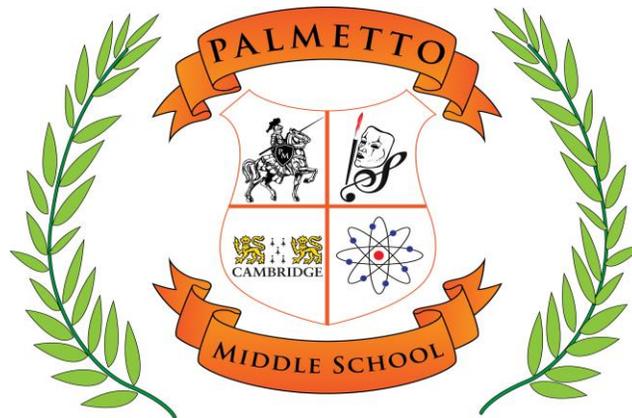


PALMETTO MIDDLE SCHOOL

Parent-Student Handbook

2017-2018



Principal

JESÚS GONZÁLEZ

Assistant Principals

RANDALL CROMER

TIFFANY KINCHEMS

Counselors

KAREN BEASLEY, Grade 7 and Grade 6 A-L

IVETTE TOLEDO, Grade 8 and Grade 6 M-Z

MISSION STATEMENT

Palmetto Middle School provides a safe learning environment for all students by encouraging educational excellence, recognizing individual achievements, promoting a climate of mutual respect, celebrating multi-cultural diversity, and enabling everyone to feel emotionally and socially secure.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

There is probably no factor more important to successful school progress than regular school attendance. Students who are absent excessively from the instructional program will fall behind in academic achievement. Excessive school absenteeism can precede course failure. The attendance rules are as follows:

1. A student accumulating ten (10) or more unexcused class absences in an annual course or five (5) or more unexcused class absences in a semester course will be subject to withholding of final passing grades; pending a student-requested administrative screening and/or review committee.
2. An attendance review committee is established at each school. The committee consists of three (3) or more school personnel who have the responsibility to review student attendance petitions during the last week of the year and recommend: A) issuing of final grades; B) temporary withholding of final grades pending make up assignments; or, C) permanent withholding of final grades and credits
3. The following are considered **excused absences**:
 - A. Illness of student
 - B. Medical appointment
 - C. Death in family
 - D. Observance of religious holiday or service when it is mandated for all members of a faith that such a holiday or service be observed
 - E. School personnel event or activity previously approved
 - F. Outdoor suspension
 - G. Court Order
 - H. Other individual student absences beyond the control of the parent or student as approved by the principal or his/her designee

ALL OTHER ABSENCES ARE UNEXCUSED. These include vacations, personal services, local non-school events, and program or sporting activities.

The above attendance policy is a summary of the official Miami-Dade County Public Schools Attendance Policy. Please refer to Board Policy 6Gx13-5A-1.041 for the complete policy.

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Notes must be submitted within three (3) days of the absence(s) from the parent stating the dates and reason for the absence(s). The absence will remain unexcused if the student does not bring a note. After the 10th absence, only official documents will be accepted for excused absences. PLEASE REFER TO THE SECTION ON MAKE-UP ASSIGNMENTS FOR FURTHER INFORMATION.

TARDIES

Students who are tardy to school must report to the Attendance Office to secure an “admit”. Excessive tardiness to school or class may be subject to disciplinary actions, including result in loss of privileges, detention, parent conference, and/or suspension.

EARLY DISMISSAL

The early release of students causes disruption to the academic performance of all students and may create safety and security concerns. No student shall be released within the final thirty (30) minutes of the school day unless authorized by the principal or principal’s designee (i.e., emergency, sickness). Students **MUST** be present for a minimum of two hours in order to be marked present for the school day. Please refer to Miami-Dade County Public Schools Board Policy 6Gx13- 5A-1.041 for the complete policy.

SCHOOL INSURANCE

Participation in the school insurance program is voluntary; however, all students taking part in athletic competitions and/or enrolled in vocational lab classes must carry the student accident insurance. A limited amount of school insurance forms are available, however, forms can be accessed at <https://www.hsri.com/>.

