



# PIRE SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY

## Student Handbook 2021-2022

860 US HIGHWAY 1 SUITE 212 NORTH PALM BEACH, FL 33408  
Phone: 305-849-4831



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## Message from the Principal...

Life takes so many turns for some of us and often leads to falling behind on our plans.

When this happens, your next few decisions are crucial and will make an everlasting impression on your life. Often, without a high school diploma, many doors are closed, and your future can look very bleak, and you feel frustrated. Additionally, jobs that you know you could do are often not available to you because you are missing a High School Diploma. It is a never-ending phase of dead-end jobs and long hours.

Sometimes you feel that you are always going to be struggling just to go ahead. While you know what you need to get out of this problem, you just do not have time to make it happen. Here, at **Pire Sunshine State Academy**, we understand your dilemma, you cannot leave your job to go to school, but you need more schooling to get out of your job.

**Pire Sunshine State Academy** programs can help you even if you have been out of school for a long time or feel that you are not a school person. We can help you begin your journey.

Sincerely,  
*Krystal Lopez*  
Principal



## Admission to Pire Sunshine State Academy

Before you can begin your academic career with Pire Sunshine State Academy, you must be able to provide information and documents to our admissions department. You cannot begin classes unless you receive a “letter of admissions” that clears your paperwork. We advise you to work closely with our admissions people to ensure your acceptance to our school. Missing documentation will result in your admission being denied or delayed.

1. Thoroughly complete the Online Registration Form
2. Take a completed School Records Release Form to the student's previous school and request that a copy of all the student's high school records be sent to Pire Sunshine State Academy as soon as possible.
3. Pire Sunshine State Academy will review the above application materials and continue to guide the potential student and make requests for other documents until the applicant's file is complete.
4. Upon completion of all admissions documents, the students’ transcripts will undergo a transcript evaluation process. This will determine the students Individualized Evaluation Program, Course Placements and Financial Commitment to complete their graduation requirements.
5. The student will then receive a letter of Admission which will include a notice of tuition due.

## School Policies

### Refund Policy

To receive a 100% refund of the refundable fees, students must drop from a course or all courses before the last day of the Drop/Add period as listed in the credit class schedule.

If you withdraw from a class after the Add/Drop period but before the withdrawal deadline, you will receive a grade of "W" and will not be entitled to a refund of fees. If you withdraw from a course after the withdrawal deadline, you will be issued a grade of "W", and a refund will not be granted.

If you have received financial aid, or if your fees were paid by an approved



agency, you might be entitled to a refund after proper credits are first issued to the awarding agency. Refund policies are established by and subject to change by the Legislature of the State of Florida. For refund purposes, the first day of classes is the one designated "Classes Begin" as published in the class schedule and does not refer to the first scheduled class day for any student.

## Withdrawal

Before withdrawing from a course or a program, a student should confer with an Academic Advisor and the Business Office to discuss the process for proper withdrawal. Failure to follow these procedures may result in a failing grade in the course. Students who follow the policy to withdraw will receive a grade of "W" (withdrawn).

## Plagiarism and Dishonesty Policy

Pire Sunshine State Academy considers academic honesty to be one of its highest values. Students are expected to be the sole authors of their work. Use of another person's work or ideas must be accompanied by specific citations and references.

On joining the school's academic community, students are expected to embrace the tenets of liberal learning – critical thinking, intellectual exploration, and academic honesty. Academic dishonesty, cheating, plagiarism, and other violations of academic integrity are causes for suspension or expulsion from the school.

Each incident will be reported in writing from the instructor or the administration, and may result in the following sanctions:

- **First time:** 10 weeks suspension
- **Second Time:** Dismissal from the school

The administration office maintains a database of all offenses, including plagiarism, and a file of all charges.

## Academic Dishonesty Appeals Procedures

**Step 1:** Within 10 days following notification of action for academic dishonesty, a student who wishes to appeal must first contact the faculty member of the class in which the incident occurred. The student should explain their reasoning for



reconsideration. If the faculty member and the student agree to a resolution, the faculty member notifies the administration.

**Step 2:** If the problem has not been resolved and the student wishes to pursue the appeal, the student must complete and send the Academic Appeal Form to the Dean's office. The Dean will review the documentation and share his decision with the student and faculty.

## Failing a Course

If you fail a course, it will be necessary to take the course again and attempt a passing grade. The school will attempt to help you to understand what you need to pass the class; however, it cannot guarantee a passing grade. In the event you fail a course, it will be your responsibility to pay for the class again.

## Grade Appeals Procedures

A student who alleges unfair grading practice for an assignment or course must first communicate with the faculty member of the class within 10 days of grades being posted online. The burden of proof is on the student and the student shall provide evidence that unfair grading practice occurred. If the faculty member and the student agree to a resolution, the faculty member corrects the grade or the grade stands. If the problem has not been resolved and the student wishes to continue with an appeal, the student will send the Academic Appeal Form to the Dean's Office within 10 days of the decision by the faculty member. The dean will review the student's appeal, check with the teacher, and make a ruling.

