



BENJAMIN E. MAYS PREPARATORY SCHOOL

STUDENT AND FAMILY HANDBOOK

Shanda Gentry, Principal
SCHOOL YEAR 2011-12



BENJAMIN E. MAYS PREPARATORY SCHOOL

"Preparing every student for success in high school, college, and beyond"

PRINCIPAL'S WELCOME

Dear Parents/Guardians of Mays Prep Scholars,

On behalf of our faculty and staff, it brings me great pleasure to welcome you to Mays Prep. We look forward to the work of preparing every student for success in high school, college, and beyond.

Mays Prep was founded on 6 core values: Hard Work; Excellence; Respect; Discipline; Determination; and Leadership. Because we believe that these values are necessary to ensure academic success, they are featured within every aspect of our school community. Through a rigorous educational process and enlivened academic setting, our students are challenged to develop the human potential that they all possess.

Each day, Mays Prep students immerse themselves in academic programs rarely available in traditional primary school experiences. They are taught by faculty members who inspire excellence and who are immensely committed to their work as educators. These teachers come from every region of the country and they represent diverse backgrounds and experiences.

Going forward, we are driven to pursue excellence in all that we do. However, we are also mindful that achieving excellence requires a cooperative effort on the part of students, teachers, parents, and the community. Therefore, we ask for your cooperation and support as we engage in the most rewarding work there is – educating your child.

Thank you for choosing Mays Prep. It is an honor to serve you.

Yours Truly,

Mrs. Shanda Gentry, Principal



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DR. BENJAMIN E. MAYS



Benjamin Elijah Mays was a giant in annals of American education. He is remembered for his outstanding leadership and service as a teacher, preacher, mentor, scholar, author and activist in the civil rights movement.

Born August 1, 1894 near Epworth, South Carolina, Dr. Mays was a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Bates College in Maine. He later served as pastor of Shiloh Baptist Church from 1921-1923 in Atlanta, Georgia. And was eventually recruited by Morehouse College President John Hope. Dr. Mays soon joined the school's faculty as a mathematics instructor and debate coach. He obtained a master's degree in 1925 and in 1935 a Ph.D. degree from the University of Chicago. In 1934, he was appointed dean of the School of Religion at Howard University and served until 1940.

Dr. Mays then became President of Morehouse College in 1940 and launched a 27-year tenure that shepherded the institution into international prominence. He upgraded the faculty, secured a Phi Beta Kappa Chapter, and sustained enrollment during wartime America.

Dr. Mays' most noted forum was Tuesday morning Chapel in historic Sale Hall, where he challenged and inspired the students to excellence in scholarship and in life itself. One of Morehouse's most distinguished graduates, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. '48, remembers Dr. Mays as his "spiritual mentor" and "intellectual father."

Upon his retirement, he served as president of the Atlanta Board of Education from 1970 to 1981. Throughout his educational career, he would receive 56 honorary degrees, including a posthumously awarded degree from Columbia University. He published nearly 2000 articles and nine books.

Dr. Mays died in 1984.



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Mission & Values

Within a highly disciplined, structured, and supportive learning environment, the Mission of Mays Prep is to prepare every student for success in high school, college, and beyond. Mays Prep subscribes to 6 Essential Core Values:

Hard Work

WE BELIEVE that smart is not something you are, rather something you become... through hard work. Our notion of hard work manifests through a concept called "effective effort." We believe that once children understand that their academic achievement is based on how hard they work, then their potential can be fully realized.

Excellence

WE BELIEVE that our work as a school hinges on helping students to reach their maximum academic and socio-emotional potential. While our students are taught the value of education, they are also taught that through their active participation in scholarship and pursuit of academic excellence, they will be able to develop themselves and become acquainted with their own talents, skills, and abilities. In so doing, the expectation is that all students, in all things, strive to become their best selves. As a staff, our responsibility is to maintain fanatically high expectations for every aspect of our students' development.

Respect

WE BELIEVE that respect enables people to work together in a complimentary fashion. Therefore, when we are respected, we voluntarily give and gain the cooperation of others. Therefore, we encourage our students to value themselves, others, and their environments as a way to display respect while practicing social interactions that are worthy of being replicated and are also useful to a collegial school community.

Discipline

WE BELIEVE that creating a disciplined school community is critical to our success. By definition, to discipline means to instruct a person to follow a particular code of conduct, or to adhere to a certain set of rules and regulations. At Mays Prep, we adhere to this general belief, but we also stress the importance of having a disciplined mind and cultivating the value of discernment.

