POLK AVENUE ELEMENTARY

Empowering One Leader At A Time

STUDENT HANDBOOK 2010-2011

"Leadership is not a one-day thing. It is a constant commitment to excellence, a habit . . . a daily practice." M. Murdock

Gail Quam Principal

110 E. Polk Avenue Lake Wales, Florida 33853 Telephone: 863-678-4244 www.lwcharterschools.com

Name		
Address		
Phone	Teacher	

Welcome to Polk Avenue Elementary. This student agenda has been provided for our students K-5 in order to provide a tool, which will allow them to plan and organize their lives. The information in this agenda is the starting point to understanding *The Avenue Way*.

Polk Avenue Elementary Mission Statement

Polk Avenue is committed to each child reaching his/her full potential through a challenging program that is integrated and provides a global perspective in a warm and caring environment.

The Polk Avenue Way

T is with great anticipation that we look to the 2010-2011 school year. This is the year that Polk

Avenue implements The Leader In Me program. Together, the staff, students and parents will learn how to become great leaders of self. This leadership of ourselves will ensure that our students are more successful than ever before. In order for us to make that happen we do need your assistance. Be on the lookout for training opportunities for you as parents and volunteers. Please schedule a conference with your child's teacher as soon as you can during this school year. You know your child best, what works with them and what does not work as well with them. Communication is essential. At Polk Avenue, I can assure you that our faculty and staff will work hard to communicate with you about your child's progress and about important events. We will be using parent conferences, parent phone calls, the student agendas, interim reports, post cards, newsletters, and the Connect Ed call out system to assist us in our communication. Please be certain to keep your phone numbers updated in the office so that we can get in touch with you. In addition, we love to hear from you. Please feel free to use the student agenda and parent phone calls or conferences to communicate to us as well. We will also provide you with a DVD to let you know more about Polk Avenue. This DVD will show to see at school to help you with whatever you may need. This DVD will also share with you more about each grade level. We value your communication as a valuable part of our team.

DISCIPLINE

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"If a child doesn't know how to read, we teach."
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Our school-wide Positive Behavior Support (PBS) aims to cultivate an environment in which positive behavior is more effective than problem behavior. PBS is a collaborative, assessment-based approach to developing effective interventions for problem behavior. PBS emphasizes the use of preventative teaching, and reinforcement-based strategies to achieve meaningful and durable behavior and lifestyle outcomes.

Our goal is to increase academic performance, increase safety, decrease problem behavior, and establish positive school culture. Through PBS our faculty, students and staff are crafting Cardinal **PRIDE** – Be **P**repared, Be **R**espectful, Act with **I**ntegrity, Be **D**etermined, and Act with **E**tiquette.

The teachers use Positive Behavior Strategies with the students in the classroom. This approach places the focus on what children are doing well. However, we also teach them that their pattern of behavior has a direct impact on the community. The students at Polk Avenue are extremely cooperative and polite; however, there are the occasional problems that must be dealt with for the good of the community. We give students numerous opportunities to reverse the counter-productive pattern of behavior and continue to learn and grow. For the students who have difficulty with behavior, we will need to have quick intervention and support from the family. There is a zero tolerance for bullying or physical aggression at Polk Avenue. Polk Avenue is committed to creating a place, where the student who behaves well and is contributing in a positive way to the learning environment is not deterred by misbehavior or disrespect.

Students have much to learn and they can learn when they are in class. Parents, I need your assistance in having your children at school on time daily. There will be an occasional sick day, but these should be rare. It is impossible for your child to learn what is happening in the classrooms when they are not here. The bottom line: we must have students present, ready to learn and ready to be respectful to the other members of the community. Our promise to you is that the Polk Avenue staff will work to support your child in every way possible, but your support and willingness to work with us is a must for a successful partnership.

We are committed to creating an environment where all can flourish. Please help us as we continue to work to design a better Polk Avenue.

[&]quot;If a child doesn't know how to multiply, we teach."

[&]quot;If a child doesn't know how to behave, we... ...teach? ...punish?"

