

VAN E. BLANTON BULLDOGS

**“Aspiring & Achieving
Excellence”**



Parent/Student Handbook

2013-2014

The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida

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Miami-Dade County Public Schools

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Miami-Dade County Public Schools

Vision Statement

We are committed to provide educational excellence for all.

Mission Statement

We provide the highest quality education so that all of our students are empowered to lead productive and fulfilling lives as lifelong learners and responsible citizens.

VAN E. BLANTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

“Making Every Minute Count”

The staff at Van E. Blanton Elementary works to develop each student’s academic, social, physical and emotional potential in a wholesome, supportive environment so as to create life-long learners and contributing citizens in a multicultural and changing world.

Biography

Van E. Blanton was born on March 27, 1873 and died on July 21, 1950. Mr. Blanton relocated to the Miami area from Madison County, Florida in 1926. He served in several educational positions including, Dade County School Board Trustee, School Board Member and as Chairman of the School Board for several years. He was the father of seven children. The eldest, Ellis M. Blanton was a Dade County Public School teacher. Ellis served as Principal of Van E. Blanton Elementary School, which was named in honor of his father.

Message from the Principal

Dear Parents and/or Guardians:

The Van E. Blanton Family is very pleased to welcome you and your child to our school for the 2013-2014 school year. Our administration and staff are committed to providing quality instruction and service to our students, parents, and community. As a result, Van E. Blanton Elementary has achieved a school grade of 'B'. We intend to continue our path of academic excellence with high expectations from every student and a positive partnership with parents.

The Parent/Student Handbook contains valuable information that will assist you and your child in having a successful school year. It is important that you read it carefully and discuss its contents. Additional information will be sent to you throughout the school year. Please inquire often to ensure that you receive it from your child.

Your support and involvement is needed in our efforts to make your child's educational experience successful and rewarding. Working together is the key to maximizing every student's potential. At Van E. Blanton we pride ourselves on "Making Every Minute Count", and with your support and assistance we are certain your child will achieve academically and develop socially.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tangela D. Goa". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tangela D. Goa
Principal

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Van E. Blanton Elementary School receives Title I funding and is located in a low socioeconomic, urban environment at 10327 Northwest 11th Avenue, Miami, Florida 33150. The school is a two story facility containing 26 classrooms, along with an adjoining media center and a cafeteria / auditorium combination. This site has been retro-fitted to access the Internet. The renovated media center houses a state-of-the-art closed circuit television system and Internet access via multiple computer stations. Additionally, the school constructed an annex, which provides space for four kindergarten classrooms.

Van E. Blanton Elementary School serves pre-kindergarten through fifth grade students from the surrounding neighborhood. The student body includes standard curriculum students, special education students (SPED) and Limited English Proficient (LEP) students. Ninety-seven percent of the students are economically disadvantaged and thus qualify for the free or reduced lunch program. The average daily attendance for students is 94 percent. The school's high attendance rate among students, as well as personnel, is due largely to the motivating efforts of the principal.

Specialty programs implemented at the school include: Special Education Program with resource and consultation models for students with diagnosed exceptionalities; Limited English Proficient Program, which provides instruction in English for Speakers of Other Languages; Spanish S, which provides instruction in Spanish for Spanish Speakers; Spanish SL – designed to help non-Spanish speakers acquire Spanish as a Second Language; Curriculum Content in Home Language (CCHL) – offers instruction in the home language for speakers of Creole and Spanish; Gifted Program, which provides specialized, educational opportunities for students who possess outstanding talents and abilities; and an Academic Excellence Program that offers enrichment learning through the Chess Club and Writing Journalism. The focus of these programs is to enrich the educational achievement of the students. In addition, students who are in need of extra help in mastering the skills taught in the classroom are provided supplemental individual and/or small group services. Some students are in need of behavior modification and redirection of inappropriate conduct. The school site maintains an active and receptive School Support Team, including a social worker, school psychologist, counselor, teachers and administrators.

WEBSITE

<http://vblanton.dadeschools.net>

GENERAL PARENT INFORMATION

ACCIDENTS/ EMERGENCY CONTACT

It is important that every student has an Emergency Contact Card completed in the event of an injury or accident. If your child is hurt at school, we will do everything to make him/her comfortable. You will be called immediately and if you cannot be contacted, we will contact the person you have listed on the emergency contact card. Therefore, it is extremely important that you to keep this information current.

