

Panther's Voice

Volume 1, Issue 1

Title I School – Oh The Places We Will Go!

August 2019

Message from the Principal, Ms. Lori A. Mendez

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

I hope you have enjoyed the summer break! Whether you are a returning scholar or new to Watkins, it is my pleasure to welcome you for the 2019 – 2020 school year. Our school grade is now a **“B”** and we are thrilled! Our scholars and teachers worked so hard to achieve this goal. I couldn't be more proud!

As we begin the new school year, we will continue to strive for greater heights. This year's theme is **“Oh the Places We Will Go,” When We Inspire Learning, Empower Students and, Embrace Change!** I am excited to have our scholars return filled with energy and enthusiasm for learning. It is our goal to welcome each scholar, embrace them and help them to feel a part of the Watkins Family.

Our hours have changed, as we are not on the list of the lowest 300 schools for reading in the state. Our new student hours are from **8:10 a.m. to 2:10 p.m.**

I am honored to continue serving as Principal of Watkins Elementary School. I have been a part of the community for over 20 years. It is truly a privilege to be a part of a team where parents, teachers and students strive to build positive relationships that support academic and social emotional growth.

The partnership between home and school is a crucial one. We hope to build partnerships with our families in order to guide our students to success. I encourage you to keep the lines of communication open. You can reach me at 754 323 7800.

Once again, welcome to the 2019 – 2020 school year! Together we can make it another great year!

Educationally Yours

Lori A. Mendez,
Proud Panther Principal

Facebook @Watkins Elementary

Twitter @PrincipalMendez

Mission: The mission of Watkins Elementary is to create an environment where students and staff exceed the academic expectations set to meet their maximum potential.

Vision: Watkins is committed to all students, faculty and staff to reach their maximum potential as they become College and Career Ready.

The School Board of Broward County, Florida , prohibits any policy or procedure which results in discrimination on the basis of age, color, disability, gender, national origin, marital status, race, religion or sexual orientation. Individuals who wish to file a discrimination and/or harassment complaint may call the Director of Equal Opportunities at 754-321-2150 or Teletype Machine TTY 754-321-2158. Individuals with disabilities requesting accommodations under the American s with Disabilities Act (ADA) may call Equal Educational Opportunities (EEO) at 754-321-2150 or Teletype Machine TTY 754-321-2158.

SAFETY GUIDELINES

Maintaining a safe campus is our priority here at Watkins Elementary. Guidelines and policies are being implemented districtwide in an effort to better secure our campuses. The District has mandated that once the school day begins, all perimeter gates must be locked except for the 52nd Avenue entrance, to allow for parent and visitor access to the school. This gate must be monitored at all times by school personnel. If personnel are not available to dedicate to this post, the gate must remain locked and visitors to the campus must call the school's office to gain entry to the campus. At Watkins, we will close and lock the gates by 8:15 a.m.. Please help us to keep our campus safe by adhering to the following expectations for arrival, dismissal, and access to the campus. Visitors requiring access to the campus once the gates are locked, can contact the Front Office at 754 323 7800 and request access. **Gates will be unlocked at 7:30 a.m. and locked again at 8:15 a.m. For dismissal, gates will be unlocked at 2:05 p.m. and locked again at 3:10 p.m.**

Identification Badges:

All students are required to wear an ID Badge while on campus. Students will be provided with one on the first day of school, it will not be sent home. Photo ID's will be created by our school vendor within 10 days of the beginning of school.

Unified Dress Code:

School Uniforms are MANDATORY at Watkins. It is very important that students are in their uniforms every day, this will help us to quickly identify intruders on campus.. **Jeans and athletic wear are not acceptable.** Parents will be notified if your child isn't in compliance with the dress code policy. Progressive discipline consequences will be implemented for non-compliant students.

