

# PARENT HANDBOOK

## ETHEL KOGER BECKHAM ELEMENTARY



Nurturing Every Child's Potential

2007-2008

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# **SCHOOL BOARD**

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**SUPERINTENDENT**  
Rudolph F. Crew, Ed. D.

**REGION V SUPERINTENDENT**  
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**MIAMI-DADE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS**  
Board Phone: 305-995-1334

Board Chairperson: Dr. Agustin J. Barrera  
Vice Chairperson: Dr. Martin Karp

Mr. Renier Diaz de la Portilla  
Ms. Evelyn Langlieb Greer  
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Dr. Marta Pérez  
Dr. Solomon C. Stinson

## MISSION STATEMENT

Every child comes to school with strengths and abilities.

The staff of Ethel Koger Beckham Elementary School  
is committed to connect these abilities  
with deeper and wider ways of knowing . . .

finding the intelligence . . .  
building character within our students . . .  
seeing each child as an individual with unique hopes,  
dreams, skills, and needs . . .

NURTURING **EVERY** CHILD'S POTENTIAL.

## COOPERATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Ethel Koger Beckham Elementary School, through a balanced, dynamic curriculum and in cooperative partnership with parents and community, will prepare its diverse student body for the changes and challenges of the future, all the while "nurturing every child's potential." Helping children grow up to be caring and generous members of the world community can be one of the most satisfying aspects of working in a caring school. The values and norms that children experience and practice as members of a school community give them a platform from which to expand their notion of community; to include people who may be very different from them, who may live far away from them, and whom they may never have a chance to know personally. The school's goal is to improve education through family, school, and community partnerships.

## TITLE 1 ADMINISTRATION 2007-2008

Ethel Koger Beckham Elementary School has been designated as a Title 1 School for the 2007-2008 school year. Participating in this federally funded program signifies the following:

- a strong emphasis on adequate yearly progress for all public school students;
- a strong emphasis on teacher certification and paraprofessional qualifications;  
State and LEA report cards to detect the percentage of schools that require school improvement;
- a greater level of authority for local schools to design their own programs; and
- an emphasis on school safety and choice.

# CHARACTER EDUCATION

The purpose of education is to make you more effective in life. The best way to educate a child is to start where the child is and build upon his or her character. In nurturing every child's potential, we offer communities of character in which virtue is modeled, taught and defined. With this in mind, Ethel Koger Beckham Elementary School is instrumental in providing a learning environment which provides multiple entry points to enact intelligence, multiple ways to bring forth capacity, and multiple opportunities to succeed.

The following are our core values:

1. Respects human dignity, which includes
  - internalizing the responsibility to protect and extend the worth and rights of all persons,
  - working with people of different views, and
  - respecting public and private property.
2. Demonstrates active responsibility for the welfare of others, which includes,
  - recognizing interdependence among people,
  - taking pleasure in helping others, and
  - working to help others reach moral maturity.
3. Integrates individual interests and social responsibilities, which includes,
  - displaying self-regarding and other-regarding moral virtues: self-control, diligence, fairness, honest, civility in every day life,
  - becoming involved in community life, and
  - developing self-esteem through relationships with others.
4. Demonstrates integrity, which includes,
  - practicing honesty and truthfulness, and
  - accepting responsibility for one's choices, and recognizing self-esteem and self-worth results from real achievement in overcoming challenges and obstacles in learning and life experiences.
5. Applies moral principles when making choices and judgments, which includes,
  - recognizing the moral issues involved in a situation,
  - seeking to be informed about important moral issues in society and the world, and
  - holding these core values as a standard, measuring ones own behavior and the behavior of others.
6. Seeks peaceful resolution of conflict, which includes,
  - striving for the fair resolution of personal and social conflicts,
  - knowing when to compromise and when to confront, and
  - working for peace.

# THE LEARNING PROCESS

The goal of Ethel Koger Beckham Elementary is to leverage new and evolving technologies to enhance education in partnership with the community, to assure that all students have the opportunity of becoming world class citizens and responsible members of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century global society. The school is committed to preparing students to become successful, contributing members of our ever-changing and increasingly competitive information-based society. Classrooms, the media center, and offices will provide all members of our learning community – students, teachers, administrators, and parents – with equitable and easy access to current and emerging technologies and content for teaching, learning, management, and community support for the school.

The approach is based on the philosophy that all individuals can learn and are responsible for taking an active role in their own learning process. Learning is a lifelong process, comes from all life experiences and human encounters, and encompasses all of our senses. The pace of learning and the learning processes are not restricted by time, place, or age. Learning by doing is the norm, not the exception, and Ethel Koger Beckham Elementary is obligated to promote natural curiosity and the desire to learn on an equal opportunity and access basis.