ACTIVITIES

Fieldtrips and Special Activities

Participation in fieldtrips requires that the student present a fieldtrip form signed by the parent/guardian to his/her teacher(s) in advance. In addition, at times vendors who have a "no refund" policy will require schools to pay the full amount of the fieldtrip prior to the event. In this case, students/parents will be notified in advance of the vendor's "no refund" policy.

Parties in School

Birthday parties can be held during the last Friday of the month at the discretion of the homeroom teacher. Parents must speak with the teacher to coordinate efforts and plan the birthday celebration in advance of the student's birthdate.

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL POLICIES and PROCEDURES

School Hours:

School starts at 8:20a.m. for grades Pre-k, K, and 1. For grades 2-5 school starts at 8:35a.m. each day. **Students should not be dropped off before 7:30 a.m. as no supervision is available.** The school is open to receive students beginning at 7:30 a.m. Students in grades Pre-K, K and 1 will be dismissed at 1:50 p.m. Students in grades 2-5 will be dismissed at 3:05 p.m. every day, except Wednesday. On Wednesday, dismissal time for the entire school will be 1:50 p.m.

IF YOUR CHILD IS DISMISSED AT 1:50 P.M., PLEASE ARRANGE FOR HIM/HER TO GO HOME AT THAT TIME. We cannot be responsible for students waiting for older brothers and sisters as this is planning time for our primary teachers.

The opening exercise on **WVEB** closed Circuit T.V. from the media center will begin at 8:35 a.m. Important announcements and instructions will be given at this time. Students in grades Pre-K, K and 1, arriving after 8:20 a.m. are tardy. In addition, students in grades 2– 5 arriving after 8:35a.m are tardy.

All students who are tardy must report to the office for a tardy pass.

Late Arrival

Students who are tardy to school must report to the Attendance Office to secure an admit . Excessive tardies may result in loss of privileges, detention, parent conference, and/or suspension.

Early Dismissal - Board Rule 6Gx13- 5A-1.041

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 unless authorized by the principal or principal's designee (i.e., emergency, sickness). **NO CHILD WILL BE RELEASED BETWEEN 1:20-1:50 p.m. and 2:35-3:05 p.m.**

Rainy Day Dismissal

Please plan ahead and make the necessary arrangements so your child knows the exact procedure to follow if it is raining at dismissal time. During heavy downpours, children that do not ride the bus will be kept in the classrooms. Students who ride the bus will be dismissed at the regular time.

We are sorry, but we cannot permit children to use the telephone except for emergencies

ATTENDANCE (See Attendance Policy Board Rule 6Gx13 5A-1.0401)

Good attendance at school affects your child's progress. However, we do not want an ill child to come to school. **EVERY ABSENCE AND TARDY** must be followed by a note from home. The note should indicate the date, the nature of the illness or the reason for tardiness. If your child is absent for more than (2) days, please call the school and inform our attendance clerk of the reason for the absence.

Student attendance is a means of improving student performance and critical in raising student achievement. Together, the staff of Miami-Dade County Public Schools, students, parents and the community must make every effort to lessen the loss of instructional time to students. In order to accomplish this goal, on April 18, 2007, the School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida approved a new Student Attendance Board Rule, which is stated below.

The Attendance Review Committee

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

1. Provide early intervention by convening when students reach an accumulation of five (5) excused or unexcused absences in a semester or ten (10) unexcused absences in an annual course.
2. Convene a minimum of six (6) designated times per year.
3. Give consideration to all extenuating circumstances surrounding student absences. The Attendance Review Committee is charged with the responsibility of prescribing activities designed to mitigate the loss of instructional time and has the authority to recommend the following:
 - a. Issuing of quarterly, semester or final grades.
 - b. Temporary withholding of quarterly, semester or final grades. The following are among possible options:
 - (1) Make-up assignments
 - (2) Attendance probation for the following grading period(s)
 - (3) Completion of a school service project
 - c. Permanent withholding of quarterly, semester or final grades and credit. The student is to be informed of his/her right of final appeal to the regional superintendent or designee.
4. Review attendance history for student(s) exhibiting patterns of excused and/or unexcused absences and provide appropriate referrals and counseling support.

