

DR. JOE J. BERNAL MIDDLE SCHOOL CAMPUS HANDBOOK

DR. JOE J. BERNAL MIDDLE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

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Section A Campus Handbook 2021-2022

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WELCOME

Welcome to Dr. Joe J. Bernal Middle School. This Student-Parent Handbook has been prepared for your information and guidance. Keep in mind at all times that you, the student, are the most important aspect of school life at Dr. Joe J. Bernal Middle School. Be proud of your school. Take good care of it. As a Black Knight, you are expected to conduct yourself with dignity, demonstrate courtesy and respect, and strive to do your best.

Dr. Joe J. Bernal Middle School is dedicated to the purpose of expanding minds and building skills that will be useful and required now and in the future. Therefore, it is necessary to have certain rules to ensure each individual has the opportunity to benefit from their educational opportunity. This handbook outlines some of the basic policies around which your school functions. Please use it as a reference to keep informed of the basic guidelines and to allow you to take full advantage of all school offerings.

Please feel free to confer with teachers, counselors, and the administration when you deem it necessary. Active parental involvement is encouraged and welcomed. The cooperation of the school patrons, based upon the knowledge of the school, will result in a more efficient and successful school program.

OUR NAMESAKE

Dr. Joe J. Bernal, born and raised in San Antonio, devoted 35 years to public education. During his time in education, Dr. Bernal served as a teacher, a principal, an assistant superintendent, and an adjunct professor.

As a Texas State Senator, Dr. Bernal authored and passed legislation to provide elementary teachers statewide a 45 minute conference period, created free statewide kindergarten for five-year olds, established the University of Texas at San Antonio, and created a dental and nursing school at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio. Dr. Bernal was appointed to the "Texas Advisory Committee on Bilingual Education from 1968 – 1973.

After leaving the senate, Dr. Bernal returned to his love of teaching as an adjunct professor in multicultural and bilingual education at the University of Texas at San Antonio, Trinity University, and Our Lady of the Lake.

Dr. Bernal resides in San Antonio and continues to dedicate time and service to public education.

SCHOOL COLORS

Vegas Gold and Black

SCHOOL MASCOT

Black Knights

MISSION, VISION, AND CORE BELIEFS

Mission - The mission of Bernal Middle School is to cultivate successful, lifelong learners in an ever-changing world.

Vision - The community of Bernal Middle School is dedicated to providing all students with safe, engaging, and differentiated learning experiences with an emphasis on building positive relationships of mutual respect.

Core Beliefs - Dr. Joe J. Bernal Middle School believes:

- All students can achieve.
- Students will rise to our level of expectations.
- We must educate the whole child.
- Excellence is a non-negotiable.

PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP YOU

The Principal

The Principal is responsible to the Superintendent of schools for proper administration of Bernal Middle School. It is his duty to organize, supervise, and administer all of the affairs of the school as they affect students, teachers, and patrons. He will be glad to help you with any of your concerns. Conferences can be scheduled by calling 210-398-1905.

The Associate Principal/Assistant Principal

The Associate Principal and Assistant Principal work directly with the principal in the management and organization of the school. They handle the day-to-day operations of the school and assume the responsibility of the Principal in his absence.

Due to morning duties and responsibilities on campus, administrators are not available for conferences prior to 8:40 a.m. We strongly suggest that if you wish to speak to an administrator, or have a conference with them, that you call 210-398-1924 to schedule an appointment. If you are unable to reach an administrator directly by phone, please leave a message and a campus administrator will return your call within 24 hours.

The Academic Dean

The Academic Dean works directly with the Principal in the instructional processes of the school to improve student performance. She is in charge of all campus testing, both at the district and state level. She handles the day-to-day operations of the school that address academics and may assume the responsibility of the Principal in his absence. Conferences may be scheduled by calling 210-398-1938.

