

Clewiston Middle School

Improvise, Adapt, Overcome...WHATEVER IT TAKES!

Clewiston, Florida 33440

(863) 983-1530



Principal: Lisa Brookins

Assistant Principal: Tina Wills

Dean: Samantha Ortiz

Dean: Samuel Thomas

School Counselor: Evelyn Massey

School Counselor: Virginia Vasquez

2018-2019 Student Handbook

Welcome to CMS!

Welcome to Clewiston Middle School! Being in middle school is an exciting time in your life! The entire staff is committed to making CMS a positive experience for each of you. In order to be successful, it will take a commitment by you as a student, the CMS faculty and staff, as well as by your parents or guardians. With all of us working together, we will provide the best education possible in a school setting that is caring and orderly.

Please review all of the information in this handbook with your parents or guardians to ensure understanding and provide the necessary direction for making this a great year.

CMS VISION

The vision of Clewiston Middle School is to create an environment where everyone thrives in a global society.

CMS MISSION

The mission of Clewiston Middle School is to focus on the individual students through cohort learning communities, advanced classes, meaningful student/teacher relationships, engaging academic work and rigorous learning experiences resulting in high levels of achievement for students and faculty.

SCHOOL HOURS

8:20-3:50 Teacher Day

8:40-3:40 Student Day

8:00 AM School Office opens
Cafeteria Opens

8:40 AM Late bell/Classes begin

3:15 PM No student check-out or
dismissal changes after this time

3:40 PM Dismissal procedures begin

ACCIDENTS

Every accident in the school building, on the school grounds, at practice sessions, or at any event sponsored by the school must be reported immediately to the person in charge and to the school office. Please provide the office with phone numbers so that we may contact parents in the event of an emergency, including home, work, and cell numbers as well as the numbers of a second emergency contact person. **School insurance information is available at the beginning of each school year.** Please check the Hendry County Schools website for more information.

AFTERNOON DISMISSAL

Bus Riding the school bus is a *privilege* that may be denied due to improper conduct on the bus. Please remember that you are expected to obey the driver and respect the driver's authority. Remain seated in your assigned seat and face front when the bus is in motion, keep noise at a minimum, leave all food and drink off the bus, and behave in a manner that will help ensure you and your friends are transported safely. Remember that all students need to be silent

while crossing railroad tracks so that the driver can look and listen for oncoming trains. By following these guidelines, it will help to ensure your safety.

What if I need to ride a different bus than the bus I am registered to ride? If a situation arises that you need to ride a different bus than you usually ride, your parent or guardian must either write a note with the changes that you will need to take to the office to get a bus note, or have them call the school **before** 1:30 and let the front office know of the changes so they can send a note to your last period class.

What if I need to leave school early? A parent or guardian must check you out from the main office. They will be required to show a picture ID each time if the front office receptionist does not know or recognize your parent or guardian. You may not leave early without permission from the office. No students can be checked out after 1:30. Students are not permitted to call parents to check them out on their cell phones without permission from their teacher.

What if my parent chooses to pick me up every day? If your parent chooses to pick you up on a daily basis, please have them tell your teacher that you will

not be riding the bus. It is best if they write a note that you will take to the front office.

What if I usually ride the bus but I have a different obligation and my parent or guardian wants to pick me up and not have to check me out from the office? If your parent or guardian needs to change your method of transportation for a particular day, please have them either write a note with the changes that you will need to take to the office or have them call the school before 1:30 and let the front office know of the changes so they can send a note to your last period class.

Students are not permitted to change their method of getting home without permission from the office.

AGENDAS

The school has provided you with an agenda, which we expect you to use to record your assignments, class activities, important dates, and other information throughout the year. It is an important communication tool between parents and school officials. Please keep the following in mind as you use your agenda:

1. **Every box, every day.** You should be writing **SOMETHING** in your content area box every day. This can be homework, the objective, learning goals, etc. Please make sure you are using the agenda to keep learning organized.
2. **Hall Passes:** The hallway Passport at the back of the agenda is to be used by all students when leaving the classroom. It is the student's responsibility to fill out the hall pass and have the teacher sign before leaving the classroom. Students are required to have a pass at all times when they are not in their designated area.
3. **Care of Agenda:** You will be expected to treat your agenda like school property. Consequences may follow for deliberate defacement of school property. *We will replace your agenda for a \$5.00 fee, one time only, so please take care of it!*

ATTENDANCE

It is necessary that you attend school every day! Being in school each day is the first step to being successful, both in school and in life.

