



**Student and Parent
Handbook
2010-2011**



Welcome to Keys Gate Charter High School! Because you have chosen to attend our school, you have taken the first step towards a bright future and academic success. At Keys Gate Charter High School we will work together to support our students, parents and families as they work hard to achieve their academic goals. This handbook is your guide to information and policies that both you and your child will need to follow in order to ensure a successful school year.

As students enter our school they will quickly learn that graduation, as well as, preparation for college through our challenging curriculum and expectations is a non-negotiable goal. We are committed to helping your child attain academic proficiency, the ability to think critically, and to develop leadership skills through active citizenship.

We expect our students to put forth maximum effort each and every day both at school and at home. At Keys Gate Charter High School, we firmly believe that our students can achieve anything they set their minds to. Let us commit ourselves to working together in helping our students accomplish great things!

***“Every time you state what you want or believe, you're the first to hear it.
It's a message to both you and others about what you think is possible.
Don't put a ceiling on yourself.”***

Oprah Winfrey



Academic Life

At Keys Gate Charter High School we are committed to providing your student the best educational opportunity. Our goal is to help your child attain proficiency in all academic areas and prepare them for their future journey into college. With high expectations, a challenging curriculum and purposeful character development in place, our students will flourish as well rounded leaders.

ACADEMIC RESPONSIBILITIES

At KGCHS, we hold our students to a high academic standard. We expect our students to complete all of their assignments in a timely manner as directed by their teachers. Students who do not turn in their assignments will receive a zero. A student that fails to turn in multiple assignments may be in danger of academic failure. In order to avoid this problem, we request that our parents carefully monitor their child's progress through the use of SIS, agendas, communication with the teacher and progress reports. After meeting with teachers and administration, students that have a chronic problem meeting their academic responsibilities may be suspended from school and may lose the opportunity to recommit the following academic year.

BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Students have several opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities. Some of these activities may include, art, guitar, tutoring etc., one to three times a week. Activities are subject to enrollment.

- ♦ **Before School Help Sessions-** Every teacher provides help sessions twice a week free of charge from 8:00 a.m.- 8:30 a.m. Students that are struggling with course work and/or concepts may voluntarily attend. It is the student's responsibility to attend Before School Help Sessions when needed.
- ♦ **FCAT Tutoring (mandatory when assigned)-** Twice a week certain students are assigned to before-school FCAT tutoring free of charge. Parents are notified in advance.
- ♦ **Sports-** A variety of team sports are offered throughout the school year. Students are encouraged to try out for individual sports but must have a "C" average or higher in each course at the time of try-outs and must maintain this average during the entire season. Please refer to the Keys Gate Charter High School Athletic Handbook for more details.
- ♦ **Enrichment Activities and Clubs-** Enrichment includes activities such as art and music lessons for an additional fee. An enrichment guide will be posted on our website which will include the activities offered, the days, time and cost. Clubs may be academic, non-academic or service based: National Honor Society, DFYIT and Key Club. Individual clubs may have a membership criterion in order to join.

- ♦ **Hours for After-School Activities-** All after-school activities meet from approximately 3:45-4:45. Locations for after-school activities will be announced by the school.

GRADING SCALE

100-90 %	A	Outstanding
89-80 %	B	Above Average Progress
79-70 %	C	Average Progress
69-60 %	D	Insufficient Progress
59% or below	F	Failure

HOMEWORK POLICY

The purpose of homework is for students to practice and demonstrate what they have learned in school; if a student has not learned what he/she is expected to, the teacher needs to be able to see this in the homework. Keys Gate Charter High School students are expected to complete all work assigned by the instructor, on time and to the best of their ability. Approximately two hours of homework are assigned on weeknights, and approximately three hours on weekends. Students enrolled in honors or AP courses will have more rigorous homework expectations. In addition to their homework expectations, students are required to read for 30 minutes nightly. Students who fail to complete homework on time may be required to attend detention. Students that continuously fail to turn in homework assignments may be removed from class and assigned indoor suspension.

Incomplete Work/Late Work- Students will receive a zero for graded assignments not turned in. Make-up work for incomplete or late assignments will be accepted at the teacher's discretion.

All students will be required to write their assignments in their school agenda. Parents should review their child's agenda each night to ensure completion of homework assignments and read or respond to communication from the school and/or teachers.

Parents may help their child in the following ways:

- ♦ Show an interest in your child's work.
- ♦ Establish a regular time and a quiet space in which to do homework.
- ♦ Review the homework for neatness and completeness.
- ♦ Refrain from doing the work for your child.
- ♦ Discuss problems related to home study with your child's teacher.

HONOR ROLL REQUIREMENTS AND STUDENT RECOGNITION

A variety of awards are given to our students who demonstrate a commitment to academic excellence throughout the school year. Recognition may be provided over the morning announcements, in assemblies and/or through the display of work throughout the school. Keys Gate Charter High School will host honor roll assemblies quarterly to recognize our students. Parents are encouraged to attend scheduled events to celebrate their child's success.

- ♦ High Honor Roll- students earning 90% or higher in every subject
- ♦ Honor Roll- students earning 80% or higher in every subject
- ♦ Benchmark Masters- students that demonstrate proficiency on quarterly benchmark assessments
- ♦ STRIVE Student Of The Month- students that demonstrate outstanding character

INSTRUCTIONAL BOOKS, EQUIPMENT, MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES

All textbooks needed by students for school and homework assignments are furnished by the school. The school is also able to provide the materials and equipment requested by teachers for classroom instruction. These materials are expensive and should be cared for properly. Books must not be written in or on. Damaged or lost books and/or materials must be paid for.

Students will be expected to provide all basic supplies such as paper, pencils, crayons, rulers, scissors, markers, glue, etc. Any additional supply needs will be requested in writing by the classroom teacher. Please ensure that your child is prepared and has the materials he/she needs in order to be successful at school each day.

PARENT CONFERENCES

Parents will be invited to attend conferences for both academic and/or behavioral reasons. When deemed appropriate by the administration, a parent conference may be required to allow a student's return to school. Parents are expected to attend all scheduled conferences. Parents may also request a conference with their child's teacher. Parents should contact the teacher via school telephone, email or SIS Message Board. The teacher will respond within 24 hours.

