full or in part) as a student's own on assignments, essays, or assessments unless explicitly allowed by the teacher.
- Using AI to bypass learning processes or engage in academic dishonesty.
- Relying on AI for inappropriate or harmful content creation, including offensive or misleading information.

<u>Accountability and Academic Integrity:</u>

- All AI use must comply with the school's **Academic Integrity Policy.**
- Students found misusing AI tools may face consequences, including loss of credit for the assignment, parent notification, or further disciplinary action.

Parental Support and Oversight:

- Parents are encouraged to talk with their children about the ethical and safe use of AI.
- Teachers and staff are available to guide students on how to use AI tools effectively and responsibly.

e-LEARNING

Every classroom at Mater Bay Academy is equipped with cutting-edge technology designed to enhance the tools for teaching and learning. Through our one-on-one iPad initiative, each student has access to a personal device that supports interactive, individualized, and digital learning experiences across all subject areas. Our classrooms feature interactive Promethean Boards, and our Science Labs are outfitted with advanced tools that promote hands-on exploration and inquiry. In our Biology-Medical Academy classroom, students engage in virtual dissection and 3D anatomy exploration using our state-of-the-art Anatomage Table. To ensure meaningful technology integration, our faculty participates in ongoing professional development focused on the latest advancements in educational technology.

SCHOOL-ISSUED iPad DEVICE

The school will provide each student in grades 6-12 an official school purchased iPad. As part of our one-to-one initiative program, all students are required to bring their school-issued iPads to school fully charged each day. These devices serve as the primary tool for accessing digital textbooks and engaging with the curriculum. It is the student's responsibility to ensure their iPad is ready for daily use, as personal devices are not permitted on campus, and parents will not be allowed to drop off forgotten devices during the school day. Students who fail to bring their iPad may receive a lower grade and be required to make up missed assignments.

Visit the school's website under e-Learning for more information.

SPECIAL EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

CLUBS

Mater Bay Academy students may participate in a wide variety of activities, including student council, subject-area clubs, honor societies, service clubs, and class activities. School-sponsored clubs may be curriculum related, or non-curriculum related. All special events and activities must be pre-approved by the administration. Birthday party celebrations including treats for students are not permitted during school hours.

Curriculum-related clubs are student groups whose goals are an extension of the activities and objectives in a particular subject area within the school's curriculum. Conversely, non-curriculum related clubs are students groups whose goals are special interest oriented and not directly related to the school's curriculum. Meetings of non-curriculum related clubs may be scheduled at times when instruction is not taking place, either before or after school hours.

Students and parent/guardians must read and sign the Miami-Dade County Public Schools Contract for Student Participation in Interscholastic Competitions or Performances (FM-7155) (06/23) https://forms.dadeschools.net/webpdf/7155.pdf, which must be turned-in to the club sponsor. In addition, alternatives to suspension may include exclusion from grade level class events and/or activities.

Non-School Sponsored Clubs

The State of Florida prohibits the participation of public-school students in Fraternities or Sororities, or any other secret society whose active membership is comprised wholly or partly by public school students and its members are selected based on the decision of its members, and not on the rules of the school.

FIELD TRIPS

All trips planned by the school are for specific educational purposes and approved by the administration. Participation in field trips requires the student to present a field trip form signed by the parent/guardian to his/her teacher in advance. **Field trip permission forms will be provided to students after any outstanding account balances have been resolved and the student has demonstrated consistent daily attendance.** Students going on field trips must assume responsibility for any applicable fees. Please keep in mind that once the field trip has been paid, the school will not issue a refund.

If a hardship exists where a student cannot afford the cost of the field trip, please notify the teacher. Field trip chaperones will be selected by classroom teachers; preference will be given to parents who have not attended previous trips and final approval from administration.

Students will not be released to **anyone** during a field trip for **any reason**. Authorized parent/guardians who wish to have student released early must report to the main office to sign out the child and wait for the child to return with their class from the field trip.

Students participating in out-of-county field trips are required to stay with their assigned chaperone for the entire duration of the trip. All students must return using the same mode of transportation as the rest of the group; alternate return arrangements will not be permitted.

