

Somerset Academy Charter School Miramar Campus

12601 Somerset Blvd.
Miramar, FL 33027

www.somersetmiramar.com

Telephone: 305.829.2406
Fax: 305.829.4477

PK – 2nd Grade Hours: 8:45 a.m. - 2:45 p.m.
3rd – 8th Grade Hours: 8:30 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.

Key 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.

Motto: Exploring New Waters

Vision: Somerset Academy is dedicated to providing equitable high-quality education.

Mission: Through the partnership of all stakeholders and a cutting-edge instructional approach, Somerset Academy Miramar sets high academic and social expectations and provides multiple opportunities for achievement that together lead to the successful development of the whole child, create lifelong learners, and produce citizens prepared to contribute to an ever-changing society.

Student Supplies:

Grade specific School Supply Lists will be available on our website this summer. On the first day of school, you may receive additional supply requests from your child's teachers. Due to 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.

Volunteer Hours:

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). There are many ways in which you may complete these hours. Some examples include assisting with instructional activities in the classroom, volunteering for school-wide events, and purchasing items to be used in the classroom. One volunteer hour will be granted for every \$4 spent on items for the classroom or given as a

donation to purchase instructional materials. Please speak with your child's teacher or a school administrative staff if you have any further questions or more information regarding volunteer hours. As the year progresses, our website and schoolnotes.com pages will also host an array of volunteer opportunities.

Communication:

Each child will be required to purchase a Student Planner and a School-to-Home folder for the year. These items are used by teachers and the school to maintain consistent communication. Your child's "**School to Home**" folder should be checked daily for valuable information such as graded class work, permission forms, conference notices, and flyers highlighting important events going on within the school. It is also essential that you view your child's **Student Planner** on a daily basis. Teachers use Student Planners to communicate daily information about your child's academic and behavioral progress. Planners will also be utilized daily by students to record homework and due dates for assignments. Written communication should be done through the planner or in the form of a note sent to school with your child in a sealed envelope. If communication through email is more convenient for you, please contact your child's teacher using this method. Each staff member's **email** address will be listed on our website shortly after the first day of school commences. Communication will be facilitated even further through **schoolnotes.com** and our **school website www.somersetmiramar.com**. To access your child's classroom schoolnotes.com page, please go to www.schoolnotes.com; there you will need to type in our school zip code (33027) and click on our school link. Then scroll to find the name of your child's teacher and click to open that page. Teacher email can also be accessed through this site.

Telephone messages may be left during school hours. However, teachers will not be interrupted during instruction to take calls and will return phone calls before or after school or during their planning time. Please allow a period of at least 24 hours for messages to be returned. If there is an urgent message, please notify the school secretary or an administrator.

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 use the enclosed **Carpool Map** and follow the routes and drop off times indicated. 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.

Arrival and Dismissal:

School hours are from 8:30 a.m. until 3:15 p.m. for students in grade 3rd-8th. School hours are from 8:45 a.m. – 2:45 p.m. for students in grades PK-2nd. 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 will generally be dismissed within 1-5 minutes after the end of the instructional day, so punctual arrival for pick-up is essential. **After care** is available for any child that needs to be picked up after 3:00 p.m. (PK-3rd) or after 3:30 p.m. (4th-8th and siblings).

SIBLING CARE: PK-2nd grade students may be picked up at 2:45; however, parents waiting on older siblings will be required to continue to loop around the carpool lane to keep it moving until older students are dismissed. A more convenient alternative for parents with children of multiple ages is to register for our Sibling Care program. With this program, younger students wait in our Sibling Care room for older siblings to pick them up. Then, the siblings walk together to the carpool area where they can be picked up all at once. In the mornings, siblings may arrive as early as 8:15 a.m. Older siblings should escort younger siblings to the Sibling Care Room and then proceed to class. This program costs \$100.00 for the year for families that have children in both middle and elementary grades and must be paid in full by August 22nd.