## Academic Progress

It is the expectation of the school and responsibility of the student to ensure they organize their time and make weekly academic progress in each of their courses.

## Graduation and Commencement

Only students who have satisfactorily completed all academic and financial requirements in the program will be considered for graduation. The graduation date on a student's diploma is always the date that the school approves his or her graduation.



## Students Records Policy

For Pire Sunshine State Academy be in accordance with state statutes and The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), we will not release information concerning our students. We maintain student records in our administrative offices located at our listed address in North Palm Beach.

Exceptions to the release of records, grades, or status are made with written permission from the student's parents/guardians if a student is under 18 years of age or with the written permission from a student if the student is 18 years of age or older.

## Privacy Policy

Pire Sunshine State Academy will never release personal student information to third parties without the student's and/or parent's written consent.

Pire Sunshine State Academy will always maintain a policy of not selling its mailing lists of current or prospective students.

## Grade Equivalents Policy

### Grading Criteria

Percent of CGPA	Weight of Grades			
<b>9<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>				
25%	Assignments and Projects	Participation	Course Assessments	Final Course Assessments
	25%	25%	20%	30
<b>10<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>				
25%	Assignments and Projects	Participation	Course Assessments	Final Course Assessments
	25%	25%	20%	30
<b>11<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>				
25%	Assignments and Projects	Participation	Course Assessments	Final Course Assessments
	25%	25%	20%	30
<b>12<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>				
25%	Assignments and Projects	Participation	Course Assessments	Final Course Assessments
	25%	25%	25%	25%



## Grade Equivalency

Letter Grade	GPA	Meaning
A	4.0	Excellent
A-	3.7	
B+	3.3	
B	3.0	Above Average
B-	2.7	
C+	2.3	
C	2.00	Average
C-	1.7	Below Average
D+	1.3	Risk of Failing
D	1.00	
D-	0.7	
F	0.0	Failed

*\*Student must score over a 65 to be considered passing.*

*\*Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) : To maintain good academic standing, the following minimum apply 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>: 2.00 CGPA*

## Communicating with The School

On occasion it will be necessary to speak with a representative of the school. If your questions are related to your class, then we encourage you to reach out directly to your teacher. However, if the matter is related to academic, counseling, finance or you just want to ask a question, we encourage you to call our office or make an appointment.

Pire Sunshine State Academy  
860 US Highway 1  
Suite 212 North Palm Beach, FL 33408



## Individualized Academic Plan



Our students enjoy the benefits of learning through our personally prescribed academic plan. Upon admission, the student receives an Individual Academic Plan (IAP). This plan outlines what courses were accepted and transferred and what courses they will need to complete to graduate with Pire Sunshine State Academy.

Once you have received admissions, your transcript record begins. This record is the most important part of documenting your progress. It is also the document an Academy will want to see upon application to their school.

## Our Curriculum and Resources

### Curriculum

Pier Sunshine State Academy possesses a centrally managed, Common Core Standards based curriculum with objectives and outcomes that are carefully defined. Individual instructors then have the responsibility to expand and enhance the basic curriculum by augmenting it with current resources and practices. The curriculum is under continual content and quality review.

### Academic Classes

Courses at Pier Sunshine State Academy are offered in Math, Science, Literature, Composition and Social Studies. Additionally, we offer special Career courses in Preparatory Business and Computer Science. However, students are still required to complete general education requirements that are described in greater detail in the programs section.

### School E-Library

To accommodate student and faculty needs, Pire Sunshine State Academy offers its library services online. This online distribution of information is well suited to the needs of today's "knowledge workers" and offers a functional version of the types of information systems our students and faculty will be expected to use throughout their careers.



## Getting Your Classes Started

The academy is in session throughout the year, with the exception of the holidays listed on the Catalog in the Calendar section.

Delivery of classes through the Pire Sunshine State Academy's LMS requires that students attend their sessions and discussions. Attendance is mandatory and students are expected to log in to their classes at least three times a week to be considered in attendance.

Special instructional activities may be scheduled at specific times convenient to both students and faculty members. Students who do not regularly attend any of their registered classes during the term, will be administratively withdrawn from the Academy and placed on probation or dismissed.

### METHOD OF INSTRUCTION

#### ONLINE DELIVERY

Once a student is registered, their only necessary equipment is a personal computer with internet access, a student can access the eLearning platform from anywhere in the world.

To maintain privacy and security, each student is provided with a **username** and **password** which allows them to reach their own **personal page** within the **Learning Management System**.