STUDENT SERVICES

Student services personnel help students concentrate on their potential for success. They use assessment, consultation, prevention, and collaboration to assist in development of appropriate behavioral and academic interventions. Student Services is an integral part of the school’s total commitment to individual uniqueness and the development of human potential. Personal, social, educational, and career needs of students are addressed.

Counselors will be available for consultation and guidance throughout the year. Students and parents are urged to contact the counselor anytime there are concerns. It is our intent to be responsive to your needs.

Students may obtain a “Counselor Request Form” from his/her homeroom teacher or the attendance office. Fill in all the information and return form to any teacher or to the counselor’s box in the attendance office. The designated counselor for the student’s grade will contact the student as soon as possible. In an emergency situation, students may ask one of his/her teachers for a pass to the guidance office. **Students are not allowed to come to the office between classes. They should first report to class.**

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU DON’T FEEL WELL

If a student becomes ill or is injured while at school, the student must obtain a pass from his/her teacher and report to the attendance office. If a student needs to take medication while at school, the medication must be brought to the attendance office along with an **Authorization for Medication Form**. The form can be obtained in the attendance office and needs to be signed by both the prescribing physician and a parent. The medicine will be kept in a locked cabinet in the office and will be dispensed at the appropriate time. If a student has any medical problems, please notify a member of the office staff before school begins session in the morning. It is important that the office staff has all of the student’s

medical information in order to take proper care of any situation. Any information provided to the office staff will be kept confidential.

EMERGENCY CONTACT CARD

The first week of school, students will be given an “Emergency Contact Card” to be completed by his/her parent or authorized guardian. Parents or authorized guardians are to complete the emergency cards and return them to the student’s teacher immediately. **In case of emergencies, students cannot be released to anyone except the parent/guardian or persons authorized on the signed Emergency Contact Card.** When a student’s telephone number and/or address changes, the parent must notify the school immediately. Safety is our number one concern. Please make sure you update the information provided on the Emergency Contact Card if it changes within the academic year.

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT STUDENT EMERGENCY DATA ON THE EMERGENCY CONTACT SHEET BE KEPT CURRENT IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY.

WHERE’S YOUR PASS?

All students must have a laminated pass from his/her teacher before leaving the classroom while school is in session. Students in the hallways without an official hall pass will be subject to disciplinary action.

TEXTBOOKS

Students are expected to properly care for textbooks and assume full responsibilities for the care of books loaned to them. Books are issued by the subject area teacher and must be returned to the same teacher upon completion of the year or withdrawal from school.

Lost or damaged books due to theft or other circumstances will result in the student being assessed a fee. Failure of the student to pay for lost or damaged books within a reasonable amount of time will deprive the student of further use of free textbooks. Upon payment for a lost book, another book will be issued. If a book presumed lost is found and returned, a refund will given to the parent.

ONCE YOU’RE HERE, YOU’RE HERE

Palmetto Middle School has a closed-campus policy. Students must stay on the grounds from the time they arrive, even if first period has not yet started, until dismissal. Students will be dismissed for appointments through the attendance office following a request by the parent/guardian, in person, at the attendance office. **Students will be released only to those persons authorized on the Emergency Contact Card. Proper identification in the form of a legal photo ID is required.** Students will not be allowed to sign out on their own to walk home. When a student returns to school the following day, all teachers of classes missed must sign his/her permit. **AT THE END OF THE SCHOOL DAY, ALL STUDENTS WHO ARE NOT INVOLVED IN PALMETTO MIDDLE SCHOOL SUPERVISED AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ARE TO LEAVE THE SCHOOL GROUNDS BY 4:00PM. THE SCHOOL IS NOT TO BE USED AS A HANGOUT FOR STUDENTS.**

HOMEWORK

Successful homework assignments engage students in purposeful, relevant learning that meets their academic needs. Homework learning activities help students understand concepts, develop thinking skills, and focus on applying their new knowledge. In addition, research indicates that:

- Schools in which homework is routinely assigned and reviewed tend to have higher achieving students. Homework should be checked in a timely fashion, where corrective feedback is given to students.
- Homework should be necessary and useful, appropriate to the ability and maturity level of students, well explained and motivational, and clearly understood by students and parents.
- The amount of assigned homework should be tied to current subject matter and learner needs based upon level of difficulty to aid in successful completion.

