DeSoto Middle School

Student/Parent Handbook

2016-2017

##  Bulldog Face Left copy

**SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

Dr. Karyn E. Gary

## DESOTO DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

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**SCHOOL BOARD ATTORNEY**

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**Foreword**

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

PLEASE READ THIS HANDBOOK CAREFULLY WITH YOUR STUDENT; RETURN THE LAST PAGE OF THIS BOOK TO YOUR STUDENT’S HOMEROOM TEACHER INDICATING BY SIGNATURES THAT YOU UNDERSTAND THESE EXPECTATIONS.

**All Policies Apply**

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 or 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.

# District Mission Statement

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

**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.

School Hours:

 Breakfast served: 7:55 am – 8:35 am

 School Hours: 8:35 am – 3:35 pm

 Pick Up Time: no later than 3:45 pm

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POLICIES AFFECTING STUDENTS

###### ARRIVAL TO SCHOOL

All students eating breakfast are to go directly to the cafeteria upon their arrival to school. Any Student not eating breakfast must report directly to their designated areas unless otherwise directed by administration.

###### ARTICLES PROHIBITED IN SCHOOL

* Items such as lighters, matches, lasers, toy guns, bandanas, water pistols, glass items, knives, hard balls, rollerblades, skateboards or any shoe with rollers are prohibited.
* Absolutely no GUM, CANDY, DRINKS, or FOOD are allowed in the buildings (other than water). This includes breakfast and lunch items. Any lunch items brought on campus must be stored in the student’s backpack and remain sealed until the student is in the cafeteria.
* Electronic devices, including cell phones, tablets, iPods, radios, wireless devices, Walkman’s and cameras are restricted during the school day (arrival on campus through last dismissal bell). These items may only be used under direct teacher supervision for instructional purposes. (See Cell Phone Policy on page 5)
* Prohibited articles (contraband) will be confiscatedand may only be picked up between 8:15 a.m. and 3:45 p.m. on normal school days.
* The school is not responsible for lost or stolen prohibited, restricted 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. Regular school attendance of students whose families receive government assistance will be monitored and those students whose academic progress is in jeopardy because of poor attendance may 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 8:50 a.m. and 9:10 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.
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 first period 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 (illness, medical, death in the immediate family, religious holiday, please see the district Code of Conduct for all acceptable reasons).

d) Signature of the parent or guardian.

e) Phone number where parent or guardian can be contacted.

1. Any absences above 9 per semester will be considered unexcused and may result in a parent conference, or referral to attendance committee / truancy services.
2. All class work missed due to absence is expected to be made up within the number of days that were missed. **It is the student’s responsibility to contact each teacher for the work missed.** In case of prolonged absence, teachers will make reasonable allowances of time in which to make up the work missed.

B. Tardiness

 If you arrive to school after 8:40 am, report to the attendance office for a late slip. Disciplinary action will be taken if you arrive late to classes during the day and your tardiness is unexcused.

C. Attendance

1. Students must be in attendance for a minimum of 1/2 day (three hours) in order to attend after school activities.
2. At the secondary level, absences are tied to course credit. Nine (9) absences (excused or unexcused) are tolerated. The tenth (10th) absence is considered excessive and will be counted as unexcused unless official documentation is provided.
3. **In order to receive credit, a student who exceeds nine (9) days of absences per class (either excused or unexcused) in a semester must have a combined passing average for the semester, AND show proficiency in the course by passing a standards-based semester exam with at least a grade of “C,” or demonstrate mastery on an equivalent assessment.**
4. 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. School Board Policy states that excessive tardiness, leaving school grounds without permission, and/or skipping class may be subject to disciplinary action.

###### AWARDS

Students are recognized several times throughout the school year for their academics and attendance. Awards are also given at the end of the school year for leadership, scholarship and citizenship. Other awards may be 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

Students are encouraged to stay organized and keep book bags, backpacks and oversize purses to a reasonable size. While in the classroom, all items should be stored under the student’s table or desk, and out of walkways or aisles. Rolling carts and backpacks are not permitted.

**BUSES / BUS RULES**

Students who ride a bus are not permitted to get off at another school, another bus stop, and are not permitted to leave campus once they arrive. The bus driver is in complete charge. Riding the bus is a privilege and students 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.

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 2:30 pm

**Level One Violation**: These violations include eating and drinking on the bus and failing to sit in the seat assigned by the bus operator (only if an assigned seat is given)

1st Offense- Verbal or written reprimand from school administrator

2nd Offense- Parent conference

3rd Offense- Three day suspension from the bus

Continued Offenses- Parent/School/Transportation conference and/or suspensions from school bus for the remainder of the school year.

