



DeSoto Middle School

Student/Parent Handbook

And

Code of Student Conduct

2011-2012

School District of DeSoto County
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Superintendent

DESOTO DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

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Foreword

The purpose of this handbook is to explain the policies, procedures and rules of DeSoto Middle School. It will be read aloud to all students and should be used by our students and their parents as a source of information throughout the school year.

Important, Please Read:

PARENTS NEED TO READ THIS HANDBOOK CAREFULLY WITH YOUR CHILD AND RETURN THE LAST PAGE OF THIS BOOK TO YOUR CHILD'S HOMEROOM TEACHER INDICATING BY SIGNATURES THAT YOU UNDERSTAND THE RULES AND REGULATIONS AS STATED.

Introduction

This handbook contains policies, procedures and guidelines for matters that are essential to the operation of the school. It is in no way intended to change or replace County of State established guidelines, policies or statutes. It is requested that comments, corrections and recommendations for additions and changes be submitted to the office. Periodic revisions will be made on a page-by-page basis in bulletin form. Please insert immediately the revisions that you receive.

Mission Statement

The mission of the School District of DeSoto is to prepare all students to be successful citizens and productive workers.

Guiding Principles

1. Students, the quality of instruction and services provided to students, and the needs of students will be central concerns in all decisions made in the School District of DeSoto.
2. Integrity, honesty, openness, and responsiveness are core values in the School District of DeSoto.
3. Decisions should be made as close to the point of implementation as possible and based on consideration of all available resources.
4. The schools belong to the community, whose input and partnerships are essential to effectively meet the needs of students.

Goals

1. To create a challenging, supportive educational environment that results in higher levels of achievement for all students which includes: reading with comprehension, writing clearly, computing accurately, thinking, reasoning, and using information to solve problems?
2. To provide leadership to agencies serving youth, ensuring family support and academic success.
3. To help all employees become educational leaders who provide responsible and innovative leadership to achieve effective instruction for all students.
4. To hold everyone in the school district accountable for contributing to the educational bottom line: student achievement.
5. To create an organizational culture that considers employees to be its most valuable resource and invests in their professional growth and development.
6. To create within the entire community a sense of ownership of the schools and a belief that a quality public school system is an investment in the continued growth and prosperity of DeSoto County.

Philosophy

At DeSoto Middle School we believe everyone has the right and responsibility to achieve his or her educational best. Successful student education results from a safe, supportive and challenging environment that gives the early adolescent an opportunity to explore, discover and learn. To be the best we can be, we will:

- Honor individual differences
- Clearly define the things we expect from everyone
- Hold each person accountable for his or her own behavior

DeSoto Middle School Mission Statement

Our Mission is to create a safe and positive learning environment to ensure that all students have the opportunity to reach their greatest potential.

Goals

1. DeSoto Middle School will build in our students a stronger sense of responsibility for themselves, others, and the community so that they may become productive and involved members of society.
2. The DeSoto Middle School staff will implement strategies to accommodate the varied learning styles which will foster a positive learning environment for the student.
3. DeSoto Middle School will maintain high academic standards in order to foster the development of each student's academic potential.

School Hours:

Drop Off Time:	No sooner than 7:45 AM
School Hours:	8:15 AM - 3:20 PM
Pick Up Time:	No later than 3:35 PM

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POLICIES AFFECTING STUDENTS

ARTICLES PROHIBITED IN SCHOOL

Items such as radios, lighters, walkmans, cameras, toy guns, water pistols, ipods, electronic devices, glass items, knives, hard balls, roller blades, skateboards or any shoe with rollers are **prohibited**. The item will be confiscated and returned to the parent. It is recommended that students refrain from bringing large sums of money to school.

*See cell phone policy on page 4.

Absolutely no GUM, CANDY, FOOD or DRINKS are allowed in the buildings.

The school is not responsible for lost or stolen prohibited or contraband items and will not investigate or attempt to recover such items.

ATHLETICS

Seventh and eighth grade students must maintain a 2.0 or higher GPA from the previous 9 weeks to participate in athletics. Students who are assigned to IR or OSS are not allowed to participate in the sport for the duration of the disciplinary action.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance and promptness are important factors in the success attained by a person in any walk of life. DeSoto Middle School wishes to cooperate with the parents and students in developing the habits of these two important characteristics.

Attendance is compulsory for all students who have not attained the age of sixteen. As part of the on-going welfare reform, regular school attendance of students whose families receive cash assistance is going to be monitored and those students whose academic progress is in jeopardy because of poor attendance will cause their families to lose a pro-rated share of the monthly cash assistance.