## REPORT CARDS AND PROGRESS REPORTS

Report cards are given each nine weeks. Grades are given in three areas:

**Academic** - an indication of the level of mastery of the instructional objectives appropriate for the grade level.

**Conduct** - the manner in which a student relates in terms of socially acceptable behavior.

LETTER GRADE	NUMERICAL VALUE	INTERPRETATION	GRADE POINT VALUE
<b>A or E</b>	90 - 100%	Outstanding	A=3.5 and Above
<b>B</b>	80 - 89%	Good	2.5 - 3.49
<b>C or S</b>	70 - 79%	Satisfactory	1.5 - 2.49
<b>D</b>	60 - 69%	Minimal - improvement needed	1.0 - 1.49
<b>F or N</b>	0 - 59%	Unsatisfactory	
<b>I</b>	0	Incomplete	

**Effort** - the desire and initiative displayed for learning.

<b>1</b>	Outstanding effort
<b>2</b>	Satisfactory effort
<b>3</b>	Insufficient effort

### INTERIM PROGRESS REPORT SCHEDULE

Grading Period 1	9/20/07
Grading Period 2	11/28/07
Grading Period 3	2/20/08
Grading Period 4	5/07/08

### REPORT CARDS SENT TO PARENTS

Grading Period 1	11/06/07
Grading Period 2	2/06/08
Grading Period 3	4/22/08
Grading Period 4	6/24/08

# MAKING CONNECTIONS

Ethel Koger Beckham Elementary will offer a balanced, flexible curriculum that unifies support for essential learning strategies with innovative environments for open-ended learning. A firm foundation, including opportunities for exploration will be provided for every student. Computers, video, and telecommunications supply rich student-directed adventures in literature, mathematics, science, and life skills. Each student will develop higher-order thinking skills which are needed to be successful in a rapidly changing world.

State-of-the-art learning technologies offer the potential to engage the student purposefully in the process of learning. By incorporating computers, video and telecommunication-based learning technologies, the student's world expands beyond the confines of the physical classroom to include the enormous diversity of resources available throughout the school building, school district, state, nation, and world. State-of-the-art learning technologies can shift the focus of the curriculum from passive ingestion of information to the active construction of knowledge - from the textbook questions to "real life" global issues - from the teacher's role as director to the teacher's role as mentor. Through the infusion of technology, learning becomes a process individualized to the learning style and pace of each student; thus, "nurturing every child's potential."

Every child comes to school with strengths and abilities. The school is committed to connect these abilities with deeper and wider ways of knowing: producing students who have mastered the basics, learned how to learn, achieved deep understanding; and who can gather and analyze data, solve problems, make decisions, use computer, communications, and video technology, communicate effectively, and work collaboratively. Technology helps students become more self-directed and less dependent on teacher assistance. Technology is flexible enough to adapt to students' individual learning styles.

Ethel Koger Beckham Elementary believes in:

- project-based learning,
- portfolio assessment,
- performance-based standards,
- collaborative efforts,
- a blend of new and traditional approaches, and
- technological practices to achieve these goals.

Technology means:

- using computers, video, and telecommunications to do real work;
- connecting students, teachers, parents and administrators via networks;
- using the Internet to connect worldwide with other schools, libraries, universities;
- helping teachers use information-based technology to do what they have always dreamed of doing.

## FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Welcome to Ethel Koger Beckham Elementary School. This handbook has been prepared to provide you with relevant information concerning procedures and guidelines for the school. With your support and cooperation, we will accomplish our mission to "nurture every child's potential . . . The predominant purpose of education is to provide the opportunity for each child to grow into his or her full capacity. Education is about opening doors, opening minds, opening possibilities. Building character in our children enables them to reach their potential: intellectually, physically, and morally. Our teaching is directed to the whole child; making our school a caring community, conducive to teaching and learning.

I look forward to working with the Ethel Koger Beckham Elementary School community as we continue to commit ourselves to excellence in education.

Sincerely,

Maria E. Tavel-Visiedo

## ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

School Hours:

Before School Care	7:00 - 8:15 a.m.
After School Care	2:00 - 6:30 p.m.
Breakfast	7:45 - 8:15 a.m.
Student Arrival	8:15 - 8:30 a.m.
Student Dismissal	PreK - 1: 2:00 p.m.
	2 - 5: 3:00 p.m.
Wednesday Dismissal	2:00 p.m. (all students)
Teacher's Hours	8:15 - 3:20 p.m.
Main Office Hours	8:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Students should arrive and be picked up promptly. The school can not provide supervision of students arriving early or who are picked up late. **Students are to meet teachers in the morning at the designated areas. Parents of students in grades 1-5 are not to walk students to the classroom door. During severe weather students will not be dismissed until thunder/lightning and heavy rain has stopped. Parents will have to pick up their child at their classroom.** For the students' well-being and safety, all parents are encouraged to comply with arrival and dismissal times. If before or after care supervision is needed, please call the After Care Office at 305-222-4905 for information.