Please be aware that if students are dropped off before or picked up after the designated times and are not enrolled in either Sibling Care or our morning and/or after care program, O.C.E.A.N., they will be placed in the O.C.E.A.N. programs and families will be billed accordingly. (A flat rate of \$10.00 for Morning Care and a flat rate of \$25.00 for Aftercare will be applied to your child's account). If you are going to be late due to car trouble or another unexpected event, please call the school to notify us of your delay. Students dropped off at carpool will be greeted outside by one of our Somerset staff members and guided into their classroom. As mandated by the Jessica Lunsford Act and district policy, parents will not be permitted in the building when dropping their child off in the morning; however they may walk their child to the designated school drop-off entrance area. (*Please refer to the Carpool Map.*) Pre-K and Kindergarten parents may walk their child to the classroom door for the first week of school to assist with their child's transition from home to school; however, parents will be asked to exit the building once the morning bell rings indicating the start of the school day. 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. Be sure to have a picture ID to present, as per school policy.

To ensure the safety of the children during dismissal, we ask that all parents/guardians picking up their children either wait at the designated areas if they are walking to pick up children or wait in their cars in the carpool lane. Teachers will escort and usher students into cars. To expedite the carpool lane, please keep the carpool dashboard display on your vehicle's dashboard and use a dark-colored marker to clearly print the outlined information. Please fill out a separate dashboard display for each child. Also, please *stay in your vehicle* and wait until the car in front of your moves ahead before pulling

forward. Never go around the car in front of you unless one of our staff indicates it is safe to do so.

For security reasons, parents will not be permitted to enter the building during 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). Authorized Pick-up Forms and Emergency Information Cards must be filled out for each child. Please note that phone numbers must be kept up to date. **Please notify our office and your child's teacher in writing if your cell, work, or home phone numbers change or if the contact person(s) on these forms change.** It is essential that the school have this information in the event of an incident or emergency. If someone not on the authorized pick-up list will be picking up your child, you must provide the school with a signed, written note along with a photocopy of your picture ID in order for your child to be released. The person picking up your child must come into the office during dismissal to present photo identification and sign out your child via the "Authorized Pick-up Release" form. You may provide this written notification via fax or a note in your child's "School to Home" Folder.

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 note that Broward County's Attendance Policy 5.5 requires us to record instructional time missed due to tardies, absences, and early sign-outs. This policy states that "a pattern of nonattendance is established when an accumulation of non-attendance excused or unexcused, equals 5 days (30 hours) in a marking period or 10 days (60 hours) within 90 days. Once a student exceeds the maximum absences, sanctions may be imposed." If such incidences occur, you (1) will be required to provide us with written note and the necessary support documentation explaining the pattern of non-attendance; (2) may be required to meet with a school administrator; and/or (3) may be contacted by an authorized Social Services Department. You will receive written notification and a conference request if we notice a concern in this area. Parent or doctor's notes must be written in order to mark absences "Excused". Otherwise, the absences will be marked "Unexcused." These notes must be provided within 48 hours of the absence. If you are not able to send a note to school within that time, please call us or email your child's teacher. Excused absences generally include family emergencies and health-related issues. When your child is absent, you will receive a phone call from our **Parent Link telephone system** that will notify you of any absences or tardies marked for your child. *Any extended absences must be reported to the Assistant Principal or Principal.* Only the Principal will be able to 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. It is important to remember that when your child is tardy or absent he/she is missing vital instructional time which may affect academic growth. There is a lot of information to be covered in a day's time, and the success of our students depends on their consistent

and punctual attendance record. Family vacations will not be marked excused, however, please be sure to notify your child's teacher and an administrator if such an event will occur for an extended length of time.

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

The O.C.E.A.N. program was formed to provide parents with morning and after care services. 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. If you are interested in registering for this program, please visit our website to download an O.C.E.A.N. Registration Form or contact our school office to obtain a hard copy.

After School Tutoring

After school tutoring is an optional fee-based program available for students in first through eighth grade. The tutoring program emphasizes preparation for the SAT and FCAT in the realms of timing, test-taking strategies, and core Sunshine State Standards-based content. It also assists students working toward mid-year promotion during the first and second quarters and students taking alternative assessments for promotion during the fourth quarter. Private One-on-One Tutoring is also available upon request. Please contact Mrs. Sadesky-Hunt if you have questions about any of our tutoring options or if you wish to enroll your child in a supplemental tutoring program.