PROGRESS MONITORING PLAN

A student that is not progressing at the appropriate rate in academics and/or behavior will be placed on a Progress Monitoring Plan (PMP). The PMP will be developed collaboratively by the teacher and parent/guardian to address the child's individual needs and to assist the child in achieving grade level standards. Parents are expected to attend the conference in order to effectively develop and be able to monitor their child's plan.

PROMOTION POLICY

Each year, students at Keys Gate Charter High School are placed in course work that will enable them, upon successful completion of all courses, to graduate high school in 4 years. Careful attention is paid to a student's progress throughout the courses. If the student's final grade in any academic core course is below 60%, the student will be required to re-take those courses in the following school year. If a student fails more than two academic core courses in a school year, it is likely that the student will be required to repeat the entire grade. In this instance, parents will be notified of their child's possibility of retention in the current grade level.

A student who is absent from class more than 20 school days may not be promoted to the next grade level.

STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (SIS)

The Student Information System (SIS) is a comprehensive web-based system that provides parents with up to date information about their child's academic progress. Aside from viewing your child's grades and assignments, parents, teachers and administration can communicate via the SIS message board. SIS is also the only means of logging in service hours. We highly recommend that students and parents track their progress and check for teacher/administrative messages on SIS on a weekly basis. Teachers may also provide students with assignments that require them to log into SIS.

In order to gain access into the SIS system, parents must enter a username and password which is provided during the first two weeks of school. Student will also have their own SIS username and password. This will enable them to monitor their own progress and communicate with their teachers.

School Culture & Routines

We strive to provide our students a caring and orderly environment at Keys Gate Charter High School. Routines and structure provides students with a sense of security and allows the entire school to maintain its focus on learning.

AGENDA BOOK

Each student will be provided a free agenda book by the school. Students are expected to bring their agenda to school every single day. Students will use their agenda to record their homework assignments, due dates and important upcoming events. The agenda is a key element and tool to develop your child's organizational skills. All students will be required to write their assignments in their school agenda. Parents should review their child's agenda each night to ensure completion of homework assignments and to read or respond to communication from the school and/or teachers. If a student misplaces an agenda, parents will be required to purchase another one from the school for \$8.00. No other agenda books will be accepted, as the school has ordered these books with specific items and information. Agendas are also used as hall and restroom passes.

Students are not allowed to tear out pages from the agenda or intentionally damage their agenda in any way. Students that tear out or damage pages from their agendas will receive consequences.

CHARACTER/CITIZENSHIP:

Students and all other members of the Keys Gate Charter High School family are expected to demonstrate superior character and citizenship. We encourage students to always do the right thing and seek the assistance of staff members when a troublesome situation arises. Follow the golden rule: Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you. Lend a helping hand whenever possible, always make good choices and act responsibly. Below are some examples-

- Refrain from using disrespectful words (e.g. "whatever"), disrespectful gestures (e.g. rolling eyes, sucking teeth), disrespectful actions and/or disrespectful tone of voice (showing "attitude")
- Items found should be turned over to the office or placed in the lost and found. Never keep unclaimed items as your own
- Do not participate in situations with peers that can get you into trouble
- Refrain from gossiping. Spreading of rumors is strictly prohibited
- Report wrong doing or dangerous situations
- Do not take things that do not belong to you including personal items and/or lunches
- Students that steal items from others will be suspended from school. **This includes consuming another student's lunch (labeled or not labeled).**

STRIVE for Greatness

Keys Gate Charter High School, Charter Schools USA and the Clarion Council are working together to help our students STRIVE for greatness. STRIVE (Schools/Students Taking Responsibility for Important Values of Excellence in Education) for Greatness is a comprehensive character education initiative, informed by research and built on best practices. Our character education model is embedded in our classroom instruction, daily routines, rules and celebrations. A STRIVE Decision making model has been established to aid students in making good choices:

STRIVE to Make Good Choices Decision Making Model

- ◆ Rules and Laws – *Will my actions break any laws or school rules?*
- ◆ Golden Rule – *Would I want someone to do this to me?*
- ◆ Parents and Teacher – *What would my parents or teacher want me to do?*
- ◆ Consequences – *What will be the consequences if I do this?*
- ◆ Proud/Feelings – *Would my parents and teachers be proud of my actions? Would I be proud of my actions? How will I feel if I do this?*
- ◆ Headlines – *How would I feel if my actions were printed as headlines in the newspaper?*
- ◆ Best – *Is this the BEST decision I can make to STRIVE for Greatness?*
- ◆ **If you know its wrong, don't do it.**

If you are still not sure:

- ◆ Consider the alternatives – What are different ways of dealing with or solving the problem?
- ◆ Weigh the consequences of the alternatives – What good or bad consequences may come from these alternatives? How would these alternatives affect those around me and me?
- ◆ Seek advice – Whom could I ask for help?
- ◆ Make a decision – Which course of action best represents good moral values and will produce the best outcome?

COMMUNITY CLEANING

All Keys Gate Charter High School community members share responsibility for keeping the hallways, classrooms, bathrooms, cafeteria and the entire school clean. All community members are encouraged to go out of their way to pick up trash or clean up. Students are responsible for cleaning up classrooms and any other spaces after use. Our expectation is to always leave spaces cleaner than you found them. If you spill something during lunch, clean it up.



PASSING TIME & QUIET HALLWAYS

Students are expected to exhibit common courtesy and common sense at all times, including transition periods. When walking from place to place within the school, students are to follow the Hallway Courtesy Procedure: walk quietly and keep hands to oneself. If a student or class does not follow these rules, they will be directed to repeat the behavior in a correct manner until it is done right. Students are expected to walk directly from one class to the next. Students may not hang out in the hallways, walk others to class or participate in any public displays of affection.

USE OF BATHROOMS

In order to prevent interruptions of learning time, students are encouraged to use the bathrooms during breakfast, lunch, and afternoon homeroom. Students will be given the opportunity to use the bathroom during passing time if they have an emergency. Students are expected to keep the facilities clean. A doctor's note may be required if a student has a medical condition that requires frequent use of the bathroom during the school day.

USE OF WATER FOUNTAINS

Students are not permitted to leave the room to get water from the water fountain. Students may drink from the fountain during passing time.

WITHDRAWALS & TRANSFERS

If a family chooses to withdraw or transfer their child from Keys Gate Charter High School, they must provide the registrar with a minimum of 24 hours notice. Withdrawals or transfers will not be processed upon demand and making an appointment with the registrar is highly suggested.