Special Note to Kindergarten Parents

This is a big step in the life of your family, and we thank you for trusting us to help your child get a wonderful start in school. Our kindergarten program is designed to meet students where they are when they arrive and move them forward academically. For some students, kindergarten will be a one year adventure and for others, it may last two years. Our philosophy is that at this early age some students need a bit more time to develop hand-eye coordination and to develop the appropriate social and academic skill to move to first grade. Research also tells us that language development and acquisition at this stage of development can move slowly at first and then take a major progress leap.

In light of this knowledge, Polk Avenue Educators have created a Kindergarten Plus Program for the young ones that need a bit more time on task before we send them to first grade. Kindergarten parent meetings will explain this in a deeper way.

Elementary Promotion Requirements

Students must meet the grade level expectations at each grade level. This means that there can be NO final failing grade in math or reading for promotion. The classroom teacher has the primary responsibility for determining each student's level of performance and ability to function at the next grade level. The Promotion / Retention Committee, which involves the parent, classroom teacher and an administrator, reviews and approves promotion/retention of students. Student retention is used to provide students with additional time to master skills required for success in the next higher grade. Any student in danger of being retained must be referred to the school-based promotion/retention team. The principal has the final decision for retention. Any student in Grade 3 who scores Achievement Level 1 on FCAT Reading must be retained unless exempt from retention for good cause. Parents are involved in writing an Academic Improvement Plan for children not meeting proficiency levels.

Conferences

Conferences will be a major part of our communication with parents this school year. This year we will have several opportunities for you to participate in conferences in your child's class. Your child's teacher will be facilitating student led conferences where your child will show you their progress for the school year with graphs and data that they have collected. As a Title I school, we are required to have one parent conference each year, but we would like to meet with you three times during the school year to continually discuss your child's progress. Thank you for participating in these informative meetings.

Volunteer Program (VIPS)

The Avenue needs you to become an active member of this community. The lives of these young students could be so much better with a bit of push from the adults in this community. We need you front and center and willing to transform this school.

We encourage all parents to become involved in their child's education through our Volunteers in Polk County Schools Program (VIPS). To become a volunteer, it is necessary to complete an application available in the school office. For the safety of our students, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) screens all volunteers.

Parties

Birthday parties may be held on the last day of the month at the discretion of the teacher. Please discuss party plan with your child's teacher two days prior to the party. All food must be individually wrapped or sealed from the baker. **No food may be homemade.**

Fieldtrips

Fieldtrips are an important and fun time of the year. We would like for you to be able to attend the fieldtrip as a chaperone, but you must be an approved volunteer to attend. This process can take long as six weeks, so please plan ahead. Also, when attending a field trip as a chaperone no other sibling of the student may attend with you while you are chaperoning our students, and you will be expected to care of a group of students. This is for the safety of all students. Cash or money orders will be an accepted form of payment, no checks please.

Classroom Visits

Parents are welcomed and encouraged to visit our school. For the safety of all students and staff we have added a perimeter fence. We do ID. Please have your ID with you when you visit campus as we will scan the ID each time you visit. Please check in through the office and obtain a visitor's pass. Visitation to your child's classroom must be prearranged with the teacher. Parents also must sign in the office and secure a visitor's pass. This must be worn while on campus.

Attendance

The research is overwhelming: the students who attend school on a regular basis make better grades. Progress happens when students are here on a daily basis, are well-rested and ready to learn. Every absence or tardy must be accounted for by the teacher. If a student is absent, it is necessary for the parent/guardian to send a note to the teacher when the student returns stating the reason for the absence. State law specifies which absences can be excused. In case of an absence for a serious or communicable illness, a note from a doctor may be required. A student not only misses on the day of absence, but also is not prepared for the next day because of missing instruction. We are enforcing the attendance/truancy policy at Polk Avenue. If your child misses excessive days at school or is excessively tardy, we will be communicating with you. Our commitment to you is that the Polk Avenue staff will support your child in every way possible, but your support and willingness to work with us is a must for a successful partnership.

Arrival Procedures For Students

Students should not arrive on campus before 7:30 AM. The safety of our children at school is of major concern for all of us. Supervision is provided on campus at 7:30 AM. Students arriving after 8:00 are considered tardy and will report directly to the office. Two unexcused tardies equals one unexcused

absence. Students may ride their bicycles with the permission of their parents. Students are urged to purchase and use individual locks to keep bikes secure during school hours.