Students with outstanding financial obligations will be unable to participate in extracurricular events and activities until their account is brought up to date.

ATHLETICS

Eligibility/Student Contracts

Participation is a Privilege:
Participation in interscholastic athletics by a student is a privilege, not a right. To earn this privilege, students must abide by the rules and meet standards of academic performance and personal behavior that are related to school purposes.

Local Rules May Be More Stringent:
Mater Bay may adopt more stringent rules for the students under their supervision. No school or school district, however, may adopt rules that are less stringent than those of the FHSAA.

Academic Requirements:
A 2.5 unweighted GPA is required for academic eligibility. A middle/upper school student must have a minimum of a 2.5 GPA, or the equivalent of a 2.5 GPA based on a 4.0 scale, at the conclusion of each semester. An upper school student must have a cumulative 2.5 grade point average on a 4.0 unweighted scale, or its equivalent, at the conclusion of each semester to be academically eligible during the next semester

Attendance Requirements:
Students must abide by the school attendance and tardy policy. In addition, any student athlete who is absent from school on the day of a practice or game may not attend practice or the scheduled game.

Physical Evaluation Requirement:
A student must have a physical evaluation each year and be certified as being physically fit to participate in interscholastic athletic programs prior to participating in interscholastic athletic competition or engaging in any practice, tryout, workout, or other physical activity associated with the student's candidacy for an interscholastic team. A physical evaluation shall be valid for a period not to exceed one calendar year from the date of the practitioner's signature. The student cannot be allowed to participate in any activity related to interscholastic athletic programs until the fully executed physical evaluation form is on file in the school. To access the forms, please visit the schools website Mater Bay Athletic Page - Physical Forms (see page 8).
Physical Examination must be dated <u>after</u> June 30th to be eligible for the incoming school year.

For more detailed information, please visit the school's website.

Good Cause Procedures: Athletics – Eligibility Standards for Extracurricular Activities

1. **General Eligibility**
   - Students who are not currently suspended from interscholastic or interscholastic extracurricular activities, or from school due to disciplinary action, are eligible to participate in such activities.
   - All student-athletes must complete and submit the required athletic packet before participating in any school-sponsored athletic or extracurricular activity.
   - A student's eligibility may not be affected by an alleged recruiting violation until a final disposition of the allegation has been made.
   - Falsification of any required documents will result in a loss of athletic eligibility for 365 days upon confirmation of the falsification.
   - Student disciplinary issues will be addressed in accordance with Mater Bay Academy's Code of Student Conduct.
   - All current Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA) Bylaws and Policies will be followed regarding athletic eligibility.
2. **Transfer and Participation Rules**
   - A student may not participate in a sport at a new school if they already participated in the same sport during that school year at a different school unless they meet one of the "Good Cause" criteria listed in section 1006.15(3)(h), F.S.
     - Participation is defined as involvement starting on the first day of the sport season as posted by the FHSAA.

3. **Exceptions to Transfer Participation Restrictions**

- A student who has already participated in a sport at another school during the current school year may still be eligible to participate in the mid-season at a new school under the following circumstances:

    a. The student is the child of an active-duty military member whose move was due to military orders.

    b. The student has been placed in a new home through foster care.

    c. The student has experienced a court-ordered change in custody due to separation, divorce, illness, or death of a custodial parent.

    d. The student faces financial hardship.

    e. The student is impacted by academic or athletic program changes that create an unmanageable learning environment.

    f. The student has lost a key part of their support system (e.g., counselor, coach, teacher, or peer group).

    g. The student applied for School of Choice prior to the start of the FHSAA fall season and was accepted within the first twenty (20) days of the school year.

    h. The student had to move to a new home address, necessitating attendance at a different school.

GENERAL INFORMATION

INCREMENT/HAZARDOUS WEATHER PROCEDURES

Arrival and dismissal procedures may be delayed due to hazardous weather conditions. Please be patient and continue to follow drop-off/pick-up procedures to ensure your child's safety. Tardies may be suspended due to hazardous weather at the discretion of the administration. The use of the telephone will not be necessary. In the event of increment weather while on campus, all outdoor activities will be altered or cancelled.

