

# Somerset Academy Charter School Miramar Campus

12601 Somerset Blvd. Miramar, FL 33027  
Telephone: 305.829.2406 ~ Fax: 305.829.4477  
[www.somersetmiramar.com](http://www.somersetmiramar.com)

Elementary School:  
"A" Rated

PK – 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Hours: 8:45 a.m. - 2:45 p.m.  
4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Hours: 8:30 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.



Middle School:  
"A" Rated

## Back to School Information Bulletin

Welcome to Somerset Academy Charter School in Miramar! We are very excited about this school year and all of the wonderful academic instruction we have planned for your children. The following is an overview of some basic information to assist you in starting this school year safely and smoothly.

### Important Dates:

- **August 14<sup>th</sup>:** "Building Walk-through" from 4:00 pm – 7:00 pm for all parents and students; classlists and homeroom assignments will be posted
- **August 15<sup>th</sup>:** "Meet and Greet" for PK and Kindergarten parents and students from 5:45 pm – 7:45 pm: Say "Hello" to your child's teacher and locate the classroom you will be walking your child to on the first days of school.
- **August 18<sup>th</sup>:** First Day of School for students; PK – 1<sup>st</sup> grade parents may walk their children to their classrooms for the first week of school.
- **August 18<sup>th</sup>:** "Boo Hoo Breakfast" for PK & Kindergarten Parents 8:45 a.m. in the Cafeteria
- **August 20<sup>th</sup>:** "Meet and Greet" from 6:15 pm – 7:00 pm for grades 1, 3, and 4  
"Meet and Greet" from 7:30 pm – 8:15 pm for grades 2, 5, and 6  
*Report to Cafeteria upon entry for general school information. Then, take this time to meet your child's teacher, learn basic classroom policies and procedures, and ask any questions that you may have.*
- **August 21<sup>st</sup>:** "Meet and Greet" from 6:15 pm – 7:00 pm for Kindergarten  
"Meet and Greet" from 7:15 pm – 8:30 pm for grades 7 – 8  
*Report to Cafeteria upon entry for general school information. Then, take this time to meet your child's teacher, learn basic classroom policies and procedures, and ask any questions that you may have. Middle school parents, please bring a copy of your child's schedule.*

Please see our website for a complete 2008 – 2009 school year calendar. A BCSD Testing Calendar is also linked. A complete Activities and Events Calendar will be posted on our website prior to the start of the school-year.

**Note for Sixth Grade Parents:** A Middle School Orientation will not be scheduled because 6<sup>th</sup> grade will be following the same schedules as our fifth grade students. Sixth grade students will have one science/math teacher and one reading/language arts/social studies teacher. They will switch between core subject-area teachers only once daily. Please contact our school office if you have questions.

# Key Information

## Student Supplies:

On our website you will find a grade specific School Supply List. On the first day of school, you may receive additional class supply materials from your child's teachers. Due to the safety issues and space limitations, **it is our school policy that you provide your child with a backpack, rather than a bag on wheels**, to carry to and from school each day. If a medical concern is present, please notify an administrator so that special accommodations can be made as dictated by your child's physician. *Pre-K & Kindergarten* – We ask that each child keep a complete change of clothing in their backpack in a Ziploc bag at all times.

Each child will be required to purchase a Student Planner and a School-to-Home folder for the year during the first week of school. These are used for essential communication daily and therefore must be purchased by Friday, August 22<sup>nd</sup>. The total cost of these items is \$7.00.

## Volunteer Hours Requirement:

Each Kindergarten through 8th grade family is required to complete 30 volunteer hours per school year. (Forty hours are required if there are siblings in both elementary and middle school. One volunteer hour will be granted for every \$4 spent on items for the classroom or given as a donation to purchase instructional materials. Volunteer Hours will be tracked using a carbon-copy form that will need to be signed by an authorized school staff member.

## Communication:

Each teacher's email address will be posted on our school's website on or before the first day of school. You may use electronic communication, the school planner, the School-to-Home folders or our general school telephone number for communication with school staff.

