

# **Somerset Academy Charter High**

A Tuition Free Miami-Dade County Public Charter School

# **Parent-Student Handbook 2019-2020**



## **Home of the Stallions**

## **Our Mission**

Somerset Academy, Inc. promotes a culture that maximizes student achievement and fosters the development of responsible, self-directed, life-long learners in a safe and enriching environment.

## **Our Beliefs**

**S**et high expectations

**O**bjective

**M**eaningful curriculum

**E**ffective

**R**esourceful and responsible life-long learners

**S**tudents who achieve proficiency and beyond

**E**valuate continuously and use data to drive curriculum

**T**eachers who are highly qualified

## **Our Core Principles**

- Effective School leaders
- Highly qualified staff
- Data assessments to drive curriculum and educational focus
- Safe and secure learning environment
- Effectual governing boards
- Research-based curriculum
- Balanced budgets to ensure resources for student achievement and teacher efficiency
- Teamwork with stakeholders: community leaders, parents, students, teachers, the administration and governing board
- Continuous improvement as main focal point
- Communication among all Somerset Academy leaders
- Teacher training and mentoring throughout the academic year

# Somerset Academy Charter High

## Administrative Staff

Kerri Ann Rodriguez, Principal  
Cristina Ayo Fernandez, Lead Teacher  
Ryan Salazar, Curriculum Specialist  
Vicky Martinez, Activities Director  
Kenny Floyd, Athletic Director  
Jacklyn Valdes, ESE Specialist  
Elizabeth Aguiar, Counselor Grades 9-12  
Danielle Bond, CAP Advisor

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## School Hours

9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade – 7:20 am – 2:20 pm

## Breakfast

9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade – 6:35 am – 7:05 am

## Bell Schedule

7:20 AM – 8:35 AM Period 1  
**(8:25am – 8:35am Morning Announcements)**  
8:40 AM – 10:15 AM Period 2 or 3  
10:20 AM – 12:40 PM Period 4 or 5  
12:45 PM – 2:20 PM Period 6 or 7

The High School Schedule runs on an alternate A&B Block Schedule

**“A” days are periods 1, 3, 5, 7**

**“B” days are periods 1, 2, 4, 6**

## **Attendance Policy**

Absences will be marked as unexcused until the student presents a valid excuse to the attendance Admit designee within **72 HOURS** of his/her return to school or it will remain as an unexcused absence. **All notes must be attached to the “Admit/Absence Notification Form”**. Absence Notification Forms are available at the Main Security Desk, School Front Desk or on the school website: somersetsilverpalms.net. The first 10 absent days are excusable with doctor’s or parent’s note. Be aware that 15 or more unexcused absences in a 90 day period will result in the student being considered truant and will be reported to Department of Justice.

**Students are not to receive credit for make-up work when absence is unexcused. Grade of “Z” must be issued.**

### **Absences will ONLY be excused for the following reasons:**

1. Student illness or hospitalization
2. Medical Appointment (must present doctor’s note showing date and time of appointment)
3. Death in the immediate family (must provide a copy of death certificate)
4. Observance of a religious holiday or service recognized by Miami Dade County Public Schools
5. Official summons to appear in court or immigration appointment (documentation of these must be provided)
6. School sponsored events or activities previously approved by administrators
7. Other individual student absences beyond the control of the parent or student must be approved by the principal or assistant principal. Transportation issues and parent/sibling illness will **NOT** be excused.

### **Absences Policy Procedure**

At 5 absences (both excused and unexcused): Counselor will contact parent with a warning and document with case management form.

At 7 absences (both excused and unexcused): Counselor will email administration and schedule meeting with parent.

At 10 absences: Counselor will email administration and schedule meeting with parent.

	<b><u>FIVE ABSENCES(5)</u></b>	<b><u>SEVEN ABSENCES(7)</u></b>	<b><u>TEN ABSENCES(10)</u></b>
<b><u>EXCUSED:</u></b>	- Conference with administrator and counselor	- Conference with administrator and counselor	- Conference with administrator and counselor
	- Case management form	- Case management form	- Case management form
			- Students are NO longer eligible for activities, sports or extra-curricular events
			- Grade may be withheld
<b><u>UNEXCUSED:</u></b>	- Conference with administrator and counselor	- Conference with administrator and counselor	- Conference with administrator and counselor
	- Administrative referral and contract	- Administrative referral and contract	- Second written referral
			- Saturday school from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm
			- Students are NO longer eligible for activities, sports or extra-curricular events
			- Grade may be withheld

**Pre-approved absences:** In the event you know your child will be absent for several days, you need to submit a “Absence Notification Form” to the Main Office for approval no less than 10 school days prior to the expected absences. FAMILY VACATIONS **WILL NOT** BE EXCUSED.