A. Absences

1. Whenever a student is to be absent, a parent or guardian should phone the school, 494-4133, ext. 207, between 7:45 a.m. and 8:15 a.m., giving the name of the student and reason for absence. If absenteeism on the part of an individual becomes excessive, the school will attempt to contact the home or parent's place of employment, which creates an inconvenience.
2. Whenever a student has been absent, he/she must return to school with a valid written excuse within two days to be presented to the attendance office prior to reporting to his/her homeroom teacher. This excuse should contain the following:
 - a) Student's first and last name.
 - b) Date of absence covered by excuse.

- c) Reason for absence (only illness or death in the family is considered excused).
 - d) Signature of the parent or guardian.
 - e) Phone number where parent or guardian can be contacted.
3. Absence due to truancy is considered unexcused and may result in a parent conference and possible legal action.
4. All class work missed due to absence is expected to be made up within five (5) school days. In case of prolonged legal absence, teachers will make reasonable allowances of time in which to make up the work missed. **HOWEVER, it is the student's responsibility to contact each teacher for the work missed.**
- B. Tardiness
If you arrive to school after 8:25 a.m., report to the attendance office for a late slip. Disciplinary action will be taken if you arrive late to homeroom or to classes during the day and your tardiness is unexcused.
- C. **Attendance**
Students must be in attendance for a minimum of 1/2 day (3 hours) in order to attend after school activities.
- D. To qualify for perfect attendance you must attend school every day including the last day of school.
- E. Students are not permitted to leave the school grounds at any time during the school day without permission from the attendance office. If you must leave the building due to illness or any other emergency, your legal guardian must sign you out at the attendance office. Other authorized personnel may be permitted to check out students with written permission or telephone verification by the legal guardian. Failure to follow the proper procedure will be considered an unexcused absence and will result in disciplinary action.
- F. School Board Policy 192.06 states:

For the purpose of recording absences due to tardiness or early release the following should be enforced:

- 1) Four unexcused tardies or early releases are equal to one unexcused absence.
- 2) Four excused tardies or early releases are equal to one excused absence.

Students receiving one of the above absences would not be eligible for Perfect Attendance for the school year.

AWARDS

DeSoto Middle School is a RENAISSANCE school! Students, faculty and staff members are rewarded several times throughout the school year for their academics, attendance, behavior and special achievements. Awards are also given at the end of

the school year for leadership, scholarship, citizenship and service. Other awards are given at the discretion of the teachers.

BICYCLES

Students who ride their bicycles to DeSoto Middle School must have them registered. This can be done by obtaining a Bicycle Registration Form from the front office. The entire form must be filled out completely by the student and turned in to our Security Officer. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen bikes. Should a bicycle be stolen from the premises, we will have the correct information on file to provide to the law enforcement agency for investigation. Students must use a chain and lock to secure their bicycle.

As of January 1998, the State of Florida Statute 316.2065 mandates all students under the age of 16 must wear a bicycle helmet. If a student is found in violation of this statute he/she may be assessed a fine or issued a traffic citation. DeSoto Middle School has the right to recommend permanent revocation of the student's privilege to ride a bike to school.

BOOK BAGS, BACKPACKS AND OVERSIZE PURSES

No book bags, backpacks, oversize purses or bags are to be carried during the school day. By way of illustration only, and not by way of limitation, examples of unacceptable purses or bags would be Vera Bradley back purses, tote purses, etc.

BUSES

Students who ride a bus are not permitted to get off at another school, nor are they permitted to leave campus once they arrive. The driver is in complete charge. Riding the bus is a privilege and you are to be courteous and respectful at all times. Failure to obey the school bus rules can result in a suspension of the bus riding privilege.

Bus Rules

- 1) Follow guidelines given by the transportation department
- 2) No fighting, abusive or profane language
- 3) No alcohol, tobacco products, drugs, knives, guns, weapons, or vandalism
- 4) No standing or moving while the bus is in motion or pushing and tripping while loading/unloading
- 5) No throwing objects from bus window
- 6) No animals (dead or alive), glass, sharp objects, bats, batons, basketballs, balloons, or large flags allowed on the bus
- 7) No hands, arms or head outside the bus window
- 8) All talking should be kept at a low tone and NO TALKING at railroad crossings
- 9) Each student is required to stay seated and face the front of the bus
- 10) A new student or any student with a change in his/her bus schedule should get a bus pass from the discipline office by 9:00 a.m.

