

(MS)²

Howard University
Middle School
of Mathematics and Science



Student and Family Handbook

Introduction

- Letter from Head of School 3
- (MS)² Mission Statement 4

Key School Policies

- Inclement Weather and Emergency Procedures 5
- Daily Arrival and Dismissal 5
- Early Dismissal Policy 6
- Attendance Policy 6

Academics

- Overview of (MS)² Curriculum 7
- Promotion Criteria 8-10
- Grading Rubric 11
- Progress Reports and Report Cards 12
- Homework Policy 12
- Standardized Testing 13
- STEM Connections 13
- Student Supplies 13

Student Support Services

- Department of Student Support 14
- Student Dress Policy 14
- Student Behavior Policy 15

Student Support Services (cont'd)

- Safety Policy 15-16
- TAG Day/Dress-up Day 16
- Student Use of School Telephone 17
- Cellular Telephone Policy 17
- iPods, MP3 Players, Electronic Games, and DVD Players 17
- Locker Policy 17-18
- Loaned School Resources Policy 18
- Health Services 18
- Transportation 19
- Cafeteria and Meals 19
- Restroom Policy 20
- Long Term Absence Policy 20
- Excused Absence Policy 20
- Truancy Policy 20

Parent Responsibilities

- Communication With (MS)² 21
- Parent, Teacher, Administration Conferences 22
- (MS)² Parent Association 22
- Visitors and Volunteers 23
- Lost and Found 23
- Universal Permission Slip 23

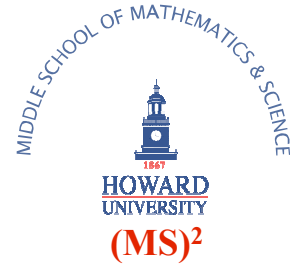
INTRODUCTION

The **Howard University Middle School of Mathematics and Science Family Handbook** provides information to help:

- Students have a productive, enjoyable, and successful experience at (MS)², and
- Parents/guardians fulfill the goal of effectively supporting their child in the (MS)² environment.

We urge you to study the handbook and become familiar with all of the information presented. Use it as a reference and guide to develop an understanding of the resources and policies at Howard University Middle School of Mathematics and Science. Please take time to review each section with your child so that he/she is clear of the expectations and underpinnings of the operations of the school.

Throughout the year, we will also review and discuss the different components of the handbook with students. In this way, they will know we are working together as a team to ensure that they have a productive year.



Dear (MS)² Family,

Welcome to the Howard University Middle School of Mathematics and Science, also known as (MS)². Once again, we are honored to welcome both our new and continuing family members to our school community.

This handbook communicates many of the procedures and policies that are in place at our school. We trust that clarity about processes will assist you and your child in finding this an exciting place to learn. Please use this handbook as a reference when questions arise during the year. We have tried to include as much information as possible, and we will probably be making adjustments to school procedures throughout the year. Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have questions or suggestions.

Effective middle schools emphasize academic integrity, while making an emotional connection with students. We are committed to the development of the whole student, mind, body and spirit. We have worked to assemble faculty and staff members who are dedicated to our mission, and have developed a wide range of academic and co-curricular programs to promote this mission. Please pledge to work hand-in hand with us to ensure that your child has the best education possible.

Dr. Neil deGrasse Tyson provided us with this equation during his commencement speech to our inaugural class: $E = MS^2$ — Excellence equals Howard University Middle School of Mathematics and Science. We invite you take advantage of, as well as celebrate this opportunity for excellence with us during this academic year.

Respectfully,

Sue P. White
Head of School



In the tradition of Howard University, the Howard University Public Charter Middle School of Mathematics and Science (MS)² provides an educational experience of exceptional quality for a diverse population of students in grades six, seven and eight.

Our curriculum emphasizes mathematics and the sciences, not only as core disciplines but also within all content areas to develop and support students' problem solving skills, creativity and academic confidence. Standards-based instruction, facilitated through student centered and inquiry-based activities, ignites student creativity and builds academic confidence, thereby providing

opportunities for exploration, discovery and knowledge building. Our students are afforded educational programs and services that foster their intellectual, psychological, social and emotional well-being and instill in them the desire to strive for excellence to pursue life-long learning. (MS)² encourages the academic risk-taking needed to master the rigorous academic disciplines and celebrate all efforts. The relationship with Howard University enriches both institutions through a continuum of care provided to its students and supported through collaborative efforts of parents, teachers, school staff, university personnel, and the community.



INCLEMENT WEATHER AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In case of inclement weather, (MS)² follows the District of Columbia Public Schools policy for delays and closings and/or the policy of Howard University. Notification will be made through the methods of communication listed below.