After school events and/or athletic practices may be cancelled due to weather conditions.

CLOSING OF SCHOOL DUE TO WEATHER CONDITIONS

The emergency closing of school due to weather is at the discretion of the Superintendent of MDCPS. Mater Bay Academy will follow the Miami-Dade County Public Schools closure policies in case of weather emergencies. Please be attentive to local news channels and/or radio for cancellation of school.

FIRE AND EMERGENCY DRIILS

At least ten fire and emergency drills will take place throughout the school year, in accordance with the Miami-Dade County Public School Policy and Emergency Procedures. At the sound of the emergency bell, students must stop what they are doing and follow the teacher's instructions. The use of digital devices is NOT allowed during emergency drills as it may cause frequency interference.

Some drills require students and staff to clear the building promptly using the assigned routes. Any student who is in the hallway or the restroom at the sound of the emergency bell must proceed to the nearest exit and locate the teacher. Students, teachers and staff must remain outside the building until permission is given to re-enter.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Student and employee safety is a primary concern. The Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) was created to provide school personnel with the necessary leadership skills and knowledge needed to respond to critical incidents or other related emergencies that may occur in our schools /community.
Mater Bay Academy has a site-specific plan to address all types of critical incidents. These plans address the individual needs of the school and provide guidelines for devising methods for communicating with the staff, students, parents/guardians, and the media during a critical incident or an emergency. Some of the protective action procedures include the evacuation of students/staff from the building, and if necessary, the relocation of students/staff from the school campus, lockdown procedures and holding/dismissing students during school and community emergencies.

Some important tips for parent/guardians to remember during a Critical Incident are as follows:
- Remain calm.
- Monitor media outlets for updates and official messages from the school.
- Do not flood the school with telephone calls.
- If the school is on lockdown, wait until the lockdown is lifted before going to the school.

All school personnel are adequately trained in the school EOP and are prepared to respond immediately during a critical incident or emergency to provide safety for all students and staff.

VISITORS

FOR THE SAFETY OF ALL OF OUR STUDENTS, **ALL VISITORS** must report to the main office to obtain a visitor's pass. Only persons with pertinent business are permitted on school grounds. Children, including family members, who are not currently enrolled at Mater Bay Academy will not be permitted on school grounds during school hours. Instructional time is precious and must not be interrupted by parent visits. Please schedule appointments with your child's teacher to avoid unnecessary interruptions. All visitors must be cleared via the Volunteer Safety Program.

PARKING DECALS

As part of our security measure, all vehicles entering and while on campus must have a decal displayed on the dashboard or visible to security and staff. Parking decals for all motor vehicles, including mopeds and motorcycles, will be required for parking at the school. Vehicles without parking decals will be ticketed or towed at the owner's expense. Two decals will be provided free of charge at the start of the school year. For additional decals, please visit the front office. Additional decals can be purchased for $5 at the front office.

Student parking decals are issued based on academic achievement, a minimum GPA of a 3.0, and on a first-come, first-serve basis. Students must contact the Activities Office to obtain further information. Decals are distributed prior to the beginning of each school year.

HALL PASSES

Five (5) minutes are allowed to pass from class to class. Students should be seated in their classroom when the tardy bell rings. It is essential for students to move quickly and in an orderly manner observing the normal traffic flow. Students must not push or run in the halls. Please cooperate with Security and staff in the exercise of their duties and present a hall pass when asked to do so. Hall passes will be granted by the assigned period teacher and based on the classroom rules and policies of each teacher.

ACCIDENTS/ILLNESSES

Parents will be notified immediately in case of illness or an accident. In the event that a parent cannot be located, the person(s) named on the emergency contact card will be contacted. **It is the parents responsibility to make sure that the contact card is current and accurate**. Please notify the office immediately of any accident or injury which occurred during arrival or departure from school.

Children who are ill should remain at home to minimize the risk of passing the illness onto others. Please notify us of any contagious illness your child has so we may alert other parents. In addition, please notify the school of any chronic condition your child may have.