**Level Two Violation**: These violations include, but are not limited to: disrupting, distracting, or disobeying a bus driver, failing to utilize required safety equipment on the bus; getting out of seat when the bus is in motion; loud talking, remarks or spitting out of the bus window at other students, pedestrians, or motorist.

1st Offense- Verbal or written reprimand from school administrator

2nd Offense- One (1) to ten (10) day suspension from the bus with parent/school/transportation conference

3rd Offense- Suspension from school bus for up to the remainder of the school year

**Level Three Violation**: These violations include, but are not limited to: placing head, arms, or legs outside the window of the bus; opening a school bus emergency door and/or exiting the bus when it is stopped, unless directed by the school bus operator in an emergency or during an evacuation drill; threats against the bus operator, bus attendant, or passengers on the bus; profanity directed toward the bus operator or bus attendant; fighting on the bus; smoking on the bus; opening a school bus emergency exit door while the bus is in motion; throwing objects out of the window of the bus, which may or may not cause injury to persons or physical damage; throwing objects at a bus after leaving the bus which may or may not cause injury to persons or physical damage; vandalism of seats or other bus equipment; boarding or attempting to board a bus route other than the students assigned bus route or attempting to leave the school bus at other than the students assigned bus stop without permission of the school administrator.

1st Offense- One (1) to Ten (10) day suspension from the school bus with parent contact

2nd Offense- Ten (10) day suspension from the school bus and/or from school with parent/

school/ transportation conference.

3rd Offense- Suspension from school bus up to the remainder of the school year and/or possible suspension or expulsion from school.

**Bring Your Own Device (BYOD)**

The School District of DeSoto County has instituted a BYOD policy allowing students to access district wireless services. Students are expected to comply with the expectations and proper use of BYOD policies at all times.

**CAFETERIA**

The School District of DeSoto County will participate in the Community Eligibility Option which will allow our district to provide breakfast and lunch to all students free of charge.

BREAKFAST: Breakfast is served in the DMS cafeteria from 7:55 a.m. until 8:25 a.m. each morning. Students arriving on campus before 8:00 a.m. should report to the cafeteria.

LUNCH: Students are expected to follow the guidelines set forth in the cafeteria.

**Cafeteria Expectations**

1. Stay in your assigned seats/don’t table hop.
2. Raise your hand to leave your table.
3. Keep your table and area clean.
4. Talk quietly.
5. Only four students to a girl or boy bathroom at a time.
6. Possible consequences for cafeteria infractions: table reassignment, Minor Alternative Report, lunch detention, Office Referral.

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

Parents are welcome to eat with their student; however it will be in a designated area, subject to administrative approval. Parents must check in at the front office and receive a visitor’s pass before entering the cafeteria. Parents who fail to comply with these cafeteria guidelines will lose this privilege.

###### CELL PHONE POLICY/ WIRELESS DEVICES/ ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY

STUDENT USE OF CELL PHONES ON A **SCHOOL BUS** IS STRICTLY **PROHIBITED**.

Students may bring electronic communication devices such as cell phones to school; however, restrictions apply upon entering campus in the morning and during the school day. UNLESS the use of the communication device is under direct supervision for instructional purposes, it MUST BE TURNED OFF AND STORED OUT OF SIGHT. 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.

**Minimum Consequences**:

1st Offense- Electronic device will be confiscated; the student will be responsible for picking up the phone at the end of the school day. Parent may be contacted, and possible disciplinary action may occur.

2nd Offense- Electronic device will be confiscated and parent will have to pick up with possible disciplinary action.

3rd Offense- Electronic device will be confiscated until a parent conference is held with administration.

Continuous violation may result in loss of privilege.

Confiscated electronic devices may only be picked up between 8:15 a.m. and 3:45 p.m. on normal school days. Refusal to comply with reasonable request to surrender item will result in disciplinary action.

###### CHANGE OF ADDRESS

**For the safety of your child** it is very important that you notify the guidance department if you change your address or telephone number.

###### CLUBS/ORGANIZATIONS

Any student receiving two or more referrals 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, 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.

**COMPUTER / TECHNOLOGY USE**

Student use of technology is a privilege, whether it is on a district issued device, or in a computer lab or classroom. Students are expected to adhere to all expectations in district technology use and 1:1 policies. Students who abuse or break technology equipment are subject to pay for all repairs necessary. Student use of technology may be disrupted due to repeated abuse of school equipment, or failure to pay for repairs.