Excused School and Class Absences and Tardies

1. Student illness: Students missing 5 or more consecutive days of school due to illness or injury are required to provide a written statement from a health care provider. The written statement must include all days the student has been absent from school. If a student is continually sick and repeatedly absent from school due to a specific medical condition, he or she must be under the supervision of a health care provider in order to receive excused absences from school.
2. Medical appointment: If a student is absent from school due to a medical appointment, a written statement from a health care provider indicating the date and time of the appointment, must be submitted to the principal.
3. Death in family
4. Observance of a religious holiday or service when it is mandated for all members of a faith that such a holiday or service is observed: The religious holiday must be listed on the district's approved list of religious holidays.
5. School-sponsored event or educational enrichment activity that is not a school-sponsored event, as determined and approved by the principal or principal's designee: The student must receive advance written permission from the principal or the principal's designee. Examples of special events include: public functions, conferences, and regional, state and national competitions.
6. Subpoena by law enforcement agency or mandatory court appearance.
7. Outdoor suspensions
8. 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.

Unexcused School Absence

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 unexcused until he/she submits required documentation as specified above. Failure to provide required documentation within three school days upon the return to school will result in an unexcused absence. Unexcused absences include:

1. Absences due to vacations, personal services, local non-school event, program or sporting activity
2. Absences due to older students providing day care services for siblings
3. Absences due to illness of others
4. Absences due to non-compliance with immunization requirements (unless lawfully exempted)

Excessive Absences. A student accumulating ten (10) or more class unexcused absences in an annual course, or five (5) or more class unexcused absences in a designated semester course will have quarterly, semester and final grade(s) withheld pending an administrative screening and completion of assigned interventions by the Attendance Review Committee.

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

The after care program located on this campus is housed in our school's cafeteria. The After Care Program is operated by the Family Christian Association of America. The telephone number is (305) 836-7331. Its operating hours are from 1:50 – 6:00 p.m. daily

BEHAVIOR

Our students are expected to show respect for themselves, other students, teachers, and other adults. We encourage our staff to use positive reinforcement for good behavior. Mid-period progress reports inform parents that their child's conduct needs improvement or is satisfactory. The following are our expectations for student behavior:

We, the students of Van E. Blanton Elementary School, are proud of our school and want to be able to:

- have excellent opportunities to learn
- have a safe and attractive school
- enjoy working with our teachers and classmates
- develop good habits and attitudes, which will enable us to become responsible citizens

Students will be expected to respect and abide by the Code of Student Conduct, which has been developed by the Miami-Dade County Public School.

AT VAN E. BLANTON ELEMENTARY WE ARE EXPECTED TO:

- come to school every day unless we are ill
- bring a note when we are absent
- arrive at school on time
- keep our work materials and text books in good condition
- complete our class-work and homework carefully, and neatly
- come to school well groomed, neat and clean, and in uniform
- show respect for our teachers, other adults and each other
- keep our rooms, bathrooms, halls, and grounds clean
- take home written notices
- obey our patrols
- walk quietly in the halls
- let our teachers know if we need their help

SOME THINGS THAT ARE NOT ALLOWED:

- fighting and bullying
- anything that can be used as a weapon
- profane language or language which threatens or is insulting
- substances harmful to our health
- gum
- harassment.

BICYCLES/SKATEBOARDS

Bicycles are to be walked once a student enters the school grounds. A bicycle rack is available for students to park and lock their bicycles. Skateboards are prohibited.

BREAKFAST/LUNCH PROGRAM

Our cafeteria is part of the Miami-Dade County Program. Only the best quality food is served. Every student **MUST EAT LUNCH**. This year parents need only to complete one free lunch application per family.

Students have the following choices:

1. Breakfast is available in the cafeteria at 7:30 am-8:15 am daily. It is free for all students.
2. Students may buy the approved lunch for \$2.25.
3. Students may bring lunch from home and purchase milk for \$.60 or orange juice for \$.30.

THIS LUNCH SHOULD NOT INCLUDE CANDY, GUM, CANNED OR BOTTLE SOFT DRINKS.
No glass containers please.

PRE-PAID LUNCH: If you wish, you may pay a week in advance for your child's lunch on Monday, and the account will be credited for days absent. This method of payment avoids the loss of money at school; this option is highly recommended for kindergarten students.