CAFETERIA

DeSoto Middle School offers breakfast and lunch to students and staff. Information regarding pricing and procedures will be provided by the DeSoto County Food Service department. Applications for free or reduced meals may be obtained through the DeSoto County Food Service department or the front office..

BREAKFAST: Breakfast is served in the DMS cafeteria from 7:50 AM until 8:25 AM each morning. Students who **do not** ride a school bus are to enter the cafeteria before 8:05 AM. All students eating breakfast are to go directly to the cafeteria upon their arrival at school.

LUNCH: Students are expected to follow the guidelines set forth in the cafeteria. Students may pay for their breakfast/lunches in advance (weekly, monthly, etc.) by reporting to the cafeteria office during homeroom (8:15-8:51). Should a student be unable to pay for his/her lunch, an alternative lunch consisting of a peanut butter sandwich and milk will be provided at no cost.

No food deliveries will be accepted (i.e., fast food, pizza and party items)

CELL PHONE POLICY

STUDENT USE OF CELL PHONES IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED AT ANY TIME DURING THE SCHOOL DAY, DURING SCHOOL FUNCTIONS, OR ON A SCHOOL BUS.

Students may bring electronic communication devices such as cell phones; however, All cell phones must be placed in the locker at the beginning of the day and remain in the locker until leaving at the end of the day. The use of these communication devices is strictly prohibited at any time during the school day, during school functions, or on school buses. All electronic communication devices must be turned off, stored out of sight in locker and are not permitted to be worn on the person in any fashion. Violation of this policy will result in confiscation and/or disciplinary action.

Note: If the communication device is used in a criminal act while the student is on school property or in attendance at a school function, there is a possibility of disciplinary action by the school and/or criminal penalties.

Electronic and Laser Devices Prohibited:

Any laser device or electronic device, not authorized for use as a learning device, is prohibited on school grounds, at school functions, or on the school buses. Prohibited electronic devices are considered contraband, and possession of such devices will result in confiscation and/or disciplinary action. The school will not be responsible for such items being lost or stolen.

Minimum Consequences:

1st Offense- Electronic device will be confiscated and held for a minimum of 24 hours. Parent will have to pick up and or possible disciplinary action.

- 2nd Offense- Electronic device will be confiscated and held for a minimum of 1 week. Parent will have to pick up and or possible disciplinary action.
- 3rd Offense- Electronic device will be confiscated and held for a minimum of 1 month. Parent will have to pick up and or possible disciplinary action.

Contraband may only be picked up between 7:45 a.m. and 4:15 p.m. on normal school days.

Refusal to comply with reasonable request to surrender item will result in disciplinary action.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please inform the guidance department if you change your address or telephone number. **THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT!**

CLUBS/ORGANIZATIONS

Any student receiving two or more Referral's for Assistance resulting in IR and/or an Out of School Suspension may be asked to resign from the club/organization.

COMPULSORY IMMUNIZATION

Pertinent information of Florida Statutes 232.032 reads as follows: "This bill relates to immunizations and requires that all students in kindergarten through grade twelve (both public and non public schools) **MUST** have a certification of immunizations or exemption in order to be admitted or to attend school."

Immunizations shall be required for Polio, Diphtheria, Rubeola, Rubella, Pertussis and Tetanus. All students entering the seventh grade effective with the 1997/98 school year are required to complete the following immunizations: Tetanus-Diphtheria booster, Hepatitis B vaccine series (3), and second dose of measles vaccine.

DEPARTURE AFTER SCHOOL

If you ride a bus, you are to exit the building and go directly to the loading zone designated for your bus. Walkers are to leave the building immediately and go directly home. Walkers are not to take shortcuts through private property. **No loitering on school grounds will be permitted.** Students are not to visit another school's campus.

DISCIPLINE

Discipline is essential to the success of any organization and education is no exception. Students are expected to follow the school rules and cooperate with all school personnel. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action. An attempt will be made to contact the parents or guardians of students every time disciplinary action has to be taken. The disciplinary action taken by an administrator will be determined by the severity of the infraction. The disciplinary actions include after school detention, Intervention Room, and Out-of-School Suspension.

Philosophy

At DeSoto Middle School we believe everyone has the right and responsibility to achieve his or her educational best. Successful student education results from a safe, supportive, and challenging environment that gives the early adolescent an opportunity to explore, discover, and learn. To be the best we can be, we will:

- Honor individual differences
- Clearly define the things we expect from everyone
- Hold each person accountable for his or her own behavior

DeSoto Middle School School Rules

1. I respect personal space and will not touch or speak to another in any way that offends that person or others.
2. I respect the need for my school to be a safe and inviting place to learn.
3. I respect other students' right to learn.
4. I respect the teacher's responsibility to teach.
5. I respect my duty to be prepared, on time, and in the right place.