Dismissal Procedures

All students are dismissed at 2:45. Bus students are picked up on the east side of campus beside the cafeteria. Car riders in grades K-5 are picked up on the west side of campus only, not from the front office. Walkers will exit the campus at the area assigned according to which direction they live from the school. Day care and bus students will be assigned to specific after school rooms while they wait to be picked up. Parents are reminded that they are responsible for contacting childcare providers when their child is absent. This avoids unnecessary concern and time spent trying to locate a child by these providers.

Inclement Weather Dismissal

Parents, please make a plan with your child on how they are to go home on rainy days. Please include arrangements for their bicycles as well. These plans should be shared with their classroom teacher. If at all possible please try to have a rainy day plan in place so that your child does not have to call you for instructions. Remember, we have approximately 500 students, and it is difficult for all of them to use the phone to call home on these days.

Procedures For Student Check-Out

A request to have a student excused from class early should be sent with the student the morning of the dismissal. The time and reason for leaving should be included. When possible, medical and dental appointments should be made outside of school hours. The student will remain in the classroom until the teacher is notified by the office to release the student. The parent or authorized person must report to the office and sign the child out. Only parents or those who are listed on the emergency card will be allowed to pick up the student early from school. Unless there is an emergency, no student will be released during the last 15 minutes of the day. Thanks for understanding this expectation.

Emergency Cards and Medical Information Cards

It is important that the school has up to date information on the Emergency Card kept in the office and the Medical Information Card kept in the clinic. If you move, change jobs, or your phone number changes, we must have the new number. For the safety of your children, the school must be able to reach you or a person listed on the card during school hours.

Medication

The following must be followed for prescription and non-prescription medication:

• Students cannot transport any medication. An adult must deliver all medication to the school clinic.

- Medication may be administered for one day with a written note from the parent/legal guardian, but only if it is in the original prescription packaging.
- An official form must be completed and signed by the Physician or Nurse Practitioner.
- No medication will be administered without parental authorization and without a physician or nurse practitioner's instructions.

Personal Items At School

It is important that students avoid bring personal items such as cameras, radios, toys, sports equipment, trading cards, hats, etc. to school. Cell phones: may be at school as long as they remain in the off. If the phone is turned on it will be collected and an adult will need to pick it up from the office. Many times these items ended up being at the center of distractions. The school is not responsible for the loss of personal items.

Textbooks and Library Books

Students will be held responsible for assigned textbooks and library books checked out by them. It is important to read with your child each week. We will have Open Media Nights during the year. These are nights when you can visit the library with your child and take AR (Accelerated Reader) tests together. There are all sorts of things that may capture your imagination, if you will just reach for them.

Mandatory School Uniforms

All students are required to adhere to the Polk County Mandatory Uniform Dress Code: In addition to this policy Polk Avenue Elementary also initiates the following.

Bottoms: khaki/tan

- Shorts, pants, skirts,
- No sweat pants or knit pants
- Shorts, skirts and jumpers must be mid-thigh or longer
- All clothes should fit appropriately

Tops: Red

- Plain red t-shirts or plain red collared shirts
- Shirts must be tucked in

Fridays:

Bottoms: color-dark/blue or jeans

Tops: Alternative color Polk Avenue T-shirts

Title I

Polk Avenue is a Title One School? What exactly is that and what does that mean to me?

- Title I can help children be more successful in school
- Parents have a voice in their child's education
- Teachers realize the contributions of parents to their child's education.

How does Title I work?

- Federal government provides funds to States each year for Title I after the state sends in a plan describing:
 - What children know and should be able to do
 - High-quality standards that children are expected to meet.
 - Ways their progress will measured

Then the State education agencies send the money to school
Districts based on the numbers of families that receives free and
reduced lunch. And then the Local School District or Lea
eligible schools and distributes the funds.

identifies

Parents, Teachers, Administrators, and Staff will:

- Identify students who need help the most
- Set goals for improvement
- Measure student progress, using state standards
- Develop programs that supplement classroom instruction
- Involve parents in every part of the program

We need you help to.....

- Determine goals for the program
- o Plan and carry out program
- Evaluate programs
- Work with your child at home and possibly as a volunteer in the classroom

Be on the look for:

• Annual Title One Parent Meeting (Open House)

- The Parent- School Compact School Parent Involvement Plan
- o District Parent Involvement Plan