In the case of other unforeseen emergencies, notification will also be made through the following methods of communication.

Methods of Communication:

- (MS)² community will be called by the automated telephone message system;
- Television announcements will be made on local channels, such as WRC-4, WJLA-7, FOX-5 and WUSA-9;
- Radio announcements will be made on local stations, such as WHUR 96.3FM and WTOP 107.7 FM;
- Email automated message system.

DAILY ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Supervision of students does not begin before 7:00 AM. Therefore, students should not arrive before this time. If it is necessary for your child to arrive earlier on any given day, please contact the office in advance so that arrangements can be made. The cafeteria opens for breakfast at 7:20 AM.

The (MS)² building hallways and stairways are security coded and are not open for public access prior to 7:45 AM. Therefore, students cannot travel beyond the first floor. If your child is meeting a teacher before 7:45 AM, the teacher will issue a pass to the student the day before the meeting. In the morning, staff on duty will contact the teacher to come down to get your child.

Students are expected to vacate the school premises immediately at the end of the school day. Parents/guardians who pick-up their children are asked to enter the campus through the 4th Street gate which generally opens at 4:15 PM and exit through the 6th Street gate. The 4th Street gate closes about 4:45 PM. Make certain when you are picking up your child, that you do not block the crosswalk, driveways, and intersections.

Please contact the school immediately if you will be delayed in picking up your child. All students in the building must be under the supervision of a staff member, so it is essential that we know who is in the building after hours and where they are located. Unless a student is with a staff member, students waiting to be picked up must wait at the security area until their ride comes.

EARLY DISMISSAL POLICY

Requests for early dismissal must be made in writing and submitted to the main office by the beginning of the day of the scheduled early dismissal. Early dismissal means that the child will be leaving school anytime during the school day before 4:30 PM. The written notification must include the following:

- Student's name;
- Date and time of the early dismissal;
- Mode of transportation the child will be using or if he/she will be picked up and by whom;
- Parent/guardian contact information so that the request can be verified (specifically if the child is leaving on his/her own). **This person must be the parent/guardian on record.**

Our preference is that all students are signed out by the parent/guardian on record. So when you are picking up your child, we are requesting that you come into the main office and sign him/her out.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Parents/guardians should “plant the seeds” early for developing the habits of coming to school daily and on time. Your child is expected to be in school every day that school is in session. Both excellent attendance and punctuality are at the top of our list of behaviors we believe help build good character and a strong work ethic. In addition to coming to school everyday, we believe that students should arrive a little early versus right on time. This will allow him/her to have extra time to mentally prepare for the day.

Please note that being tardy three (3) times will convert to one (1) unexcused absence. If a student is habitually late, parents will be required to meet with the school administration to immediately address and correct this behavior. A contractual agreement will be on file to this effect.

You and your child, together, must assume the responsibility of coming to school everyday and on time. However, as the parent/guardian, the ultimate responsibility is yours.



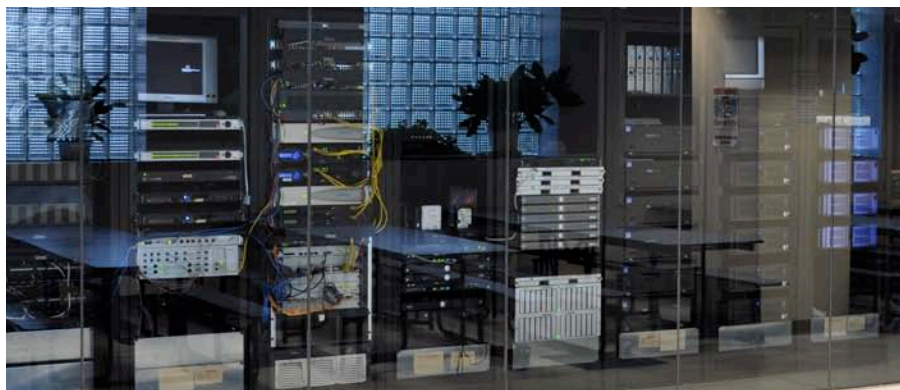
OVERVIEW OF (MS)² CURRICULUM

The Learning Standards adopted by the District of Columbia are the foundation on which the core (MS)² Curriculum is built. These learning standards are designed to encourage the highest achievement of every student, by defining the knowledge, concepts, and skills that students should acquire at each grade level. The new learning standards in reading/English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies are among the best in the nation, and are the cornerstone of (MS)²'s commitment to provide each student with an excellent education. You can download complete copies of these standards at:

<http://www.k12.dc.us/dcps/Standards/standardsHome.htm>

The following courses are offered at (MS)²:

- Mathematics (including Algebra I)
- Science
- Integrated Mathematics with Technology Applications
- English/Language Arts
- Reading
- Social Studies
- Spanish
- Music
- Physical Education



SCHOOL GRADING AND PROMOTION

The question of promotion is one that challenges every school, at every grade level. At (MS)² we know that neither automatic retention nor automatic promotion is the solution for students who do not successfully complete their work. Given the importance of the decision, our promotion policy is designed to provide students with optimal learning opportunities throughout the year to achieve at proficient or advanced levels.