Please see the DeSoto County Code of Conduct for an explanation of consequences to rule infractions.

- Jurisdiction of the DeSoto County School Board has been extended beyond the DeSoto Middle School boundary lines.
- Student suspensions will be viewed as an unexcused absence. Students will have five (5) days to make up work.

DMS School Uniform and Dress Code Policy

- **Solid blue, black, or khaki pants**, walking shorts, slacks, skirts, skorts, jumpers, or similar clothing made of twill, corduroy, or denim fabric. (A small logo no bigger than your fist is acceptable)
- **Any solid color shirts with collars** such as a polo, oxford, or dress shirt (A small logo no bigger than your fist is acceptable)
- DeSoto Middle School (Panther) or DMS club shirts are permitted for wear on Fridays.

- **Jackets, sweaters, coats, etc.:**
 - Must meet dress code rules and be removed when entering building (placed in locker).
 - **Any cover-up garment that is worn during the day must be a solid Panther red, black or Bulldog blue color with no hood.** (A small logo no bigger than your fist is acceptable)

The uniform policy also includes the following:

- **Shoes/Footwear:** All students shall wear shoes. We encourage athletic shoes. Covered toes and heel shoes are acceptable. **No sandals.** Platforms and shoes with wheels may not be worn.
- The size of shirts and pants must be appropriate to the student's body size and not oversized or undersized.
- Shirts must be tucked into the waistband of the pants or skirt. Exceptions will be allowed in individual cases at administration's discretion.
- No drop pants. Pants or shorts must be worn so that the waistband is worn at the waist and not below. Shorts are no shorter than mid-thigh.
- The hem of the girls' skirts or dresses must be no shorter than mid-thigh.
- Blankets are not permitted.

No student will be denied attendance at school or be penalized for failing to wear a school uniform due to financial hardship. DMS and The School Advisory Council will be developing procedures and criteria to offer assistance to these students. Boosters have shirts available at a reasonable price. Parents are asked to notify administration if they need assistance.

STUDENT APPEARANCE & DRESS CODE POLICY

Students are required to wear appropriate clothing to school. Inappropriate clothing and appearance are disruptive to the school program and administration will enforce adherence to this policy. **School administrators have final authority to decide if clothing complies with the dress code policy.**

When it is determined that a student's clothing does not comply with the dress code, a parent/guardian may be asked to bring an appropriate change of clothes to school. The student may, with parental permission, be sent home in order to change clothes. In addition, the student may also receive a disciplinary consequence for violating the school's dress code policy.

Violations of this Policy

Violations of this policy shall be treated as rebellious behavior in violation of the Student Code of Conduct. However, policy violations shall not carry over on the student's discipline record to subsequent years. This policy shall apply to students at all times when they attend school or any school sponsored event. Administration may exercise discretion and permit exceptions to this

policy for extracurricular activities.

General Dress Code Policy Requirements

Appropriate Sizes: Students shall wear clothing of appropriate size as determined by administration exercising his or her judgment. The size of shirts and pants shall be appropriate to the student's body size and shall not be unduly oversized or undersized.

Shirts: Shirts shall be tucked into the waistband of the pants or skirt. Exceptions will be allowed in individual cases based upon the discretion of the principal or designee. All shirts must have sleeves.

Pants: Pants shall be worn so that the waistband is worn at the waist and not below the waist.

Skirts and Dresses: The hem of girls' skirts or dresses shall be no shorter than mid-thigh as determined by administration in the exercise of his or her judgment.

Shoes/Footwear: All students shall wear shoes. We encourage athletic shoes. Covered toes and heel shoes are acceptable. **No sandals.** Platforms and shoes with wheels may not be worn.

