



# Key West High School

WELCOME TO THE  
**2023-2024**  
SCHOOL YEAR

Principal  
Rebecca Palomino  
Assistant Principal  
David Perkins  
Assistant Principal  
Yanelys Ballard  
Assistant Principal  
Ja-Ronika Veldheer

## MISSION STATEMENT

*To empower all students to maximize their potential and prepare them with the skills and experiences necessary to be college or career ready and to develop those character traits that will enable them to be productive members of society.*

*Conch Pride Rooted in a Tradition of Excellence!*

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the 2023-2024 School Year! We are excited to welcome you all to a year of learning, growing, and continuing our commitment to excellence! I am incredibly elated and overcome with Conch Pride to return to my alma mater as your principal. I am committed to continuing the embracing culture and traditions of Key West High School that make our school community the absolute best place to learn and grow! The administrative team would like to welcome Assistant Principal Ja-Ronika Veldheer to the Conch Community.

This year we will continue to build and strengthen our relationships amongst ourselves as a team along with our students, families, and community. Our adage, Conch PRIDE, is **P**erseverance, **R**espect, **I**ntegrity, **D**edication, and **E**xcellence; lessons and expectations that are embedded in all that we do. We will have pride in all that we accomplish this year by holding all students to high expectations, providing all students with a rigorous education, closing achievement gaps, and preparing all students for college and career readiness and success. Key West High School provides exceptional traditions in academics, athletics, activities, and services. Our students will graduate from Key West High School ready for the competitive global society and with a lifelong sense of Conch Pride.

With more options today than ever for education, we will continue to show the community that Key West High School, the flagship school since 1906, continues to be the best place for learning for all students!

**Please take a few moments to read the below important information as it will help get you started and throughout the year.**

**ORIENTATION** for *New Students/Freshmen* will be **Wednesday, August 9<sup>th</sup> at 9 a.m.** in the auditorium. Information on academics, activities, athletics and life in our Conch Community will be shared. Take time to explore campus, meet teachers, and peer mentors. School Counselors will be available to address any schedule concerns.

Conch Pride Rooted in a Tradition of Excellence!

**STUDENT HANDBOOK** Available on our school website [www.keysschools.com/kwhs](http://www.keysschools.com/kwhs). The handbook includes school/district policies, behavior and academic expectations as well as other important information that students and parents are responsible for knowing. Much of the information below is excerpted from the handbook, however, you should read/review the handbook in its entirety and refer to it throughout the year as it is a valuable resource that will help both students and parents prepare for a successful year at KWHS.

**SCHEDULES** It is our priority to ensure students have the correct courses with a complete schedule; teacher/period requests are *not* a priority. Things to Look For: complete schedule, four core academic courses (English, Math, Science, History), courses meeting graduation requirements, not scheduled in a class you have already taken, one class per period, etc. Elective requests will be addressed the first two weeks of school by school counselors.

**9<sup>th</sup> Grade** – Linda Missert, ext. 54316

**11<sup>th</sup> Grade** – Caitlin Nicklaus, ext. 54308

**10<sup>th</sup> Grade** – Jennifer Bassett, ext.54313

**12<sup>th</sup> Grade** – Lindsay Moore, ext. 54402

**Schedule Corrections** can be addressed by:

1.) **Submitting an Online Request Form**

Scan QR Code to fill out form. You will receive an email once your request has been addressed. The form will be live August 1<sup>st</sup>- 9<sup>th</sup>.



2.) **Meet with a School Counselor**

Scan the QR Code to schedule an appointment. Walk-Ins Welcome from 9-11 a.m. & 1-3 p.m on the following days:

- Monday, August 7<sup>th</sup> – Seniors
- Tuesday, August 8<sup>th</sup> – Juniors & Sophomores
- Wednesday, August 9<sup>th</sup> - Freshmen



**SCHOOL BEGINS Thursday, August 10<sup>th</sup>**, with classes starting at **7:30 a.m.** and ending at **2:30 p.m.** Show your Conch Pride by wearing your class spirit colors:

**SENIORS** (Crimson Red), **JUNIORS** (Black), **SOPHOMORES** (Grey) & **FRESHMEN** (White)  
*Go Conchs!*

**TRANSPORTATION** Bus Schedules are available on the district website under the transportation department. Check routes occasionally for changes/updates. Arrival times may vary 5-10 minutes.