## Transportation to and from School:

Somerset Academy Charter Schools are not a part of the Broward County School Bus system. Therefore, transportation in this form is not offered. If you are interested in accessing a private busing service, we have information available for you at the school. Otherwise, you may use our carpool lane to transport your child daily. Please follow the Carpool Map's directions posted on our website. These have not changed from last year. We also ask that you complete the *Carpool Dashboard Display* inside and place it on the dashboard on the passenger side of your car. This will assist us in keeping the carpool line moving efficiently. At no time may any car be parked in the carpool lane. Additionally, parents/relatives may not walk through the carpool line or sidewalk to look for children. Walkers will always be picked up from the south side of the building (our main entrance). If you are making a change in your child's transportation procedures, please be sure to notify your child's teacher in advance.

## Arrival and Dismissal:

School starts promptly, and we open our classroom doors 15 minutes early for all students. *Morning care* is available as early as 7:00 a.m. for any child that needs to be dropped off at school prior to the arrival windows. Students who are dropped off late must be signed in by a parent or guardian. Students who are dropped off early will be placed in morning care and charged \$25.00 per day for supervision. Students may not wait unsupervised in the parking lot at any time. Students who are picked up late will be placed in Aftercare and will be charged \$1.00 per minute late or \$25.00 per day for supervision. Students picked up after 6:00 pm will be charged \$1.00 per minute until picked up. If students have not been picked up by 7:00 pm, the Miramar Police Department will be called to take the child under their supervision until parents/guardians can be reached.

**SIBLING CARE:** PK-3<sup>rd</sup> grade students who have Siblings in middle school (grades 6-8) will incur a minor fee of \$25.00 per month for supervision between 8:15 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. and between 2:45 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. while older siblings are in class. Payment must be made by the first of each month. Late fees of \$10.00 will be applied if payment is not made within 5 days of the first school day of each month. Payment for the entire year can be made in advance for a fee of \$200.00 (due by the first day of school, August 18<sup>th</sup>).

We will also be upholding a Somerset policy that students may not be picked up for early release between 2:15 p.m. and dismissal time without at least 24 hours notice, a doctor's note, and/or notification of a family emergency. This policy has been put into place in order to avoid excessive disruption to end-of-day instruction and to maximize learning time for all of our students. If unavoidable incidences occur, please notify the office before embarking to the school and proceed directly to the front office to sign out your child.

**PARKING:** Parking is limited. Therefore, please use the spots marked Visitor on the south side of the building if you need to come into our office for any reason. Parents may not use the Staff Parking Lot except during evening events. Please do not park in the carpool lane at any time. Please be wary of parking in the surrounding neighborhoods to walk into school. The HOAs have notified us that unauthorized cars will be towed.

**School Safety:** All parents must report to the office upon entry to the building. For security reasons, parents will not be permitted to enter the building during drop-off and dismissal unless they have a note from a school staff member showing there is a scheduled conference or appointment. Upon entry, parents must sign in at our office and present photo identification (such as a driver's license). As part of the Jessica Lunsford Act, parents wishing to attend a field trip or volunteer in the classroom must complete a Volunteer Form and be screened. Please speak to our office staff if you have questions about this procedure. **For every child's safety, please do not enter or exit the east or west side doors at any time before, during, or after school.**

### Weather Worries

In the event of dangerous weather, such as a hurricane, please refer to the news or radio for announcements regarding Broward County's schools. We will follow any and all guidelines and actions according to what the county dictates necessary. If Broward County Public Schools are closed, we are closed.

### Student Conduct

As a Broward County Public Charter School, we are required to implement and follow the Broward County Student Code of Conduct. All students will receive a copy of this booklet on the first day of school. **Parents and students must sign and return page 3 of the booklet (the parent/student acknowledgement form), within three days of issuance of the booklet.** Somerset Academy also abides by the County's No Tolerance policy on threats of violence and acts violence and unwaveringly enforces strict consequences for any behavior that is deemed dangerous to the school. Somerset also has its own Code of Conduct, available in our online parent/student handbook, and its rules and consequences, as well. We will be implementing Saturday School as a consequence to deter inappropriate behavior. Saturday School will be scheduled monthly. Students assigned to attend Saturday School will also be charged a mandatory \$20.00 fee. Additional consequences and disciplinary activities may involve campus clean-up and beautification activities.