The goal is that all students have the support needed to move forward successfully from one level to the next. To move forward students must at least satisfactorily complete work in their core courses. Therefore, we have carefully planned a proactive approach that includes parents, teachers, students and administrators for the prevention of academic failure. Through on-going monitoring of student performance, starting before the first day of class, appropriate interventions will be provided to ensure academic success for all students.

Evaluation of student achievement focuses on academic performance and other dimensions of student growth. The Head of School is ultimately responsible for determining the placement that best meets the student's academic, social, emotional and physical needs; each member of the school Teaching Team is responsible for evaluating the growth of each individual.



PROMOTION CRITERIA

To be promoted to the next grade level each school year, each middle school student should:

- Receive no more than one D and no Fs in any core subject.*
- Perform at the Proficient Level or higher on the DC-CAS or comparable standardized assessment in mathematics, science, and reading.**
- Complete a writing folder/portfolio that includes 3 required writing pieces – one from mathematics, one from science, and one from English/language arts. One of the writing pieces must be a report on a science or mathematics project conducted by the student.

* Students receiving a D in a core course at the end of the school year will be required to attend summer school.

** Students scoring less than Proficient on the DC-CAS or comparable standardized assessment, will be required to attend summer school.

PROMOTION CRITERIA (CONT'D)

The Head of School and Teaching Team will also consider the following factors in determining promotion/retention of students:

- Academic achievement (successful mastery at the current level as evidenced by grades earned during academic reporting periods);
- Demonstrated ability to function at the next level;
- Organizational skills and work habits that are commensurate with requirements at the next grade level;
- Attendance;
- Level of maturity – including social, emotional and physical factors.

Students who are failing one or more core academic subjects in the total program or scoring less than Proficient on the DC-CAS assessment in mathematics, reading or language arts will be considered “at risk”. For a student “at risk,” the Head of School and teaching team may recommend from the following alternatives:

- Attendance at summer school
- Supplemental instruction/ assignments/tutoring or other interventions as determined by the school;
- Promotion to a Transition Year at the end of the second term (Grade 8 only);
- Repeat the entire year (with enhanced supports available and an alternative approach to the delivery of the subject matter that promises greater opportunity for success).

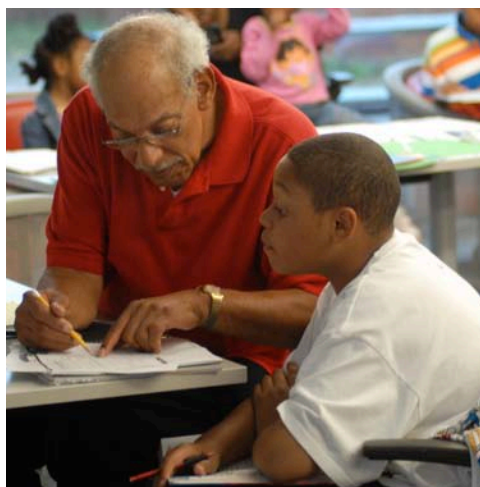
Students entering the school at the 6th grade level will be given diagnostic assessments in mathematics and reading/language arts. Any student placing more than 2 grade levels below the beginning 6th grade level will be considered “at risk” and accompanying recommendations listed above will apply.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities are expected to master the general curriculum to the maximum extent appropriate with the use of supplementary aides and services. The Individual Education Plan (IEP) goals and objectives developed by the School Team and parents determine how a student with disabilities is expected to meet the (MS)² promotion criteria and must be documented in the student’s IEP.

NOTIFICATION OF PARENTS

At the opening of each school year, the parent/guardian of each student is given a copy of the (MS)² Promotion Policy. All incoming parents receive an explanation of the policy during their initial interviews. Within 2 weeks of the first grading period, the parent/guardian of any student who is considered “at risk”, according to the criteria above, is sent a letter notifying them of the “at risk” status and requesting a conference to discuss an intervention support plan which will require monitoring and support by parents as well as the student and the (MS)² Teacher Team. After each report card and standardized test, parents are updated on the progress of their student vis-à-vis his/her “at risk” status. The parents/guardians of any students who are deemed to be “at risk” of failure by March, are notified of the requirement for their child to attend summer school in addition to the other interventions in place. In addition, they are informed of the possibility that their child may be recommended for retention, or in the case of 8th graders, recommended for the Transition Year after 8th grade before being promoted to the 9th grade and high school.