Cafeteria

Food Cost

Breakfast		Lunch	
All Students	No charge	Students	\$2.25
Adults	\$2.00	Reduced Price, Students	\$0.40
		Adults	\$3.00

Free Breakfast

The National School Breakfast Program was enacted to ensure that school children are being served a nutritious breakfast daily. **Miami-Dade County Public Schools offers breakfast at no charge to all M-DCPS Students.** The breakfast at no charge is not dependent on the student qualifying for free/reduced meals at lunch.

Free/Reduced Lunch Program

The National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs as administered by Miami-Dade County Public Schools provide free and reduced priced meals for children unable to pay the full price. Applications must be filled out every school year; forms are sent to all homes with a letter to parents or guardians the first week of school. Meal benefits begin on the day the application is approved and continue throughout the school year in which the application is approved, the summer, and approximately the first twenty days of the next school year.

PAYPAMS

Miami Dade County Public School's Department of Food and Nutrition allows parents/guardians the convenience to pay on-line via the internet or by telephone for their child's/children meals with a credit or debit card. The parent/guardians will create a lunch account on-line for the child and will be able to access the following:

- view the account balance
- schedule automatic payments.
- receive low-balance e-mail reminders
- view a report of daily spending and cafeteria purchases

CAFETERIA RULES

- Walk in the cafeteria at all times.
- Once you have your tray and are seated at the table, please remain in your seat.
- Sit correctly in the chair or on the bench.
- Use the bathroom before or after lunch. No one will be permitted to leave the cafeteria.
- Be sure to clean your area before leaving the cafeteria. Put your tray in the trash can located at the end of the table, and throw away any items near your chair.
- Do your part to keep our cafeteria clean.

CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) is committed to providing a safe teaching and learning environment for students, staff, and members of the community. On January 16, 2008, the School Board approved a newly revised Code of Student Conduct (COSC). The revised COSC identifies, recognizes, and rewards model student behavior within a framework of clearly established and enforceable rules and policies. It advocates a holistic approach to promoting and maintaining a safe learning environment and requires active participation from students, parents/guardians, and school staff. Students and parents/guardians can access the English and Haitian/Creole versions of the document on the M-DCPS Website located at:

<http://ehandbooks.dadeschools.net/policies/90/indes.htm> or you may request a copy from your child's school. The Spanish version of this document will be forthcoming.

Additionally, M-DCPS is proud to launch SPOTsuccess, an initiative that enhances the COSC. It supports civic, moral and ethical values, encourages a positive and supportive school climate, and allows all school personnel to recognize and reward students for exemplifying model student behavior. Parents/guardians can check to see if their children are recognized through the SPOT success system by creating a Parent Account. For instructions, log on to M-DCPS Website at <http://www2dadeschools.net/parents/parents.htm>, click on Parent Portal and follow the directions on the screen. If you need additional assistance, you may contact your children's school(s).

Student Rights and Responsibilities

The rights and responsibilities presented in the Code of Student Conduct reflect the need for providing students with greater opportunities to serve themselves and society, and allow students maximum freedom under law, commensurate with the schools' responsibility for student health, safety, and welfare.

Dress Code – Board Rule 6Gx13- 5C-1.031

Students are expected to come to school with proper attention having been given to personal cleanliness, grooming, and neatness of dress. Students whose personal attire or grooming distracts the attention of other students or teachers from their school work shall be required to make the necessary alterations to such attire or grooming before entering the classroom or be sent home by the principal to be properly prepared for school. Students who fail to meet the minimum acceptable standards of cleanliness and neatness as determined by the principal and as specified in this rule shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary measures.

Uniform Policy

Van E. Blanton Elementary is a **mandatory** uniform school. School colors are green, yellow and khaki.

Cell Phones

Possession of a cellular telephone is not a violation of the Code of Student Conduct (CSC). However, the possession of a cellular telephone which disrupts the educational process; the use of the cellular telephone during school hours; and the possession or use of a cellular telephone which disrupts or interferes with the safety-to-life issue for students being transported on a M-DCPS school bus, would be a violation of the CSC.

COMPREHENSIVE READING PLAN

Elementary students are required to read at least five books or their equivalent during each nine-week grading period, including in-class independent reading and at-home reading. Students must also read for 30 minutes at home as part of their daily homework assignment. The length of the books and the complexity of the content may be taken into account when satisfying this requirement.

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Parents, guardians and students are protected by The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and the Florida Statutes from individuals' access to information in students' 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 laws. 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.