Unacceptable Attire

Students are not allowed to wear clothing, jewelry (including body piercing jewelry and "grills"), buttons, haircuts, tattoos, or other attire or markings which are offensive, suggestive, disruptive, or indecent such as

1. Clothing associated with gangs,
2. Clothing encouraging the use of tobacco, drugs, alcohol, or violence,
3. Clothing associated with discrimination on the basis of age, color, handicap, national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, race, religion, or sex.
4. Clothing exposing the torso or upper thighs such as see-through garments, mini-skirts or mini-dresses, halters, backless dresses, tube tops or tank tops without over shirts, spaghetti strap garments without over shirts, bare midriff outfits, or shirts tied at the midriff.
5. Clothing not properly fastened or with tears or holes.
6. Clothing traditionally designed as undergarments such as boxer shorts, bloomers, tights, hosiery, and sleepwear should not be worn as outer garments.
7. Hats, headgear, sunglasses, or any head covering except when approved by administration.
8. Armbands, wristbands, belts, wallet chains, oversized chains of any size (example: dog chain style necklace, on wallets, etc.), or other items with heavy metal projections are prohibited.
9. Students may not display inappropriate markings (i.e., signs, graffiti, symbols, etc.) on themselves or any items they have at school.

10. Gang paraphernalia, jewelry, tattoos, clothing, or other insignias, (including writings), which provoke and/or promote violence or disruptions may not be worn.

Unacceptable Shorts

Athletic shorts including spandex-style “bicycle” shorts, basketball style shorts, cut-off jeans, frayed jeans or pants, cut-off sweat pants, short-shorts, and running shorts, are not permitted.

Exceptions to the uniform dress code shall be permitted when:

- a. A student wears a uniform of a nationally recognized youth organization, such as the Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts, on regular meeting days.
- b. A student wears a costume or special clothing necessary for a school play or other school-sponsored activity as permitted by administration
- c. A student’s parent requests a reasonable accommodation to address the student’s disability. Such request shall be reduced to writing and submitted to the principal for approval.

Violation of the Policy of Unacceptable Appearance (Not Necessarily Clothing)

It will be a violation of this Policy for a student to attend school or any school-sponsored event or function held during the school day with any visible body piercing, except for earrings on the ears, all other body piercing jewelry/items must be removed and not concealed. It will also be a violation of this Policy for any student to have his or her hair cut or worn in such a manner, or colored in such a manner, in an extreme fashion such that administration, within reasonable exercise of his or her discretion, determines it is so distracting or disruptive that it interferes with the orderly educational process.

By way of illustration only, and not by way of limitation, examples of unacceptable hair color or style would be extremely garish neon colors, orange, purple, green (or other unnatural colors), color patterns such as plaid or stripes, Mohawk style, extreme spiked hair and similarly unusual and distracting hairstyles.

Further, it will be a violation of the Policy for a student to wear makeup that is not within the acceptable standards for the school or community such that administration, within the reasonable exercise of his or her discretion, determines it is so distracting or disruptive that it interferes with the orderly educational process.

Breach of Conduct

Repeated violations of the Dress Code Policy shall be treated as rebellious behavior under the Code of Student Conduct.

EXTRA HELP

We encourage you to ask your teachers for extra help if you do not understand an assignment, if the work is difficult, or if you have been absent and have missed class assignments and discussions. Arrange a conference with your teacher before or after school or at a time convenient to both of you during the day.

A teacher will sometimes request a student to stay after school if it is apparent that the student is having difficulty with his work. This is not to be thought of as a punishment, but rather as the desire of the teacher to help you make the progress of which you are capable.

FIRE DRILL/TORNADO DRILL

Fire, tornado, and other school site safety drills at regular intervals are required by law and are an important safety precaution. It is essential that when the first signal is given, everyone obeys orders promptly. The teacher in each classroom will give the students instructions. Students are to move in an orderly fashion.

FUN DAY ACTIVITIES

Any student who has two or more Referrals for Assistance within a nine-week grading period will not be allowed to participate in fun days.

GRADING AND REPORT CARDS

Academic and Exploratory Classes: Report cards will be distributed after the end of every nine (9) week grading period. Refer to the school calendar for specific dates.

The grading system at DeSoto Middle School is as follows:

GRADE	PERCENT	GRADE POINT VALUE	DEFINITION
A	90-100	4	Outstanding progress
B	80-89	3	Above Average progress
C	70-79	2	Average Progress
D	60-69	1	Lowest acceptable progress
F	0-59	0	Failure
I			Incomplete

GRADE 2

Phone Instructions:

By using a touch tone phone, you will be able to access your child's grades, as posted by our teachers, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. To access your child's grades, dial into the system, 494-1933. **Upon answering, press 8040. Follow voice prompts.** Note: Pin number is your child's birthday (using two digits for month, day and year. i.e. March 6, 1986 is entered 030686). If you are having difficulty with this system please call 494-4133 ext. 268.