### After School Tutoring

After school tutoring is an optional fee-based program available for students identified as "At-Risk." The tutoring program emphasizes preparation for the FCAT in the realms of timing, test-taking strategies, and core Sunshine State Standards-based content. **Please note that Level 1 and Level 2 students will be required to attend our free tutoring program as part of our parent-student contract** this year. Exact dates and times for tutoring will be forthcoming.

### Tardies and Absences:

Any students arriving after the morning bells ring will be marked tardy, and the child will need to be signed in by the parent in the office in order to be permitted to class. Tardiness disrupts the learning process for all of our students, so please ensure that your child arrives to school on time. Please be sure to write a note or bring a doctor's note if your child is absent; be sure to indicate the reason for the absence. *Any extended absences must be reported to your child's teacher;* in such cases, only an administrator can determine if the long-term absent days will be marked excused or unexcused and if work will be able to be made up at a later date.

### O.C.E.A.N. (Before and After Care Program)

The O.C.E.A.N. program was formed by Somerset Academy to provide parents with morning and after care services. Operated by Somerset Academy, these programs offer homework assistance, recreation, snack, tutoring and enrichment activities for students enrolled. Morning care commences at 7:00 a.m. to students of working families who must arrive prior to the start of the school day. It also provides after school care for students until 6:00 p.m. on school days. Registration is done on a first-come, first-serve basis as long as there is availability. More information will be forthcoming as we approach the start of the school year. Please continue to check our website or contact our school office for updated information.

### Homework Policy

For all students, homework is assigned nightly and at the discretion of each teacher. Weekend homework will be at the discretion of the teacher. General guidelines are given to ensure that reasonable amounts of homework are assigned. Please note that homework is not graded. If you have a concern about Homework, whether content or quantity, please contact your child's teacher. This year, students will be required to complete reading logs and will be assigned other books to read. Additionally, our Accelerated Reader program will quiz students on books read and will be used as part of your child's classroom grade.

### Textbook Policy

Each student is responsible for textbooks issued to him or her. Hardcover textbooks are to be covered at all times. Lost or damaged books must be replaced through payment at the cost of a new book and will include shipping charges. A textbook contract will be sent home during the start of the school year for parents to sign and return to the teacher. This contract will be kept in your child's file until the end of the year. You will be provided with a copy upon your request.

### Outstanding Fees

Parents with outstanding financial obligations may speak to the school treasurer/bookkeeper in order to find out amounts owed and to clear debts or work out payment plans. Students with outstanding financial obligations may be prohibited from attending school-sponsored events and from re-registering until debts have been cleared.

### Personal Possessions

Please label all of your child's possessions in permanent black marker - particularly lunch boxes, jackets, sweaters, and sweatshirts. We do allow students to bring in recess recreation equipment such as gloves and soft balls; however, the school will not be held responsible if any personal items are lost, damaged, or stolen. **Lost & Found** in the main office; unclaimed items are donated every two weeks to charity. Please be aware that certain items are forbidden to be taken out during school hours. If seen or heard by any staff member, these items will be confiscated until Winter Break or the last day of school (whichever comes first). Some of these items include IPODS, Gameboys, Yugio devices, Trading Cards, inappropriate magazines or books, and cell phones. If cell phones are confiscated, they will be returned to the parent the first time. If they are confiscated again, they will be kept along with all other items as stated above.

### Exceptional Student Education

Exceptional Student Education (ESE) programs include consultations and/or services for gifted, speech/language, and other various health and learning exceptionalities. Please contact our school office to be put in touch with our ESE Specialist, Mrs. Ofelia Barcelo, to get more information.

### Birthdays and Invitations

If your child is going to bring invitations to school for a party at home or elsewhere, please make sure that all children in the class or grade-level are invited. Otherwise, please make other arrangements to distribute invitations. (Elementary Only): If you wish to have a birthday party, please be sure to schedule it with your child's teacher during lunch time and/or recess time only. This way, we will not be diminishing critical and state-mandated instructional time allotments.