SCHOOL GRADING

Grading Rubric - Standards for End-of-Course Grading		
A	90-100%	An “A” signifies an EXCEPTIONALLY clear and creative grasp of the concepts and skills, which reflect, full mastery of the standards for the subject/area of study for his/her grade level. Students demonstrate the ability to apply these skills and knowledge in novel situations. They demonstrate mastery through oral and written communication. An “A” also means that the student has actively participated in class activities and has completed all assignments and projects in a timely manner. The quality and appearance of the assignments and projects indicate that the student has spent extra time, personal energy, and critical reflection in an effort to demonstrate exceptional work.
B	80-89%	A “B” signifies a SOLID understanding and full mastery of the major concepts and skills of the standards for the subject/area of study for his/her grade level. Students are able to demonstrate the application of the concepts and skills studied. It also means that the student’s effort and class participation have exceeded the minimal basic requirements for the course. All assignments and projects were judged to be solid in content and were completed in a timely manner.
C	70-79%.	A “C” signifies a SATISFACTORY understanding and application of the concepts and skills targeted in the standards for the subject/area of study for the given grade level as well as minimal participation in class discussion and activities. It also indicates that the student completed the appropriate assignments and projects that satisfied the basic course requirements.
D	60-69%	A “D” signifies a BELOW AVERAGE demonstration and application of the subject area concepts and skills and/or inadequate preparation for class discussions or activities. It may also indicate that assignments were not completed in a satisfactory or timely manner. A grade of “D” is minimally passing.
F	59% and Below	An “F” signifies that the student has NOT DEMONSTRATED adequate understanding or application of the concepts and skills reflected in the content standards for his/her grade level targeted in the course. It may also indicate that the student HAS NOT met the attendance or assignment requirements. A grade of “F” is NOT passing.

PROGRESS REPORTS AND REPORT CARDS

There are two types of reports that **officially** communicate student academic progress. The reports are:

- The mid-quarter **Progress Report**, distributed at the midpoint of each quarter, presents the progress (grades) of the student for the first-half of the current grading period.
- The end-of-the quarter **Report Card**, distributed at the end of each quarter, presents the end of quarter grades and the cumulative progress for the academic year-to-date.

HOMEWORK POLICY

Homework is provided to reinforce and extend learning, to strengthen skills and concepts introduced in the classroom, and to promote independence and academic responsibility.

Howard University Middle School of Mathematics and Science takes homework seriously. It is our policy for teachers to assign meaningful homework on a regular basis and that students complete all homework that is assigned. We urge parents to establish a homework policy for your child at home that dictates when and where homework is to be completed each day.

Following are student responsibilities regarding homework assignments:

1. Students have the ultimate responsibility for completing all homework assignments and submitting them when due.
2. Students must seek assistance from their teacher whenever they have problems completing the homework assigned.
3. Students have the responsibility for submitting late assignments even though full credit may not be given.
4. Students placed on an intervention plan, for repeated violations of the homework policy, are responsible for adhering to said plan.

In case of chronic violations of the homework policy, a parent/guardian conference will be held with the (MS)² administrative team and the teacher(s) to discuss the root cause of the violation and to identify next steps. Persistent abuse of the policy may result in expulsion from (MS)².

Parents/guardians are reminded that PowerSchool is a powerful vehicle for monitoring your child's daily progress. You will be issued a code to PowerSchool where you can access specific and detailed information about the performance of your child in each class. By accessing PowerSchool on a regular basis, you can always be informed on what your child is/is not doing and based on this information, act accordingly.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

The District of Columbia Comprehensive Assessment System (DC-CAS) is administered to all students at (MS)². This test is the state assessment used to assess the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and is mandated for all District of Columbia public and charter schools.

In addition, the Northwestern Evaluation Association (NWEA) test, an independent test used to assess student achievement and gauge performance, is administered three times per year to all (MS)² students.

STEM CONNECTIONS

(MS)² has an extensive STEM Connections' program designed to peak the interest level of every student. From 3:30 PM to 4:30 PM your child has the opportunity to engage in activity-based learning that supports the core content areas and/or the elective courses. Some of the STEM Connections opportunities are: Architecture Club, MathCounts, Stock Market Club, Science Club, Toy Challenge, Solar Car, Robotics, Broadcast Media, Yearbook Club, Africa's Voice, Journalism/Book Club, Creative Writing, Intramural Sports, Chess Club, Game Club, The Mathematics of Dance, Drama Club, Spelling Bee, Man Training, and Toastmasters (Public Speaking Club).