Each school must provide to the parents, guardians or eligible students annual notice in writing of their right to inspect and review student records. Once a student reaches 18 years of age or is attending an institution of post-secondary education, the consent is required from the student only, unless the student qualifies as a dependent under the law.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Student Data/Emergency Contact Cards are distributed during the first week of school. Students are expected to bring the cards home and present them to their parents or guardians. The card must be carefully completed and then returned. The information provided on the Student Data/Emergency Contact Card will enable school staff to contact the parent/guardian immediately in the case of an emergency. Students may only be released from school to the persons listed on the emergency contact card after presenting a picture identification. No persons, other than school staff, will have access to the information submitted.

EMERGENCY OPERATION PLAN

Students at Van E. Blanton Elementary School participate in numerous emergency procedures during the school year to assure that they are knowledgeable in what is expected of them, how they are to behave, and where they are to go. These drills include: fire drills, hazardous weather and tornado drills, and code red and code yellow procedures. The school has an established emergency plan for various types of other emergencies.

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

It is county policy that every student has a textbook for each subject. However, if your child's books are lost or stolen it is your responsibility to pay for the books. The cost will be based on the condition of the textbook.

All financial obligations incurred, i.e., school fees, textbook loss or damage, club activities, overdue or lost library books must be paid in the school's treasurer's office).

HALLS/HALL PASSES

At no time is a student to be out of the classroom during class without an official pass. Teachers are not to give verbal permission for a student to exit the classroom. Students should not run or loiter in the halls.

INSURANCE

The Student Protection Plan is designed to cover students or injuries 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 and strongly encouraged. The school will forward 2013-2014 enrollment application and additional information to the parents.

LOST AND FOUND

Items that are found on campus are typically turned in to the office and kept in the Parent Resource Center under the supervision of the Community Involvement Specialist, Ms. Johnson. In instances where items have been misplaced or missing, please contact the school office or Ms. Johnson.

MESSAGES AND USE OF TELEPHONES

Only school office telephones are to be used during the regular school day. Because cell phone use can be intrusive upon the learning environment, it is prohibited in the classroom. Cell phone use is permissible when approval is granted by the Principal, Assistant Principal or the Teacher.

PARENT ACADEMY

The Parent Academy is a free, year-round, parent engagement and skill building program of Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS). The goals are to educate parents about the importance of their role; strengthen the family unit; unite families and schools; and inform parents of their rights, responsibilities and the educational opportunities available to their children and to them personally.

In addition, The Parent Academy provides classes and workshops for parents/guardians; organizes Family Learning Events; coordinates the availability of M-DCPS and community resources for parents/guardians and students; and provides professional staff development for school personnel on how to create parent-friendly schools.

PARENT/TEACHER ASSOCIATION (PTA/PTSA)

The Van E. Blanton Elementary Parent-Teacher Association works with state and national PTAs to support and speak in the schools, in the community and before governmental bodies and other organizations that make decisions affecting youngsters. We work to encourage parent, student and public involvement at the school as a whole. Cost of joint the PTA is \$5.00 per family which includes state and local membership dues.

PARENT OUTREACH CENTER

The Parent Outreach Center is located in Relocatable-1. The center provides information and resources for our parents and the community at large. It offers classes on health care, parenting skills, homeowner's information, etc. The Parent Outreach Center hours of operation are 8:15-3:20 pm daily. The phone number is (305) 696-9241 extension 146 and Ms. Connie Johnson is the Community Involvement Specialist responsible for supervising the Parent Outreach Center.

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 his/her information - including grades, attendance, and bus route information, and have access to the *Parent Resource* link, which takes them to sites such as Parent Academy, School of Choice, etc.

PETS AT SCHOOL

Students are not allowed to bring pets to school.

PROGRESS REPORTS/INTERIM REPORTS

Interim progress reports must be sent home **at any time** the student is performing unsatisfactorily in academics, conduct, or effort, and are disseminated to all students at mid-grading period. The dates for Interim Progress Report distribution are:

Interim Report Distribution	Report Card Distribution
September 20, 2013	November 15, 2014
December 2, 2013	February 7, 2014
February 19, 2014	April 17, 2014
May 5, 2014	June 27, 2014

Report cards will be mailed to those students who have submitted a self-addressed stamped envelope at the end of the fourth grading period. All other will be available for pick up on June 27, 2014.