Homework will not be used for the following reasons:

- To discipline or punish students
- To introduce or practice skills the student does not understand
- To assess a students' learning without reference to other work

HOME-LEARNING TIME EXPECTATIONS

Educators have differing opinions on the amount of homework that is necessary for children. School Board policy recommends the following minutes that include assignments for all subject areas and teachers collectively per school day:

- Grades 6, 7, and 8 - 75 minutes daily (5 days a week)

Guidelines suggest that students should also read for 30 minutes in addition to homework assignments. Additionally, specialized programs such as gifted and/or High School credit courses receive increased levels of homework due to rigorous course work demands.

Homework assignments are aligned to standards and expectations for the grade/course of the students as well as their academic needs. Homework may vary depending on the grade level and specific programs such as SPED, Gifted, or students enrolled in High School credit courses. Access to technology are taken into consideration. Assignments may be modified to accommodate students who do not have access.

EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS

- Contact the teacher early, if the student begins to develop a pattern of late or incomplete work.
- Contact the teacher to clear up any misunderstandings, troubleshoot problems and be better informed about the students' learning progress

GENERAL RULES

- Students must walk in the hallways at all times. There is to be no running or horseplay.
- All students must have a pass to be in the halls during class time.
- Smoking and controlled substances are prohibited.
- Gum is prohibited.

- **Use of profanity, abusive, vulgar language and/or gestures will not be tolerated. Racial slurs or any degrading comments will not be tolerated.** Students may not engage in any act of sexual harassment of a physical or verbal nature. Such acts will result in serious disciplinary action. Bullying of any kind, including cyber bullying, is not tolerated. Threats of any kind are not tolerated.
- Selling items on school grounds is prohibited.
- Electronic devices are only allowed with special permission granted by the classroom teacher or school personnel.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

When it becomes necessary, detentions and/or work detail will be assigned for lack of cooperation or disrespect for others and/or the learning environment. Students who fail to follow the requirements of the team policies or are tardy to class may be subject to administrative disciplinary procedures. Students who fail to serve a detention will be assigned to SCSI. **Please refer to the Code of Student Conduct** for further information.

School Center for Special Instruction (SCSI)

Students may be assigned to the School Center for Special Instruction, instead of outdoor suspension. The center will provide tutorial and guidance services.

Student Success Center (Rule6Gx1335A1.06)

Assigned of up to ten (10) days may be issued to students for breach of the Code of Student Conduct. T

Code of Student Conduct, Violations, and Disciplinary Actions

The Code defines distinct violations identified by principals, administrators, teachers, students and community members which are representative of those acts that frequently cause disruption of the orderly educational process. It should be pointed out, however, that this list is not all-inclusive, and a student committing an act of misconduct not listed will be subject to the discretionary authority of the principal. A major consideration in the application of the Code of Student Conduct is to identify the most appropriate disciplinary action for bringing about positive student behavior. Student services personnel such as counselors, visiting teachers and psychologists play a vital role in assisting the student in resolving any problems influencing his/her behavior in a negative manner.

The Principal, teacher, or both, consistent with the powers delegated to them, have the authority to take additional administrative action if, in their opinion, the nature of the misconduct warrants it. students who have 5 or more days of indoor or any days of outdoor suspensions will be excluded from field trips and/or team activities.

