

Student & Family Handbook

The purpose of the Breakthrough Miami Family Handbook is to establish a standard of conduct for Breakthrough Miami Scholars in which will provide the best possible educational climate for the students, faculty, and staff. This handbook outlines the Breakthrough standards and procedures for all aspects of the program.

MESSAGE FROM YOUR BREAKTHROUGH MIAMI DIRECTORS

NEW FAMILIES

Welcome to the Breakthrough Miami family! We had an intensive and competitive recruiting and admissions process this year that included making presentations to more than 1,000 fourth graders.

Selecting our incoming scholars was incredibly difficult as we had many worthy candidates and limited space. Congratulations on your child's acceptance into our program. You should feel so proud!

Your child has just made one of the most important decisions in his/her young life – making education the number one priority!

As we begin to embark on this educational and enrichment journey together, we want to share our beliefs:

- ➔ We believe in your child's ability to get into college preparatory high school programs!
- ➔ We believe your child will go on to a four-year college or university!
- ➔ We believe your child has tremendous potential and is capable of achieving excellence in challenging academic environments!
- ➔ We believe your child will thrive in a culture of discipline, respect and high expectations.
- ➔ We believe that together we can develop an educational plan for your child that will nourish his/her passions, help uncover new dreams and develop the tools to achieve them.

We will now become your child's champion, advocate, and greatest supporters. But we can't do it without you! We need you to commit to us as wholeheartedly as we are committing to you and your child. We need you to hold us accountable, and we will do no less with you. We are now partners in the effort to help your child prepare to achieve his/her fullest potential.

Sincerely –

Breakthrough Miami Team

RETURNING FAMILIES

We are so happy you're back! We absolutely love your child and fully believe in his/her ability to thrive in an academically rigorous high school program and go on to a competitive college or university!

You are leaders now! As the returning families, we are relying on you to help our new families and help define what it means to be a member of our family.

Now is the time for us to recommit to each other and to the goals of getting your son/daughter into a top college-preparatory high school program and on a very purposeful path to a four-year college/university.

Sincerely -

Breakthrough Miami Team

SUMMER INSTITUTE for 5th – 8th GRADERS

Our Scholars attend a highly effective and academically rigorous six-week Summer program.

Here is what happens over those six weeks:

- ✓ Each student takes four academic classes including Math, English, Science, Social Studies.
- ✓ Each student takes one exploratory elective designed by our teaching interns. In the past such subjects have included African Dance, $E=MC^2$, Breaking Through to Broadway, Young Poetic Society, the Great Debaters, and many more.
- ✓ The academic program is rigorous and skills-based with rigorous but effective home learning assignments each night, including reading at least one novel during the program.
- ✓ Each student has the opportunity to practice public performance skills during All School Meetings (ASM), go on stimulating field trips, and participate in other artistic and athletic activities based on his/her own interest and talents.

BREAKTHROUGH LINGO

Affirmation Statements – is the pledge that all Breakthrough Scholars will learn to recite verbatim in which the words and values will be reinforced throughout this 7 year commitment. (See Below)

“I am a Breakthrough Miami Scholars, and I have committed myself to this program that I know will challenge me to achieve more than I have ever thought possible. I will work hard to be the best I can be for I am the future and bright hope for my family, friends, and community. I strive to be consistently excellent, responsible, and act with integrity as a student and a leader. I am brilliant, I am CONFIDENT, I will graduate from COLLEGE, and I will achieve my DREAMS.”

ASM (All School Meeting) -All School Meetings are held to celebrate student accomplishments, reinforce program expectations, and prepare for upcoming events. Matters are brought to light during ASM in the form of skits, songs, and announcements. Teachers organize the agenda for ASM, and involve students in as many aspects of it as possible .

Family Night/Culture Potluck - Family Night is held on one of the first few weeks of the program to introduce parents/guardians to the faculty and orient them more in depth to BT Miami. The basic goal is to build relationships with families and encourage them to become involved in the educational life of their children. Families also share cultural dishes during our festive potluck that evening.

Spirit Week - Spirit Week is designed to get kids hyped up about team spirit, and Breakthrough in general. Each team will work together to form their Spirit Week cheer, skit and costumes. It will set the tone for the entire summer, so it’s important to kick off the summer on the right note!

Breakthrough Olympics – Is a day that students compete in athletic and academic competitions, encouraging teamwork and sportsmanship.

Career Day - Breakthrough students come dressed for success and spend the day with professionals in a wide variety of different fields (doctors, lawyers, dolphin trainers, etc.) Students write resumes and cover letters to their host before they visit. They will also create thank you letters when they return. In addition to learning about a variety of professions, students are also able to practice social skills that build confidence .

ArtSplosion - is an afternoon of interactive art workshops led by dancers, poets, painters, actors, singers, and sculptors. Students get inspired, create art, learn and experience what the artistic culture of Miami has to offer!

Celebration - Celebration is the culminating event of the summer which highlights student academic and co-curricular activities. Academic displays are created to showcase student work, students are featured in the grade level songs, and family and friends are present to share in this finale to the summer.