STUDENT SUPPLIES

We recommend that students bring the following to school each day;

- *2 ballpoint pens, blue or black ink*
- *2 pencils, mechanical optional*
- *1 yellow highlighter pen, any size tip*
- *1 or 2 three-ring binders with plain front cover and appropriate amount of loose leaf paper*
- *6 subject dividers with the pocket folders*
- *Graph paper*
- *Ruler*

Additionally, teachers will make specific requests throughout the year.

DEPARTMENT OF STUDENT SUPPORT

The Department of Student Support provides opportunities for academic development, assists students with basic academic requirements, and serves to motivate students toward the successful completion of their middle school education. The Department of Student Support also provides instruction in basic study skills, tutorial services, academic and personal counseling, assistance in applying to high school programs, mentoring, and specialized services for students with special needs. The Department of Student Support consists of the Dean of Students, School Counselors, Special Education Coordinator, and Behavior Coordinators.

STUDENT DRESS POLICY

(MS)² maintains a strict dress code policy. All students must wear the required uniform attire everyday. A signed contractual agreement regarding the school's dress code policy will be a part of your child's file. Violation of the dress code policy will result in disciplinary action by the administrative team, which will include a conference with the parent/guardian. Repeated violations could warrant suspension and expulsion.

All students must wear the (MS)² uniform to school and to school related events, unless otherwise informed. To be in compliance with the uniform policy, the (MS)² student must be attired in the following:



- (MS)² logo polo shirt in navy blue, or red;*
- Navy blue or khaki pants or skirts (*During the spring and summer seasons, students may also wear navy blue or khaki shorts - not to exceed one inch above the knee.*);
- Socks: solid white or solid navy blue;
- Shoes (any color): open toe, high heel shoes, and open heel, i.e. crocs, are not allowed;
- Belt: solid black or solid brown (*only required if pants or skirt have belt loops*);
- (MS)² logo sweater in navy blue;
- Stud earrings (*Hoop earrings are not allowed.*);

**Shirts must be tucked in at all times.*

Except for stud earrings, students are not allowed to wear jewelry of any kind, or headbands, armbands, wristbands, hats, scarves, gloves, vests and bandanas during the school day. Students are also discouraged from wearing make-up and nail polish.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR POLICY

The (MS)² discipline policy helps to establish an environment in which students' basic rights are guaranteed and responsibilities are clearly understood. Mutual respect, courtesy, and consideration for others are key values at (MS)². We encourage students to be responsible for their actions, to use good judgment, and to be kind and honest to everyone regardless of similarities or differences. Please know that violence and abuse, of any kind, imposed upon any student, teacher, employee, or volunteer will not be tolerated.

The (MS)² **ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY** applies to:

- Cheating;
- Fighting;
- Assault;
- Theft;
- Vandalism;
- Destruction of (MS)², Howard University, or personal property of others;
- Insubordination;
- Use of profanity;
- Threats, bullying, and harassment;
- Possession of weapons;
- Possession of tobacco, alcohol or drug products;
- Possession of pornographic material.

All acts of violence and threats will be taken seriously. Parents/guardians will be contacted and procedures will immediately be implemented to determine appropriate disciplinary action. For serious infractions, a student may be suspended or expelled from (MS)². Also, legal action may be taken.

SAFETY POLICY

It is the goal at (MS)² to ensure that all students and staff are safe while in the school building, as well as in close proximity to the campus. The school does not sanction any conduct from students, employees, parents/guardians, or volunteers that interferes with any individual's academic or professional performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment for work or study. Actions contrary to this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, expulsion and legal intervention.

Currently, the following policies are in place:

- Visitors must sign-in at the security desk upon entering the building. All visitors will be issued a badge that must be worn for the duration of the visit.
- A staff member escorts visitors, with appointments, to their meeting venues.
- Students are not allowed to carry backpacks and other book bags to class.
- Students are not allowed to leave the building without written permission from the parent/guardian of record. They must be signed-out in the main office and picked-up there.

SAFETY POLICY (CONT'D)

- Students are prohibited from engaging in any activities that could impede their safety or the safety of others, i.e. running, playing, fighting, etc.
- Students are not permitted out of the classroom without a pass.

We also suggest that you review safety precautions for your child to observe while coming to and from school. These include, but are not limited to:

- Traveling with at least one other student;
- Going directly to school and coming directly home (or other specific destination) without stopping at stores and carry-outs;
- Refraining from interacting with strangers en route to and from school;
- Refraining from getting in cars with strangers for any reason;
- Staying alert, focused and aware of their surroundings;
- Refraining from playful and disruptive behavior while walking, in the Metro stations, or riding the train, bus, and/or Howard University shuttle.