Uniform Bottoms: Khaki, Burgundy, Black, Gray, Burgundy & Gray Plaid

Uniform Tops: White, Burgundy, Gray, Pink

Arrival Procedures:

Gates will be open at 7:30 a.m. for entry into the campus. **There is no supervision for students before 7:30 a.m. Parents may not drop their child off before 7:30 a.m.** All **car riders** including **Pre K** students will be dropped off in the car line. **Parents** are welcome to walk their child to class on the 1st day of school. Be sure to have a valid drivers license for all subsequent visits to the campus. **Bike riders** can access the school from the front office door on the south side of the school. **Walkers** may enter the school from either the north side or south side doors, depending on their route to school. Students arriving on the bus, will enter the school and transition to the cafeteria for breakfast and supervision until dismissed to class. **Cars will not be permitted to enter the bus loop during arrival and dismissal.**

Dismissal Procedures

Bus riders will exit the school and be supervised in the bus loop. Car riders will transition to the car loop and wait for their parents while being supervised. Car riders are defined as students leaving campus in a car. Walkers will exit the campus from either the north east or north west doors. Bikers will exit from the south west doors, closest to the bike rack.



To volunteer or chaperone a field trip in a Broward County Public School, you must be cleared first. Please fill out the application on the link provided and make sure you do it within enough time for the application to be processed, which may take several days.

<http://browardschools.com/getinvolved/application>

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS DRILLS

As part of our normal practice, we conduct fire drills monthly and tornado drills two times per year. We also conduct mandated "code red" lock down drills each month. At the conclusion of each planned drill, a Parent Link message will be sent informing you of the event. In the case of an actual emergency, Watkins Elementary will communicate with the school community as soon as feasibly possible using Parent Link. To ensure that you can receive this timely communication, be sure that you keep your contact information up to date with the front office.



Complete all Back-to-School forms needed on line!

<https://www.browardschools.com/Page/38091>

Only for students returning to their school. New students must follow in person registration process.

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS

ASP is our on-site aftercare provider. ASP students are escorted to the cafeteria by staff from their grade level areas at dismissal. Students who attend other off campus private aftercare providers are dismissed with the bus students. Aftercare providers are required to pick up in the bus dismissal area. Be sure your child and teacher know the name of the aftercare provider.

EARLY DISMISSAL / SIGN OUT:

As per School Board Policy, students are not permitted to be picked up 30 minutes prior to the end of the school day; the last 30 minutes are very critical. Teachers are conducting final review of lessons, distributing important information, and giving homework assignments. We thank you in advance for your cooperation with this matter. Also the gates to the school will be locked and you will have to contact the office for entry. There is no early dismissal after 1:40 p.m. please plan accordingly.

Message from the Assistant Principal:

AGENDA BOOKS: Agenda books keep your child aware of important dates/homework assignments, and are used as a communication tool between the teacher and the parent. Please check and sign your child's agenda booklet daily.

ATTENDANCE: Attendance at school often determines pupil progress. Students should attend school daily and arrive on time. In the event of an absence, **a call to the office is required beginning with the first day and continuing with all subsequent days.**

Remember, the front office must be notified of your child's absence **within 48 hours of their absence.** After five unexcused absences the parent/guardian will be contacted by the State District Attorney's Office. **Please make sure you call 754-323-7802.**

CONFERENCES: Conferences foster understanding among the teachers, students, and parents. A parent or teacher may request a conference at any time. Please call the school to arrange for a mutually convenient time to speak to your child's teacher.

EARLY RELEASE DATES: Early Release Days are designated by the School Board of Broward County. On these days students are dismissed at 12:10 pm.

October 17, December 20, February 20, March 19, April 9, June 2.

HOMEWORK: Children are encouraged to study at home. Setting aside a definite time each evening for homework will develop good work habits. Routine study time is an excellent plan, particularly if it is done with a parent in a relaxed and positive setting. The classroom teachers will assign homework.