Absences due to the following reasons will be excused:

- Illness (A student continually ill and repeatedly absent must be under the supervision of a physician to receive an excused absence.
- Death in family
- Religious holiday
- Subpoena
- Other justifiable reasons with **prior** approval by administration

Unexcused absences are any absence that is not excused for one of the verified reasons listed as an excused absence.

What do you do if you are absent? Your parent or guardian will need to write a note giving the reason for your absence. You will need to take the note directly to Mrs. Lee in the front office.

How do you get make-up work following an absence? You will have two days for every day you missed to complete your work. The school has procedures in place for make-up work. The teachers will follow the same procedures in each class in order to make it easier for you to make up your work.

What if you are late to school? All students are expected to be to class on time! If you arrive late to school you will need to go to the Front Office for a late pass. If you have been detained in the office, or by a teacher, you must receive a pass from that person before going to your next class.

Where do you go when dropped off at school? Students are to report to the Cafeteria in the morning. The **ONLY** place for student drop off is by the gymnasium. Students **cannot** be dropped off in any other area.

What do I do if my family has a situation that I will be out of school? There are situations where families have obligations that need to be met. If this should occur, you will need to have your parent or guardian come to the school and meet with administration to get permission for an extended leave.

AVID

Clewiston Middle School is on its way to becoming an AVID school. Through this process we are able to increase the opportunities for our student's school

wide, in order to prepare them for college and career readiness. The AVID strategies that will be implemented will include: peer tutoring, organization, team building and the development of study skills.

BACKPACKS

Students are permitted to carry **clear or see thru mesh** bags/backpacks only!

BULLYING/ HARASSMENT

Bullying and harassment will **NOT** be tolerated at Clewiston Middle School, and strict consequences are in place for those who violate the policies. Bullying and harassment is defined as unwanted and **continual** verbal comments and non-verbal gestures from one or more students to another **and** is one-sided. It is systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or employees, and may involve but is not limited to teasing, social exclusion, threat, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, theft, sexual, religious harassment, racial harassment, public humiliation, and destruction of property.

The Hendry County School Board Bullying/ Harassment Policy can be viewed in its entirety in the [Hendry County School District Policies and Procedures](#). Forms for reporting Bullying/ Harassment may be obtained from any Hendry County School Office or the District website www.hendry-schools.org. Bullying/Harassment may be reported anonymously.

Everyone has the right to feel physically, mentally, and emotionally safe at school. We will do everything possible to create and preserve a physically, mentally, and emotionally safe environment. Bullying offenses will be taken very seriously and will be reported to Administration and the School Resource Officer.

What do I do if I feel I am being bullied or harassed? You need to tell an adult. The first place to start would be with your teacher if it is happening at school or your bus driver if it is occurring on the bus. If the situation continues, you will need to bring it to the attention of school administration. We will do everything possible to remedy the situation. **No student should ever be afraid to come to school!**

CAFETERIA

A well-balanced lunch is offered at no cost to students. Thanks for helping keep the cafeteria a quiet, clean, comfortable place to eat by following these school-wide cafeteria expectations:

1. Wait your turn.
2. Have your ID ready.
3. Remain in your seat.
4. Talk quietly.
5. Clean up your area.
6. Be prepared to leave when your teacher arrives.

Students are permitted to bring lunch with them. However, students are **not** permitted to have outside restaurant or fast-food lunches brought in to them. It is difficult to get the lunches to the cafeteria in a timely manner and in doing so would take away from the faculty members who are monitoring the students.

CLINIC

The clinic is open from the start of the student day to the end of the student day. You must have a pass from your teacher in order to visit the clinic. If you are ill, the clinic staff must call home for you. Students are not to call parents on their cell phones of their illness unless directed to do so by a faculty member. Please make sure the office/clinic has the correct emergency contact information at all times. A rest area is available for emergencies only.