TAG DAY/DRESS-UP DAY POLICY

Occasionally, (MS)² relaxes the dress code policy and sponsors TAG Day and Dress-up Day. These days are announced in advance and students are permitted to dress in casual or dress-up attire respectively.

Please note: Students who do not participate are required to wear the full school uniform.

The criteria for student attire for these special days are as follows:

1. Students are to wear appropriate clothing that is not too tight, nor too short (*i.e. does not exceed one-inch above the knee*), too scant (*i.e.. halter tops, strapless tops, shoe-string tops, tops that bear the stomach*), or too baggy (*i.e. below the waist*).
2. Students are to wear dress-up clothes that are appropriate for church-like functions. (*After-five attire is not acceptable.*)
3. Students are to wear clothing that is void of vulgar and inappropriate images and language.
4. Students may wear age-appropriate jewelry.
5. Students should refrain from wearing heels that are more than an inch high.

STUDENT USE OF SCHOOL TELEPHONE

Students will be allowed to use school telephones to make essential calls to their parents/guardians during the school day. However, the student must get permission from the teacher/staff member in charge.

Parents are urged to try to anticipate any needs of their children to avoid having to communicate with them during the school day.

CELLULAR TELEPHONE POLICY

During school hours, students **are not permitted** to use their cell phones. If there is an emergency, students will be allowed to use a school telephone. All cell phones must be turned off and stored in the locker until dismissal time. Violation of this policy will result in the cell phone being confiscated by a staff member and given to the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students will only return the cell phone to the parent/guardian.

iPODS, MP3 PLAYERS, ELECTRONIC GAMES, AND DVD PLAYERS

We are requesting that students refrain from bringing items, such as iPods, MP3 players, electronic games, and DVD players, to school, as well as other toys and gadgets that can be distracting to other students. We are aware that many students use these items to entertain themselves on their way to and from school. While this may be the current trend, we urge you to remind your child that they need to stay focused and aware of their surroundings at all times and not be distracted by listening to their favorite tunes or playing their favorite games.

If a student is found using such an item in school and/or on field trips, it will be confiscated by a staff member and given to the Dean of Students. If an item is confiscated, the Dean of Students will only return the item to the parent/guardian.



LOCKER POLICY

Each student will be assigned a combination locker. Each student should remember his/her combination and not reveal it to any other students. Please note that assigned lockers are still the property of the school, and the school administration has the right to open any locker when necessary. Lockers are to be used to store school materials and supplies only. Unfortunately the lockers are small, resulting in students having to store their outerwear and book bags in the “cubbies” located in their homerooms. It is essential that you label all of your child’s belongings, including book bags, since there is the possibility that students may have the same/similar items.

Students are only allowed to use their lockers before school, before lunch, after lunch, and after

LOCKER POLICY (CONT'D)

school. Therefore, it is essential that you emphasize the importance of being organized with your child. Each child needs to make certain that they have all the materials needed for the morning classes in the morning and the afternoon classes in the afternoon. Students will not be allowed to return to lockers to retrieve items left behind once the locker periods have ended.

LOANED SCHOOL RESOURCES POLICY

The parent/guardian is required to sign a “school resource form” for every school-owned resource that is loaned to your child. These resources can include laptops, textbooks, calculators, novels, etc. The signed form represents a contract between the school and the parent/guardian. It states that you assume responsibility for the issued resource and if it is lost or damaged, you are responsible for paying the replacement cost of that item.

At the end of the year, students are to return all issued books and other materials in good condition or pay the replacement cost. Final report cards and transcripts may be withheld pending compensation for items that have not been returned or items that are damaged. Please note that all 8th grade students must settle all outstanding debts to participate in the promotional exercises.

Generally, students are expected to bring their books and other issued resources to class everyday; however, in some cases, classroom sets of textbooks are available, which enables students to keep their assigned books and materials at home. Students will be informed if this is the case.

HEALTH SERVICES: Health Suite/School Nurse

(MS)² has a full-time nurse on staff and a fully equipped health suite. Our nurse oversees the daily health issues of all students. It is up to the parent/guardian to fully disclose any medical condition(s) about your child to the school nurse prior to the opening of the school each year, and/or present such information at any time a medical condition arises. This includes information about allergies, special diets, or any physical impairment. The school nurse is the contact person for such information and may be reached through the main office phone number. The nurse will assume responsibility for appropriate communication to the teaching and support staff.