AUTHORIZATION FOR MEDICATION

Miami-Dade County School Board policy "prohibits school personnel from administering any prescribed medication without parental consent and a medication authorization form signed by the child's physician and parent(s)."

In order for medication to be administered to your child, we must have an AFM (Authorization for Medication Form). This form is available in the office and must be kept on record and updated by the treating physician as needed. The parent is responsible for making sure that the proper forms are completed and returned to the school. This form must be completed by a pediatrician or a family doctor.

Medication must be in its original container labeled with the following information: The child's name, dosage, name of the drug, physician's name and the name and phone number of the pharmacy that filled the prescription. **Rigid guidelines are followed in administering medication.** For example, office personnel designated to dispense medication are required to count the number of pills the student brings to school and document it in the student medication log. In addition, the same guidelines apply for field trips.

WITHDRAWALS

Please notify the school office of your child's withdrawal or transfer at least one day in advance. To process a withdrawal from the school, the registering parent/guardian must come into the school office and complete the necessary paperwork to process a transfer. A transfer involves notification of a change in school and the return of textbooks, digital devices, class fees, lunch fees and payment of any/all monies owed to the school.

LOST AND FOUND

A lost and found area will be designated in the Cafeteria. To minimize the quantity of lost and found articles, we ask that you please write *your child's full name* on everything he/she brings to school. Due to CDC guidelines, all lost and found items will be discarded at the end of the week.

FLORIDA HARM PREVENTION AND THREAT MANAGEMENT MODEL

Florida Statute, Section 1001.212(12), requires the Florida Department of Education's Office of Safe Schools to develop a statewide behavioral threat management operational process, a Florida-specific behavioral threat assessment instrument, and a threat management portal. Florida's Harm Prevention and Threat Management Model was designed to identify, assess, manage, and monitor threats to schools, school staff, and students.

The goal of all school safety efforts is to *prevent* violence or harm to members of the school community. Threat management uses a methodology that identifies students exhibiting threatening or other concerning behavior, gathers information to assess the risk of harm to themselves or others, and identifies appropriate interventions to prevent violence and promote successful outcomes. The process applies a non-punitive assessment to distinguish between innocuous and serious situations. The aim of the threat management process is to intervene at the earliest stage to provide assistance to students and to alter or disrupt concerning behavior for the benefit of the student and school.

The Florida Harm Prevention and Threat Management Model's process is a systematic, fact-based method designed to identify, using threat assessment protocols, whether behaviors or communications constitute a concern for violence or harm to another person. Upon determination that a risk of violence exists, the threat management process then results in determining the level of concern and appropriate management of the person posing the concern to mitigate the risk of harm and remove them from the pathway to violence. The classification of an individual is based on their presenting risk and needs and balanced against protective factors. The Florida Model assigns a Low, Medium, or High level of concern (also called threat levels) to each concerning behavior or threat reported to the threat management team that cannot be summarily closed as unfounded. There are four possible dispositions:

Unfounded Determination

An unfounded determination means that there is not sufficient factual basis to support the allegation, or it can be determined that the threats were never made; what was said was clearly not a threat; or the incident/behavior of concern did not happen or rise to the level of posing a threat or concern of harm to the school community. In sum, an unfounded threat has no factual basis to support the allegation. The reporting person may simply have been mistaken about the concerning behavior. No threat management action is needed when a threat allegation is deemed unfounded. This disposition is appropriate only when it is clear there is no factual basis to support the allegation; the case should be advanced to the next step if there is any doubt.

Low Level of Concern

Low levels of concern in a school setting are generally expressions of anger, frustration, fear, or anxiety that are noticeable but do not represent a serious concern. A Low level of concern designation is appropriate where a person poses a threat of violence or exhibits other concerning behavior that is minimal, and it appears that any underlying issues can be resolved easily. This level means the concern for future violence toward another person is low. There may nonetheless be significant concerns about the person but at that time, the concern for violence toward another is at the low end of the spectrum.

Medium Level of Concern

A Medium level of concern designation is appropriate where the person does not appear to pose an immediate threat of violence, but the person exhibits behaviors that indicate a potential intent to harm or exhibits other concerning behavior that requires intervention. This level suggests that violence toward another may occur, and although the situation is not urgent, violence cannot be ruled out. The threat management team may not have complete or completely accurate information to guide the outcome of the assessment.