School Rules & Procedures

Keys Gate Charter High School's rules and procedures are designed to create a caring and safe learning environment. We believe that respect, courtesy, self-discipline and a focus on learning are essential to any successful school. Keys Gate Charter High School does not tolerate disrespectful behavior or disruptions to learning, and disciplinary consequences are associated with violations of rules.

In order to ensure that students, as well as families are fully informed regarding the school's rules and expectations, it is essential to review this *Student and Parent Handbook* in detail, and to ask the Principal or Assistant Principal if you need further clarification.

Keys Gate Charter High School's rules and policies include those listed throughout this handbook, as well as any changes throughout the school year that are posted in the school, on our website, distributed to students and parents, and/or any other rules communicated to students by school staff. The rules apply to students at all times while the student is on school grounds, during school-sponsored activities and trips, and during events linked to the school. Following the rules and procedures outlined in this handbook is a necessary condition of enrollment in the Keys Gate Charter High School community.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the willful presentation of someone else's work as one's own. Keys Gate Charter High School students are expected to do their own work and cite the work of others as appropriate. Copying work from another student may be regarded as plagiarism if done without consent and if credit is not given. Penalties for plagiarism include failing the assignment and suspension. The school may choose, at its discretion, to employ plagiarism-detecting software.

Cheating

We expect each student's work to be solely the result of his/her own effort. Cheating includes copying another student's work, providing another student with work or answers, talking with another student during an assessment, using information or material other than those expressly approved during an assessment, or attempting any of these activities, and/or participating or assisting in any way. Penalties for cheating include failing the assignment or exam in question as well as suspension.

Missed Class work/Homework

When the second class work/ homework assignment is not turned in on time the teacher will assign a detention. For each occurrence after the second missed assignment, the child will receive an additional detention. Students with chronic homework infractions are referred to the school administration for suspension.

ARRIVAL

It is important to teach our children the significance of regular school attendance. In addition, it is important that students report to school on time. All students must use the school driveway to be dropped off. Please make sure to follow the directions of school employees in the drive thru.

Drop off is from 8:15 a.m. to 8:40 a.m. so that children are sitting in class by 8:45 a.m. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that their child arrives to school on time. Please plan accordingly to meet our 8:45 a.m. start time.

ATTENDANCE POLICY/PROCEDURES

Our challenging academic program makes every day and hour of school time extremely important. **Vacations may not be scheduled during school days. Regular medical, dental and other appointments may not be scheduled during school hours.**

- ♦ Students must attend all assigned courses, tutorials and events. An unexcused absence or tardiness will lead to academic and/or disciplinary consequences.
- ♦ Keys Gate Charter High School expects families to schedule vacations or special events so as not to conflict with school.
- ♦ **A student who misses more than 20 school days may not be promoted to the next grade or graduate.**
- ♦ **Late arrival is not acceptable.** Any student who arrives late must report to the main office and may be subject to disciplinary action.
- ♦ If a student is missing school time due to excessive absences, tardiness, or early dismissals, the parent(s) of the student will be required to attend a conference at the school before the student is permitted to reenter class.

Absences

- Any time a student returns to school after an absence, a note must be sent in to the main office within 48 hours. After this 48 hour period, this absence will be recorded as unexcused and will not be changed. Acceptable excuses for students' absences are illness, a death in the family, a school-sponsored event or activity that has been previously approved or religious holiday. Medical appointments such as check-ups should be scheduled when school is not in session.
- Absences due to sibling or parent illness will not be considered as excused.
- Original doctor's notes must be turned in to the main office upon a student's return to school. Original doctor's notes will not be accepted at the end of the school year for an absence that occurred previously in the year. Photocopies of doctor's notes will not be accepted. The school reserves the right to contact the physician to verify the authenticity of doctor's notes.
- Up to 10 parent excuse notes will be permitted per school year for illness. All other absences must be excused by a doctor's note
- Students exceeding a combination of 20 unexcused absences, tardies and/or early dismissals will lose automatic re-enrollment privileges.

Early Releases

- Early releases require excusal notes to be marked as excused. These notes must also be turned in to the main office within 48 hours.
- Any early releases that occur before 9 a.m. will be considered an absence

Late Arrival

- Tardies are not excused unless they are documented by a doctor's note
- Doctor's notes for tardies must be received at the time of student arrival and turned into the main office
- Any student arriving after 12 p.m. will be marked as absent for the day

BOOKBAGS

All book bags must be in good repair. Students may not draw or write messages on their book bags. Students with book bags that have student generated writings or drawings on them will have their book bags confiscated and be required to carry items in a plastic bag for the remainder of the day. These book bags will be held in the office and will be returned only to the parent/guardian. Students that are found with book bags that display inappropriate drawings, messages and/or symbols may be suspended.

CAFETERIA PROGRAM

Breakfast and lunch will be served in the cafeteria. Occasionally, students may lose or forget their lunch or lunch money. When this happens, the student will be provided cereal and milk. Students will not be permitted to call home. Lunch charges cannot be made since public funds do not allow schools to extend credit. Students are not allowed to bring sodas, coffee (hot or cold), energy drinks (i.e. *Red Bull, Full Throttle*), candy or gum to school. Glass containers are not permitted.

Students are not allowed to give away or share their lunches at any time. School lunches are carefully balanced according to the Federal School Lunch Program. According to program guidelines, students should only consume the assigned portion. Students that do not purchase school lunch may not ask classmates for any part of their lunches. Please ensure that your child is adequately prepared for lunch each day with either money in their account or a bagged lunch.

In an effort to promote healthy eating habits, we request that fast food not be brought to school. I

f you insist on bringing your child lunch and/or fast food, it must be placed in a regular lunch box or brown bag and must occur during the child's scheduled lunch time. Remember no sodas.

Breakfast

Breakfast will be served from 8:00 a.m. – 8:35 a.m. each morning. Students are expected to adhere to all cafeteria rules and clean up after themselves. Students that are not actively eating breakfast are not allowed in the cafeteria. "Hanging out" in the cafeteria is not allowed and will result in immediate consequences.

Payment

All parents must pay for lunch on a weekly or monthly basis. Payments should be made in cash or check. Please check our website to review the menu for the month.