INTERIM REPORTS: An interim report is sent home half-way through a quarter to notify parents of progress. If you want to request a conference, or if the teacher requests a conference, please call the school to arrange a convenient time. Please sign the interim report and return it to the school immediately. Interim dates are as follows: **September 13; November 19; February 11; April 30.**

Report Cards: A quarterly report card is sent home at the end of each quarter to notify parents of progress. Report Card dates are as follows: **November 13; January 29; April 15; June 2.**

CLASS SIZE AND STUDENT PLACEMENT

Due to the State Class Size Reduction law, students may need to be moved between teachers after the start of school to ensure compliance with the required student limits. These limits are 18 students for Kindergarten to Grade 3; 22 students for grades 4 to 8; and 25 students for grades 9 to 12 in core classes. Please know that students' needs, will continue to be met through proper instruction and services. Additional information on core classes or anything related to Class Size Reduction is available on the Class Size Reduction website at <http://www.broward.k12.fl.us/classize/>

Dear Watkins Family,

I am excited to begin my 8th year as the Assistant Principal of Watkins Elementary.

At Watkins we believe in excellence for all. This year's theme is **"Oh the Places We Will Go," When We Inspire Learning, Empower Students and, Embrace Change!** I will continue to work to support student needs both academically, socially and emotionally.

I believe in open communication and invite you to contact me via email at Shereen.Reynolds@browardschools.com or by phone at 754 323 7800. Additionally, please be sure to follow us on Facebook at *Watkins Elementary School* and on Twitter at *Principal Mendez*. Events are posted on our school website, social media, Class Dojo and via Parent-link, an automated phone call that is sent each Sunday afternoon. Be sure to listen to the announcements in order to be aware of school events.

Safety and security is everyone's business. Our school gates are locked shortly after the start of the school day and re-open shortly before dismissal. Should you require access to the campus during the school day, you will be required to state your business and present a government issued identification. Thank you for your patience as we ensure that our learning environment is safe and secure.

Looking forward to an amazing school year!

Sincerely,

Shereen R. Reynolds

Assistant Principal

CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

The Code of Student Conduct Handbook Goes Green! Parents are invited to review the Code of Student Conduct Handbook and complete the required forms by accessing the Back to School Forms link found on the Broward Schools' webpage at: <https://www.browardschools.com/Page/38091>

CAFETERIA NEWS

Charged Meals - Charged meals are allowed when a student does not have money in their account. Students are allowed to charge only once. If your child comes the second day without money he/she will be given an alternative meal. Students are told when they have \$2.00 or less in their account and that they need to bring money for the next day. Please feel free to call the cafeteria at 754-323-7810 or register online at www.schoolpaymentsolutions.com to check your child's balance.

Birthday Celebration Notes: If you choose to celebrate your child's birthday at school. Please note the following birthday celebration guidelines:

1) Birthdays are recognized during lunch time in the cafeteria with cake/cupcakes that are purchased from a store by you. 2) Balloons and lighted candles are not allowed in schools. 3) Photos/videos of students within the cafeteria are not permitted. Please deliver the items for your child's celebration to the office and a staff member will ensure that it is distributed to your child's class.

Thank you for helping us maintain a safe environment as you celebrate the special occasion.

Be sure to complete your application for free and reduced lunch at Myschoolapps.com

If you do not have internet access you may come into the office for assistance or call 754-321-0250



Please help us welcome...

Sarah Haslett – Speech Language Pathologist
Isaac Mena-Giron – 3rd Grade Teacher
Jessica Mentore – 5th Grade Teacher
Amanda Ratigan – 3rd Grade Teacher
Crystal Ray – 1st Grade Teacher
Nelda Robinson – Teacher Assistant
Maria Yanez Perez – 4th Grade Teacher
Sarah Sanon – School Psychologist
Arkys Valdez – Pre K Intensive

Important Date(s) To Remember



First Day of School

August 14, 2019

Fall Pictures

August 29, 2019

Open House Gr. K-2

September 4, 2019 @ 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Open House Gr. 3-5

September 11, 2019 @ 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.

No School

September 30, 2019

No School

October 9, 2019

PARENTAL INPUT FOR INSTRUCTIONAL AND SCHOOL BASED ADMINISTRATOR EVALUATIONS.

In accordance with Florida Statute 1012.34, parents have the opportunity to provide input into the faculty and administration performance evaluations. If you are interested, please provide the Principal with your input in writing by April 10, 2020.