CALCULATION OF STUDENT GRADES

KINDERGARTEN GRADES	NUMERICAL VALUE	VERBAL INTERPRETATION	GRADE POINT VALUE
E	90-100%	Outstanding progress	4
G	80-89%	Above average progress	3
S	70-79%	Average progress	2
M	60-69%	Lowest acceptable progress	1
U	0-59%	Failure	0

1-12 GRADES	NUMERICAL VALUE	VERBAL INTERPRETATION	GRADE POINT VALUE
A	90-100%	Outstanding progress	4
B	80-89%	Above average progress	3
C	70-79%	Average progress	2
D	60-69%	Lowest acceptable progress	1
F	0-59%	Failure	0
I	0	Incomplete	0

When calculating the grade for a semester or an annual course, the following grade point averages are to be used:

- A = 3.50 and above
- B = 2.50 – 3.49
- C = 1.50 – 2.49
- D = 1.00 – 1.49

PUBLICATIONS

In its efforts to maintain consistent communication with all stakeholders, Van E. Blanton Elementary circulates and disseminates an array of publications, including monthly newsletters, an annual parent-student handbook (in three languages), an annual school brochure (in three languages), and parent letters and flyers (ongoing). The information contained within the publications keep the stakeholders apprised of the functions, activities and operations transpiring within the school.

PUPIL WORK FOLDERS

A folder with all important tests and assignments as well as other samples of your child's work is kept by your child's teacher. Most teachers send these papers home on a regular basis for your signature. However, you are

welcomed to review this file at anytime. Please let your child's teacher know if you would like to review the work folder.

REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

Students entering Miami-Dade County Public Schools for the first time must present the following documents:

- Original birth certificate
- Proof of age and legal name
- Proof of a current physical examination including a tuberculosis clinical screening, appropriate follow-up and a certificate of immunization
- Two proofs of current address
- Disclosure at time of Registration
- Students transferring from other school districts should provide their most recent report card or other records from the last school they attended

STUDENT ILLNESS

We cannot keep ill students at school. If your child becomes ill, we will contact you immediately. If we cannot reach you, we will use the emergency contact information you have given us.

STUDENT SERVICES

Counselor/Student Services

The Student Services Department coordinates and sponsors the Brilliant Bulldog Award, Character Education and the School-Wide Discipline Plan. These programs have been effective in decreasing unacceptable behavior among the students. The Brilliant Bulldog Award affords school-wide, weekly recognition for students who have demonstrated excellence in behavior and/or academics. Students aspire to achieve this acknowledgment and therefore exhibit the qualities and characteristics that deem them worthy candidates for this honor. Character Education has proven viable in building sound values and forthright character. Character Education is a year long endeavor that is integrated into the Social Studies component of the curriculum. Through this undertaking, students are exposed to and subsequently internalize qualities that embrace friendship, honesty, respect, integrity and courage. The School-Wide Discipline Plan has also been a potent aspect of this component, as through this five part system, the students demonstrate commendable behavior. Other initiatives sponsored by Student Services are the Do-the-Right Thing Award and the Conflict Resolution Program. In regards to the Conflict Resolution Program, the school seeks to allocate a period of time each week for student mediators to meet with the Guidance Counselor. This time is not intrusive upon the classroom instructional time. The Do-the-Right Thing Award highlights student behavior that typifies or exudes value traits such as honesty, integrity and forthrightness.

School Psychologist

The site is staffed with a School Psychologist, who provides regular services to students. The psychologist is an integral member of the Child Study Team, and administers assessments, makes observations and completes all necessary reports in order to ensure the proper academic placement of students.

School Social Worker

The school is regularly visited by a School Social Worker. This professional determines the specific needs of the students and families and proceeds to provide – where necessary - appropriate services.

Speech Therapy

The school receives adept services from the Speech/Language Pathologist. This pathologist is present at the site two days per week and provides specialized services to students who have been identified for and subsequently placed into this program

TEXTBOOKS

Van E. Blanton utilizes state adopted, research based text books for instructional purposes.

THIRD GRADE PROMOTION

It is the ultimate goal of the Florida Legislature that every student read at or above grade level. Any student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading, based upon locally determined or statewide assessments or through teacher observations conducted in kindergarten or grades 1-3, must be given intensive reading instruction. If a

student's reading deficiency, is not remedied by the end of grade 3, as demonstrated by scoring at level 2 or higher on the statewide assessment test, the student must be retained.