When shifting from classroom instruction to online instruction the instructional design and the role of the parties involved change. However, it is important to maintain that the student will have a space to reflect and acquire knowledge from the materials, the interaction with the instructor and the learning community. The online platform will allow these interactions to be more flexible regarding time and space, yet the outcome should be similar or better. It is important to outline the following criteria:

1. The teacher has knowledge in online instructional technology so that they can not only easily use it to teach students but also help



students who have any issues.

2. The student earns flexibility in distance and time. Based on the course syllabus, the student can plan and organize his/her learning plan for the subject.
3. The online process opens many avenues for study; self-study takes an enhanced role. Also, they can have interactions with the teacher and the rest of the students through forums, chats, web-conferencing and such.
4. The student follows the course agenda and works guided by the teacher's advice. Students are accountable for semester work.

## LEARNING PLATFORM

Our platform replaces the classroom and provide the student with the tools to engage the learning process in an enjoyable, easy to use and efficient environment. The platform has been standardized to familiarize the student with the learning process and avoid confusion. Some of the elements contained in the platform are:

- **Course Syllabus:** Outlines the path to the class.
- **Chats:** Allows for the student to interact with other students and the teacher.
- **Forums:** This asynchronous tool allows the class participants to create threads of information that will be available throughout the class. Great tools for studying down the road.
- **Calendar:** Reminds the students how the class has advanced and reminds them of tasks, quizzes, or exams ahead.
- **Document load zone:** Throughout the course the student will have places to load assignments in a clear and convenient way.

## COURSE CONTENT

Once the students log in their personal page, and open their course, they can see different web tools they can use to study. The main one they will use is the documents & links tab which contains their downloadable syllabus, lectures, audio or video streams and any other relevant learning materials.



Students will follow their syllabus to organize their weekly studies and will use the assignments tab to review deadlines, download exams, submit homework, case studies, or projects and upload their work.

Special instructional activities may be scheduled at specific times convenient to both students and faculty members, in which case the announcement tab is the tool used by the faculty to give directions. If a student has a question related to the course, they can directly post it in the discussion posts where both the teacher and fellow students can respond so that everyone benefits from the answer. If a student has a question not related to the course, they can directly email their teacher through the address given in the syllabus, Skype-chat or call them as disclosed in the syllabus.

## EVALUATIONS

The use of forums, chats, and other communication tools gives instructors the opportunity to provide continuing evaluation and feedback to students as they prepare their formal evaluations.

Formal evaluations are implemented using assignments or quizzes. For assignments, the student submits a text file; the instructor corrects it, gives feedback, and assigns a grade. Quizzes are corrected automatically, and the grading is instantaneous.

All exams are administered through our password protected online platform. Students are expected to adhere to the timeline and retake policies provided by the course teacher in the course syllabus. Any retakes are at the discretion of the teacher.

Faculty members will have their access online to post assignments and exams. Faculty will have between 48 hours to post grades for assignments during the term and 5 days to post grades for finals electronically.

## RESPONSE TIME

When a student sends a message with a question, or posts a message in a forum, the instructor is expected to respond within 24 hours during weekdays, and 48 hours during the weekends. The same response time is used for evaluations that require the instructor's review, grading, and feedback.

## ONLINE COMMUNICATION

It is essential that online students communicate with their instructors frequently.



Students with questions must write emails to their instructors asking the many questions they may have. They may request additional chat sessions in order to clarify information. The instructor will schedule a time to meet with you in a chat room, or by phone, or in person at the campus location in North Palm Beach, Florida. Students should expect that each communication will be followed up with a written summary of the discussion generated by the instructor. Such communications will be provided to the student by email.

## Preparing for Graduation

It is important that you understand that graduation is not automatic. You must continue to check your progress and compare your courses with your ILP to make sure you are on schedule. It is your responsibility to make sure you reschedule classes you failed, withdrew, or did not finish.



In your Catalog is a list of the current graduation requirements for Pire Sunshine State Academy. Most students are in the 24-credit program unless it is specifically noted on your ILP.



## Next Steps

### Continuing Your Education

One of the lessons we have learned in this economy is that we must continue to develop our talents for us to remain valuable in the workforce. Whether you are considering going directly into the workforce or are thinking of upgrading to your college degree, Pier Sunshine State Academy can help.

Through our courses we can help you obtain the necessary skills needed to prep for college entry exams or specific career certifications. We believe our courses contain rigor and relevance and will better prepare you for your next move.

If you desire to continue to college, upon confirmation of graduation, your advisor can help you fill out your college application.

**IMPORTANT: Pire Sunshine State Academy does not guarantee acceptance into any College or University. Please check with your institution before applying to Pire Sunshine State Academy, acceptance of transfer credentials is subject to the policies of the receiving institutions.**

**This handbook is designed with the student in mind. It will help you to navigate our educational platform as well as give you the information you need to succeed in our school. Please keep it handy for future reference.**



THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING

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