Internet Instructions:

- 1) Go to the DeSoto County School home page: desotoschools.com
- 2) Choose Excelsior Pinnacle Parent Internet Viewer
- 3) Enter your child's student number (six digit number)
- 4) Enter your child's PIN number (birthday using two digits for month, day and year. i.e. March 6, 1986 is entered 030686)
- 5) Enter school choice
- 6) Choose the report you would like to view

GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT

The guidance department is available to help the students with the difficult decisions both academic and personal they may face. The counselors will work with every student to plan their most appropriate educational program. They will also work with the students to help them develop self discipline and a good self concept.

HALLWAY COURTESY, QUIETNESS AND ORDER

Please keep hallways and sidewalks open to traffic by walking to the RIGHT. Do not block traffic by standing in groups. Pass through the hallways quietly. Be considerate of others in the halls and classrooms. **Always keep your hands to yourself!** Pick up paper from the floors and discard trash in the containers provided. **Leave the school building immediately after dismissal unless under the supervision of a teacher.**

HONOR SOCIETY

The purpose of the DeSoto Middle School Honor Society is to recognize and promote admirable qualities in students.

Induction criteria is as follows:

- 1) The student must have a 3.5 or higher overall **grade point average** as per the guidance print out in the spring of the school year.
- 2) The student has received no more than one DeSoto Middle School RA or has not been suspended from school for a disciplinary action. Referrals that result in Time-out or detention do not count.

The DMS Honor Society is based upon the qualities deemed most desirable: **Scholarship, Leadership, Citizenship, and Service.** To remain a member, a student must maintain certain standards.

Academic Standards:

Probation from the Honor Society will be incurred if a student's grades fall below the 3.5 GPA or if a student earns a grade of "C" or lower for any nine-week grading period. Any student placed on probation will be given one nine-week grading period to improve

their status. If a student fails to improve their academic status, then he/she will be asked to resign from the Honor Society until the next academic year.

Citizenship Standards:

Any student receiving two or more Referral's for Assistance resulting in IR and/or an Out of School suspension may be asked to resign from the Honor Society.

LOCKERS

The school accepts no responsibility for money or other articles in lockers. It is the student's responsibility to keep his locker locked at all times and not reveal his combination to any other student.

Use of lockers between classes is not permitted unless during the scheduled and appropriate time set by the teacher. Keep lockers neat and orderly. **Students are not to share their locker with another student.**

All students found purposely damaging lockers or damaging lockers through carelessness (over stuffing) shall have their locker privilege revoked.

Lockers that are not working properly or are in need of repair should be reported to your homeroom teacher.

Students may rent a P.E. locker for \$1.00 during the time they have P.E.

LOCKERS WILL BE INSPECTED ON A REGULAR BASIS
Administration has the authority to randomly search lockers.

LOST AND FOUND

Lost and found items should be turned into the office. Lost and found items will be kept for a 30-day period and then disposed of.

Students should report any lost items to the front office.

MEDIA CENTER

Students may use the Media Center when they present a pass signed by their classroom teacher. Each student will be charged a fine of five cents per day, excluding Saturday and Sunday, for all overdue books. Each student is expected to maintain appropriate behavior while in the Media Center. Students must pay for lost or destroyed Media Center materials. All borrowing privileges may be canceled until restitution is made.

MEDICINE

No medicine should be brought to school other than that prescribed by a physician or sent by a parent (no medications are allowed on the bus). Prescription medication must be in its original container and will be controlled and distributed from the school health nurse after the proper authorization has been completed and filed. All medicine must be left at the health clinic with the school health nurse until time to use. It is the responsibility of the parents/legal guardians to notify the School Health nurse of any medication changes. Parents are cautioned to send only the amount of medication needed for any given time period. Students becoming ill during the school day should report to the health clinic. If there is a necessity to go home, the health nurse will make every attempt to contact the parent by using the Emergency Health Card and the student will then be released from school to the parent or parent-designee. **It is extremely important that Emergency Health cards be returned to the school with current information and signed by the parent.** School health nurses are employed by the DeSoto County Health Department.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parents who wish to discuss their child's behavior or progress with team teachers can arrange to have an appointment scheduled by calling the guidance department at 494-4133, extension 217. This is requested to avoid conflict with previously planned duties of the teacher.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Senate Bill 610 requires the equivalent of one class period per day of physical education for a minimum of one semester (18 weeks) of each school year for students in grades 6 through 8 beginning in the 2009-2010 school year. The physical education 18 week requirement shall be waived for a student who meets the following criteria:

- The student is enrolled or required to enroll in a remedial course.