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PARENTS/GUARDIANS BILL OF RIGHTS

We want to make certain you are empowered to ask questions and request information about your child. As such, we have developed a Breakthrough Miami Parents/Guardians Bill of Rights to clearly note our commitment to this partnership. There are some fundamentals that we never deviate from which include:

- ➔ You have the right to ask questions and expect answers about all things which may affect your child.
- ➔ You have the right to monitor all Breakthrough Miami activities: academic, behavioral and social.
- ➔ You have the right to know and consult with the adults in the program who influence your child.

COMPLIMENTS, ISSUES, AND CONCERNS

Breakthrough Miami has a strong leadership team committed to providing our families with the care and service they have come to expect and enjoy. If there are any issues, please see your Senior Site Director. If the issues/concerns cannot be addressed at that level, please contact Jamael Stewart, Director of Program Operations, at jamael@breakthroughmiami.org or 305.779.7301

REQUEST for CONFERENCE

Parents/guardians at any time may request a conference with their child's summer teacher(s), Senior Site Director, and Associate Site Director to discuss issues of conduct or performance as long as the request is made 24-hours in advance. Parents may either submit request in writing or contact the Senior Site Director to arrange a meeting. Because we are also about the business of training new teachers, we ask that parents never directly contact teachers (by phone or in person) to discuss issues of student discipline.

SIGN IN/SIGN OUT PROCEDURES

Sign In - Students sign in every morning during homeroom. If a student arrives to Breakthrough after homeroom they report to the office to sign in.

Sign Out - Students sign out of the program with their homeroom teachers at the end of the day.

- For early pick up procedures please see the Early Leave Section of the Handbook.
- For late pick up procedures please see the before and After School Procedures/Late Pick Up Section of the handbook.

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL PROCEDURES/LATE PICKUP

Breakthrough Miami is NOT a Before Care/After Care Program. Students can only be dropped off after 8:15am and picked up no later than 5:00pm. Students who are being picked up between 4:30 and 5:00pm must report to Breakthrough Miami late Pickup Area. Students are required to quietly complete homework during this time. Students MUST be picked up by 5:00 pm. The Director will notify parents if students are not picked up by 5 pm then a call to the emergency contact will be placed. Parents who fail to pick up their students on time 3 afternoons or have students who misbehave will lose the privilege of allowing their students to participate in this program.

EARLY LEAVE

Parents/guardians need to provide advanced notice to Breakthrough Miami when a child is unable to stay for the entire day or when a child will be taking another form of transportation home. Breakthrough staff will not release a child to any adult who is not listed on the student information form. Parents must approve names and contact information of adults who are allowed access to their child in writing.

INCIDENTS

In the event that your child is involved in an incident or becomes ill, you or a family representative must come to Breakthrough within two hours of notification to pick up your child. Breakthrough Miami maintains documentation of all student incident(s), however, minor, by filing incident reports. A copy of all incident reports related to your child is sent to the Children's Trust as well.

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VISITATION

Parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to visit Breakthrough Miami at any time. For the safety of our children, we ask that all visitors sign in with the Senior Site Director before venturing into classrooms or other areas of the campus. Proper identification is required of all visitors. Visitors are allowed to observe classes and activities but are not allowed to participate in or interfere with teacher's lessons or activities as it disrupts learning. Teachers will be happy to speak to you during their conference times.

UNIFORM POLICY

Students are to adhere to the following dress code while with Breakthrough Miami:

- ✓ Attire should be modest and appropriate at all times
- ✓ **STUDENTS MUST WEAR BREAKTHROUGH SCHOLAR T-SHIRT**
- ✓ No cleavage should be shown at any time.
- ✓ Students should not wear clothing that is so tight or so low that is inappropriate or calls undue attention to the body. This could include shirts or pants that are not properly fitted
- ✓ Girls must wear shorts at least mid-thigh length.
- ✓ Advertisements worn on clothing or jewelry must uphold the values and expectations of Breakthrough Miami
- ✓ Verbal or visual references to profanity, alcohol, tobacco, and drugs are prohibited



The dress code may be relaxed for students when utilizing the pool. Standards of modesty still apply. Items that are transparent when wet or too revealing will not be allowed. Ladies must wear one-piece bathing suits that fit properly in all areas and that do not expose midriff. Gentlemen must wear properly fitting swim trunks.

*******Scholars are REQUIRED to wear sneakers or tennis shoes throughout the summer institute.*******

EMERGENCY and SAFETY PROCEDURES

Closing/Lockdown - In the event of a county, state, or weather emergency that requires schools in our area to be closed, the school will follow Miami-Dade County Public Schools recommendations. In a lockdown, the school gates will be closed. Parents will be contacted immediately on this matter.

Participant Confidentiality - Breakthrough Miami staff, interns and volunteers must follow procedures to ensure participant confidentiality is kept at all times during the program. All participant information is not to be shared with individuals outside of Breakthrough Miami and The Children's Trust.