### Extracurricular Activities

After school clubs, sports, and other extracurricular activities will be offered throughout the school year. Staff will be in place and working hard to continuously develop these programs. We want to provide our students and families with an array of enrichment opportunities to enhance each child's talents and interests. Please continue to view our website and your child's School-to-Home Folders for information on these developing programs. Please note that a minimum GPA and participation fees will be required for middle school students participating in sports. More information will be shared by our Athletic Director during the first month of school.

### School Lunch Information:

Broward County provides our school breakfast and lunch. BCSD Fees have increased from the 2007 – 2008 school year significantly, especially in regard to their delivery charges to bring the lunch to our school.

	<u>Breakfast</u>		<u>Lunch</u>	
	Reduced	Regular Price	Reduced	Regular Price
Elementary	\$0.30	\$2.85	\$0.40	\$3.75
Middle	\$0.30	\$3.00	\$0.40	\$4.00

**IMPORTANT NOTE: With gas prices and cost of living expenses increasing daily, we STRONGLY encourage you to apply for Free or Reduced Lunch for your child.** *Forms are available in several languages in our front office and will be sent home on the first day of school. Completed applications are sent directly to the Broward County Schools Food Services Department, and determinations for qualification in this program are made at the county level. You will be notified of the outcome by them directly. Qualifying factors are based on income and the number of persons/dependents living in your household. It is certainly worth a applying if it might save you money. Additionally, it can benefit the school in that if just over 50% of our students qualify for free or reduced lunch, our school is eligible for significant Title I funding that will allow us to purchase more instructional resources to help our students succeed!*

School lunch may be purchased from our Broward County lunch program, or you may send a packed lunch. We will not allow parents to drop off lunch during the school day unless there is an occasion in which a student forgot a lunch box at home. In this case, you may drop the lunch off in the office so that school staff can deliver this to your child. If you are unable to get to school and your child does not have lunch or lunch money in his/her account, the school will provide lunch and send you a bill for the amount of Broward County's daily lunch. We strongly encourage you to regularly replenish your child's lunch account with the BCSD lunch staff. Lunch accounts may be replenished each morning during breakfast times. Please note that we will never deny a child lunch for any reason. It is, however, your responsibility to ensure that your child has adequate funds in his/her lunch account. Broward County will only allow one or two days of forgotten lunch money before they will stop serving your child. If this occurs, please be sure your child notifies a staff member to ensure that he or she receives something to eat.

### Medication/Health

Students that need to take medication during school hours must fill out all required forms issued by the School Board of Broward County and our office. A completed form must be on file from your child's doctor for medication dosages and daily times for medication administration. County policy dictates that medication bottles must be new and unopened and must contain the amount listed on the prescription label. These must be kept in a secure location in the office and may only be administered by appropriately trained personnel. Prescription or over the counter medication is never to be sent to school with a student.

Both Somerset Academy and its families must comply with all Broward County Health guidelines. Some common ailments that your child may experience this year might include ringworm, pink eye, lice, and colds/flu. Please contact our office or Broward County's Health Department for instructions on how to handle these or any other health-related issues should they occur. Please remember that contagious ailments spread easily in a classroom, so when your child is "under the weather," it's best to keep air on the side of caution and keep them home until they are feeling better.

### Conferences and Parent Universities

Our goal as a community school is not just to educate our students, but it is also to educate our parents and keep them informed in their child's learning progress. We require parents to attend a minimum of two in-person conferences per year. In addition, we will be offering Parent Universities throughout the year. This will be an opportunity for parents to come out and learn more about a variety of topics such as Homework Help; Nutrition; Reading, Writing, Science and Math Strategies; and Standardized Testing.

### Uniform Policy and Vendor information

The uniform policy at Somerset Academy states that every student must be dressed in the proper school uniform each school day. Uniforms are mandatory and will be strictly enforced at our school to ensure student safety. It is important that the uniform is clean, in good condition, and has the correct embroidery on it. **Due to an excessive number of uniform violations last year (by students wearing inappropriate sweaters/jackets and inappropriate uniform bottoms), we are requiring that all clothing worn by students have the Somerset Academy Miramar embroidery on it. Cover-ups (jackets, sweaters, sweatshirts, etc.) must be uniform solid-colored. Belts are also required for all students.** Please note: The air conditioning in the classrooms can get cold; therefore, we encourage you to purchase at least one sweater or jacket for your child.