PROHIBITED ITEMS

Personal property such as wallets with chains, permanent markers, balloons, skateboards, radios, iPods, laser pointers, video game cartridges. CD's, cameras, toys, stink bombs, shaving foam, pepper spray, mace, animals, etc. are not permitted in school. These items will be confiscated and returned only to parents. GUM is not permitted at Palmetto Middle School. Any clothing, hairstyle, jewelry, accessory that is a safety concern and/or contributes to disruption of the learning environment is not permitted. **Cell phones must be turned off and not to be visible during school hours unless the student is participating in a teacher-approved activity using the Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) network. The school will not be responsible for any device or data loss, theft, damage, or cost related to replacement or repair. Please log on to wifi.dadeschools.net for additional information.**

PURSES, WATCHES, GLASSES, BOOKBAGS, AND OTHER VALUABLES SHOULD NEVER BE LEFT UNATTENDED. WRITE YOUR NAME ON ALL ITEMS BROUGHT TO SCHOOL, INCLUDING COATS AND JACKETS.

Students who find lost articles are expected to take these to the attendance office immediately. Lost articles that are not claimed within a reasonable period of time will be given to charitable organizations.

The school will not be responsible or spend time looking for lost, stolen or confiscated items, including, but not limited to, cell phones and electronic devices. We strongly discourage students from bringing expensive phones or other electronic devices.

MEDIA CENTER

The library is open from 8:30 AM to 3:50 PM. Passes are required for admission to the media center. The electronic security system is in full operation and will set off an alarm if books are taken out without being checked out at the circulation desk. Books may be checked out for a two-week period and may be renewed for another two weeks. Magazines and reference materials may be checked out on an overnight basis to be returned the following school day before classes begin.

OVERDUE BOOKS

Books are to be returned on or before the date stamped on the back cover. Books returned after that date will accrue a fine of five (5) cents per day. The fine for late overnight reference materials is fifty (50) cents per day.

LOST BOOKS

Students are responsible for taking care of and return any book checked out. If a book is lost or damaged while checked out to a student, that student will be expected to pay for it.

INTERNET USE POLICY

Access and use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and its use must support the educational objectives of the district. Students must always get permission from their teachers prior to using the Internet. In addition, the district prohibits the transmission of materials such as copyright material, threatening or obscene material or material protected by trade secret, which violate local, state and federal law or regulation, as well as the use of the Internet for product advertisement, commercial activities, political campaigning or solicitation.

AUTOMOBILES, MOTORCYCLES, AND BIKES

Students are not allowed to drive any gas-powered vehicle such as mopeds, scooters, etc. to school. The parking lot is only for school personnel. Parents are not permitted to drop students in the parking lot. A locked area is provided for students to chain and lock students' bicycles. The school is not responsible for stolen or damaged bicycles. Students are under direction of the school and must observe all school rules while on their way to school in the morning, while in school during the day, and on their way home after school (including while they are outside the boundaries of the school campus).

TRANSPORTATION

The Miami Dade County School Board furnishes free school bus transportation to students who live more than two miles from the school and/or whom a doctor has certified as handicapped. Students must:

- Board and leave the bus at their assigned stop only.

- Ride no bus other than the one to which student is assigned. Students are not authorized to ride any other bus for any reason.
- Behave in an orderly manner while riding the bus.

Furthermore, missing the bus is not a reason for an excused absence. **THROWING AND SPITTING THINGS FROM BUS WINDOWS WILL RESULT IN SUSPENSION.** Riding the bus to school is a privilege, which should not be abused by the student. The bus driver is responsible for the safety of all riders and will report any misconduct to the appropriate school administrator. **Students may be temporarily or permanently suspended from the bus by the school principal for conduct which violates the rules.**

USE OF THE TELEPHONE

Students are allowed to use an office telephone in case of an actual emergency. Messages are a disruption of class time and will not be delivered except in an emergency. Students must have an official hall pass from their teacher to use the office telephone. **Cell phones must be turned off and not visible during school hours.**

LOCKS AND LOCKERS

Hall lockers are available for the storage of books and supplies. You may only use school locks which are sold early in the school year. **Other locks will be cut off.** Lockers may be subject to search. Difficulty with locks should be reported to the appropriate administrator. Do not share lockers or combinations. The school will investigate reports of stolen property, but it cannot be held responsible for items lost, damaged, or taken from the locker. You are financially responsible for lost locks or damage to the locker.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Participation in field trips, social events, class trips and dances is a privilege that must be earned. Since the school assumes the responsibility for the safety of each child as well as the entire group, all Miami-Dade County School Board rules will be enforced. The school dress code will also be enforced for each event. Chaperone directions are to be followed by each student or disciplinary actions will be administered upon their return to school. **There are no refunds for paid field trips.**

CAFETERIA GUIDELINES

Students will report to their third period first and the classroom teacher will escort the class to the cafeteria. Keep tables, seats and floors clean. Students are to remain seated until picked up by their classroom teacher.