All students assigned to physical education must participate. In view of this, it is strongly urged that the student visit his family doctor for a complete physical examination before entering school. If a limitation is to be placed on participation in physical education, a written statement should be presented which clearly sets forth the limitations and is signed by a medical doctor. The statement will be made a part of the student's record.

Guidelines for students participating in P.E. will be distributed to students by the P.E. teachers.

PUBLICATIONS

The yearbook is sold in the fall and contains individual pictures of students, teachers, and staff. Photographs of extra-curricular activities and other events are also included. The school newspaper is distributed on a periodic basis.

RESTROOMS

Take care of the restrooms. **KEEP THEM CLEAN** and do not abuse them. Abusing the restrooms will lead to disciplinary action.

SCHOOL STORE

School store will be open from 8:05-8:45 in room 306.

SPECIAL ACTIVITY REQUIREMENTS

Requirements for all special activities or projects will be handed out from the department or person in charge after approval by the principal (Physical education, band, art, tech lab, etc.)

STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (S.A.P.)

We at DeSoto Middle School, in working with early adolescents, realize how difficult this age can be. Today's society presents many difficult situations for students to cope with in their daily activities. Some students have a much more difficult time in dealing with the problems of early adolescence. These students may be identified as "at risk". Problems an "at risk" student could be experiencing might include the following: severe depression, child abuse, alcohol or drug abuse, teen parenting, and attempted suicide. Identifying "at risk" students and assisting them is perhaps one of the greatest challenges facing our schools and teachers today. Research has shown that the most successful approach to identifying and helping "at risk" youth is the utilization of a team approach.

THE STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SAP) CORE TEAM

The Student Assistance Program has been created to provide help for our "at risk" students. At the heart of the SAP is the CORE TEAM. The Core Team is a group of teachers who have been specially trained to provide assistance to "at risk" students.

STUDENT INSURANCE

Although many families have adequate insurance coverage without the student insurance, it is available to all students.

TELEPHONE USE

The attendance office telephone is for school business and it may be used by students **ONLY** in cases of emergency. **Students will not be allowed to receive incoming calls.**

TEXTBOOKS

Each student is responsible for returning textbooks in the best possible condition. If a textbook has not been properly cared for and is returned damaged, the student must pay for the book. If a book is lost or stolen, the cost will be determined by the criteria for evaluation as described in the DeSoto County School Board Instructional Materials Handbook. **A REPLACEMENT BOOK WILL NOT BE ISSUED UNTIL THE LOST/DAMAGED/STOLEN BOOK HAS BEEN PAID FOR.**

VISITORS

ALL VISITORS ARE REQUIRED TO REPORT TO THE FRONT OFFICE/RECEPTION AREA TO BE ISSUED A VISITORS PASS. DRIVER'S LICENSE OR APPROVED IDENTIFICATION IS REQUIRED TO OBTAIN A VISITORS PASS

Students are not allowed to bring visitors to school. Parents are always welcome, but are required to make an appointment to see a teacher, the administration, the guidance office, or to visit their children's classes.

VOLUNTEERS

A volunteer is a non-paid person functioning under the sponsorship of the School Board and at the direction of the responsible administrator. School volunteers may include but are not limited to parents, senior citizens, students and other adults who assist the teacher or other members of the school staff. Volunteers will need to fill out a volunteer application either online at desotoschools.com or by obtaining one from the front office. Once the application is approved the applicant will need to contact the District's Human Resource Department for an appointment to be fingerprinted if necessary. It may not be necessary for all applicants to be fingerprinted. Fingerprints are of no charge to the volunteer. Once the applicant is approved by the Superintendent their name will be placed on the cleared volunteer list. At that time the applicant may begin volunteering.

WITHDRAWALS

Students withdrawing from school must check out with the records clerk. All books must be returned and all other obligations cleared before any records will be mailed out.