Before students enter the building, please ensure that Uniform shirts are tucked into the bottoms and that the waist band of the bottoms is not worn any lower than the child's waist line. Socks must also be worn. We will notify parents to bring their child a change of clothing immediately if this policy is not upheld. If repeated infractions of the Uniform Policy occur, consequences for the student will ensue, including a formal conference with parents and possible dismissal from the school. Please contact us if there is an extenuating circumstance that has caused your child to be out of uniform so that we do not write an infraction notice

P.E. Shirts and Spirit Shirts are available to be purchased only at the school and must be preordered. Order forms will be sent home the first week of school. Until P.E. Shirts come in, students should wear any gray t-shirt for P.E. Uniform bottoms can be purchased at the uniform store or at any local Walmart or other department store. These are the only items that do not need to be embroidered.

Uniform shirts must be purchased from the Somerset Academy Official Uniform vendor: **All Uniform Wear, 8180 Pines Blvd., Pembroke Pines, FL, 33024.** Their contact numbers are 954-885-5246 (phone) and 954-885-5236 (fax).

### Uniform Specifications (Shark Logo)

<b>Tops:</b>	Elementary shirts may be red, navy, white, or gray with a "smiling shark" logo; Middle school shires may be red, navy, white, or black with a "tough shark" logo. <i>Note:</i> If you have a Somerset Miramar Shark Shirt in black (elementary) or gray (middle), it may still be worn.
<b>Bottoms:</b>	Black, Navy Blue or khaki shorts, skirts, capris, pants, skorts, or jumpers with official Somerset embroidery. <i>Note:</i> <i>Shorts, skirts, skorts and jumpers may be not be shorter than 3 inches above the knee and may only be worn by students in grades PK-4.</i> Belts must be worn daily.
<b>PE Clothes:</b>	Official P.E. Uniform T-shirt and navy blue athletic shorts must be worn. Shorts must be no shorter than 3 inches above the knee. These may be purchased from the official uniform vendor. Uniform sweatshirts and navy blue sweatpants may be worn on cold days.
<b>Shoes:</b>	Rubber-soled shoes/sneakers with a closed-toe area and full back must be worn. Shoes may not have any wheels, noises, lights, or other distracting devices. Socks must always be worn with shoes and laces must be snugly tied. <b><i>(Please note: In order for students to participate in P.E. activities, sneakers <u>must</u> be worn.)</i></b>
<b>Cold Days:</b>	Official long-sleeved uniform shirt or jacket purchased from the vendor. School uniform colored cover-ups may be worn if they have NO LOGOS or other writing. Administrators may deem cover-ups inappropriate at their discretion, and you will be called to bring a change of clothing if this occurs. Non-logo long-sleeved shirts may also be worn <i>under</i> the regular uniform shirt; these must be an official uniform shirt color with no designs. (Only solid-colored garments may be worn.)
<b>Dress Down Days:</b>	Twice monthly hosts a scheduled Dress Down Day for a \$2.00 fee per child. On this day, students may dress in clothing of their choice. This clothing, however, must be appropriate and adhere to the guidelines listed below. Please note that any teacher or administrator may determine an outfit to be inappropriate at his or her discretion. If this occurs, parents will be notified immediately to bring a change of clothing and the child will wait in the office until the new clothing arrives. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students may not wear anything shorter than 3 inches above the knee. No mini-skirts or short shorts, please.</li><li>• Students must wear clothes in a size that fits appropriately (not too baggy and not too tight).</li><li>• Mid-riff shirts are not allowed under any circumstances. (Hint: If a student raises his/her arms up straight above their head and their stomach is revealed, the shirt is too short.)</li><li>• Undergarments may not be revealed in any outfit. This includes bra straps and boxer shorts.</li><li>• No lewd, inappropriate or offensive logos, words, or pictures may appear on the clothing.</li><li>• Boys may not wear undershirt-style tank tops.</li><li>• Shoes must conform to regular uniform standards listed above.</li><li>• Shirts may not contain any suggestive or poignant graphics or words.</li></ul>
<b>Spirit Days &amp; Field Trip attire:</b>	Spirit Day is every Friday, and Spirit Shirts may be worn on this day. Spirit Shirts can be purchased by completing the distributed order form which will be sent home the first week of school. They are color-specific and based on grade level. These will be the shirts that we wear for safety and identification on all field trips, as well.
<b>Jewelry &amp; Adornments:</b>	Only small, simple jewelry may be worn. No large or excessive jewelry, acrylic nails or colored nail polish may be worn at any time. Large hoops and dangling earrings are also not permitted.