Americans with Disabilities Act

Breakthrough Miami will provide equal access to qualified students with disabilities in all programs, services, and activities. Access means that a qualified individual with a disability will not be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of services, programs or activities, nor will the student be subject to discrimination. With advanced notice all reasonable and appropriate accommodations will be provided for students who have a qualified disability based on a psychological or medical evaluation.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, accommodation will not be provided (1) for personal devices or services, even though the individual may be a qualified individual with a disability, or (2) that would result in fundamentally altering the nature of a program, or when the academic requirements are essential to a program of study or to meet licensing prerequisites, or (3) may cause undue financial or administrative burdens.

Title II states, in part, that no otherwise qualified disabled person shall, solely by reason of such disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in programs or activities sponsored by a program.

EXPECTATIONS FROM OUR PARENTS & GUARDIANS

- Follow through on your student's 8 year commitment to Breakthrough Miami.
- Ensure good attendance at Breakthrough Miami throughout the Summer Institute and School-Year Program (schedule your vacations around the dates of the program; schedule appointments after the Breakthrough Miami day ends).
- Check to see if summer homework is complete.
- Establish routines at home that support your child's academic pursuits: a quiet place to complete homework each afternoon; time each day for fun physical activity; healthy, balanced meals; and a regularly scheduled bed time that allows for 6-8 hours of sleep.
- Be an active part of your child's education, including attendance at Breakthrough Miami conferences, special events as well as those at your child's school.
- Communicate your concerns, questions, and suggestions to us. Maintain regular contact with the Breakthrough Miami office as a source for support, advocacy, and resources relating to your child's education.
- Actively help your child raise any grades that fall below an A or a B.

EXPECTATIONS FROM OUR SCHOLARS

- Follow through on your eight year commitment to the program. If you are not serious about being a Breakthrough Miami student for eight years, do not enroll.
- Attend Breakthrough Miami everyday throughout the Summer Institute.
- Participate in the School-Year Program including mentoring, tutoring, academic workshops, and enrichment opportunities.
- Commit to completing all homework assignments during the summer and school year.
- Conduct yourself respectfully toward other students, teachers, and staff in the program at all times.
- Communicate with teachers and staff – be open about your needs, questions, and concerns. This includes promptly reading and returning all forms. Deadlines are important.
- Use the Breakthrough Office as a source of support and help.
- Set high academic goals for yourself and pursue them. Challenge yourself to be the best student you can be. The motivation and desire must come from you.
- Take challenging courses in middle school whenever possible and appropriate.

SUPPLIES, FOOD, & TRANSPORTATION

Supplies - Students should bring a binder, pen and pencil, notebook and sneakers each day. Students may bring cell phones, however they must be turned off and put away during program hours. **Please be advised that Breakthrough Miami does not take responsibility for students' lost, stolen, broken, or damaged property and will not be able to replace such belongings.**

Food - Breakthrough Miami provides breakfast, lunch and snack each day during the summer. Summer meals provided by Breakthrough Miami comes from the State of Florida Summer Meal Service Program or Depending on the site, meals may be provided by the onsite catering service at determined cost. Of course, if you don't like the food, you can bring a bagged lunch from home. If you have a food allergy, please be sure to note it on the emergency information form.

Transportation - All students are provided with free transportation at a stop near their home. Breakthrough Miami creates all bus routes in June for the Summer Institute and in August for the School Year Program. Please visit our website for Bus Route information. (Please see Transportation Form in your enrollment packet for rules and regulations for students that ride the bus) **Please note: Breakthrough Miami reserves the right to revoke any students' bus privileges at any time**

Behavioral Management Plan

Definition of Behavior

- A. Aggressive behaviors are those actions which may cause potential injury to self, students or staff, or destruction of property.
- B. Disruptive behaviors are those actions that include foul or unacceptable language related to noncompliance, behavior that disrupts, annoys, or irritates others, and/or behaviors that interrupt or interfere with normal classroom activities.
- C. Antecedent behaviors are actions that, if not dealt with immediately, have the potential to lead to aggressive and disruptive behaviors. These behaviors generally occur when a classroom or Breakthrough Miami (BTM) rule has been violated, including: talking out, being off-task in the classroom, refusing to work, (behavioral indicators that have led to problems in the past)
- D.

Classroom Management Plan

Classroom rules are:

- A. Students are to keep hands and feet to themselves
- B. Raise your hand before talking
- C. Ask permission before leaving the room
- D. Be prepared – come prepared

If one of the rules is violated, a warning is given with a concrete explanation of what behavior was unacceptable with a prompt of the expected behavior for the immediate situation. If the warning is sufficient, class time may continue with reinforcement, and acknowledgement for acceptable behavior based on the situation and the student's disposition.

If the student continues to be noncompliant the student will be referred to administration and removed from the room. Removal will be for the remainder of the class in which the incident occurred depending on the behavior.

The classroom teacher will, within the same day the incident occurred, attempt to resolve the conflict through directed conversation with the student to ensure he/she understands the behavioral expectations for the class and to analyze alternative, more acceptable methods for dealing with the incident.

Students are invited to attend Breakthrough Miami and will be asked to leave if they do not follow the Breakthrough Miami expectations. Any action that threatens the safety of another person in the Breakthrough Community will be dealt with immediately and will be grounds for immediate dismissal from the program.