DESOTO MIDDLE SCHOOL CALENDAR 2011-2012

August 15	Teachers' First Day
August 22	Students' First Day
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September 5	Labor Day Holiday
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October 21	End 1 st Quarter Grading Period
October 24	Records' Day/No School
October 25	Begin 2 nd Quarter Grading Period
October 27	1 st Quarter Report Cards Distributed
October 31	Professional Development Day/No School
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November 21-22	Hurricane Make-Up Days
November 23-25	Thanksgiving Holiday (5 Days) 11/21-25/11
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December 6-7	FCAT Writing Prompt Field Test
December 19-30	Winter Break
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January 2	Classes Resume
January 16	Martin Luther King Holiday/No School
January 20	End 2 nd Quarter Grading Period
January 23	Records' Day/No School
January 24	Begin 3 rd Quarter Grading Period
January 26	2 nd Quarter Report Cards Distributed
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February 20	Presidents' Day Holiday
February 28-March 1	FCAT Writing 4 th , 8 th & 10 th Grades
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March 12-16	Spring Break
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April 4	End 3 rd Quarter Grading
April 5	Records' Day/No School
April 6	Good Friday Holiday/No School
April 9	Begin 4 th Quarter Grading Period
April 11	3 rd Quarter Report Cards Distributed
April 16-27	FCAT Testing Period
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May 28	Memorial Day Holiday/No School
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June 7	End 4 th Quarter Grading Period/Early Release
June 8	Last Day for Teachers
June 13	4 th Quarter Report Cards Mailed

I have read the DeSoto Middle School Parent / Student Handbook and understand the rules and regulations as stated.

Parent Signature: _____

Student Signature: _____

Please return this page to your child's homeroom teacher.

Yo he leído el manual de Padres/Estudiantes de la escuela DeSoto Middle y entiendo las reglas y reglamentos establecidos.

Firma del Padre: _____

Firma de Estudiante: _____

Por favor de vuelva esta pagina a la maestro/a de su hijo.

TEACHER/STUDENT/PARENT COMPACT OF DESOTO MIDDLE SCHOOL

Teacher Agreement: I believe that each child can be successful. I will

- believe that each child can learn and achieve high standards.
- provide meaningful and appropriate homework and classroom activities.
- maintain open lines of communication with each student's family.
- provide an emotionally and physically safe environment that promotes learning.
- provide well planned lessons that will provide for each individual's differences.
- enforce school and classroom rules fairly.

Teacher Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student Agreement: I believe that I can be successful. I will

- show respect to all other students and school personnel.
- attend school and all classes on a regular basis.
- complete classroom and homework assignment to the best of my ability.
- believe that I can and will learn.
- take pride in myself and my school.
- work cooperatively with my classmates, teachers, and all school staff.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Agreement: I believe that my child can be successful. I will

- provide a home environment that encourages my child to learn.
- teach my child self-respect, respect for the law, respect for authority in the school, and respect the rights and property of others.
- make certain my child attends school all day, everyday, unless my child is ill.
- stay aware of what my child is learning.
- encourage my child to improve comprehension and vocabulary skills through independent reading, and enhance communication skills through problem solving and writing.
- ensure my child is prepared for learning by reviewing homework, having necessary schools supplies, and providing a quiet place to study and read.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Pacto del maestro/estudiante/padre de

DESOTO MIDDLE SCHOOL

Pacto del maestro: Creo que cada niño puede lograr éxito.

- Creo que cada niño puede aprender y alcanzar mayores niveles de aprendizaje.
- Proveeré actividades significativas y apropiadas para las tareas y actividades de la clase.
- Me mantendré en comunicación con los familiares de los estudiantes.
- Proveeré un ambiente físico y emocional que promueva el aprendizaje.
- Proveeré lecciones bien planeadas y apropiados por los distintos niveles.
- Aplicaré las reglas de la escuela y de la clase justamente.

Firma del maestro _____ Fecha: _____

Pacto del estudiante: Yo creo que puedo lograr éxito.

- Demostraré respeto a todos los estudiantes y personal de la escuela.
- Asistiré a la escuela y a todas las clases regularmente.
- Terminaré las tareas y los trabajos de la escuela de acuerdo a mi habilidad.
- Creo que yo puedo aprender.
- Me sentiré orgulloso de mí mismo y de mi escuela.
- Trabajaré con mis compañeros de clase, maestros y personal de la escuela.

Firma del estudiante _____ Fecha: _____

Pacto del padre: Yo creo que mi hijo puede lograr éxito.

- Proveeré en casa un ambiente que anime a mi hijo a aprender.
- Enseñare a mi hijo a respetar la ley, la autoridad en la escuela y los bienes y propiedad de los demás.
- Me encargaré de que mi hijo asista a la escuela todo el día, y todos los días al menos que esté enfermo.
- Estaré al tanto de lo que mi hijo esté aprendiendo.
- Animaré a mi hijo a que mejore la comprensión, habilidades del vocabulario a través de la lectura independiente y a que realice habilidades de comunicación a través de resolver problemas, y escritura.
- Me aseguraré de que mi niño esté preparado para el aprendizaje mediante la revisión de las tareas escolares, y que tenga los materials escolares necesarios, y proporcionaré un lugar tranquilo para estudiar y leer.

Firma del padre _____ Fecha: _____