The parent of any student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading must be notified in writing of the following:

1. That his or her child has been identified as having a substantial deficiency in reading.
2. A description of the current services that are provided to the child.
3. A description of the proposed supplemental services and supports that will be provided to the child that are designed to remediate the identified area of reading deficiency.
4. That if the child's reading deficiency is not remediated by the end of grade 3, the child must be retained unless he or she is exempt from mandatory retention for good cause.

The district school board may only exempt students from mandatory retention for good cause. Good cause exemptions shall be limited to the following:

- Limited English Proficient students who have had less than two (2) years of instruction in an English for Speakers of Other Languages program.
- Students with disabilities whose Individual Educational Plans indicate that participation in the FCAT is not appropriate
- Students who demonstrate an acceptable level of performance on the alternative assessment approved by the Florida Board of Education. As required by State Board of Education Rule 6A-1.094221(2), the standardized assessment to be used is the grade 3 norm-referenced test (NRT) portion of the FCAT reading or a parallel form of the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT), administered by the district to eligible students. The SAT may only be administered once to meet the good cause exemption.
- Students who demonstrate, through a student portfolio, that the student is reading on grade level as evidenced by demonstration of mastery of the *Sunshine State Standards* in reading equal to at least a Level 2 performance on FCAT.
- Students With disabilities who participate in the FCAT, and who have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or a Section 504 plan that reflects the student has received the intensive remediation in reading, for more than two (2) years but still demonstrates a deficiency in reading and was previously retained in kindergarten, grade 1, grade 2, or grade 3.
- Students who have received the intensive remediation in reading as required for two (2) or more years but still demonstrate a deficiency in reading and who were previously retained in kindergarten, grade 1, grade 2, or grade 3 for a total of two years. If promoted under this exemption, intensive reading instruction must include an altered instructional day based on the deficiencies identified during the PMP process that includes specialized diagnostic information and specific reading strategies.

TITLE I ADMINISTRATION

The Title I Administration Parental Program helps parents/guardians become more engaged with their children's education, by building their capacity for involvement, thus ensuring a stronger partnership among the school(s) involved, parents/guardians, and the community, to improve student academic achievement. For this purpose the Title I funded Community Involvement Specialists (CIS) at Title I schools, assists school-sites, the District and Regional Centers in planning, implementing and delivering educational support programs and special projects, thus helping to meet District and school-site goals and objectives.

VISITORS

Due to legal regulations, students are not permitted to have guests attend school with them at any time. Parents/guardians are always welcome and tours may be arranged to view the school. Visitors must first register with security at the main entrance, sign-in and produce photo identification, and then proceed to register in the main office. For the safety and protection of all boys and girls, all visitors, including parents, must always sign in with a security guard before proceeding to the main office. **No students not attending Van E. Blanton Elementary are allowed on school grounds during school hours.**

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

The School Volunteer Program is responsible for electronic registration, background checks and trainings of volunteers. There are two different levels of volunteerism.

Level 1 - complete a database background check	Level 2 - complete a fingerprint background check
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Day chaperones for field trips •Classroom assistants •Math and/or reading tutors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Certified Volunteers •Mentors •Listeners/Oyentes •Athletic/Physical Education assistants •Overnight chaperones.

Any individual interested in volunteering in Miami-Dade County Public Schools must:

- Complete Registration Form #1764, date and sign, and submit to a school or work location.
- Show a current valid government-issued identification with picture.
- Show a social security card (check name and number).
- Complete a background check.
- Upon clearance, attend an orientation at the school.

Florida KidCare

Getting health insurance for your children before they become sick is very important. Florida KidCare is comprehensive health insurance for children from birth to age 18 who are uninsured. **Any family can apply**; the amount you pay is based on income and family size. Most families pay \$15 or \$20 each month or **nothing at all**. **Many non-citizen children may qualify**.

Services Include:

- Doctor Visits
- Mental Health
- Check-ups and Shots
- Prescriptions
- Hospital and Surgery
- Emergency Services
- Vision/Hearing
- Dental

Florida KidCare accepts applications all year. **No interview is required**. You can apply online at www.floridakidCare.org and click "Apply Online Now". **If you would like assistance, please visit this school and ask to speak with the KidCare Liaison.**

For more assistance, call 1-888-540-5437, or call The Parent Academy 305-995-2680.