Free/Reduced Price Lunches

An application for free or reduced price meals will be sent home in the beginning of the school year. Parents must apply for this benefit yearly. The applications should be completed and returned to your child's teacher within the first week of school. A random selection of applicants will be asked for additional information regarding verification of income. Notification pertaining to qualification for free/reduced lunch will be sent promptly. **Parents are responsible for providing their child a lunch until the application is approved; however, prior year lunch status is valid for the first two weeks of school only.**

Behavior

Conduct in the cafeteria reflects a student's home training. Students should eat in an atmosphere that is pleasant and conducive to good habits. Please discuss good cafeteria manners with your child. Students may receive a detention and/or clean up duty for improper cafeteria behavior.

Students Will:

- ♦ Use low voices during lunch.
- ♦ Not play or throw food.
- ♦ Raise their hand if they need something.
- ♦ Remain seated during the lunch period at the assigned table.

CELL PHONES

Cell phones and other electronic devices are not allowed on school campus. Students may not bring a cell phone to school. School phones are available for emergencies. All cell phones or other electronic devices will be confiscated by school personnel and kept in the main office until the last day of the school year.

The only exception to the cell phone policy is for those students that ride the bus. Those students must give their cell phone to their homeroom teacher for storage throughout the day. At the end of the day, during homeroom, students will retrieve their phones before going home. If, at any time, a student that rides the bus is found with a cell phone in sight, turned on and/or in use while on campus, will have their phone confiscated until the end of the school year. Parents are discouraged from text messaging and/or calling their children on their cell phones during school hours as it will result in the cell phone being confiscated.

Keys Gate Charter High School and its staff are not responsible for the loss, theft and/or damage of any cell phone or electronic devices.

COLD WEATHER

On occasion during the winter months, we have very cold weather where the temperature drops below average. As part of our uniform policy we have included long sleeve undershirts, jackets, sweatshirts and pants for days like these. We recommend that you purchase these items at the beginning of the school year in order to be prepared for cold winter days.

If at any time the temperature drops below 50 degrees, students may wear a heavier jacket of their choice on top of their Keys Gate jacket while outside. Once inside, students will be asked to remove the additional jacket, gloves and/or hats. Girls wearing skirts may also use solid colored opaque stockings. If an undershirt is worn, it must be solid white. **At no time will jean pants of any color or style be allowed during cold weather days.**

COMMUNICATIONS

Communication is absolutely essential for success in any endeavor. The administration and staff recognize this and will strive to facilitate open and frequent communications with parents at all times.

Your child's agenda is usually used as the first means of communication between the teacher and the parent. We ask the parent/guardian to review and sign the agenda nightly. Parents can view their child's daily progress by logging on to the SIS system. User names and passwords will be sent home during the first two weeks of school.

Please feel free to consult with the office regarding any problems or questions that concern your child. Before contacting administration, it is imperative you speak with the child's teacher first regarding classroom issues. It is the desire of the administrators and the faculty to be of service to both parent and student, and every teacher welcomes a conference with any parent. At no time is it appropriate for a teacher to meet with parents while students are present, including the arrival time from 8:30a.m. – 8:45 a.m. Therefore, conferences must be scheduled ahead of time, so the teacher and/or administrator will be available to meet with you.

It is the parents' responsibility to stay informed. We are also striving to become a paperless school. Information about Keys Gate Charter High School will be posted on our website. If you do not have access to the internet, a copy of the information will be posted in the school lobby. Also, please check with your child daily for emergency notices and www.keysgatecharterhigh.org every week for new information.

Automated phone calls and/or emails are sent out periodically through our **"Parent Link"** system. These phone calls and/or emails contain attendance notifications, special reminders and important messages from the school. This system may also be used to notify families of emergencies such as hurricanes and school closures. We ask that you please listen carefully to each message that is delivered. If you have changed any of your contact information, including cell phones and email addresses, please update this information with the office staff.

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURE

Discipline is the process of changing a student's behavior from inappropriate to exemplary. We are never satisfied with merely stopping poor behavior; we desire to teach the student to do what is right. We do not discipline a student out of anger

or for the sake of convenience, but with a loving desire to help the student to do what is right. Though few students desire discipline, they often need it in order to reach their full potential.

Depending on the nature of the infraction, the following actions may be taken by the school:

- ♦ **Correcting Behavior/Verbal Warning.** When a student behaves in an unacceptable manner, he/she may be instructed to correct his/her behavior. Students are expected to follow teacher instructions right away and all the way.
- ♦ **Confiscation of property.** Items such as electronic devices, toys, inappropriate uniform items or any other item that staff deems as distracting or inappropriate will be confiscated and held in the office for parent to pick up.
- ♦ **Detention.** Students may be assigned detention for certain infractions of school rules.
- ♦ **Parent Notification or Conference.** A parent may be called and/or asked to come to the school for a conference for various types of misconduct. Communication with the parent allows the school and family to work together to teach the child positive behavior.
- ♦ **Reflection Essay.** A student may be asked to write a short essay reflecting on his or her behavior and/or a particular incident or issue.
- ♦ **Loss of Privilege.** A student may forfeit privileges such as participation in school trips, events or activities. Any student that has been suspended will not be allowed to attend end of year field trips
- ♦ **School Service.** This may include cleaning, garbage removal, and other school chores. As appropriate, the student will be expected to correct or repair any damage or harm which may have resulted from the infraction.
- ♦ **Apologies.** For infractions which are particularly destructive to class or school community, students may be required to make an apology to those involved in an incident.
- ♦ **Academic Consequences.** A student will receive no credit due to an academic infraction such as plagiarism or cheating.
- ♦ **Removal from Class/Administrative Referral.** If a student's behavior is disruptive to the learning of others, the teacher may remove the student from class and send them to the administrator's office. Students who are removed from class are required to make-up all class work
- ♦ **Saturday Detention.** A student who demonstrates continuous disruptive conduct will be assigned to Saturday detention from 8:30 – 11:30. If a student skips Saturday detention he/she will receive an outdoor suspension.
- ♦ **Indoor Suspension.** An extended removal from class may occur when a student demonstrates continuous disruptive behavior. Parents will be notified if their child is placed on indoor suspension.
- ♦ **Outdoor Suspension.** A temporary removal from school also known as outdoor suspension may be assigned. Academic make-up work will be required. Return to school may be contingent upon a parent conference and/or submission by the student of a written essay, guided by the school, addressing the issue at hand and stating how the student intends to move forward.
- ♦ **Probation.** A student who continually exhibits behavior that is non-compliant with school rules and that has been placed on outdoor suspension may be placed on disciplinary probation. Parents will be notified if it becomes necessary to place the child on a probationary contract
- ♦ **Expulsion.** A student may be expelled from Keys Gate Charter High School when the student's violation of school rules or policies renders it appropriate, or when expulsion is in the greater interest of the school community.
- ♦ **Additional Consequences.** Additional disciplinary consequences may be assigned at the discretion of the school