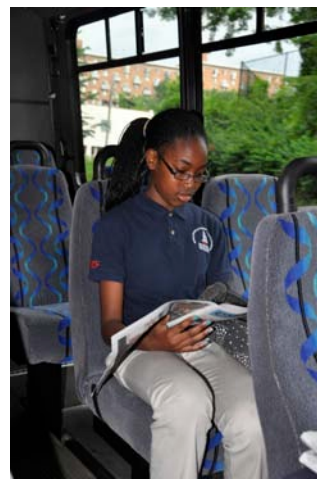
Medications/Medical Concerns: Neither prescription nor over-the-counter medications can be dispensed to a student by the school nurse without a completed release form signed by the child’s doctor. The form for school-distributed prescription medication is available from the nurse or in the school office. Also, at no time is a student to carry either a prescriptive or over-the-counter medication – including headache or pain relievers – in school.

Finally, if your child is ill or contagious, it is in his/her best interest and the best interest of the other students that he/she is not sent to school.

TRANSPORTATION

We are privileged that Howard University has granted (MS)² students permission to travel on the Howard University shuttle buses to and from the campus at no cost. These shuttle buses make stops in locations around the Howard University community including both Metro stations nearest the university. To locate other stops that may be convenient to you, please check the Howard University website. If your child rides the shuttle, please remind him/her that this is a privilege and that proper decorum is expected at all times.

Additionally, (MS)² students are expected to demonstrate proper behavior in public places both before and after school. This is particularly true for large groups of students waiting at bus stops and in Metro stations. When wearing the school uniform, our students can easily be identified as (MS)² students. We want our students to be model citizens who, by their decorum, attract others middle grade scholars to (MS)².



CAFETERIA AND MEALS

All students are expected to respect the rights of everyone during the breakfast and lunch periods. Students are to stay seated during meal times and use conversational tones when speaking with friends. Students are responsible for ensuring that their eating area is clean before leaving.

Students should use the restroom during their lunch period to avoid restroom interruptions during class time. Please remind your child that following lunch period, he/she must arrive at their next period on time and that tardiness will not be tolerated.



Catered breakfast and lunch are available daily, including early dismissal days. Parents/guardians must submit a completed lunch application to determine if your child qualifies for free or reduced meals. If your child does not qualify for free or reduced meals or he/she prefers not to eat the school breakfast and/or lunch, then they may bring their meals from home. Also, microwaves are available in the cafeteria for student use on a first-come, first serve basis.

RESTROOM POLICY

Students are encouraged to use the restroom during their independent time (before school, during the lunch period, freecess, and after school). In cases of emergencies, students **will be** allowed to use the restroom during class time. A log of student restroom usage is maintained for future reference and to track students who may be abusing restroom usage.

Parents/guardians are asked to inform the school nurse if their child needs special consideration for using the restroom for a temporary problem. If there is a chronic condition, a doctor's note stating such must be on-file with the nurse who will confidentially inform teachers of this medical situation.

LONG TERM ABSENCE POLICY

If your child is absent from school for a week or longer, this constitutes a long-term absence. Parents/guardians have the responsibility of informing the administration of the nature of the absence and securing all missed assignments. Students have the responsibility of working within a planned agreement for completing and submitting all missed assignments.

EXCUSED ABSENCE POLICY

At least one of the following must be received for an absence to be considered an excused absence:

- Note from a doctor specifying the date(s) student was under medical care;*
- Note from parent stating the absence was due to:
 - Illness;
 - Celebrating a religious event;
 - Attending a funeral of an immediate family member;
 - A mandated court appearance with verification from the court.

* Required if student is absent five (3) days or more

TRUANCY POLICY

The District of Columbia Board of Education has adopted an enhanced truancy policy for DC public and charter schools. Your child is truant if he/she is absent from school without an excuse. Five (5) consecutive days of unexcused absences will warrant a parent conference. Twenty (20) days of unexcused absences will warrant a truancy court referral.

COMMUNICATION WITH (MS)²

NOTE: Remember that you, the parent/guardian, are responsible for seeing that your child is in school and on time every day. Make it a habit to check home assignments to ensure that they are complete and done well. We also suggest that you stay in touch with us using any of the ways provided:

It is easy to –

MAINTAIN COMMUNICATION WITH (MS)² ONLINE WITH

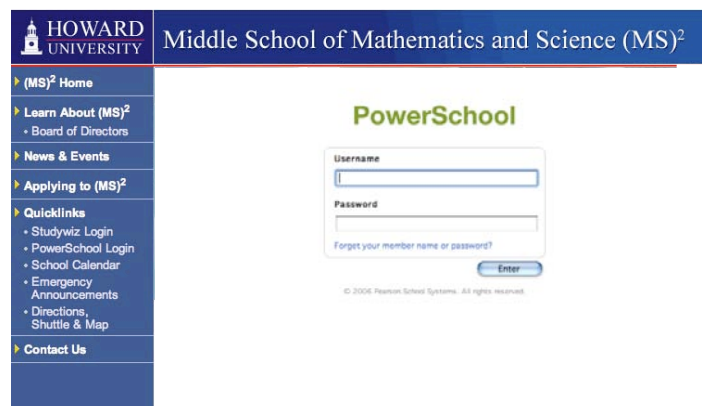
PowerSchool

<http://powerschool.universitymiddleschool.org/public/>

PowerSchool is a fully integrated, web-based, cross-platform student information system.