**Make-up Work** All students are entitled to receive their assignments or “Make-Up” work for any absence or suspension. **MAKE UP WORK IS NOT TO BE WITHHELD FROM ANY STUDENT.** Students **ARE NOT** entitled to receive a grade/credit for missed work with an unexcused absence (Hence the need for an **ADMIT**). Assignments must be completed within 24 hours (X per missed days) after returning to school. In addition, all assignments must be made-up or the student will be issued an incomplete or “**Z**”. Be aware, incomplete assignments may affect the student’s final grade. It is the student/parent’s responsibility to contact the teacher regarding any missed assignments. If a student anticipates being absent for more than two consecutive days, it is the student’s/parent’s responsibility to contact the school and pick-up any class work/homework from the teacher.

**Illness** Students accumulating ten (10) or more absences in an annual course or five (5) or more absences in a semester course due to illness from school must be documented as under the supervision of a physician in order for the absences to be excused. In addition, it is required that the school have a signed note from a physician on file to receive an excused absence thereafter.

**Consequences** Students accumulating ten (10) or more absences in an annual course, or five (5) or more absences in a semester course, will be subject to the withholding of passing final grade(s) pending a student/parent requested administrative screening and/or review of all absences by the attendance review committee. Students with fifteen (15) or more

unexcused absences, in a 90 calendar day period, are subject to having a complaint of truancy filed with the Department of Juvenile Justice and legal action will be taken to insure regular attendance. ***In addition, any student who has ten (10) or more absences and/or twenty (20) or more cumulative tardies in an annual course WILL NOT be allowed to participate in extra-curricular activities, field trips, interscholastic competitions including sports and/or performances for the remainder of the school year. In addition, students may have their grade withheld.***

**THIS WILL BE STRICTLY ENFORCED**

## **TARDIES**

**All tardies are considered as UNEXCUSED.** Students arriving tardy to school must report to front desk, where they will be scanned/checked in as “Tardy to School”. Students must present a valid school ID to then be issued a “Tardy to School Pass”. Only then will student be authorized to proceed to current class period. Students **WILL NOT** be admitted to any class tardy without a **“TARDY to Class Pass” nor a valid School ID.** Students with excessive tardies are subject to consequences with parent contact and administrative discipline and/or will be referred to the administration/Attendance Review Committee.

### **Consequences for Tardies per 9 Weeks for High School**

- **0-3 Tardies** -- Verbal Warning issued
- **4-5 Tardies** – Assigned an Administrative Detention
- **6<sup>th</sup> Tardy**—Assigned an Administrative Detention for Saturday Morning
- **7+ Tardies** – Assigned **(1)** Day Outdoor Suspension & repeated for each subsequent tardy. Written Referral to Administration for Parent Contact with Attendance Intervention Plan.

## **EARLY DISMISSAL**

1. Parents/guardians or any other adult (21 or older) who is **listed on** the Emergency Contact Card must come to the Front /Attendance Office in order to request an early dismissal.
2. The adult picking up a student must present picture identification and this must be validated using the information in the Emergency Contact Card in order for students to be released. **Students will not be dismissed to any person NOT listed on the emergency contact card.**
3. Early releases will count as absences and will affect the student’s attendance record for the classes missed. Students are responsible for the assignments missed.
4. NO student under the age of 18 is allowed to sign themselves out without administrative approval and parent contact.
5. NO student will be released for early dismissal 30 minutes prior to general school dismissal per School Board Policy.

## Uniform/ID Policy

The appearance of the Student Body at Somerset Academy Charter High is of paramount importance. Appearance is fundamental to good character, social development and academic success.

The following is the Uniform/ID policy that is implemented at Somerset Academy Charter High. All students are required to follow and abide by this policy with no exceptions. Students with excessive uniform/ID violations are subject to consequences with parent contact and/or referral to administration for discipline.