###### DEPARTURE AFTER SCHOOL

If you ride a bus or parent pick up, you are to exit the building and go directly to the loading zone designated for your departure. Loading zones are identified and procedures for parent pick up or buses must be followed. Walkers and bike riders are to leave the building immediately and go directly home. Students 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. Disciplinary actions may include: campus clean up, lunch detention, after school detention, Intervention Room, and Out-of-School Suspension. Please see the DeSoto County Code of Conduct for an explanation of consequences to rule infractions.

#### DeSoto Middle School Rules

1. I respect personal space and will not touch or speak to another in

any way that offends that person or others.

1. I respect the need for my school to be a safe and inviting place to learn.
2. I respect other students’ right to learn.
3. I respect the teacher’s responsibility to teach.
4. I respect my duty to be prepared, on time, and in the right place.

Please note: Jurisdiction of the School District of DeSoto County has been extended beyond the DeSoto Middle School boundary lines. Absences due to OSS will be recorded in a category separate from excused or unexcused. Absences due to OSS count toward the 9 day attendance rule! Students will be required to earn a C on the semester exam to earn credit in the class.

**DRESS CODE**

Effective July 1, 2011, Florida Statute prohibits a student, while on the grounds of a public school during the regular school day, from wearing clothing that exposes underwear or body parts in an indecent or vulgar manner or that disrupts the orderly learning environment. Any student who violates the dress policy is subject to specified disciplinary actions prescribed by Florida law.

**First offense**: Student is warned and required to correct the dress code violation and/or choose to spend the remainder of the day in IR.

**Second offense**: Student is required to correct the dress code violation or choose to spend the remainder of the day in IR. Parent is contacted.

**Third and subsequent offense**: Refer to Tier 2, Consequence 2 (Defiance) in the Discipline Procedures section. Parent contacted.

\*All offenses will be recorded in the discipline database.

Responsibility for the dress and appearance of students enrolled in any school within the School District of DeSoto County primarily rests with parents and the students themselves.

To assist parents and students in making appropriate fashion and grooming decisions for school, the School Board has established the following guidelines for appearance and dress.

**It is expected that students will wear the following:**

* Clothing and hairstyles which are not harmful, disruptive, or hazardous to health or safety;
* Appropriate undergarments at all times. Undergarments are to remain unexposed;
* Footwear which is appropriate to activities and conditions; All shoes (including sandals and crocs) must cover the heel or have a heel strap. Slide sandals and flip flops are not permitted.
* Any clothing deemed appropriate by the individual school’s dress code policy.

**It is expected that students WILL NOT wear the following**:

* Caps, hats, headwear, or sunglasses except when students are out of doors during school hours. (F.S. 1001.43(1)(b)
* Apparel, emblems, insignias, badges, or symbols that display obscenities, are sexually suggestive, or which promote or advertise the use of tobacco products, alcohol, drugs, violence or other illegal activities;
* Apparel or symbols which are offensive to any specific group or which are identified with gang, secret society, or cult involvement;
* Any articles of clothing or jewelry that could likely cause injury or disruption, such as but not limited to, inappropriate tattoos, a spiked bracelet that could be used as a weapon, decorative chains and/or piercings which are designed or worn in a fashion that could easily cause injury;
* Halters, backless or sleeveless dresses or tops, spaghetti straps, tube tops, tank tops, muscle shirts, tops with low or revealing necklines, tops where the midriff would be exposed or any other clothing which may be tight, revealing, or distracting unless covered by an appropriate outer garment which remains as part of the outfit. In addition, ripped or holey apparel must have proper clothing underneath so skin IS NOT exposed.

Note: The principal or the principal’s designee has the final authority for interpreting whether a student’s apparel conforms to the dress code. When it is determined that a student’s clothing does not comply with the dress code, or is disruptive or inappropriate, a parent/guardian may be asked to bring an appropriate change of clothes to school, or a student may be sent home to change clothes.

Note: The principal may modify the dress code for extra-curricular school functions.

Florida Statute 1001.43, 1006.07

For additional information please refer to the Student Code of 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. **For the safety of your child** it is essential that when the first signal is given, everyone obeys directions promptly. The teacher in each classroom will give the students instructions. Students are to move to their designated location in an orderly fashion. Students who disrupt any drills, real or practice, may face disciplinary action.