Keys Gate Charter High School students are expected at all times to focus on learning and behave in ways that are respectful. Examples of unacceptable behaviors, which lead to disciplinary action include, but are not limited to:

- ♦ Disrespectful words (e.g. “whatever”), disrespectful gestures (e.g. rolling eyes, sucking teeth), disrespectful actions and/or disrespectful tone (showing “attitude”)
- ♦ Cursing at any member of the Keys Gate Charter High School community
- ♦ Teasing, name calling, harassing comments
- ♦ Spreading of malicious rumors or gossip
- ♦ Putting head or shoulders on desk
- ♦ Calling out
- ♦ Complaining or whining
- ♦ Any sign of disrespect after receiving a warning or redirection
- ♦ Not following directions from an adult right away and all the way
- ♦ Un-tucked shirt and/or uniform violations
- ♦ Unprepared for class, incomplete or missing assignments
- ♦ Lying and/or cheating
- ♦ Being late to class
- ♦ Disruption of learning
- ♦ Possession and/or use of electronic devices or cell phones while on campus
- ♦ Not handing in homework or poor quality homework
- ♦ Malicious destruction of school property which will result in the replacement, repair or payment for damages.
- ♦ Chewing gum in the school building or on the school grounds.
- ♦ Threatening violence, even in jest
- ♦ Racial, sexual, homophobic or other inappropriate comments
- ♦ Touching, pushing, hitting, horseplay, throwing objects or any form of aggression
- ♦ Public displays of affection, including kissing, hugging and/or holding

Each teacher enforces classroom rules and expectation with their students. Students are required to adhere to these expectations. When a student misbehaves, the teacher will ask the student to correct their behavior. When further redirection is required, the teacher will assign consequences such as detention and/or a disciplinary referral which may result in suspension. Parents will receive notification in the agenda book, via email or phone call.

Students missing a detention will receive an additional detention day. Leaving a detention early will result in another day being assigned. Students that do not serve their assigned detention or do not bring their notice signed and returned to the teacher are subject to suspension. Students that have been issued more than 3 detentions or have failed to serve 3 detentions will be assigned a suspension.

Please note- Certain misconduct or misbehavior may warrant an immediate consequence. Several warnings during the same school day may lead to the assignment of a detention and/or administrative referral. Depending on the misconduct, parent notification prior to the assignment of a detention or referral may not be required.

The Miami-Dade County School Board established a Code of Student Conduct that lists violations and disciplinary actions that may be taken in order to deal with student misconduct. The following website link will allow you to view the complete MDCPS Code of Student Conduct online. The Keys Gate Charter High School Student and Parent Handbook is a supplement to the Miami-Dade County's Code of Conduct.

<http://www.dadeschools.net/ehandbook/Code/index.htm>

DISMISSAL

Students must leave the school grounds immediately after dismissal unless participating in a scheduled enrichment, club or sport. Parents must wait for their children **outside** the school. **After 3:00 p.m., student will not be dismissed early.**

Only individuals listed on the **emergency contact card** will be allowed to pick-up students from school. A valid photo identification will be required of all individuals picking up students. If someone arrives at the school to seek the release of a student and the person's name is not on the emergency contact card or the person does not have a valid photo identification, the student will not be released.

To avoid having the school become involved in personal family conflicts, parents or guardians should submit a copy of any legal documents to the main office, which indicate who has legal access to the student and his/her records during school hours. In the absence of legal documentation, school officials will provide access only to those individuals whose names appear on the student's data card. Failure to provide the school legal documentation outlining visitation rights will result in any parent listed on the birth certificate to be permitted to pick up a child. Friends and strangers will be denied access to a student in the absence of verified parental consent.

DRESS CODE

A higher standard of dress encourages greater respect for individuals, students and others, and results in a higher standard of behavior. Our dress code guidelines indicate appropriate school uniform during normal school days. Keys Gate Charter High School reserves the right to interpret these guidelines and/or make changes during the school year. Students are expected to follow these guidelines.

Every student in attendance shall wear the Keys Gate Charter High School official uniform from ***All Uniform Wear***. **Our uniform vendor maintains records of transactions for each family. Therefore, Keys Gate Charter High School reserves the right to check with *All Uniform Wear* to ensure a student's uniform was purchased through the vendor.**

If a student is out of uniform he/she will not be allowed to enter class. Parents will be required to bring the proper uniform item to school while the student waits in the office. Students that have frequent uniform infractions including but not limited to un-tucked shirts will receive immediate consequences. Please check your child's uniform each morning before arriving at school.

Uniforms may not be altered for purposed other than pant length/height. Uniforms may not be rolled up, ripped or torn in any way. All uniforms must be free from writing and display the school's approved logo.

Hair: Hair must be neat and clean with no “unnatural” colors (florescent, green, pink, etc) or Mohawks. No hats, bandanas, do-rags or headbands may be worn. Bangs or long hair may not interfere with a student’s ability to see clearly. If school personnel cannot clearly see a student’s eyes, his/her must be pulled back immediately or trimmed by the parent. Hair must be neatly braided down and excessively spiked hair is not allowed. No headwear except hair bows, hair bands, etc for girls. Students may not bring electrical devices or hair products to school such as flat iron, curling irons to school and/or hairspray.

Makeup/Nail Polish: Students may not wear makeup that is dark colored or excessive. Students wearing makeup that is deemed to be excessive or distracting to the learning environment will be asked to wash their face clean. Nail polish should be lightly colored.

Tattoos: Any existing tattoos must be completely covered by uniform attire. If needed, a student may have to wear a long sleeve shirt all year long to cover a tattoo on the forearm.