The Counselors

All students are assigned a guidance counselor. Your counselor will be happy to assist you with problems concerning both school and your personal matters. If you want an appointment with your counselor, this can be arranged with the secretary in the guidance office before and after school. Parents can refer their child by contacting the counseling office and students can refer themselves through the online referral system. If your counselor cannot see you that same day, he/she will make an appointment with you for the next day. Conferences with students receive first consideration of the counselor's time. ***The function of the counselor is advisory, not disciplinary, and all information is confidential.***

The Nurse

The school nurse is available to help you at school with medical emergencies and will work closely with your parents and physician in administering prescribed medication. The clinic is located in the main office. Please notify the school nurse of any medical conditions that may be of concern. The school nurse is unable to administer over-the-counter medication to your child and can only administer prescriptions in their original container.

The Police Officer

The Police Officer assists students when needed and helps maintain a safe environment. He/she helps supervise after school events and helps monitor traffic. The SAFE hotline number is 397-7233 or text safe@nisd.net.

GENERAL INFORMATION

AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

All school and U.I.L. rules apply to conduct and dress code for students who attend after-school activities. Written permission and/or an admission fee may be required for many events. Transportation to and from school is the responsibility of the parents for these activities; parents are expected to pick up their child immediately at the conclusion of each activity. Children should not have to wait longer than 15 minutes for parents to pick them up after a school event. If a parent or guardian does not pick up their child in a timely manner, the protocol and procedure set forth by NISD in the Crisis Handbook could be followed by the administrator or staff member if they deem it necessary. Students who are not picked up in a timely manner after a school event or school function could be denied the right to attend future after school functions for the remainder of the year. Students who exhibit inappropriate behaviors will be removed from the activity. Formal attire and/or limousine transportation are not appropriate for these events. Any clothing deemed inappropriate or suggestive is not permitted.

Circumstances that restrict students from attending after-school events are the following:

- out of school suspension/in school suspension assigned for the day of the event
- other disciplinary actions that may warrant non-attendance of the event
- absence from school the day of the event
- repeated misconduct at after-school events
- assignment to an alternative educational campus
- withdrawal from Bernal Middle School (athletic events may be permitted.)

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Following any absence, students should bring a dated note signed by the parent explaining the reason for the absence. If a doctor saw the student, a note should be obtained from the doctor explaining the absence. All doctors' notes should be sent to the school to substantiate absences. All notes should be turned into the attendance office within 5 days of the student's absence. Students should bring all notes to the attendance office between 7:55 and 8:40 a.m. Please add your child's ID number on the note to ensure that the absence is appropriately processed.

Tardies - Sufficient time is provided to pass from one class to another. A tardy is considered as a student not physically in the classroom when the bell rings. Students tardy after 15 minutes may be considered truant or absent. Students with excessive tardies will be referred to the administration for disciplinary action.

BACKPACKS / BOOK BAGS

Backpacks and/or book bags may be used to carry books and supplies to and from school, and may be taken to classes during the school day.

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROCEDURES

All students will enter the cafeteria in an orderly manner. There are specific rules on how students sit in the cafeteria and the majority of the time students will be allowed to sit with their friends, as long as cafeteria rules are followed. Students must raise their hand for permission to leave their seat. Duty teachers will dismiss students and students may not leave the cafeteria before permission is granted. Students are required to keep their area clean. While in the cafeteria line, students are to only touch the food items they intend to buy.

Visitors must sign in with the front office and receive a visitor's pass before coming into the cafeteria. **Parents may bring lunch to their children; however, parents may not bring lunch for other students.** No celebrations are permitted in the cafeteria (e.g. birthdays). To ensure that other students do not feel uncomfortable or left out, parents who bring outside food and drinks should eat lunch with their children at a designated table in the cafeteria.

Breakfast/Lunch Money - Go to www.myschoolbucks.com to access your student's cafeteria account and add money as needed. We encourage parents to monitor their student's lunch account online to prevent any problems that deal with your child's purchases.

BUS ASSIGNMENTS AND TRANSPORTATION

Students are required to ride the designated bus assigned to them by transportation. Riding a bus is a privilege, not a right. Students may be assigned a specific seat on their bus. Only a family emergency would warrant assignment to a different bus. (Staying overnight with a friend is not an emergency.) In order to ride a different bus home, and receive an official bus change form, a note must be sent by a parent/guardian the day prior to or the morning of and be brought to the APO for administrative approval. **This approval must be obtained prior to the end of the school day** (these will not be approved after school in the bus loop). Students will be given a note from the Vice Principal's office that needs to be given to the bus driver. The number of students assigned to buses and the systemized route is disrupted when ineligible students ride on alternate routes. All bus routes and assignments of students are done through the district's transportation offices.