PowerSchool gives you the power to stay on top of student progress – with email updates and online access to schedules, grades, homework, attendance information, and teacher comments.

Login instructions will be provided.

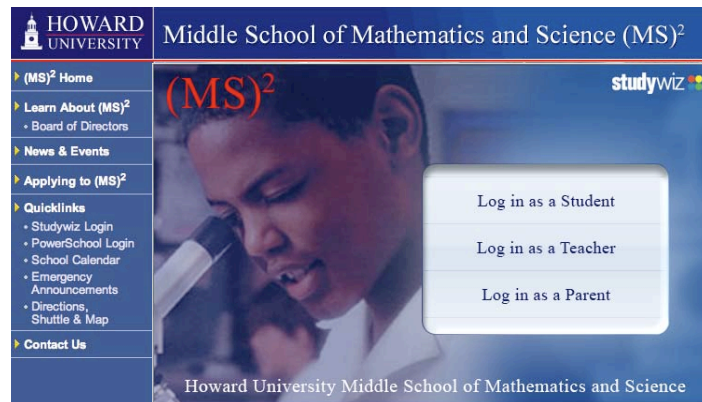


Studywiz

<http://studywiz.universitymiddleschool.org>

Studywiz provides an online space where educational content of all types is collected, organized, and managed to create an enriched learning environment and curriculum for students. Studywiz gives teachers a unique tool for elevating instruction through personalized, collaborative and interactive learning and real-time assessment and results, and it supports parental participation in learning.

Login instructions will be provided.



**PARENT, TEACHER,
ADMINISTRATION CONFERENCES**

You are encouraged to obtain information about your child using the ways presented on page 21 of this handbook. As you review this information, arrange for conferences with your child's teachers to gain even more insight into how well your child is performing. Being informed will enable you to play a more significant role in assisting your child's teachers in addressing concerns and in maintaining success. A key indicator of student success is directly linked to parent/guardian involvement and support. Even when things are going well for your child, it is encouraging for him/her to know that both parents and teachers have mutual concern about their well-being and academic successes.

Be certain to check the school calendar for the dates and times of the formal parent-teacher conferences. These occur at the midpoint of each quarter. During these conferences you are afforded the opportunity to visit with all your child's teachers in one day. These conferences are scheduled at times that accommodate work schedules of parents/guardians.

**(MS)² PARENT ASSOCIATION**

All parents/guardians are expected to be active participants in the (MS)² Parent Association. The Parent Association provides parents/guardians with the organizational structure and network capabilities for families to work collaboratively in making (MS)² one of the most effective schools in the nation. Check the school calendar for meeting dates and times.

VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS

(MS)² welcomes all visitors and volunteers. If you are coming to meet with a teacher or administrator about your child, or even as a volunteer, parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to call to schedule an appointment. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the administrative assistant who will connect you to the volunteer coordinator.

All individuals entering the building must sign-in at the security desk to receive a visitor's badge. The badge must be worn for the duration of the visit and returned to the security guard upon leaving. Children from other schools will not be allowed into the building unless accompanied by an adult. It is expected that all visitors will exhibit proper decorum while in the building.

LOST AND FOUND

You are reminded to label all of your child's belongings. This will enable us to return lost items expediently. All unidentified "lost and found" items will be left at the lost and found area located at the security desk in the main lobby. Also, students are encouraged to check their classrooms for any misplaced items. At the end of each semester, unclaimed clothing will be donated to local charities. Finally, it is highly recommended that large amounts of money and/or valuables are not brought to school. The school will not assume liability if these items are lost or stolen.

UNIVERSAL PERMISSION SLIP

A signed universal permission slip must be on file for your child. This permission slip grants permission for your child to participate in local field trips, including excursions to Baltimore, Maryland. It is our policy to notify parents/guardians in advance of all field trips; however, occasionally excursions may be unanticipated and may not permit advance notification. Thus, with this slip on file, your child will be able to participate in all activities.





Howard University Middle School of Mathematics and Science
405 Howard Place, NW, Washington, DC 20059
Phone: 202-806-7725 - Website: <http://www.howard.edu/ms2>