High Level of Concern

A High level of concern designation is appropriate where the person poses a threat of violence, exhibits behaviors that indicate both a continuing intent to harm and an effort to acquire the capacity to carry out a plan, and may also exhibit other concerning behavior that requires immediate intervention and protective measures for the target. This level suggests the student of concern is reaching a critical point on the pathway to violence from which they perceive it may be difficult to turn back. A High level of concern requires immediate and continuing attention from threat management resources to ensure violence does not occur.

The level of concern will determine the next steps in the threat management process and whether the threat management team may choose to implement, or whether they will be required to implement, a Student Support Management Plan (SSMP). The SSMP is part of the threat management process. The SSMP is not punitive or part of a disciplinary process. The SSMP is a student support and management plan that uses direct and indirect interventions to help create an environment less likely to produce violence. The SSMP identifies mandatory action steps that are needed to ensure school safety and responses that can help support the student of concern and make positive outcomes more likely. The SSMP is implemented by the threat management team imposing requirements on the student. Under the SSMP, a student of concern may be required to refrain from certain conduct or may be required to engage in certain actions that are designed to prevent harm to others. The action steps selected will comprise the SSMP. The resources and other support the student needs will differ depending on the information gathered during the assessment, including the mental health interviews when applicable and identified protective measures. The SSMP is established for a specified period based on the level of concern and is reviewed each month by the school-based Threat Management Team.

Threat management is a proactive approach to preventing violence and other unwanted outcomes. It is important to recognize that threat management is not punitive but that a student's underlying conduct may violate laws or school/district regulations, and these actions may result in punitive action separate from and unrelated to the threat management process. All threats or reports concerning behavior should be taken seriously and thoroughly reviewed to determine their merit and the level of concern. The threat management process is ongoing and ends only when the threat management team deems it appropriate under the circumstances, or responsibility is transferred to another threat management team. Remember, if you see something, say something. Effective threat management relies on all school employees, volunteers, and service providers reporting any threat or concerning behavior. All students, parents, guardians and caregivers are *strongly encouraged* to report any threat or concerning behavior.

For additional information on The Florida Harm Prevention and Threat Management Model, please contact the school.

Mater Bay Academy Middle/Upper

22025 SW 87th Avenue
Miami, FL. 33190
305-969-5989
www.MaterAcademyBay.com

PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK
AGREEMENT VERIFICATION FORM
2026-2027

Thank you for choosing Mater Bay Academy as your School of Choice! Our Parent & Student Handbook can be found on-line on our website at www.materbayk12.com**. Please read and review the handbook with your child. If you are unable to access the internet, please feel free to pass by the main office and request a copy.**

Once you have read the handbook, please complete the form below. This form must be submitted annually by the end of the first week of school. Failure to return this form completed will automatically be considered that you have reviewed the handbook along with your child and will abide by the policies of the school.

PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN THIS FORM TO YOUR CHILD'S HOMEROOM TEACHER:

I have read Mater Bay Academy's (a Miami-Dade County Public Charter School) *Parent & Student Handbook*, including the uniform policy and the *M-DCPS* Code of Student Conduct which can be accessed at: *http://www.dadeschools.net/ehandbook/Code/index.htm*.

As a parent I understand the importance of these documents and agree to abide by the policies and procedures contained therein.

Name of Student: _____ Student ID: _____

Homeroom Teacher (Period 1): _____ Grade: _____

_____ _____
(Signature of Parent/Guardian) (Parent/Guardian Name – Print)

_____
(Signature of Student) (Date)

DISCRIMINATION / HARASSMENT

It is the policy of our school that all students and employees be treated with respect. We affirmatively strives to provide a workplace and educational environment free from discrimination and harassment (including sexual harassment), as required by law. Through this policy, we establish our intent to provide equal access, opportunity, and treatment to students in the provision of educational programs and activities and to applicants and employees in all aspects of employment. Slurs, innuendos, hostile treatment, violence, or verbal or physical conduct against a student or employee reflecting on his/her race, ethnic or national origin, gender or any other of the categories described below, will NOT be tolerated by our school.