Determination

WE BELIEVE that determination is the state of persisting in spite of obstacles. At Mays Prep, the expectation is that every student, faculty member, and parents embrace the value that determination has on the eventual success of each of our students, both academically and otherwise. To never quit and to



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always meet challenges with confidence and fortitude is aligned to our mission and is the common thread that binds each of our core values.

Leadership

WE BELIEVE in the explicit teaching of leadership. We are preparing our students to be leaders - leaders at school, leaders in their communities, and leaders in any other capacity that they find themselves in life. As we support our students in the development of a disciplined mind and critical thinking skills, we believe that they will be better prepared to assume leadership beyond their days at Mays Prep.

Mascot: Knights

School Colors: Maroon and White

Calendar:

You will receive notices of upcoming school activities and events. A school calendar is available for you to view or print on the Benjamin E. Mays' website: www.maysprep.org

Conference Times:

Regular Conferences will be held October 28th and February 10th from 3:00-6:30 pm. If you wish to conference with your child's teacher please contact the teacher or the office to request a meeting. Teachers are available daily before and after school and during their planning time. It is best to have a pre-planned appointment time to enable the teacher to be prepared for you.

Transportation Policy:

Transportation will be provided by the school via Hammond's Transportation, a company which provides school buses. Students will be given pick-up and drop-off times prior to the start of the school year. Parents are required to make sure that the school maintains the most current contact information as stops are generated based on the addresses listed at the school. Parents of students in grades Kindergarten - Second are required to accompany their children at the bus stop. No kindergarten through second grade scholars will be allowed to exit the bus without an adult at the stop. Failure to ensure that an adult is at the bus stop to receive scholars will result in temporary suspension of bus privileges (students will be dropped off to school but the student's family will be responsible for picking their scholar up from school for at least 3 days not to exceed 5 days). Parents will receive a notice of when students will be allowed to resume roundtrip on the bus. Students who are continuously left on the bus will be taken to the police station where parents are required to pick up their students. Students may also lose privileges due to behavior. Any student written up by the driver, for excessive misbehavior will be removed from the bus. Any issues or concerns with transportation should be directed to



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the school at 504.373.6249. (For issues that may arise before or after school hours, parents should contact the principal, Mrs. Gentry directly at 504.402.2818.

DRESS CODE

Mays Prep enforces a Dress Code to create a sense of community and to ensure that students focus on learning instead of clothing. Clothing and accessories that could create disruptions or disorder or that do not conform to standards of health, safety, and cleanliness are not allowed. Parents must pick up children who are not properly dressed for school, bring the missing Dress Code items to the school, or authorize the student to return home to retrieve the necessary items as students may not be permitted to attend class without the proper uniform. Violation of the dress code may result in disciplinary consequences pursuant to the Code of Conduct. The Dress Code policy is as follows:

Students (Grades K-3)

The uniform for male students at Mays Prep shall include the following:

- School approved Mays Prep Polo Shirt
- School approved Khaki Pants (Regular straight leg khakis are permissible as well. These can be purchased from Soul Train Fashions)
 - (no jeans, no side pockets or loops, no bell-bottoms, no slit bottoms, no cell-phone pockets)
 - khaki shorts are permissible for grades K-3 only
- Plain, Solid, Black belt (Mandatory)
- ALL BLACK shoes

Students (Grade 4)

Girls:

- Plaid kilt skirt
- White short sleeved shirt with Peter Pan collar and Mays Prep Crest
- Plaid Cross Tie

Boys:

- White button down Oxford shirt with Mays Prep Crest
- Universal Khaki pants
- Maroon Neck Tie with White "M" embroidered on it



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Accessories:

Any accessories that students wear (barrettes, etc) MUST be either maroon, white, or clear colored.

Footwear Description:

Closed-toe black shoes, loafers or lace-up style (*no moccasins, no boots, no clogs, no bowling shoes, no shoes with stripes, no multi-colored or two-toned shoes*) (2 inch heel maximum)

Students cannot wear hats, jeans, jackets (except when outdoors), beepers, CD players, MP3 players, cell-phones, or any other clothing inappropriate for the workplace (excessively baggy pants, excessively tight pants, etc.)

Students cannot wear distracting accessories (excessive jewelry, tongue rings, upper ear earrings, nose rings, earrings for boys, tinted glasses, personalized belt buckles, inappropriate sneakers, inappropriate or distracting socks, temporary tattoos, etc.) STUDENTS MAY ONLY WEAR A BASIC WATCH but we maintain the right to collect the watch or any other clothing accessory that we deem inappropriate or disruptive to the school community. Shirts must be tucked in and shoelaces must be tied at all times. Students cannot alter their uniforms, including their gym uniforms, in any way (e.g. writing/drawing, ragging, slicing, cutting, etc.). No logos or insignias (e.g., Dickie's, Levi's, Polo, Gap, FUBU, Tommy Hilfiger, Fila, etc.) of any kind are allowed on shirts, sweaters, pants, ties, shorts, belts, or socks.