STUDENT DRESS CODE/UNIFORM CRITERIA

SHIRTS

- Girl's or boy's polo shirt with approved school logo.

- Oxford button down shirt with collar with approved school logo.
- Approved Spirit-Wear* Shirt, Spirit-Wear T-Shirt, or Palmetto Middle School Club. Sports shirts may be worn **ON FRIDAYS ONLY**.
- Button down shirts **may not** be worn open.
- **Approved school colors: white, black, grey, and orange**

Spirit-Wear is defined as clothing which has been pre-approved by PMS Student Activities, is related to school activities, organizations, clubs, or athletic teams, and **have not been altered in anyway.*

***Shirts with logos are available at vendors listed on school website (pms.dadeschools.net).*

SHORTS and PANTS

- Knee-length, solid color shorts or cargo-style shorts
- Capri pants, pants or jeans
- Shorts and pants must be worn at the waist
- Shorts must reach the knee
- Pant legs may not drag on the floor
- Shorts or pants may not have embellishments, embroidery, patches or holes
- **Approved school colors: khaki, black, blue, and grey**

UNDERSHIRT

- Undershirts may be worn with shirts
- Solid color t-shirts may be worn underneath an outer shirt
- **Approved colors: white, black, grey, and orange**
- Pre-approved Spirit-Wear t-shirts may be worn underneath an outer shirt

OUTERWEAR

- Solid color sweatshirt, sweater, and/or jacket may be worn over uniform shirts
- Outerwear may not have embellishments, embroidery, patches or holes
- **Approved colors: Black and grey.**

SHOES

- Sneakers, shoes with a back, or completely closed shoes

ITEMS NOT PERMITTED

- Caps, hats, headwear or hoods

GUESTS AND OTHER VISITORS

Due to legal regulations, students are not permitted to have guests attend school with them at any time. Parents are always welcome and tours may be arranged to view the school. Classroom visits require a 24-hour notice. Visitors must first register in the main office. Anyone who fails to follow these procedures will be considered a trespasser and is subject to arrest.

PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES

While it is understood that parents are not responsible for providing a great deal of assistance to the student in completing homework, there is still much that parents can do to promote good study habits. Checking the Agenda Book for assignments will assist parents in monitoring the student's homework. Responsibilities include:

- Providing an environment conducive to study.
- Providing continued interest and concern for the child's successful performance in school.
- Encouraging and supporting the child in his/her performance of homework assigned.
- Demonstrating an interest in assignments and assisting, if possible, when requested by the child. This is not to include performing the work for the child.
- Supporting the school in regard to the student being assigned homework. Requesting assignments for students when short-term absences are involved.
- Making sure student reads for a minimum of thirty (30) minutes each night as per District Comprehensive Reading Plan.

INTERIM PROGRESS REPORT

Interim Progress Reports are issued approximately four and one-half weeks after the start of a grading period. They are to be signed by the parent and returned to the homeroom teacher.

UNSATISFACTORY PROGRESS REPORT

It is the school's intention that students work to the best of their ability at all times. Occasionally, however, when a student is not working to that potential, or is displaying disruptive behavior, an unsatisfactory progress notice will be issued. This report is to be signed by the parent or guardian and returned to the issuing teacher. The intention of this procedure is to help the student progress satisfactorily.

PROCEDURES FOR ADDRESSING CONCERNS

Parents should address concerns to the following individuals in this order: teacher, counselor, assistant principal, principal.