Shoes/Socks: Students must wear closed heel and closed toe shoes with rubber soles at all times. No sandals, slippers, flip-flops, “Crocs,” boots, sneakers that are higher than the ankle or shoes with metal tips may be worn. Shoes must be primarily white, brown, navy or neutral colors. Shoes that light-up, have wheels or have fluorescent colors are not allowed. Shoes must be fastened properly at all times. Socks must be no higher than ankle height.

Shirts: Uniform shirts must be tucked in at all times- no exceptions. Polo shirts must be purchased through the uniform vendor, *All Uniform Wear*. P.E. shirts may only be worn during the P.E. class. All jackets and sweatshirts must be embroidered by our vendor. Undershirts may be worn underneath the uniform polo and may be a short or long sleeve. Only solid white undershirts or the school P.E. t-shirt are allowed. Tank tops of different colors may not be worn beneath the school polo. Students wearing any undershirt other than white or P.E. t-shirt will be asked to remove it and the item will be held in the office for the parent to pick up.

Slacks/Shorts: All uniform slack/shorts must be worn with a belt through the belt loops, fitted to the waist and be in good repair at all times. Belts should be free of any metal studs or large buckles. Any belt that is deemed distracting must be removed. All uniform bottoms must have the KGCHS logo embroidered in the selected colors. NO: cargo pants, capri’s or jeans of any color or style. Any pants, other than those sold at the uniform store are not permitted regardless of whether they have a logo or not. Having designer pants logoed through another vendor is strictly prohibited and a direct violation of copyright law. Shorts that are deemed too short will not be permitted. Shorts may not be rolled up at any time. Skirts or skorts are not approved uniform attire.

Jackets: Only jackets and/or sweatshirts sold through our uniform vendor will be allowed. Jackets/sweatshirts may not have hoods, must be appropriately sized and in good repair. Students wearing any other form of jacket or sweater that does not meet these guidelines will be confiscated. Parents will be required to pick up their child’s jacket/sweatshirt in the office at the end of the school year.

Jewelry: Boys and girls may not wear body piercing other than one pair of stud style earrings on their ear lobes (no gauges allowed). For the safety of our students, hoop earrings of any size are not permitted. Nose rings or studs are not allowed no matter how small. Students may wear one chain, one bracelet and/or one watch. Chains must be tucked inside of the shirt at all time. Students that have difficulty following these guidelines will have their jewelry items confiscated.

Labeling- Labeling or embroidering of your child's name on uniform items is highly recommended. *All Uniform Wear* embroiders jackets for a nominal fee.

Special Events: During special events, students are expected to dress appropriately. The length of skirts and/or dresses should be in accordance with our dress code. Low cut dresses exposing cleavage and/or low cut open back dresses will not be allowed at any event. Please plan accordingly when purchasing special event attire.

General/Jean Day: No sports bands (wrist, head or ankle) may be worn at school. "Grills" or false mouthpieces are not allowed. At no time are students to wear anything offensive, immodest or deemed inappropriate by the faculty. Writing or drawing on the body is not permitted at any time.

Periodically students may participate in "jean day." On jean days, students may only wear jean pants with their uniform tops. Jeans that are torn or have holes are not allowed. Shirts must be tucked in on jean days. Jean skirts or jean shorts or not allowed. At no time are students to wear anything offensive, immodest, or deemed inappropriate by the faculty.

Keys Gate Charter High School is not responsible for the loss, theft or damage of confiscated items.

Please also read the section titled "Cold Weather" for additional information about uniform guidelines during cold winter days.

FOOD and DRINKS

Students are not allowed to consume any type of food or candy as well as any liquids including juice and water. A doctor's note may be required for students that have a medical condition that may need to consume food or drink throughout the school day.

EARLY DISMISSAL

Any student signed out of school prior to dismissal will have an early dismissal logged to his/her absence record. If you need to take your child out of school before the end of the school day, please come to the school office and sign him/her out and a school employee will send for your child. Parents are not allowed to retrieve their child from the classroom or any other location on campus.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Electronic devices such as iPod's, MP3 players, gaming devices and personal cameras are not allowed on campus-not even in book bags. (Students that are enrolled in our photography or journalism courses are the only students allowed to bring a

camera to school for class work purposes). These items will be confiscated immediately and stored in the main office. Only the student's parent or guardian will be allowed to collect these items from administration. At the end of the school year, all items that have not been picked up will be donated. Keys Gate Charter High School is not responsible for any electronic device that is stolen from a student. Since electronic devices are prohibited, administration is not required to conduct searches or investigation for these items.

Please also refer to the Cell Phone policy for more information about cell phone use.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION

Your child's safety is one of our major concerns. We need to be prepared for the unexpected. We hold quarterly fire drills, lockdowns, and extreme weather procedure to prepare us for emergency situations. Should we need to evacuate the building, there are comprehensive evacuation plans for bomb threats, nuclear releases and other situations in place. Under no circumstance will parents be allowed to pick up their child at school during an evacuation period. Our goal is to evacuate the entire building safely. In the event an evacuation takes place, you may contact CSUSA @ 954-202-3500 or listen to local news stations for information. Please patiently wait for a phone call from school personnel explaining the location and procedure for picking up your child. Students will only be released to the people identified on the emergency contact form. Please bring a valid picture ID when picking up your child. Our emergency evacuation procedures are available for review in the main office.

FAMILY RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT

The revised Family Rights and Privacy Act became a Federal law in November, 1974. The intent of this law is to protect the accuracy and privacy of student educational records. Without your prior consent, only you and authorized individuals having legitimate educational interests will have access to your child's educational records. In special instances, you may waive this right of access to allow other agencies working with your child to have access to those records.

FIELD TRIPS

Participation in field trips is a **privilege**. Students serve as representatives of the school; therefore, they may be excluded from participation in any trip for reasons relating to academics, behavior, conduct and/or attendance. Students with fees owed to the school for lab fees, lost books, etc. will not be permitted to attend field trips until these fees are paid.

Proof of Insurance- In order to participate in any field trip, a student must submit a copy of his/her insurance card to their homeroom teacher. If a parent does not have insurance, school insurance must be purchased at the beginning of the school year. Even though a family may have medical insurance, school insurance is highly recommended since it is rather affordable.