Positive Behavior Support

Benjamin E. Mays Preparatory School enforces the Positive Behavior Support program (PBS) as our discipline plan. It has a 3 components designed to help our students become effective and focused learners.

1. The effective instruction of school-wide expectations and behaviors. The students will be instructed on the desired behaviors and expectation at Benjamin E. Mays Preparatory School.
2. School-wide discipline plan for inappropriate behaviors. This involves a weekly behaviors sheet, consistent consequences for inappropriate behavior, and positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior.
3. Reward system for students. This allows students and classes to earn various incentives for appropriate behavior.



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Parents on Campus

Please go directly to the office to check in. This includes coming for any scheduled meetings or conferences during the regular school day. Do not expect to go to a teacher's classroom at any time. They are teaching throughout the day and can only conference during planning or specific conference times (see conference times). All parents must have a visitor's pass when on campus.

School Schedule

Students may be dropped off no earlier than 7:35am at the cafeteria only. Parents must make sure that an adult is on duty before leaving their child (ren) unattended. No student may be dropped off in the parking lot. Students should be escorted to the cafeteria.

Mays Prep may involve local agencies such as the police, the judicial system, and/or other authorities if a student is repeatedly late to school or absent from school.

A student who misses ten or more consecutive days of school without notifying Mays Prep or who enrolls in another school is subject to being unenrolled at Mays Prep. In addition, parents must withdraw students in writing.

Instruction begins at 8:15am. Any student arriving to school after 8:15am is tardy and should be checked in at the front office with an adult. School dismisses at 4:15, any child leaving before dismissal must be checked out in the office. Students cannot be checked out after 4:00 pm. Parents will have to wait until the start of dismissal.

Supplies: Please see the appendix.

Grading System

Grades will be recorded weekly. Students will receive report cards after the end of each 9-week period. Parents are required to attend report card conferences (please see specific dates in the conferences section).

GRADING SCALE:

- A= Excellent (92-100%)
- B= Above Average (83-91%)
- C= Satisfactory (74-82%)
- D= Below Average (65-73%)
- F= Unsatisfactory (Below 65%)



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Promotional Policy

PROMOTION, RETENTION, AND AWARD OF CREDIT

Curriculum Mastery

Promotion and course credit shall be based on mastery of the curriculum. Expectations and standards for promotion shall be established for each grade level.

Standards for Mastery

Mastery shall be determined as follows:

1. Course assignments and unit evaluation shall be used to determine student grades in a subject. An average of 70 or higher shall be considered a passing grade.
2. Mastery of the skills necessary for success at the next level shall be validated by interim assessments. Mastery of at least 70 percent of the objectives shall be required.

Grades K-5:

In grades K-5, promotion to the next grade level shall be based on an overall average of 70 on a scale of 100 based on course-level, grade-level expectations for all subject areas and a grade of 70 or above in language arts and mathematics. Additionally, students must show at least 4 steps growth on the STEP assessment.



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Knights Compact

All Mays Prep students, parents, teachers and staff sign this Knight's Compact to ensure clear expectations for all.

TEACHERS' COMMITMENT

- We will arrive every day by 7:30 A.M. (Mon. – Fri.)
- We will remain at MAYS PREP until 4:45 P.M. (Monday – Thursday) and 4:00 P.M. on Friday.
- We will come to MAYS PREP on appropriate Saturdays at 9:00 A.M. and remain until 12:30 P.M.
- We will always teach in the best way we know how, and we will do whatever it takes for our students to learn.
- We will always make ourselves available to address the concerns of students, parents, and colleagues.
- We will always protect the safety, interests and rights of all individuals in the classroom.

Failure to adhere to these commitments can lead to our removal from MAYS PREP.

SIGNATURE DATE: _____

PARENTS'/GUARDIANS' COMMITMENT

- We will make sure our child arrives every day by 7:45 A.M. (Mon. – Fri.), or boards a bus at the scheduled time.
- We will make arrangements for our child to remain at MAYS PREP until 4:15 P.M. (Monday – Thursday) and 3:00 pm on Friday
- We will make arrangements for our child to come to MAYS PREP on appropriate Saturdays at 9:00 A.M. and remain until 12:00 P.M.
- We will always help our child in the best way we know how, and we will do whatever it takes for him/her to learn. This also means that we will check our child's homework every night and initial homework logs, let him/her call the teacher if there is a problem with homework, and try to read with him/her every night.
- We will always make ourselves available to support our child's education at MAYS PREP. This also means that if our child is going to miss school, we will notify the teacher as soon as possible, and we will read carefully all the papers that the school sends home to us.
- We will allow our child to go on MAYS PREP field trips.
- We will make sure our child follows the MAYS PREP dress code.