EVALUATING STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Academic grades are to reflect the student's academic progress based on the standards for the grade level/course in which the student is enrolled. The academic grading scale as per Miami Dade County Public Schools is as follows:

Grade	Percentage (%)	Point Value
A	90-100	4
B	80-89	3
C	70-79	2
D	60-69	1
F	0-59	0
I	0	0

Conduct grades are to be used to communicate to both students and parents the teacher's evaluation of a student's behavior and citizenship development. These grades are independent of academic and effort grades.

HONOR ROLL

Palmetto Middle School has several programs for recognizing student achievement. These include

PRINCIPAL’S HONOR ROLL

A’s in academics and conduct and 1’s in effort.
Academic average = 4.00

SUPERIOR HONOR ROLL

A’s and B’s in both academics and conduct and 1’s or 2’s in effort.
Academic average = 3.60

REGULAR HONOR ROLL

No grade below a B in academics and conduct and 1’s and 2’s in effort.
Academic average = 3.50

EXTRACURRICULAR SPORTS/ACTIVITIES

Palmetto Middle School provides an extensive extracurricular program. Extracurricular activities are designed to meet the needs and interests of all students as an effort to encourage student involvement. The program begins after school and lasts until 4:50 pm. Students are required to prearrange their own transportation home. Specific dates and times for activities are listed weekly and can be found on the school calendar posted on the school’s website.

PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS

Students in grades 6, 7, and 8 are required to enroll in a total of 18 annual courses: 12 required courses and six (6) elective courses. Students are required to take and pass language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and two electives per year.

Students must pass all courses each year with a minimum cumulative total of 10 points, 5 of which must be made within the second semester (referred to as the 5 point rule.)

Grade	Language Arts	Mathematics	Social Studies	Science	Elective	TOTAL
6	1	1	1	1	2	6
7	1	1	1	1	2	6
8	1	1	1	1	2	6

INDEPENDENT READING REQUIREMENT

All Miami Dade County Public School students in grades 1-12 are required to read a minimum of five books during each nine-week grading period. This includes in-class independent reading and at-home reading. A minimum of thirty (30) minutes of at-home reading is a daily homework assignment for all Miami-Dade County Public Schools students, as mandated by the M-DCPS Comprehensive Reading Plan for improvement of reading achievement.

SCHOOL WEBSITE & APP

Our school’s website and App provides pertinent and useful information. Make sure you take advantage of the links to each core subject, activities, clubs, teachers, and the school calendar. The school calendar is refreshed monthly. The website address is: palmettomiddle.com You may download our App via the App store.

PARENT PORTAL

Parents may access student information at <http://myportal.dadeschools.net/parent>

If you have not registered online, you will be required to visit the school to receive your 6 digit PIN.

BELL SCHEDULE

Homeroom/Advisement	9:10 AM - 9:40 AM
Period 1	9:44 AM - 10:34 AM
Period 2	10:38 AM - 11:28 AM
Period 3	11:32 AM - 1:08 PM
Period 4	1:12 PM - 2:02 PM
Period 5	2:06 PM - 2:56 PM
Period 6	3:00 PM - 3:50 PM

Anti-Discrimination Policy

Federal and State Laws

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.

Title II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA) - prohibits discrimination against employees or applicants because of genetic information.

Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act of 2002 – no public school shall deny equal access to, or a fair opportunity for groups to meet on school premises or in school facilities before or after school hours, or discriminate against any group officially affiliated with Boy Scouts of America or any other youth or community group listed in Title 36 (as a patriotic society).

Veterans are provided re-employment rights in accordance with P.L. 93-508 (Federal Law) and Section 295.07 (Florida Statutes), which stipulate categorical preferences for employment.

In Addition:

School Board Policies 1362, 3362, 4362, and 5517 - Prohibit harassment and/or discrimination against students, employees, or applicants on the basis of sex, race, color, ethnic or national origin, religion, marital status, disability, genetic information, age, political beliefs, sexual orientation, gender, gender identification, social and family background, linguistic preference, pregnancy, and any other legally prohibited basis.

Retaliation for engaging in a protected activity is also prohibited.

Revised: (07.14)