Chaperones- When a parent/guardian chooses to be a chaperone he or she accepts the rules set forth by the school and field trip sponsor for that particular activity. Parents/guardians must follow the directions given by the trip sponsor and be

punctual with the assigned schedules/itineraries. It is expected that students be redirected appropriately when needed. Parents/guardians that do not comply will not be allowed to chaperone any other trips.

Out of County & Overnight Trips- Any student that has been assigned outdoor suspension for any reason will not be allowed to attend out of county and/or overnight trips.

Parent permission must be given for students to participate in field trips. The teacher will send permission slips and information about each field trip 2-4 weeks prior to the field trip date. Money and permission slips must be turned in according to the teacher's instructions, prior to the field trip or the student will be not be permitted to take part in the field trip. Students not wearing the appropriate field trip attire will be required to remain at school.

- All field trip money will be collected by the classroom teacher.
- Field trips must be paid in cash only.
- Money will not be accepted at the front office.
- Early dismissal after a field trip will be considered an unexcused early release.
- Parents that chaperone a daytime field trip will earn 6 service hours and parents that chaperone an overnight field trip will earn 10 service hours.

According to the new law titled the Jessica Lundsford Act, any parent wishing to chaperone a field trip must be fingerprinted. The fingerprint check must include an FBI background check. Information on how to obtain this clearance will be provided the first week of school. Any parent not fingerprinted will not be permitted to chaperone a field trip or walk around with the school group.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

If a student or his/her parents feel they have a grievance or complaint, they should do the following:

1. Carefully analyze the problem and be sure you have all of the facts.
2. Ascertain that you have a rational attitude about the problem.
3. Seek to resolve the problem with the teacher, if applicable.
4. If you believe the problem is not resolved, meet with school administration.
5. If left unresolved, you should contact CSUSA at 954-202-3500.
6. If still unresolved, you should contact the Homestead Charter Foundation.

IMMUNIZATION & HEALTH RECORDS

Students are required to be up to date with all immunizations. Supporting documentation must be provided to the main office. All medical forms must be original documents as mandated by the state. As per state law, students that are missing any

immunizations and/or medical documentation will not be allowed into school. We advise parents to consult with their child's physician to ensure all immunizations are up to date.

LOST AND FOUND

Throughout the school year, items which have been lost are turned into the main office. Many items would be quickly recovered if clothing and personal belongings were labeled with the student's name. Anytime a student loses an item, he/she may go to the "Lost and Found" to claim it. There are many items found and never claimed each year. These items are donated monthly to various charitable institutions. Therefore, please label your child's personal belongings.

MEDICATION

The administering or dispensing of any medication (including non-prescription medication) to students by employees of Keys Gate Charter High School without specific written authorization by the parents of the student is forbidden. If it is absolutely necessary that the child take any medication while he/she is in school, the parent must sign an authorization form. Please obtain this form in the main office. The medication will be kept in the office and will be administered by office personnel. Students are not allowed to have any medication in their possession. Parents must pick up and drop off medicine in the office.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

A great portion of each student's day is spent at school; therefore, his/her growth and development becomes a joint responsibility between the home and school. Everyone is urged to become active in helping further the goals and growth of the PTO. The faculty, staff and administration hope that all of the parents will become active members supporting the school and organization. Officers will be elected yearly according to PTO bylaws.

The PTO will sponsor fundraisers and family events throughout the school year. Monies generated by fundraising events will be used to purchase items voted on by PTO members. PTO board meetings are held regularly and are open to anyone who wishes to attend.

PARENT SERVICE HOURS

Parents are required to volunteer 20 hours per family or prorated to two hours a month if their children are accepted after school has begun. Ten hours of volunteer service should be completed by **December 15th**. Students whose parents have not

completed the 20 hours by **May 15th** will not be recommitted for the following school year. Parents must log their hours on the SIS system. Please be sure to log in your own volunteer hours in a timely manner so that hours can be accounted for each quarter. Teachers will check and approve the volunteer hours monthly. The system will automatically link siblings.

Parents have many opportunities to volunteer their time both at school and at home. Volunteer sign-up sheets will be available at Open House before school starts and during Back to School Night. Other opportunities are announced throughout the school year. Parents will receive volunteer time for attending workshops and general parent meetings conducted in the school. To volunteer in classrooms, please make prior arrangement with the teacher so that instructional time is not lost.

Due to conflicting work schedules, some families may be unable to volunteer their time. Although we prefer our parents to volunteer at the school, we do accept \$10 per hour donations to the school. Please ensure to keep all receipts.

Ways You Can Earn Service Hours:

- Assist in the cafeteria
- Assist teachers with bulletin boards, cutting & craft activities
- Attend PTO meetings, volunteer at day and evening events
- Volunteer for field day and/or field trips (6 hrs for day time field trip & 10 hours for an overnight field trip)
- Purchase items for the classroom or school (aside from general school supplies)

Students will not be allowed to participate in the following activities if service hours have not been completed:

- Banquets for clubs or sports
- Graduation/End of Year Awards Ceremonies
- Grade level picnics and parties
- End of year field trips

PEDICULOSIS (HEAD LICE)

Students will be checked periodically for head lice. Students will be sent home immediately if school personnel suspects lice in his/her hair. The students may not return to school until treatment has been administered and all nits, dead or alive, have been removed from the hair. Upon returning to school, the student will be checked to determine if any nits are still present before admission to class. To prevent an outbreak of head lice, parents are asked to examine the hair of their children weekly.

PUBLIC DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION, RUMORS & GOSSIP

It is understood that friendships and socialization is a part of a student's academic experience in any school. It is imperative to remember though that the most important reason students are sent to school is to learn. Learning must be the number one priority throughout the day in order to be academically successful.

While on school campus it is expected that all students respect their peers and may NOT demonstrate the following behaviors:

- Holding hands
- Kissing- any kind
- Hugging and/or holding
- Playful hitting or touching
- Spreading of rumors and malicious gossiping (verbally or written)
- Bullying, harassing and/or making threats to or about peers

RETURNED CHECKS

Returned checks to Keys Gate Charter High School are charged a \$25.00 returned check fee. Payment for the returned check and the \$25.00 fee must be made within 7 days of notification from the school. After two returned checks to the school, a family may not pay by check for anything at school. Students whose families do not submit payment in a timely manner for returned checks will lose privileges to field trips and special events.

SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL (EESAC)

This group meets each month to discuss school issues/concerns and create a School Improvement Plan by evaluating school data. Parents may volunteer to be part of this advisory council when vacancies are available.