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 of 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 that outlines rules and consequences. Somerset Academy is firm and expects appropriate conduct to be exemplified by all students. Parents will be required to conference with teachers and/or administrators if behavior problems occur. Students may be required to sign a Behavior Contract if behavior issues are continuous and fail to improve. Students can also be asked to withdraw from school when and if their behavior becomes continuously detrimental to other students and/or staff at the school. Due Process procedures will be upheld and may be requested in such situations. A new procedure that we will be implementing to deter inappropriate behavior is Saturday School. Saturday School will be held once a month from 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. 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.

Part of our school program emphasizes character development and citizenship. We incorporate a character education program for all students that highlights Broward County's Core Character Traits. Each month, we recognize one child from each classroom that exemplifies the character trait being taught and invite parents to celebrate in their success at a Student of the Month morning ceremony.

Student Accident Insurance/Accident Reporting

Families that do not have health insurance for their children must apply for Student Accident Insurance in order for their child to be able to attend field trips, special events, recreation activities, or before and after school care. These applications will be given out when school begins and must be completed and mailed out by families within the first week of school. If an accident occurs during school hours, parents will receive a copy of a Student Accident Report from the school. Parents may also be contacted via telephone depending on the severity of the accident or injury and anytime there is an injury on the head or face. Parents should call the principal immediately if there are any additional concerns.

Academic Program and Specials

Most of our day at the Miramar Campus is geared toward instruction of the following academic subjects: Reading, Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science. Special area activities include physical education, art, Spanish, music, and computers. Additional special area activities, or electives, are offered to our middle school students. A Curriculum Guide and course descriptions are available for middle school students on our website. Students are instructed using a combination of textbooks, workbooks, novels, internet resources, manipulatives, and project-based and thematic activities. All instruction emphasizes the development of reading and writing skills. Primary-aged children also receive phonics and center-based instructions.

While we set high expectations for all of our students, we also realize that each of our students has unique and different needs, and each learns through different instructional methods and at different rates. Therefore, our school program offers a variety of activities to meet each child's unique learning needs. We offer enrichment, gifted and accelerated instruction for students who demonstrate the ability to progress at a more rigorous rate. We also offer ESE, remedial and intensive instruction for students who need academic reinforcement. Materials such as Wilson Reading, SRA Kits, and the Voyager reading program are used for these students. It is our philosophy to educate and develop the "whole" child. Our school staff works together with parents and the community to facilitate the academic, social, physical and emotional growth of every student.

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. Homework reinforces important concepts learned in school, and while any given homework assignment is not a grade, it can contribute to your child's participation, effort, and conduct points which do factor in to academic grades and quarterly Report Cards.

Therefore, parents should assist students with homework and check to be sure that it is completed nightly to maximize comprehension. An important guideline to remember to help your child get the most out of homework assignments is to allow *your child* to do the assignment or project. Although homework time may be expedited by assisting your child in completing their assignments, you may actually be shortchanging your child's opportunities for learning. If your child is having great difficulty completing homework independently or completing assignments within a reasonable amount of time, please contact your child's teacher. He or she will be able to work with you on an individual plan for your child and can offer you strategies that may help. Homework will not be given during FCAT and SAT testing days. Please refer to the planner for your child's homework assignments. At the elementary level, spelling words will be available weekly through the planner, and at all levels, assignments and projects will be available through schoolnotes.com pages.

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 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. If you wish to look for an item, we will maintain a **Lost & Found** in the main office. You may also send your child to look for these items. Please call during school hours or visit the Lost and Found before or after school for inquiries. Items will be held in Lost and Found for approximately two weeks. All Lost and Found Items left longer than two weeks will be donated on the 15th and 30th of every month. Please be sure to notify your child's teacher or the office immediately if your child has lost a personal belonging.

Please be aware that certain items are forbidden from school. These items are listed below:

- DS, PSP, Gameboys and games (or any other hand-held electronic games/gadgets)
- IPODs or portable CD players and walkmans of any kind.