- 1) **Somerset Academy Charter High issued School ID MUST be worn at all times on School property.** Students will be issued current IDs at beginning of each new school year for no charge. Students may purchase a temporary or full replacement IDs for a fee during the school year as needed.
- 2) All students are required to wear uniforms sold from the approved uniform company. Uniforms must be worn daily. All uniform garments (Both Pants & Shirts) must be embroidered with the school logo and name. Uniform Shirts must be Polo type with correct class color and must bear the school Logo/Crest. 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade Uniform Pants must be embroidered and be khaki colored.
- 3) Pants and shirts that are too big, too small, or too tight (No Skinny Pants, Joggers or Jean Type Material ex.) for the student **WILL NOT** be acceptable and will be deemed as a violation of the uniform code.
- 4) Belts must be **ALL BLACK** and worn at all times by both boys and girls and fastened securely at waist level. Pants must be worn at waist level at all times. Too tight, too loose or low pants will not be allowed.
- 5) All shirts will be worn in neatly manner at all times and pants secured in place with the belt. Shirt colors allowed for 9<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> grade students, are black, grey or navy polo shirts. Polo shirts must be worn all time and may not be substituted for with other types of clothing. **ONLY** school authorized outerwear or sold by "All Uniform Wear" jackets in blue, will be permitted.
- 6) Undershirts (t-shirts, etc.) may only be white. No other colors will be allowed.
- 7) Shoes must be closed toed and **ALL BLACK**. Matching laces must be worn and fastened tightly at all times. Socks must be worn at all times.
- 8) **NO HOODED SWEATSHIRTS (HOODIES) OF ANY TYPE OR REPRESENTATION ARE TO BE WORN AT ANYTIME ON SCHOOL PROPERTY OR SCHOOL EVENTS. \*\*\*\*\***
- 9) Uniforms must be clean at all times. Good personal grooming of hair, skin and fingernails is expected at all times.
- 10) Hair must not be dyed with unnatural colors, worn unusually, or maintained in an unacceptable condition. Men's hair should not extend past the shirt collar, nor the front length below the eyebrow level.  
**\*\*Any hairstyle that the administration deems inappropriate and/or distracting to the learning environment will not be permitted such as Mohawks or Variations thereof allowed. \*\***
- 11) All headgear is forbidden to be worn on school property except as deemed acceptable by administration for special events. This includes: Hats, Bandanas, Skull Cap, Head Wraps, etc.

- 12) No buttons, tags, or labels may be worn on the school uniform unless approved by the administration.
- 13) No writing on school uniforms or school approved apparel will be permitted.
- 14) **No Tattoos may be exposed, nor will writing/drawings on any body part that is visible be permitted.**

### **Boy's Uniform**

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

- Wear earrings (real or clip-on), Tooth Jewelry (Grills-Caps) nor have any visible body piercings or tattoos
- Wear any additional jewelry or clothing except as specified above

### **Girl's Uniform**

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

- No other visible piercings, for example Nose/Tongue or tattoos are allowed. Earrings must be worn in appropriate manner as deemed acceptable by the administration or be removed upon request.
- Tooth Jewelry (Grills-Caps)
- Wear headscarves. Hair should be maintained with clips, bobby pins, or soft hair bands only. No Bandanas or hats allowed. Religious exceptions may apply.

### **Important Note for Science Classes**

**Many brands of hair styling products contain highly flammable chemicals, even when they are dry. It is advised that these should not be worn in science classrooms as there is a risk of ignition from open flames.** Additionally, it is recommended that students purchase a plain apron for use in these classes during their time in school to protect their clothes from damage during lab work. The school cannot, nor will be held responsible for damage to students' person or property if they do not follow the safety guidelines above and those advised in their classrooms.

## **CHAIN OF COMMAND**

### **Procedures for Addressing Concerns**

Conferences with individual teachers must be arranged by contacting the teacher. Contact may be made by calling the school office or emailing the teacher. Please make appointments for conferences before or after school hours. Teachers may also be available during their breaks; however you must make an appointment during these times.



**PLEASE DO NOT ENGAGE IN UNSCHEDULED PARENT CONFERENCES DURING ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL OF STUDENTS, DROP-OFF LANES, PARKING LOTS OR HALLWAYS BEFORE-DURING-AFTER CLASSROOM TIME.**

Please attempt to resolve issues/conflicts with the teacher directly. Most issues can be resolved thru an email or phone conversation. It is strongly encouraged for our parents to have open and honest communication with their child's teachers.

Order of contact to resolve an issue is:

**Teacher → Counselor → Dean of Students → Assistant Principal → Principal**

### **Code of Excellence**

We believe that a safe and orderly school is of primary importance. When children behave in a respectful, responsible and safe manner, they learn more and develop into responsible adults who realize the importance of: "Character Counts."

The Somerset Academy Charter High Code of Excellence is a school-wide plan that clearly outlines students' expectations. As a Miami-Dade County Public Charter School, Somerset Academy Charter High uses the Code of Student Conduct published and distributed by the Miami-Dade County Public School Board as a general guideline. In order to ensure a safe and orderly learning environment, Somerset Academy Charter High enforces stricter standards for its students as outlined in the School Wide Discipline Plan. Each parent must take an active role in supporting the school's Code of Excellence. It is in the children's best interest that parents and staff work together to ensure a happy, safe and productive learning experience.

### **School Wide Discipline Plan**

Somerset Academy Charter High holds a **Zero Tolerance** policy for infractions of the Code of Student Conduct as listed in the **Severe Clause** below.