What if you have to take medicine at school? Your parent must sign an authorization form approved by the Hendry County School Board, which is available in the school clinic and the main office. The medication, **in the original prescription container**, must be turned into the school nurse along with the authorized form **by the parent/guardian**. The medication will be administered in the clinic where records are kept on all medication use. You are responsible for remembering to come to take your medication at the appropriate time. Remember that no student is permitted to carry medication of any kind (except inhalers) with them at school.

CLUBS / ACTIVITIES / ATHLETICS

What rules govern clubs, activities, and athletics?

1. Students must maintain a 2.0 GPA each semester.

2. All athletes must maintain a 90% attendance rate in all class periods throughout the school year to maintain privileges and participation in extracurricular activities.
3. Students must be in attendance at school in order to participate in any after school practice or event. If the after school activity is scheduled for Saturday, the student must be in attendance the previous school day.
4. Athletic teams are governed by the CMS Athletic Handbook.
5. Only students who attend Clewiston Middle School, Clewiston Christian School, New Harvest Academy, and Home-School students associated with the county, are welcome to participate in after school socials.
6. For any fall sport or activity, eligibility will be determined by the last GPA from the report card from the previous year.
7. Due to the need to issue receipts/regulations for handling money, we will only accept fees associated with socials, school functions, etc. only during the times specified by the sponsor.
8. All regular school rules are in effect during all school-sponsored activities.

CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

Students will earn consequences for inappropriate behavior, including (but not limited to) warnings, conferences, time-outs, ISS, out of school suspensions. You have a responsibility to yourself and to others to conduct yourself appropriately throughout the school day. Listed below are some of the school rules for Clewiston Middle School:

1. Students are not permitted to display gang-related drawings or writings on any possessions, including but not limited to clothing, notebooks, or book bags.
2. Loitering, or sitting on campus, is not permitted before or after school.
3. Couples are not permitted to embrace or display other overt signs of affection.
4. All non-school items should remain at home, such as: toys, stuffed animals, trading cards, laser pointers, fidget spinners, large amounts of money, expensive jewelry, items to sell, etc. Non-school items will be sent to the office and a parent must pick them up. Items not claimed by June 30 will be discarded.
5. Permanent markers and whiteout are not permitted on campus.
6. Gum is not to be used during school hours.
7. Consumption of candy, food, and drinks is not permitted in the building unless supervised by a teacher. Water is permitted. It must be in a clear closed container, and must be kept away from school technology.
8. Students are not permitted to engage in activities related to gambling.
9. Food items for sale in the cafeteria (except water) may not leave the cafeteria after the lunch period.
10. Students are not permitted to have their cell phones on or visible during the school day.

Self-Discipline

Self-Discipline is being responsible for your choices and thinking about the consequences of those choices before taking action. We expect you to be responsible and make proper choices for yourself by:

- accepting consequences for your actions
- concentrating on your work and developing good study habits
- ignoring, asking them to stop, or telling an adult when someone acts or speaks unkindly
- learning to **LISTEN** when others are speaking
- learning to show emotions in acceptable ways
- setting realistic goals and striving to reach them
- showing respect for people of all ages
- using self-control at all times

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER

A School Resource Officer is assigned to CMS. He/ She will be walking around campus and through classrooms throughout the day and is here for the protection of all students and faculty. They are here for your protection and safety.

DRESS CODE

Appropriate dress is essential for an orderly and productive school atmosphere. How you dress is a reflection of how you feel about yourself and how others see you. Students are expected to come to school well groomed and neatly dressed.

It is the joint responsibility of every student, parent, or guardian, teacher, and administrator to see that the dress of the student is appropriate and does not

interfere with the teaching/learning process. Any time missed due to dress will be unexcused.

Appropriate Dress for CMS Students is:

The Clewiston Middle School (CMS) student body will adhere to the following dress code. CMS administration reserves the right to prohibit the wearing of any article of clothing, accessory or hairstyle that is considered disruptive to the educational process.