## ATTENDANCE

Regular, prompt attendance is essential if a child is to be successful in school. Please be certain that your child attends school daily except in the case of illness. The school day begins promptly at 8:30 a.m.; being on time is a habit your child should develop now to carry throughout life. If your child is absent or tardy, be sure to send an explanatory note to the teacher. Medical reasons, religious holidays, and school related activities are the only excused absences. EVERY absence must be followed by a note of explanation indicating the nature of the absence or the absence will be counted as an unexcused absence. **A student accumulating ten (10) or more class unexcused absences in an annual course or five(5) or more class unexcused absences in a designated semester course will have quarterly, semester and final grade(s) withheld pending an administrative screening and completion of assigned interventions by the Attendance Review Committee.** It is not necessary to call the office on the first day of a child's absence; however, if the child is ill for three or more days, please notify the office. On occasion, emergency trips are necessary. However, withdrawing a student for a vacation, during the school year, interrupts the continuity of instruction and, under most circumstances, is considered an unexcused absence.

## BEFORE / AFTER SCHOOL CARE

Before and After School Care is offered through Dade County's principal-operated program. Students who need supervision before 8:15 a.m. or after dismissal need to be registered with our Before/After School Care Program. Before school care is available from 7:15 a.m.; After Care is available from 2:00 to 6:30 p.m. Please contact the After Care Office for cost and registration information at 305-222-4905.

## CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

Students are responsible for all textbooks and library books issued to them during the school year. All lost or damaged books must be paid for. If a lost book is found, money will be refunded.

## CHANGE OF EMERGENCY CONTACT

Our first concern is for the health and safety of our students. In the event of illness or injury to your child, it is essential that we be able to reach you immediately. Therefore, please be certain that we have "current" emergency information. This must include names of persons authorized to take your child from school.

## CLASSROOM PARTIES / SOCIAL EVENTS

Yearly, two classroom parties will be planned by the teachers, winter recess and end-of-the-year. Teachers will contact room parents for assistance as needed. Details of time and other arrangements will be in keeping with School Board policy and will be communicated in writing to parents. **NO BIRTHDAY PARTIES MAY BE CELEBRATED IN THE CLASSROOMS.** Parents may bring cupcakes to share with the class during lunch time.

## CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

Each student is expected to behave acceptably and not interfere with the educational opportunities of classmates. Parents have the primary responsibility for their child's conduct. We will request that parents/guardians come to school when a student has a disciplinary problem. Florida law states that schools must have a CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT. A copy of this Code is given to each student and may be found in the library of each school and the principal's office. Please read and discuss the Code with your child. The CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT identifies specific violations for which administrative discipline is mandated. Students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with school and classroom rules. Students are expected to be courteous and respectful towards others at all times.

## UNIFORMS

The following dress code has been approved for Ethel Koger Beckham Elementary by the Dade County School Board: students will wear uniforms to school. Ibiley School Uniforms provide the school with economical "packages" for parents to choose from. The Kendall store is located at 11530 SW 120 St. Dark color shoes or sneakers (black, brown, navy, dark gray) are recommended. All shoes should be closed-toe (no sandals) and soles appropriate for recreation.

## CURRICULUM

The program at Ethel Koger Beckham Elementary includes a broad range of curricular offerings, which includes Miami-Dade County Public Schools' Competency-Based Curriculum and instruction tailored to meet individual student needs. Your child's teacher will be happy to explain the instructional program.

## EARLY DISMISSAL

Early dismissal is disruptive to your child's educational process. You are encouraged to schedule all appointments outside of school hours. Prior to any early dismissal, the parent or guardian must sign the Early Dismissal Log located in the Main Office.

## FAMILY EDUCATION RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT OF 1974

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-380) grants parents complete access to their child's records, and the right to partially control the release of information from the records. The intent of this law is to protect the accuracy and privacy of students educational needs. Contact the school registrar for the Release of Information Form.

Directory information, which includes: name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, date of attendance, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height, if a member of an athletic team, degrees and awards received, and most recent previous educational agency or institution attended, may be released separately or as part of a list to appropriate individuals unless you make a written request within twenty days of receipt of this notice to the contrary. This information will be released only in accordance with the guidelines established by MDCPS.

## MEDICATION

School Board Policy has strict guidelines on possession and use of medication. If your child, while under a doctor's care, requires medication during the school day, the Authorization of Medication Form must be on file in our office. NO prescribed or over-the-counter medication can be dispensed unless this form has been completed.

## VALUABLES

Students are not permitted to bring electronic devices, sports equipment, unnecessary money, expensive jewelry, or any other valuable personal items to school.

## FIELD TRIPS

Educational field trips are planned as a part of the school program. Permission slips **MUST BE SIGNED AND RETURNED** to school prior to each trip. Children without signed permission slips will not be allowed to attend. Siblings will not be allowed to attend any field trip.