ACCREDITATION

This year MDCP-S will undergo the accreditation process. Accreditation is a voluntary method of quality assurance developed more than 100 years ago by American universities and secondary schools, and designed primarily to distinguish schools adhering to a set of educational standards. The accreditation process is also known in terms of its ability to effectively drive student performance and continuous improvement in education. But such definitions, though accurate, are incomplete.

While accreditation is a set of rigorous protocols and research-based processes for evaluating an institution's organizational effectiveness, it is far more than that. Today accreditation examines the whole institution—the programs, the cultural context, the community of stakeholders—to determine how well the parts work together to meet the needs of students.

For many, accreditation is both a significant achievement pronouncing an institution's quality of education, as well as a remarkably enriching process for the institutions recognizing the tremendous competitive and performance gains it affords. Sadly, some schools approach accreditation as a necessary imposition that they must endure to secure the seal of accreditation, and the quicker they satisfy the requirements, the sooner they can return their attention to running their institutions. But it is those schools and school systems that see the untapped transformative

power in the process of accreditation that are able to build true capacity to improve student learning and make continuous school improvement a distinctive reality.

It is the process of accreditation that yields the greatest continuing return for institutions. When approached properly, the internal self-assessment an institution conducts against a set of research-based quality standards can produce a wealth of galvanizing insights. Honest self-evaluation is unparalleled in its ability to uncover and bring into sharp focus special challenges for an institution that may not have been fully understood. The external review is the hallmark of the accreditation process, and like the internal self-assessment, it energizes and equips the leadership and stakeholders of an institution or school system to tackle those areas that may be thwarting desired performance levels.

Accreditation is a force-multiplier. The process is a catalyst for transformative excellence, and AdvancED's accreditation process is designed on a standards-based framework to feed continuous improvement and transform education on a global scale. Education providers of all types around the world use AdvancED Accreditation.

- Elementary, Middle and Secondary Schools
- School Districts/Systems
- Postsecondary Schools
- Educational Corporations
- Digital Learning Institutions
- Educational Service Agencies
- Pre-K Institutions

Accreditation is inextricably linked to institution and educational system improvement. The accreditation process asks institutions and systems to critically evaluate their vision, strategies, priorities, leadership, and programs and resources. The process of earning and maintaining accreditation provides institutions and educational systems with clear and compelling direction for implementing changes to move toward excellence.

For more information regarding accreditation please visit:
<http://www.advanc-ed.org/what-accreditation>

PARENTS –RIGHT TO KNOW LETTER

Dear Parents/Guardian:

Miami-Dade County Public Schools is committed to providing information to you regarding your child's teacher and paraprofessional qualifications in a timely manner upon request.

You have the right to request the following information:

- Whether the teacher has met state licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
- Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which state qualifications of licensing criteria have been waived.
- The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree.
- Whether your child is provided services by paraprofessionals, and, if so, their qualifications.

You will be notified in writing if your child has been assigned or has been taught for more than four consecutive weeks by a teacher who has non mastery of academic standards.

Please be assured that Miami-Dade County Public Schools is dedicated to providing the students of this county with a quality education. The information regarding the qualifications of your child's teacher and/or the classroom paraprofessional may be obtained from the school.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tangela D. Goa". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tangela D. Goa
Principal

The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida adheres to a policy of nondiscrimination in employment and educational programs/activities and strives affirmatively to provide equal opportunity for all as required by:

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 - prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, or national origin.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended - prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, or national origin.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 - prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender.

Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA) as amended - prohibits discrimination on the basis of age with respect to individuals who are at least 40.

The Equal Pay Act of 1963 as amended - prohibits gender discrimination in payment of wages to women and men performing substantially equal work in the same establishment.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 - prohibits discrimination against the disabled.

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) - prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in employment, public service, public accommodations and telecommunications.

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) - requires covered employers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to "eligible" employees for certain family and medical reasons.

The Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978 - prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.

Florida Educational Equity Act (FEEA) - prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, gender, national origin, marital status, or handicap against a student or employee.

Florida Civil Rights Act of 1992 - secures for all individuals within the state freedom from discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap, or marital status.

Veterans are provided re-employment rights in accordance with P.L. 93-508 (Federal Law) and Section 205.07 (Florida Statutes), which stipulate categorical preferences for employment.