**Please note that this list is NOT all-inclusive and the school administration reserves the right and discretionary authority to enforce consequences accordingly for any disciplinary issue.**

A **Severe Clause** can be enacted automatically when the student performs one of the violations listed below:

*Fighting, drugs, weapons, profanity, defiance of school personnel, assault upon a student or staff member, and/or any continuous disruptive behavior that disrupts the learning environment or posed threat shall be deemed an action under the Severe Clause. Any infraction within the Severe Clause will result in immediate outdoor suspension.*

## **Social Media and Bullying**

The inappropriate use of social media will not be tolerated, this includes but is not limited to cyber-bullying, transmission of inappropriate material and sexting. If there is deemed reasonable cause, electronic devices may be confiscated and their contents examined. Bullying, whether thru electronic means or expressed verbally or physically will not be tolerated.

## **Classroom Discipline**

In addition to observance of school wide discipline, all students at Somerset Academy Charter High must follow each teacher's individual **Classroom Discipline Plan** and will be subject to that teacher's enforced consequences. Parents will receive and sign each teacher's discipline plan at the beginning of the school year.

## **Satisfactory Progress**

Students at Somerset Academy Charter High must maintain a minimum 2.0 GPA, as well as a satisfactory attendance and behavior record. **Non-compliance with these requirements will prevent the students from participating in any extra-curricular activities and eligibility to participate in sports.** In addition, non-compliance with these requirements will result in the student being placed on an academic/behavior contract and placed in a probationary period for improvement. If the school identifies your student as requiring additional instruction and/or remediation, participation in, including but not limited to, successful completion of identified mandatory tutoring and/or summer school sessions shall be required. Make-up sessions or Alternative Options may be scheduled at the discretion of the administration. Failure to comply may result in a student's grade retention.

## **Activities-Sports**

**In order for any student to be eligible to participate in ANY extracurricular activity, school event, field trip or sports team, the student must meet the following requirements:**

### **Grades 9-12:**

- Must have a previous and current **2.0 GPA**
- Must have NO more than 1 "F" in a class in the current grading period
- No more than 1 referral per semester.
- No conduct grade below a "C" in any class
- Must not have reached five **(5)** tardies in the current grading period nor twenty **(20)** in total.
- Must not have reached ten **(10)** total absences in a school year.
- Any suspension from school ten **(10)** days or more or an offense as listed under the **Severe Clause**.

- Must not be delinquent with any owed school monies/fees/dues or Volunteer Hours, etc. See below.

### **Financial Obligations**

- All money transactions are to be handled through the school treasurer or designee.
- Failure to pay any & all outstanding fees may result in the loss and/or suspension of extra-curricular activity privilege. In addition, any & all outstanding fees may result in the holding of graduation materials such as transcripts and diploma until such monies are paid.
- Fees may include but shall not be limited to: lost books, late course/library fees, lunch accounts, before/after care fees, field trips, athletic (team sports) fees and any & all fees which may accrue in the normal course of the school year, etc.

### **Volunteer Hours**

Parental/Guardian involvement is a critical component of your child's educational success. Somerset Academy prides itself on the success of our students and therefore requires that parents/guardians become active stakeholders in their child's future.

- All Somerset Academy parents/guardians are asked to complete thirty (30) volunteer hours, or the equivalent, per academic year.
- All parent/guardian volunteer hours must be completed prior to April 3<sup>rd</sup> of the current school year and/or any graduation/promotion ceremony if applicable.
- For each sibling, you are asked to complete an additional fifteen (15) hours, or equivalent, per academic year.

***\*\*\*Please note that all of the above lists are NOT all-inclusive and the school administration reserves the right and discretionary authority to withhold participation based upon negative student performance, behavior and financial responsibilities.***

**Miami-Dade County Public Schools:** Please note: All students enrolled in Somerset Academy Silver Palms are students of Miami-Dade County Public Schools, subject to applicable policies and entitled to the same rights.



# SOMERSET ACADEMY CHARTER HIGH

## PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK AGREEMENT VERIFICATION FORM 2019-2020

Thank you for choosing Somerset Academy Charter High as your School of Choice! Our Parent & Student Handbook can be found on-line on our website at [www.somersetsilverpalms.net](http://www.somersetsilverpalms.net). Please read and review the handbook with your child. If you are unable to access the internet, please feel free to pass by the Main Office and request a copy. Once you have read the handbook, please complete the form below.

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

I have read **Somerset Academy Charter High's** (a Miami-Dade County Public Charter School) Parent & Student Handbook, including the uniform policy and the M-DCPS Code of Student Conduct which can be accessed at: <http://www.dadeschools.net/ehandbook/Code/index.htm> and is available in the school's Main Office.

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

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Please list **ALL CHILDREN** enrolled at any of the following school locations in grades K-12; Somerset Academy Silver Palms, Somerset Academy Charter High, and Somerset Academy Silver Palms at Princeton.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Campus: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Campus: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Campus: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's email: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Parent/Guardian) (Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Student) (Date)