### **Standardized Testing**

All students in grades 1-8 will be administered standardized tests yearly. Our first and second grade students are given the SAT-10 in reading and math. Second graders will also receive the NNAT for gifted screening. All 3<sup>rd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade students will be given the B.A.T. (Benchmark Achievement Tests) and the FCAT in the areas of reading and math. In addition, fourth grade students take the FCAT Writing test and fifth grader students take the FCAT Science test. Other tests may be required if your child is identified as speaking English as a second language (ELL). Other screenings, such as weight, height, BMI, vision, hearing and scoliosis testing, are also done for students in identified grade-levels.

Charter schools are required to follow county guidelines regarding retention and promotion. These are listed online on the Broward Schools website under Policy 6000.1 and are mandated for all Broward County public schools. *Please note: The promotion criterion in Broward County is different than the criterion set forth in Miami-Dade County.*

### **Visitors, Volunteers and Parent Involvement**

All parents are required to complete a minimum of 30 to 40 volunteer hours per school year. Parents wishing to visit the campus or volunteer for the day should schedule to come ahead of time with a teacher or administrator. Please be sure to bring a driver's license. This is needed to scan in order to generate a Visitor's Pass. If you wish to be a Room Parent, a member of our School Advisory Council, or a regular volunteer who helps with fundraisers, parent communication, special events and other school-related activities, please contact our Activities Director. If you wish to volunteer on a daily basis or in direct contact with children, the Jessica Lunsford Act requires that you be screened through Broward County Public Schools. Please inquire about obtaining fingerprint clearance through our Activities Director. Additionally, if you wish to volunteer weekly or even daily in the school, we would love your assistance; however please be aware that you will not be permitted to spend this volunteer time only in your child's classroom. Parent volunteers are always needed for carpool and lunch supervision and assistance. Please contact our Activities Director to volunteer to help in these much needed areas.

If you have a special skill to offer or if you have a business that would serve as an aide to the school, please let us know! We will contact you, whenever possible, to utilize your services. We are here to help each other as a school community!

### **Testing, Grading, and Progress Reporting**

Teachers are required to record weekly grades in each subject area. Most graded work will be sent home in the student's "School to Home" Folder. If it is not sent home, it is kept in your child's student portfolio. This is required by Broward County School District. You may schedule a conference with your child's teacher to review the portfolio at any time. Grades will be posted and accessible to you online through Powerschool; you may access posted grades at any time. You may also monitor your child's progress through Virtual Counselor. Information on these programs will be distributed by your child's teacher during the first weeks of school.

As a part of Somerset's school policies and educational philosophy, you will be notified if your child is progressing below proficiency in the following ways:

- Notes in the planner
- Copies of "D" and/or "F" student work to be signed by parents
- Progress Monitoring Plans (PMPs)
- Interim Reports (sent to *all* students)
- Report Cards
- Conference requests, phone calls, and/or emails

Please check the School to Home folder daily and especially every Friday and sign the Student Planner as necessary in order to stay up to date on your child's academic progress.

Somerset Academy follows the county grading scale listed below:

- A = 100 - 90%
- B = 89 – 80%
- C = 79 – 70%
- D = 69 – 60%
- F = 59% and below

### **Resolving an Infraction**

If you encounter situations that you need to discuss with school personnel, we ask that you use the following hierarchy - in this order - to address your concerns:

1. Office Personnel or Teacher
2. Grade Level/Subject Area Team Leader
3. Assistant Principal
4. Principal
5. President of Board of Directors