**BREAKFAST / LUNCH** Breakfast = \$1.75 @ 7:00-7:30 & Lunch = \$2.85 @ 11:11-11:46 a.m. / 12:05-12:40 p.m. Seniors/Juniors could be eligible for off campus lunch. To apply for off campus lunch privileges visit <https://form.jotform.com/220113821949150>. Food may not be delivered or brought back to campus. Only students with a valid lunch pass are allowed to leave campus for lunch.

- Apply for **Free/Reduced Meals** at <https://frapps.horizonsolana.com/welcome>.
- Sign up for **Online Payment of Meals** at [www.mypaymentsplus.com/welcome](http://www.mypaymentsplus.com/welcome).

**SAFETY / SECURITY** The safety of our students and staff are our primary concern. We now have two School Resource Officers (SRO) on site full time. Our single point of entry is the front gate. **Students and Staff must have their IDs on and all visitors must check in through the front office.** **\*\*New student IDs will be issued on Picture Day August 14<sup>th</sup>\*\*** Safety tips, drills, and information will be provided regularly. We encourage See Something, Say Something and urge all to utilize our Text Tips reporting system for anything that is a possible safety issue by texting (305) 432-3311. We also encourage parents to verify their phone number and email address in Focus Parent Portal to ensure they get immediate information if there is a safety/threatening situation.

**ATTENDANCE MATTERS** Missing 10% (average 2 days/month) can drastically affect a student's academic success. Please refer to the Student Handbook for more information regarding the attendance policy (i.e., what deems an absence as excused or unexcused, tardy policy, truancy intervention procedures, driver's license suspensions, etc.). Trips/Vacations are not considered excused absences, please plan accordingly and refer to the MCSD 2023-2024 Calendar on the district website at [www.keysschools.com](http://www.keysschools.com) for holidays. Written notes for excused absences must be submitted within 2 days. Students absent more than 9 times a semester must pass the semester exam to earn credit for the course. Students not in class by the sound of the bell will be considered tardy and will receive a 15 min afterschool detention with the teacher.

**CODE of CONDUCT** The iBeLieve Monroe County School District Behavioral Expectations outline the roles of students, teachers, parents, administrators, and district-wide staff with regards to Being Safe, Responsible, Respectful, Ready to Learn, and Empowered. The Discipline Section of the Student Handbook details discipline rules and consequences. Violations may result in detentions, Saturday School, In School Suspensions, Out of School Suspension, and/or Restorative Justice. Violations that will result in OSS and law enforcement involvement include vaping on school grounds, possession of alcohol/tobacco/drugs/paraphernalia, fighting, or weapons (including items simulating a weapon).

**DRESS CODE / CODE of APPEARANCE** To promote the decorum of an educational atmosphere focusing on academic success, clothing must not be revealing or provocative, as per policy. The Dress Code can be found in its entirety in the Student Handbook found on the school website, however, please note the following: sleeves are required on all tops (no exposed undergarments); shirts must extend over the waistline (no bare midriff); shorts/pants must be worn at the waist (no exposed undergarments); shorts/dresses/skirts must be at hands length; clothing may not advertise/encourage the use of drugs, tobacco, or alcohol; and students may not wear items that could be used as a weapon (i.e., chains, spikes, etc.).

**ELECTRONICS** Electronics such as cellphones and headphones are popular; however, the policy at school will be that **NO ELECTRONICS MAY BE VISIBLE UPON ENTERING CLASS.** No full ear covering headphones are allowed. See full information in our handbook. Teachers may utilize electronics as a technological tool for lessons at times and our Bring Your Own Device policy indicates electronics are only taken out at the teachers' request (see handbook). Students are responsible for monitoring their own electronics. They are also expected to follow the Acceptable Use Policy regarding student access to network communications. Violation of policies may result in detention or the item being held in teacher lock up during class.

**STUDENT COMMUNICATION** Student communication occurs using several methods including verbal announcements daily during third period and posted announcements on the designated board outside of the office. KWHS uses social media and the school website for overall information. Take advantage and keep up with the news and information using the avenues of communication. Use of student planners is encouraged to keep up with project deadlines, assignments and activities.

**PARENT COMMUNICATION** Communication with parents is the key to a student's success. Please help us keep you informed by completing the registration form and packets that are sent home the first day. Be sure to include your email address to receive the weekly newsletters. Visit our website at <https://www.keysschools.com/kwhs> for the latest in school news. In addition to the website and weekly newsletters, we utilize the marquee, announcement board at school, quarterly information letters, Facebook (Key West High School Athletics and Activities), Instagram KWHS\_news, Twitter KWHS\_news , phone calls, BlackBoard messages and an electronic gradebook, FOCUS.

**SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL** SAC meets the first Tuesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. in the library. The role of SAC is to participate in the School Improvement plan, provide input on school activities and procedures and provide a forum for parents to share and receive information. Please consider being a part of this valuable parent organization!

**ACADEMIC MONITORING** Monitoring as well as attendance can be done with FOCUS, our electronic grade book. All parents should be registered for a FOCUS Parent Portal Account to view grades, progress reports, report cards, and attendance; register for an account at <https://monroe.focusschoolsoftware.com/focus/auth/>. Grades are put in weekly. Progress reports are available in FOCUS Parent/Student Portal at the mid-nine week point. Student report cards will be available in FOCUS Parent/Student Portal within 10 days after the end of each grading period. Parents may contact teachers directly through email or a phone call with questions or concerns. Information regarding graduation requirements and curriculum expectations will be delivered at orientations and via our communication methods. Please note that EOC courses do not earn semester credit as they are yearlong courses.

**COLLEGE PREPARATION** Our CAPS counselor, Lydia Estenoz at ext. 54307, and our school counselors can assist with college applications and scholarship information throughout the year, so please utilize their services. SAT/ACT registration can be done on-line, however, counselors are available to help. Transcripts cost is \$1.00. Ms. Faatuai or Ms. Darnall in the office can assist with transcript requests.

**TESTING** has become a large part of Florida students' academic career and there are many tests that students must take. Please refer to the Master Calendar on our school website for progress monitoring fall, winter, & spring assessments, PSAT/SAT/ACT School Days, Midterms, Finals, Senior Final Exams, etc. Waivers for mid-terms and finals will be given only on an emergency basis. Please plan vacations accordingly.

**ATHLETICS** Athletic Seminar for all fall athletes is August 17<sup>th</sup> @ 6 pm in the Auditorium. Prior to the start of a sport's season, and prior to participating in any physical

activity (including practice), athletes must complete all requirements and receive a Clearance Card. Requirements can be found/uploaded on [www.AthleticClearance.com](http://www.AthleticClearance.com) and include a physical, online course certificates, consent for medical treatment form, and confirmation message. The required online courses can be found at [www.nfhslearn.com/courses](http://www.nfhslearn.com/courses) and include Concussion for Students, Heat Illness Prevention, and Sudden Cardiac Arrest. Contact Athletic Director Justin Martin at ext. 54406 with questions. There will be Athletic Seminars for parents and ALL students that plan to participate in any sport throughout the year. Please check our Athletics page on our school website for more information.

**ACTIVITIES** There is something for everyone at KWHHS! School events, performing groups, clubs and the opportunities for service and fun with peers are extensive. A list of Clubs/Activities are available on the school website and look for announcements as clubs get underway after Labor Day. Stacy Saunders is our Student Activities director and can be reached at ext. 54391.

**PHOTO RELEASE** Students are photographed for the yearbook, news releases, and publications, including social media throughout the year. If this is not acceptable, please be sure to notify the office at the start of the school year by emailing [Stacy.Saunders@keysschools.com](mailto:Stacy.Saunders@keysschools.com) identifying your student and stating you do not want them photographed in school activities or for the yearbook.

**MEDICATIONS** All prescription medications need to be registered with and administered by the school nurse in the front office. Students are not permitted to carry prescription medications with them throughout the school day. Nurse Jennifer Searcy can be reached at ext. 54311.

**DEBT LIST** Please check to be sure a student is cleared of owing fees or books; the debt list is available in the front office. Students on the debt list will not be able to participate in formal athletics or performing groups, receive a lunch pass or have any other privileges until cleared.

**STUDENT SERVICES & SUPPORT** Administration is here to assist students, parents, and staff in any way. Our door is open, you may call for an appointment, or email with issues or suggestions. Please refer to our Organizational Chart on the school website and utilize all that we have to offer. Our student service team is made up of school counselors, social workers, community-based counselors, athletic director, activities director, instructional coaches, media specialist, parent educator, nurses, and more. Our exceptional teachers provide quality instruction and assistance, their contact information is located in the staff directory on our website.

I am very proud of the culture for learning at Key West High School and the entire staff that supports our amazing students. We are looking forward to working with you and your child as we reengage ALL students and accelerate their learning and overall wellbeing.

Sincerely,



Rebecca Palomino  
Principal