CAMPUS OPERATING HOURS

- Classes begin for Dr. Joe J. Bernal Middle School students at **8:40 a.m.** and end each afternoon at **4:05 p.m.** each day, Monday through Friday.
- The doors will be opened to all students at 7:00 a.m. Students who arrive at school before 8:30 a.m. are allowed to eat breakfast (if they choose) and to report to the grade level designated areas.
- Front Office Hours are from 7:45 - 4:30 PM.
- Students will not be allowed to be checked out after 3:45 PM due to dismissal procedures.

CAMPUS VISITORS

All Parents and Visitors are required to register in the Front Office with staff regardless of how long they plan to stay on campus, and must indicate the reason for visiting the campus. They are also required to sign-out prior to leaving the campus. Upon sign-in, all Parents and Visitors should receive a Visitor's Pass, and must wear this pass where it can be visible to staff. These precautions are taken to ensure a safe environment for our students and staff. All volunteers and mentors are also required to do a criminal background check before volunteering on campus or field trips. The background check may be done on-line through the NISD website.

DELIVERY OF ITEMS / OUTSIDE FOOD ITEMS

In an effort to minimize interruptions and maximize instructional time, **we do not deliver items directly to students.** However, we also recognize that students will sometimes forget an item at home. We will deliver glasses, school items (books, assignments, etc), house keys, and lunch money. For all other items, the student is expected to come by the office BETWEEN classes to retrieve their belongings. No business will be permitted to deliver food to a student (i.e. pizza delivery, sandwich delivery, food delivery services). This procedure helps the school to maintain an academic environment and is effective in helping students practice personal responsibility. **Parent/Guardian dropping off food needs to be an emergency contact listed in HAC. Students need to be aware food is being delivered and are not permitted to share food. Flowers, balloons, birthday presents etc. will not be delivered and will be held in the office until the end of the day when students can pick them up to be taken home.**

DRESS FOR SUCCESS

The district's dress code is implemented (Section D); therefore, students will be expected to follow the guidelines set forth by the district. Dress code standards are extended to extra-curricular activities held on the campus. In an effort to promote a safe and positive school environment that is conducive to learning, students should wear appropriate clothing that will not cause disruptions in learning or safety. Inappropriate, indecent, suggestive or distracting clothing will not be allowed. Changes in dress code, deemed appropriate and necessary by the school principal, may be announced, implemented and enforced during the course of the academic school year.

Students out of compliance with dress code may be removed from the regular school setting until the parent is able to provide appropriate attire. Students will be asked to change into school issued clothing if parents cannot be reached. Book covers, folders, book bags, school property, body parts, and/or personal property or clothing displaying obscenities, alcoholic beverages, narcotics, controlled substances, weapons, gang related materials or any design or inscription that administration determines to be unacceptable are not permitted at Bernal Middle School. These items will be confiscated and documented, if necessary, in the student's discipline record.

Final determination of acceptable dress code and grooming rests with the Principal or his/her designees.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES/ TECHNOLOGY

School districts throughout the country, including Northside ISD, have moved into the "Information Age" by providing network and Internet access for students. Technology will be used abundantly at Bernal Middle School. Everything from testing reading levels of students to accessing the library's card catalog database requires the use of networked computers. With this privilege comes responsibility. Students must use the Northside network and the Internet in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner in accordance with the Northside ISD Acceptable Use Policy. At the beginning of each school year there are two forms that must be signed and returned to the school before your child will be able to use a networked computer at Bernal Middle School or have their work published on the Bernal website.