1. **All students are required to have their ID Badge around their neck and visible at all times.**
2. **NO** Halter-tops, tube tops, muscle shirts, spaghetti straps, midriff or backless shirts and blouses. Tops must be at least three inches below the waistband or remain tucked in so that the midriff area is **not** exposed. All tops must have 2 inches of fabric at the shoulder.
3. Clothing must cover the chest as to ensure that cleavage is **not** exposed.
4. Students may wear shorts, skirts or dresses that are no more than six inches above the middle of the kneecap.
5. Transparent mesh or see through clothing may not be worn without appropriate undergarments. Holes six inches above the knee or higher, must have appropriate undergarments covering exposed skin.
6. **NO** exposure of underwear/ undergarments.
7. **Zero tolerance** for drop pants.
8. Leggings/ jeggings are permitted but must be worn with a top or covering that is at least eight inches or less from the knee.
9. Intentionally altered clothing or unbuttoned and ill-fitted garments are **not** acceptable. Ill-fitted garments include, but are not limited to, those that are too small (immodest) or too large (falling off the body).
10. All clothing and accessories must be free of any promotion of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, sex, gang affiliation, or other offensive, profane, discriminatory, and/or suggestive messages.
11. **NO** caps, hats, headbands, stocking caps, bandanas, hair nets or head phones. Students who wear these items will have to remove them. These items will be confiscated until a parent can pick up them up from the office.
12. Students must remove sunglasses when **inside** the school facility.
13. Students may wear shoes of their choice!

Please Remember. . .

- If there is a question on appropriate dress, the final decision will be made by the administration.
- Items of clothing and accessories (jewelry, hair color, or other adornments) that cause a distraction, disruption in the learning process, or safety hazard are inappropriate.

Violation of the dress code will result in the following disciplinary action(s):

1st Offense: Warning (change of clothes may be required for some dress code violations Student must scan in at RTC.

2nd Offense: Parent Contact/Student must scan in at RTC.

3rd Offense: Parent Contact/Student must scan in at RTC.

4th Offense: Student receives a referral to the dean's office.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Students may have an electronic device (cell phones, I-pods, tablets, headphones, earbuds, etc.) in their possession during school hours but they must be turned off and out of sight. Students may use their electronic device before the instructional day begins and once it ends. **Students are not permitted to use speakers at any time.**

If seen using any electronic device during instructional hours, the device will be taken to the bookkeeper and only a parent can pick it up from the school at the end of the school day. All devices brought from home are the individual student's responsibility. **The school will not be responsible for lost, stolen or damaged devices.**

FEES

All fees (lost and damaged books, library fines, restitution, cafeteria costs, etc.) and monies will be collected by different faculty members. The front office clerk will assist you with determining who will collect the monies. Fees may be paid before, during, or after school by students and at any time by parents. Only checks made payable to Clewiston Middle School, in the exact amount are accepted.

SAFETY DRILLS

Several safety drills will be conducted during the school year for the safety of our students. These drills will include; fire drills, hazardous weather drills, lock-down drills, and intruder drills. Each time a new drill is introduced, your teacher/s will give you detailed explanations of what is expected of you, what you can expect, and the procedures you will need to follow. Once the initial type of drill is completed, additional drills will not have warnings. Drills are opportunities to practice what to do in case of an emergency.

We understand, as parents, that it is uncomfortable to hear that these types of drills need to be addressed. However, we are living in a different time and we want to prepare our students here at Clewiston Middle School, should any such situation arise. We also understand, as parents, you would like to be notified of such drills. However, that defeats the purpose of a drill. We promise you that if an emergency situation should ever arise, that the Superintendent or designee will contact parents via the call-out/ e-mail system in place. Please make sure that you keep the office updated with any changes in contact information.

Please note that during drills or if a situation would ever occur and we would have to go into a lock-down situation, parents would not be permitted to check students out of school until law enforcement has the situation under control and grants us permission to do so.

Please know that our staff at Clewiston Middle School puts the safety of your child first!

GUIDANCE SERVICES

What can the guidance counselors do for me? The counselor can help you understand your problems, educational plans, vocational plans, personal development, home, and family relations. Many other topics of interest are explored through both group counseling and individual conferences. Counselors will keep information confidential unless disclosure is legally required to prevent danger to the student or others.

How can I see my guidance counselor? Get a pass from your teacher to sign up for an appointment with your counselor.

ID BADGES

Do I have to wear an ID badge? Yes, you must wear your school ID at all times. There are two reasons for all students and faculty members to carry their School ID. The first reason is for the safety of everyone on campus. The second reason is our campus is becoming more computerized. You will need the bar code to check in if tardy, check out books, get your lunch, and other procedures during the school day. The cost to replace an ID badge is \$2.00 and \$1.00 for a new lanyard.