- Trading cards of any kind (i.e. baseball, Pokemon, etc.)

- Any electronic toys and games (i.e. Virtual pets, Tamagotchis, ect.)

Toys from home

Magazines or books containing text or graphics inappropriate for children.

Any other item inappropriate, unsafe, or distracting to the learning environment.

If you are not sure about an item, please call the office first to verify if it is permitted in school. If a staff member sees a student with any of the items listed above, they following will take place as per our school policy:

Item will be confiscated and given to school administrators for safe keeping.

Items confiscated between August and December will be returned on the last school day before Winter Break.

Items confiscated between January and May will be kept until the last day of school and returned on that day.

Items confiscated may be returned before that specified dates but will only be returned to the child's parent or guardian. This is at the discretion of school administrators. We strongly suggest cell phones not be given to students. Students must use the office telephone if a phone call needs to be made. However, if a child must carry a cell phone, it must be kept out of sight and off during school hours. If a cell phone is out or in use during school hours without the permission of a staff member, the phone will be confiscated and held in the office until the student's parent can come to pick it up. Disciplinary action may ensue.

School Lunch Information/Healthy Kids:

Cost: Lunch is \$2.85 Breakfast is \$2.35

One of the goals at Somerset Academy Charter School Miramar Campus is to focus on the growth and development of the whole child. We want to assist our students in making healthy choices and establishing healthy habits. It is important that the children at our school leave with the skills necessary to continue a happy and balanced academic, social, emotional, and physical life. Students will participate in both Physical and Health Education. Everyone has heard the saying, "You are what you eat." What we put into our bodies affects our mental, emotional, and physical well-being. Therefore, we will need to work together to help our children establish healthy eating habits as well. Keep in mind that one of the number one causes of obesity in children is the consumption of soda because the sugar content is so high. Many of the juice boxes, candy, fruit roll ups, etc. are overloaded with sugar which can elicit "sugar highs and lows" that affect both behavior and mental function. The point of all this information is to encourage you to please send a *healthy* snack and lunch for your elementary child. Some great ideas for healthy snacks include nuts, granola bars, cheese and crackers, peanut butter, cheese sticks, raisins, fruits, and vegetables. Time will be allotted during the school day for students to eat breakfast, enjoy a healthy snack provided from home-elementary only) and eat lunch. O.C.E.A.N. also provides an afternoon snack for students enrolled in this program. Broward County provides our school breakfast and lunch.

Breakfast: Students may choose to eat breakfast at home or to purchase at school from our Broward County breakfast program. If you will be purchasing school breakfast, you must be sure to arrive *no later than* 8:20 a.m. (3rd-7th) and 8:35 a.m. (PK-2nd) to allow enough time for your child to finish eating before the start of school.

Lunch: School lunch may also 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 must contact the office ahead of time to let us know that you are arriving, and then proceed to the office to drop off the lunch. The office staff will be sure that the lunch is given to your child. *Please do not make this a regular occurrence. Please no fast food lunches – these will not be allowed in the cafeteria (i.e. McDonald's, Burger King, Wendy's).* 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. 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.

Free and Reduced Lunch: Reduced meal rates and free breakfast and lunch are available to families who qualify. If you feel that you might qualify and are in financial need of this program's assistance, please complete a Free/Reduced Lunch Application. These are available at our school office and will also be sent home with all students the first week 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.

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 on these programs or to answer any questions or concerns.

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 off school grounds.

(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 host it within that time frame. This way, we will not be diminishing critical and state-mandated instructional time allotments.

Uniform Policy and Vendor information

The uniform policy at Somerset Academy Miramar 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. It is important that the uniform is clean, in good condition, and has the correct embroidery on it. Uniform shirts and bottoms 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). P.E. Shirts and Spirit Shirts are available to be

purchased only at the school and must be preordered (order forms will go home the first week of school). Until P.E. Shirts come in, students should wear any gray t-shirt for P.E. The bottoms for P.E. must be navy mesh shorts or navy sweatpants. We want our students to look professional and take pride in their school. Therefore, it is also important that they wear their clothing in a way that exemplifies this. Uniform shirts must be tucked into the bottoms at all times, and the waist band of the bottoms should not be worn any lower than the child's waist line. If the bottoms have belt loops, please make sure your child wears a belt. 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, and a formal conference with parents will be required. 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.