TO FUNCTION EFFECTIVELY IN THIS ENVIRONMENT, STUDENTS MUST ASSUME PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY TO BEHAVE ETHICALLY, EVEN WHEN TECHNOLOGY PROVIDES THEM THE FREEDOM TO DO OTHER- WISE. THE USE OF THE NORTHSIDE NETWORK AND THE INTERNET IS A PRIVILEGE, NOT A RIGHT, WHICH MAY BE REVOKED AT ANY TIME FOR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR. USERS ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR UNDERSTANDING THE ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY AND GUIDELINES AS A CONDITION OF USING THE NORTHSIDE NETWORK AND THE INTERNET. USE OF THE NORTHSIDE NETWORK OR THE INTERNET THAT IS INCONSISTENT WITH THIS POLICY MAY RESULT IN LOSS OF ACCESS AS WELL AS OTHER DISCIPLINARY OR LEGAL ACTION.

GRADE REPORTING THROUGH HOME ACCESS CENTER (HAC)

Parents are encouraged to regularly monitor their student's progress throughout the year by utilizing NISD's on-line Parent Portal. Students will receive a progress report the third and sixth week of the marking period. The progress reports are designed to inform parents and students of current classroom performance and grades. The teacher may require the students to have you sign and return each progress report sent home to verify that you received your child's report. If the teacher deems necessary, you may be contacted by phone to make sure you received the report. This is especially true if the progress of your child is not acceptable or if the grades or conduct are below average.

Report cards will be issued at the end of each marking period. They provide the student's academic grades, citizenship grades, plus other pertinent information. We encourage you to make sure that you receive a report card every nine weeks. If a parent does not receive their child's report card, please contact the counselor's office for assistance. If a parent/guardian has any questions or concerns regarding their child's education, please start by contacting the teacher, then if the question or concern is not answered/solved, then contact the counselors' office and/or administration.

PE / DANCE / ATHLETICS LOCKERS

Lockers will be issued individually. Lockers should be kept locked; a student should not divulge the combination to another student. Direct all locker problems to the coach or teacher. Sharing lockers is not permitted. Students found sharing lockers will be subject to disciplinary action.

Students should observe the following practices:

1. Valuable items should be left at home, not kept in a locker.
2. Do not share lockers - Sharing lockers can lead to the loss of expensive textbooks and personal items.
3. Do not give your locker combination to anyone.
4. Locker problems should be reported to the PE/Athletic Coaches or Dance Director.

LOST AND FOUND

IF YOU FIND ANY ARTICLE OF VALUE, PLEASE TURN IT IN TO THE FRONT OFFICE IMMEDIATELY.

As the school assumes no responsibility for lost articles, students are encouraged to take every precaution to protect their possessions. Students should not bring expensive or valuable items to school. Students should carefully label each article, such as clothing, books, and supplies for easy identification. If you are in possession of an item that does not belong to you, you will be subject to disciplinary measures. Lost and found items collected and not claimed by the end of each marking period will be donated.

NUISANCE ITEMS

Items that cause a distraction from the school's academic atmosphere are not permitted. The school cannot be held responsible for any of these lost or stolen items. Confiscated items will be returned to the parent only. Students who bring these items to school are subject to disciplinary action.

REGISTRATION / WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

Registrations - To register your student, please go to <https://www.nisd.net/schools/registration> and complete the pre-registration. A counselor will contact you and schedule an appointment to complete the registration process.

Withdraw of Student - When it is known that a student is going to withdraw, the parents or guardians should notify the Counseling Office at least one day in advance, if possible. All textbooks and library books must be returned. Any fines owed to the school need to be paid before records may be released. Technology devices should be returned to the Technology Support Specialist. Textbooks must be returned to the Textbook administrator. NO records will be released until all obligations (textbooks, fines, release forms, etc.) have been fulfilled. A parent signature will be required for final clearance to be given.

TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Please refer to Section B of Northside's Student and Parent Agreement for the Acceptable Use of the District's Electronic Communication System policy.

BERNAL BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

Displayed around the campus is the K.N.I.G.H.T.S. acronym for student behavior and expectations.

- **K - Kindness matters**
- **N - Never miss an opportunity to succeed**
- **I - Integrity always**
- **G - Get to your correct location on time**
- **H - Hands and feet to yourself**
- **T - Technology when approved / appropriate**
- **S - Safety First**

****Note: As policies and procedures change, administration reserves the right to update the campus handbook.****