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- We understand that our child must follow the MAYS PREP rules in order to protect the safety, interests, and rights of all individuals in the classroom. We, not the school, are responsible for the behavior and actions of our child.
 - We will always protect the safety, interests and rights of all individuals in the classroom. *Failure to adhere to these commitments can cause my child to lose various MAYS PREP privileges.*
- SIGNATURE DATE: _____

STUDENTS' COMMITMENT

- I will arrive at school every day by 7:45 A.M. and remain at MAYS PREP until 4:15 P.M. (Monday - Thursday) and 3:00 pm on Friday.
 - I will come to MAYS PREP on appropriate Saturdays at 9:00 A.M. and remain until 12:00 P.M.
 - I will always work, think, and behave in the best way I know how, and I will do whatever it takes for me and my fellow students to learn. This also means that I will complete all my homework every night; I will call my teachers if I have a problem with the homework and I will raise my hand and ask questions in class if I do not understand something.
 - I will always make myself available to parents, teachers, and any concerns they might have. If I make a bad choice, this means I will tell the truth to my teachers and accept responsibility for my actions.
 - I will always choose to behave in order to protect the safety, interests and rights of all individuals in the classroom. This also means that I will always listen to all my MAYS PREP teammates and give everyone my respect and support.
 - I will follow the MAYS PREP dress code.
 - I am responsible for my own choices and behavior, and I will follow the teachers' directions. *Failure to adhere to these commitments can cause me to lose MAYS PREP privileges.*
- SIGNATURE DATE: _____

Parental Involvement Policy:

Parent volunteers are extremely valuable components of the educational process. Acting as a parent volunteer is a great way to find out what goes on in your child's school. Because of the tremendous impact that parent volunteers can have on students, we believe that all parent volunteers should possess the following personal characteristics:

- You must like and enjoy working with children.
- You must feel that being a parent volunteer is an important position, worthy of your time and effort.
- You must be willing to work with many different students in a variety of situations.
- You must be able to accept the responsibility that goes along with your position.
- You must be of good and reliable character.



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At Mays Prep, we believe that parental involvement is essential to solidifying the partnership between school and home. As such, we are convinced that parental involvement is not only valuable but very necessary. We are committed to ensuring that "Every Student, College Bound". Going forward, Mays Prep will engage parents in the following way:

- Mays Prep will involve parents in the development and yearly review of the school's performance through surveys and feedback. The surveys will be used to analyze how we can best serve families. they will also be used to make revisions to policies in the Student & Family Handbook
- We will provide the planning and support necessary to implement effective parental involvement by providing opportunities for parents to be actively involved in their child's education through a variety of activities and strategies to include:

___ Classroom

- ___ Room Parent
- ___ Teacher helper
- ___ Make copies
- ___ Translator

___ Mentoring

- ___ Career day speaker
- ___ Coaching
- ___ Student support

___ Leadership

- ___ Committee Leader
- ___ School Advocate
- ___ Arrange for community and business members to speak at the school

___ Communications

- ___ Social networking

___ Other _____

___ Time/Service

- ___ Office
- ___ Field trips
- ___ Final Exam
- ___ Cooking
- ___ Art and Crafts
- ___ Stuffing envelopes
- ___ Mailings
- ___ Donations
- ___ Write newsletter
- ___ Provide transportation for other parents/kids
- ___ Repair/Carpentry work
- ___ Other _____

___ Planning/Coordinating

- ___ Event Committees (outside PTCO)

___ PTCO

- ___ Fundraising
- ___ Family/school event planning
- ___ Officer

- Mays Prep will provide materials and training to help parents work with their child to improve their child's achievement by offering such programs and activities as:
 - iLEAP/LEAP Informational Meetings
 - Grade Level Parent Nights
 - Family Literacy, Math and Science Nights
 - Urban League Parent Advocacy Training



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- Mays Prep along with Urban League will provide professional development for faculty and staff in communicating effectively with parents. Topics to be addressed:
 - communicating effectively with parents
 - positive use of phone logs in communicating with parents
 - positive communication strategies
 - positive behavior support
 - 3-tier model for intervention

As part of our parental involvement program you may be asked to participate in a parent focus group, answer surveys or participate in school activities as a participant or helper. Please consider helping your school become the best it can be. we need your assistance to make it work!