**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 DEFINITION**

 **VALUE**

 A 90-100 4 Outstanding progress

 B 80-89 3 Above average

 C 70-79 2 Average progress

 D 60-69 1 Lowest acceptable

 F 0-59 0 Failure

 I Incomplete

**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

Hallways and sidewalks must be kept open to traffic flow by walking on the RIGHT side. Do not stop and stand 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 Referral for Assistance (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.

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

###### NURSE’S OFFICE / MEDICINE / ILLNESS

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. Students with no fever or signs of visible illness or injury will be sent back to class. **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.

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 by 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.

###### PARENT PORTAL

The Parent Portal will give you quick, convenient access to many of the websites and services that you use related to the district.  Sign in *one time*, and from there access all the other services provided.

**Each parent or guardian requesting access to the portal will need to bring a completed form and photo ID to the student’s school.  You will receive an email with directions on how to access the parent portal. Your username and password will be included in that email.**

 The parent portal will allow you to access information such as:

* classroom grades and attendance
* test scores and other assessment data from current and previous years
* school and district websites

###### PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parents who wish to discuss their child’s behavior or progress with team teachers can schedule an appointment through the guidance department by calling 494-4133, extension 218. This procedure avoids conflicts with previously planned duties. Parents may contact individual teachers before and after school as needed via phone (863-494-4133) or by email.

###### PHYSICAL EDUCATION (P.E.)

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 six through eight 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.

**PE Lockers**

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

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

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

###### RESTROOMS

Students should make every effort to use the restroom between class changes, or during lunch. Once in class, students are expected to ask the teacher in an appropriate manner, to use the restroom. Excessive use of the restroom (same class, multiple times, daily use) may be referred to the parent / school nurse for potential conference. Take care of the restrooms. KEEP THEM CLEAN and do not abuse them. Abusing the restrooms will lead to disciplinary action.

###### SCHOOL STORE

The school store will be open from 8:10 – 8:30 a.m. when staff is available.

###### SPECIAL ACTIVITY REQUIREMENTS

Requirements for all special activities or projects such as band, art, tech lab, chorus, etc., will be determined by the sponsoring department or teacher. After approval by school administration, information will be distributed by activity sponsor.

**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) 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 staff who have been specially trained to provide assistance to “at risk” students. Team meetings will take place periodically to identify and discuss students in need of assistance. Parents may be invited to these meetings.

###### 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 the price of a new book. **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, guidance office, or to visit their children’s classes. Parents must make PRIOR arrangements with administration in order to visit their student’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 **www.desotoschools.com** or by obtaining one from the front office. **Once the application is approved the district’s Human Resource Department will contact the applicant 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.

Volunteers will work under the direction and supervision of teachers or members of the school staff and may perform any task assigned by their supervisor and approved by the responsible administrator, excluding access to student cumulative records, grading subjective tests, or supervising a class in the teacher’s absence.

Volunteers will sign in and out on the volunteer log and receive a pass at the front office.

**All field trip chaperones must have a completed and approved volunteer application.** Please remember that it may take up to 30 days to process a volunteer application, so plan accordingly. Certain circumstances may require fingerprinting, for more information contact DeSoto Middle School at 863-494-4133.

### **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

August 3 Teachers’ First Day

August 5 Professional Development Day

August 10 Students’ First Day

August 31 Early Release (Professional Development)



September 5 Labor Day Holiday

September 7 1st Quarter Progress Reports Distributed

September 28 Early Release (Professional Development)



October 7 End 1st Quarter Grading Period

October 10 Records’ Day/No School

October 11 Begin 2nd Quarter Grading Period

October 31 No School (Professional Development)



November 8 2nd Quarter Progress Reports Distributed

November 19-27 Thanksgiving Holiday



December 14-16 Mid Term Exams/ Early Release

December 16 End 2nd Quarter Grading Period

December 17- January 1 Winter Break



January 2 Records Day/No School

January 3 School Resumes; Begin Quarter 3 Grading Period

January 16 Martin Luther King Holiday/No School



February 1 3rd Quarter Progress Reports Distributed

February 20 Presidents’ Day Holiday



March 9 End 2nd Quarter Grading Period; Early Release

March 10 Records Day/ No School

March 11-19 Spring Break (No School)

March 20 School Resumes; Begin Quarter 4 Grading Period



April 14 Good Friday (No School)

April 19 4th Quarter Progress Reports Distributed



May 24-26 Final Exams/ Early Release

May 25 8th Grade Promotion

May 26 Last Day for Students

May 29 Memorial Day (No School)

May 30 Teachers Last Day

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

**Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Please detach and return this page to your child’s homeroom teacher.**

**Yo he leido 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.**