Uniform Specifications for Elementary School – Shark Logo

Tops: Red, Navy Blue, White, Black, or Gray official uniform shirt. Elementary uniform shirts must have a “smiling shark” logo and middle school shirts must have a “tough shark” logo.

Bottoms: Black, Navy Blue or khaki shorts, skirts, capris, pants, skorts, or jumpers (must be purchased from uniform store with school name embroidered on pocket) **Note:** *Shorts, skirts, skorts and jumpers may not be shorter than 3 inches above the knee.*

PE Clothes: Official P.E. Uniform T-shirt and navy blue mesh shorts. Uniform sweatshirts and navy blue sweatpants may be worn on cold days.

Shoes: 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. **(Please note: In order for students to participate in P.E. activities, sneakers must be worn.)**

Cold Days: Official long-sleeved uniform shirt or jacket purchased from the vendor. Non-logo long-sleeved shirts may also be worn *under* the regular uniform shirt; these must be an official uniform shirt color.

Dress Down Each month hosts scheduled Dress Down Days for a \$2.00 fee per child.

Days: 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.

Students may not wear anything shorter than 3 inches above the knee. No miniskirts or short shorts, please.

Students must wear clothes in a size that fits appropriately (not too baggy and not too tight).

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.)

Undergarments may not be revealed in any outfit. This includes bra straps and boxer shorts.

No lewd, inappropriate or offensive logos, words, or pictures may appear on the clothing.

Boys may not wear undershirt-style tank tops.

Shoes must conform to regular uniform standards listed above.

Shirts may not contain any suggestive or poignant graphics or words.

Spirit Days & Field Spirit Day is every Friday, and Spirit Shirts may be worn on this day.

Trip attire: They are color-specific based on grade level. These will be the shirts that we wear for safety and identification on all field trips, as well.

Jewelry & Adornments: Only small, simple jewelry may be worn. No large or excessive jewelry, acrylic nails or colored nail polish may be worn at any time.

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 University every quarter. This will be an opportunity for parents to come out and learn more a variety of topics such as Homework Help, Standardized Testing, and Reading education.

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 Miramar 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 air on the side of caution and keep them home until they are feeling better.

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.

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 in advance with a teacher or administrator. Please be sure to bring a driver's license. We welcome and encourage your participation in the learning process! If parents wish to be part of SPA (our Somerset Parent Action group) to help with fundraisers, parent

communication, special events and other school-related activities, please contact our Activities Director, Susan Uncapher, and leave your name and telephone number. She will assist you or put you in touch with the contact person for specific volunteer opportunities. If you have a special skill to offer (sewing, drawing/painting, maintenance, tutoring, computer knowledge, music education, dance, etc.) or if you have a business that would serve as an aide to the school (landscaping, locksmith, plumbing, electrical, cleaning, copying), 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! If you wish to volunteer on a daily basis or in direct contact with children, the Jessica Lunsford Act requires that you be fingerprinted 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.

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 3rd – 7th 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. 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.

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. 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

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

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. This year, we will be implementing the use of Powerschool and Powergrade. These are web based programs which will allow you to view your child's grades at any given time. Additional information about this program will be shared at our Open House shortly after the start of school, and all parents will be issued log-in information.

Another method of keeping up with your child's academic progress is through Virtual Counselor. Our website contains a link for Virtual Counselor, and parents may log-on to set up a user ID and password at any time. If you need to obtain a copy of your child's student number, please contact our school receptionist or data-processor or your child's teacher.

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 or Curriculum Specialist
3. Assistant Principal
4. Principal
5. President of Board of Directors

Extracurricular Activities

After school clubs, sports, and other extracurricular activities will be offered throughout the school year. Since we are opening our new facility for the first time, these may not be offered during the first months of school. Staff will be in place and working hard to develop these programs for the 2008 – 2009 school year. 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.