This Policy Covers the Following Protected Categories:

AGE - This category prevents denial of employment and/or educational opportunities because of a person's age.

CITIZENSHIP STATUS - This category prevents denial of employment and/or educational opportunities because of a person's citizenship or immigration status.

COLOR - This category prevents denial and/or educational opportunities because of a person's skin tone. Color discrimination can occur within the same race; for example someone who has a darker complexion may discriminate against someone that has a lighter complexion.

DISABILITY - This category prevents denial of employment and/or educational opportunities because of a person has, or is perceived to have a permanent impairment that substantially limits or prevents a major life activity; for example: walking, seeing, hearing, talking, sitting, or standing.

ETHNIC/NATIONAL ORIGIN - This category prevents denial of employment and/or educational opportunities because of a person's ancestors' place of origin; or because an individual has the physical, cultural or linguistic characteristics of a particular group.

GENDER - This category prevents denial of employment and/or educational opportunities because of a person's gender or sex.

GENDER IDENTITY - This category prevents denial of employment and/or educational opportunities because of a person's gender-related identity, appearance, expression or behavior, regardless of the individual's assigned sex at birth.

GENETIC INFORMATION (GINA) - This category prevents denial of equal employment and/or harassment because of a person's genetic information; it ensures that individuals are not treated differently because of genetic information.

LINGUISTIC PREFERENCE - This category prevents denial of employment and/or educational opportunities because of the language a person speaks.

MARITAL STATUS - This category prevents denial of employment and/or educational opportunities because of a person's marital status; i.e. single, married, widowed, or divorced.

POLITICAL BELIEFS - This category prevents denial of employment and/or educational opportunities because of a person's support and/or affiliation or lack thereof with a particular political party.

PREGNANCY - This category prevents denial of employment and/or educational opportunities for women who are pregnant.

RACE - This category prevents denial of employment and/or educational opportunities because of a person's race. The five federally recognized racial categories are American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian, Black or African American, Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and White. Persons from a mixed racial backgrounds do not need to prove their exact heritage in order to assert that they have been discriminated against based on race. Likewise, this category covers persons being discriminated against because they are married to persons of a different race other than their own.

RELIGION - This category prevents denial of employment and/or educational opportunities because of a person's sincerely held religious beliefs.

SEX - This category prevents denial of equal employment and/or educational opportunities because of a person's male or female gender.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION - This category prevents denial of equal employment and/or educational opportunities because a person is, or is perceived to be, lesbian, gay, bisexual, or heterosexual.

SOCIAL AND FAMILY BACKGROUND - This category prevents denial of employment and/or educational opportunities because of a person's socio-economic, family and/or educational background.

Sexual Harassment will NOT be tolerated.

TITLE IX OF THE EDUCATION AMENDMENTS OF 1972 PROHIBITS SEXUAL HARASSMENT WHICH INCLUDES: UNWELCOME SEXUAL ADVANCES; REQUESTS FOR SEXUAL FAVORS; AND OTHER VERBAL OR PHYSICAL CONDUCT OF A SEXUAL NATURE, WHEN:

- Submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of employment or participation in an educational program;
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or educational decisions affecting such individual; or
- Such conduct has the purpose of effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environment. Unwelcome verbal or physical sexual conduct must be either severe or pervasive.

RETALIATION AGAINST A STUDENT OR EMPLOYEE WHO FILES A COMPLAINT IS PROHIBITED BY LAW

Retaliation occurs when an employer takes an adverse action against an employee because he or she engaged in a protected activity, such as complaining about discrimination or threatening to file a charge of discrimination. An employee cannot file a complaint of retaliation unless he/she has filed a charge of discrimination, participated in an investigation or opposed an unlawful employment practice.

For additional information about Title IX or any other discrimination/harassment concerns contact:

Academica / ESP
General Counsel
6340 Sunset Drive
South Miami, Florida 33143
Phone: (305) 669-2906
Email: cpapa@academica.org

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