## FIRE DRILLS

Fire drills are held regularly. Drills may occur at any time of the day. When the alarm is sounded, students are to form a line quickly and walk quietly in a single file to the designated exit. There is to be no talking during a fire drill. Students are requested to move quickly, without running or pushing. Upon completion of the drill, when the "all-clear" signal is sounded, all students and school personnel will return to their classrooms.

## GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING

The Guidance and Counseling Program is designed as an integral part of the total instructional program and is under the direction of a certified, professional counselor. The program provides students with a sense of belonging, self-respect, emotional security, and helps to provide a school environment in which effective learning and appropriate behavior exists.

## HOMELEARNING

Homelearning is an extension of the instructional program and is assigned on a regular basis. The purpose of homelearning is to reinforce material previously learned. It is one means whereby students are helped to develop a sense of responsibility for their learning. Parental assistance and support are essential, especially in the early years. This is not to say parents should do the work for the student. Homelearning assignments may vary from child to child and grade level. Parents are expected to encourage children to work independently; therefore, it is not the parent's responsibility to give a great deal of assistance in the completion of the homelearning. If a student has no specific homelearning assignment, it is expected that they spend time reading. Should there be any questions concerning homelearning assignments, please contact your child's teacher.

## ILL CHILDREN

If your child appears to be ill in the morning, please do not send him/her to school. Our clinic is not staffed, and is for short-term, emergency use only. In case of a serious emergency, in which we are unable to reach any member of the family, "911" will be called.

## INSURANCE

School insurance for your child may be purchased by completing the Insurance Information Form and mailing it to the appropriate insurance underwriter. Insurance applications are available in the Main Office. The school is not responsible for medical bills which arise as a result of an accident. Parents should give serious consideration towards the purchasing of Student Accident Insurance. All students enrolled in Before and After School Care must purchase Student Accident Insurance.

## LOST AND FOUND

Lost and found items are stored in the Main Office. Students should check the office for missing items. Please label all personal items for easy identification. Monthly, unclaimed items are donated to charity.

## MEALS

During the first week of school, all students are given an application for Free and Reduced-Priced Meals. Only those wishing to apply need to return the form. Students may purchase breakfast and/or lunch or bring their lunch from home. All students are encouraged to pre-pay for meals on a monthly or weekly basis. Breakfast is served from 7:45 to 8:15 a.m. Students without adequate lunch money will be provided cereal and milk.

## PTA

The Ethel Koger Beckham Elementary PTA Board meets throughout the school year. The purpose of the association is to promote positive lines of communication between parents and the school and to provide programs, functions, and services for the supplemental need of our students. Every family is encouraged to join the PTA and actively support its goals.

## PARENT / TEACHER CONFERENCE

Communication is an essential part of the educational program. It is very important for parents to keep in close contact with the teachers regarding their child's progress. If you have a concern about your child, please contact the teacher to schedule a mutually convenient conference time.

## REPORT CARDS

Report cards will be issued at the end of each nine-week grading period. Interim progress reports will be issued at the middle of each grading period. Please acknowledge receipt of these progress reports by signing and returning as directed. If you have questions regarding the reports please contact the teacher.

## SAFETY

Traffic around the school poses a danger to our students. The parking lot is for faculty use only, and should not be used as a drop-off/pick-up area for students. Students are to use the sidewalks, stay out of the parking lot, cross at the crosswalks, and obey the crossing guard. The decision as to whether a child should walk or bike to school is the parents'. If you believe your child is mature enough to do so, please review safety procedures with your child. Bicycles must be secured at the bike racks provided with a sturdy lock and chain during school hours. All members of the Ethel Koger Beckham family should follow these safety guidelines. Inconsiderate and unsafe practices constitute a severe threat to student safety.

## WEAPONS

The School Board rule on possession of weapons is very stringent and requires suspension and recommendation for expulsion from school for violators. Weapons are defined as firearms, knives, explosives, flammable material, or any other item that may cause bodily injury or death.

## TELEPHONE

The office telephone is for business and emergency calls. Student access to the phone is limited. Change in dismissal arrangements should be clarified before leaving home. Each student must have a "plan of action" in the event of rain at dismissal. Other than for an emergency, students will not be called out of class for phone calls. **Students who bring cellular phones to school must keep them put away and turned off. Students are not allowed to use cellular phones during school hours.**

## VISITORS

In order to guarantee school safety, all parents and visitors must report to the office to sign-in and get a visitor's pass before proceeding through the building.

## VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Ethel Koger Beckham Elementary has a school volunteer program operated under the auspices of the PTA. You are invited and encouraged to give of your time, talents, and energy by being a school volunteer. If you have any questions, or would like to volunteer, please contact the main office.