SCHOOL HOURS

Breakfast Service	8:00 – 8:35 a.m.
Student Arrival	8:15 – 8:40 a.m.
Doors Open	8:30 a.m.
Tardy Warning Bell	8:40 a.m.
Academic Day Starts	8:45 a.m.
Student Dismissal	3:45 p.m. (2:45 p.m. on Wednesday's)
Teachers Available for conference	8:00 – 8:30 a.m. or as scheduled with the teacher

STUDENT ILLNESS

The importance of regular attendance cannot be over-emphasized, but **students should not be sent to school when they are ill.** Students will be sent home if they have a temperature of 99 degrees or above. **In order for a child to return to school, he/she must be fever and vomit free for 24 hours.** If a student becomes ill during the school day and it appears



that they would be best cared for at home, the parent will be contacted. There are very limited facilities in the school, making it impossible to keep sick students for long periods of time. School personnel must be notified of any student's chronic illness (i.e. asthma, diabetes, heart conditions or seizures). This heightens awareness in case of an emergency. Students will not be permitted to take calls from parents to see how they are feeling. If the school has not contacted you, your child is feeling fine.

STUDENTS' RIGHTS

Students have the right to feel safe from threats and bodily harm. Disruptive behaviors are never acceptable, and when they occur, they may result in time out, exclusion from participation in class activities, detention, suspension or expulsion or other disciplinary action.

Parents who have a conflict with a student other than their own child and/or parent are requested to speak to the Administration. At no time may parents approach the student directly.

All students and employees will be treated with respect. Slurs, innuendoes, hostile treatment, violence or other verbal or physical conduct against a student or employee will not be tolerated. Police will be called when necessary.

STUDENT SEARCHES

Keys Gate Charter High School may, at its discretion and at any time, conduct searches of students and their property, including but not limited to backpacks. School desks and other equipment remain the property of the school and students should have no expectation of privacy in these areas. Should a student refuse to cooperate with a search request the school will confiscate the property in question.

SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

The Principal may recommend to the Homestead Charter Foundation Board to expel a student for any of the following in accordance with the Miami Dade County School Code of Conduct:

1. Possession, use of or transmission of a weapon including, but not limited to, a gun, knife, razor, explosive, ice pick or club.
2. Possession, use of or transmission of a substance capable of modifying mood or behavior.
3. Using any article as a weapon or in a manner calculated to threaten any person.
4. Committing a serious breach of conduct including, but not limited to, a threat or an assault on school personnel or on another pupil, lewd or lascivious act, arson, vandalism or any other such act, which disrupts or tends to disrupt the orderly conduct of the school activity.
5. Engaging in less serious but continuing misconduct including, but not limited to, the use of profane, obscene or abusive language, or other acts that are detrimental to the educational function of the school.
6. Any other conduct that warrants expulsion based on the Code of Conduct.

<http://www.dadeschools.net/ehandbook/Code/index.htm>



Suspension offenses include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Fighting or other dangerous and/or disruptive behavior (hitting, kicking, pushing or biting).
2. Possession or use of drugs and tobacco.
3. Being under the influence or having alcoholic beverages on school grounds.
4. Defacing or vandalism of school property.
5. Igniting any flammable substance.
6. Defiance or disrespect of school personnel
7. Failure to meet academic responsibility

TECHNOLOGY USE

Keys Gate Charter High School provides computers, an Intranet/Internet system, and other equipment and services as part of the learning experience. The system may not be used in any way that disrupts or interferes with its use by others. Prohibited uses include, but are not limited to:

- ♦ Vandalism or theft of equipment
- ♦ Theft, piracy or altering of software
- ♦ Activity unrelated to instruction, e.g., for unlawful purposes, commercial purposes, personal gain
- ♦ Use of chat rooms or messaging programs
- ♦ Violation of copyright laws
- ♦ Plagiarism of ideas or information
- ♦ Intentional transmission or receipt of computer viruses
- ♦ Intentional transmission or receipt of information that is pornographic, obscene, sexist, racist, abusive, or harassing
- ♦ Downloading or uploading computer games, music, software, video, or anything else for unsupervised non-academic purposes
- ♦ Any violation of federal law, state law, use of Napster, Lime Wire or installing unapproved or pirated software

TELEPHONE

When student illness occurs, a student will call home from the designated phone in the office. Students may not use personal cell phones to call or text parents during the day. Students must receive permission to use the school phone. If at any time, a staff member deems that a phone call is not for emergency purposes, the student will be denied use of phone and sent back to class.

If a parent must get an important message to his/her child, please contact the main office. School personnel will ensure the message is delivered to the student. Students will not be called out of class to speak on the phone with a parent or family member.

TRANSPORTATION

Students living in the approved bus zone from Miami-Dade County Public Schools are eligible for free bus transportation to and from school. Students must register for this service in our main office. Materials are available in the school office for registration as well as a map of the approved area.

Receiving transportation to and from school is a privilege and will be taken away for misbehavior on the bus. Any student not following the bus rules or adhering to the driver's direction will receive consequences which may include suspension or loss of bus services.

SEVERE WEATHER INFORMATION

Keys Gate Charter School will follow the same instructions as Dade County Public Schools in case of severe weather emergencies. Parents should watch the local news for information about school closings.

VISITORS

Visitors, **including parents**, are **not** permitted to go to their child's class unannounced during school hours because this disrupts normal routine and instruction. For the safety and protection of all students, visitors (including parents) must sign in, present a valid photo id when entering the building, state who they are visiting, state the purpose of the visit, and obtain a pass before proceeding anywhere in the building

We currently have the "Raptor" system in place for the safety of our students. This system will check any person entering the building against a current sexual predator list. At no time will any person be permitted access to the building without presenting a valid photo I.D. (driver's license or state I.D. card). Cooperation will enable the school to provide a safe and orderly learning environment for all students.

** Although we try to be specific to all issues, there may be issues not included in this handbook that are left to the discretion of the faculty and administration of the school.*



Student & Parent Handbook

Acknowledgement

2010-2011

I acknowledge that I have read the Keys Gate Charter High School Student & Parent Handbook. I agree to comply with the policies set forth in this handbook.

Parent/Guardian Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Student Name

Student Signature

Student Grade Level

Student Homeroom Teacher