CAMPUS TRAVEL

You are responsible for creating a nice campus environment for everyone by following these school-wide expectations for hall travel:

1. Have your signed agenda.
2. Use the sidewalk at all times.
3. Walk on the right hand side of the sidewalk.
4. Leave space between you and the person in front of you.
5. Keep noise to a minimum.
6. Keep hands, feet, and other objects to yourself.

How do hall passes work? You must have a pass when you are outside of the classroom during school hours. This pass can be found in the back of your student planner. It is your responsibility to fill out the hall pass with the date, time, destination, and have your teacher sign as approval, when leaving and returning the classroom.

INSURANCE

The school has no accident insurance. Students are offered inexpensive insurance at the beginning of the school year. All students should be covered on some insurance policy. The Florida Kid Care Program also offers health insurance to those who qualify. Information on insurance is available on the Hendry County Schools website.

LOST AND FOUND

All lost and found items should be brought to the main office. If you lose something, check with the school secretary, Mrs. Leon, in the main office. Items not claimed are donated to charity following the winter break and again after the school year ends.

MEDIA CENTER

Students may use the Media during selected times unless otherwise noted.

How do you check out a book? Each book has been electronically coded for security purposes and must be checked out and scanned using individual student IDs. Books are due 2 weeks from the date of checkout and should be returned to the book drop located in the checkout counter immediately upon entering the media center. Any book more than 2 weeks overdue may be subject to fines and/or replacement fees.

What happens if you lose or damage a library book? Many of our library books are new and very expensive. Please help us keep our library book collections new and in good shape. The librarian will check the condition of the returned book. If there is damage, it will be you and your parent's responsibility to pay for the damages.

PARENT DROP OFF/ PICK UP AREA

The parent drop off/ pick-up area is located by the gymnasium area. Students will not be permitted to use the front office as an access to the campus in the morning. All gates other than these gates will be locked. All students dropped off in the morning must report to the cafeteria.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

All students scheduled into PE are expected to participate in class activities. Students will be required to change for gym class into clothing and sneakers suitable for athletics. Gym clothing must meet the above requirements for school dress. Students must also wear sneakers that are flat and safe, which tie or Velcro. Parental notes for legitimate, short-term excuses from physical activity will be accepted for a maximum of 2 days. If a student needs to be exempt from PE for a longer period, a doctor's note or a PE Waiver must be turned in to the office stating the reason.

REPORT CARDS/PROGRESS REPORTS

Report cards are distributed at the end of each nine week grading period and are yours to keep. Report cards contain academic grades as well as attendance data. Scholastic or academic grades will be given according to the following scale: A= 90-100, B= 80-89, C=70-79, D=60-69, F=0-59. Progress Reports are issued 4 ½ weeks after the beginning of each nine weeks. Teachers will expect parents to sign and return progress reports.

Parent/ Teacher Conferences will be scheduled after the progress reports are distributed. This is an important meeting to attend especially since there is time to improve grades before report cards are distributed. You can find the dates of the conferences on our web-site or a call out will be made regarding the dates a few days prior.

TELEPHONES/MESSAGES

Telephones are available for teacher use in each classroom. Phones are not available for general business that should be handled at home before coming to school. Students may not use the telephone to make calls or text without teacher permission and without specific knowledge of the nature of the conversation.

TEXTBOOKS

Students are expected to properly care for textbooks and assume full responsibility for the care of books loaned to them. Books are issued by the librarian and must be returned to the same teacher upon completion of the year or withdrawal from school. If you lose or damage a textbook, you will be assessed a fee to replace or cover the damage. Upon payment for a lost book, another book will be issued. If your original book is found and returned, a full refund will be made.

VISITORS

All visitors on campus must check in and obtain passes from the office. Passes must be visible at all times while on campus. Visitors will be expected to produce a driver's license or other form of identification. Students are not allowed to bring guests to school during regular school hours.

TITLE I

Clewiston Middle School is a Title I school. All students receive supplemental services through staff, materials, and supplies supported with Title I funds. The purpose of Title I is to help ensure that all children have the opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach proficiency on challenging state academic standards and assessments.

**This Student Handbook is available in Spanish upon request.
Este Manual del Estudiante está disponible en español a su solicitud.**