

# STUDENT & FAMILY HANDBOOK 2025-26



**MARGARITA MUÑIZ ACADEMY**

Living and Learning in Two Languages



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## OUR MISSION

The Margarita Muñiz Academy is dedicated to full cultural and linguistic fluency in Spanish and English for all its students. Through deep partnerships with families and community, the school prepares students for higher education, careers, and civic leadership.

The Muñiz Academy Scholar IS...

- Ready to learn and stretch!
- Willing to be a positive leader.
- Is Responsible and Compassionate
- Cares about our community and beyond!

## OUR HISTORY AS A GROWING COMMUNITY

Margarita Muñiz was a steadfast advocate of bilingual education, as well as the many stories of the students who walk the halls of the school that opened in her name in 2012.

Margarita Muñiz was a leading educator in Boston Public Schools for 39 years starting as an ESL teacher. Margarita was the principal of the Rafael Hernández School, the premier K-8 Dual Language School in Massachusetts for 30 years.

We continue her legacy of building a bilingual community that honors our cultures, languages, and experiences with our students as advocates and leaders.

Margarita came to America at the age of eleven without her parents, and throughout college it was her dream to work as an educator and make a difference in the lives of children for whom English was a second language. Margarita began her career with the Boston Public Schools in 1972 as an English as a Second Language teacher in the building that is now Muñiz Academy! Her classroom was Room 319. Later, she served as a District Coordinator of Bilingual Education in the Multicultural Office. In 1981, she became the Acting Principal of the Hernández School and the permanent Principal in 1983.

Margarita received several awards in recognition of her many contributions as a bilingual educator and leader in Massachusetts. Among her many recognitions, she was Boston Public Schools Principal of the Year in 2009, a Barr Foundation Fellow class of 2007, and named one of the 100 Outstanding Women in Massachusetts in 2003. In 2010, she was honored for her contributions and leadership by Governor Patrick as the State House recognized Hispanic educators in Massachusetts.

In 2010, a group was formed to develop Margarita Muñiz Academy. Our first Head of School, Dr. Dania Vázquez worked with the ‘founding mothers’ of our school to develop a proposal and establish our school. In November, 2011, the Boston School Committee unanimously approved the proposal establishing Muñiz Academy to open its doors September, 2012. In the spring of 2023, the district included Muñiz Academy as one of the high schools to expand and include 7th and 8th grades.

Muñiz Academy is designed to offer college and career preparation for all our students with courses taught in both Spanish and English. Everyone has an English Class and a Spanish Class every day! Math, Science and Arts Classes are taught using both languages. Our community embraces what students bring as much as it strives to deepen and enrich student skills and knowledge in both language and subject matter. We live and learn in two languages every day!

## THE MUÑIZ ACADEMY SCHOLARS

### Guided by Our Values - RAICES and THE QUALITIES OF THE SCHOLAR

RAICES – Habits of the Muñiz Scholars

Responsibility, Advocacy, Integrity, Compassion, Excellence, and Stretch (going beyond).

Throughout all of their experiences at Muñiz Academy, students are expected to develop RAICES, the essential habits as citizen scholars. We believe these habits are essential to becoming fully prepared and well-rounded citizens and scholars at Muñiz Academy and beyond.

RAICES...What do these look like, sound like, and feel like everyday?

- I arrive to class on time
- I arrive ready to learn
- I am prepared to work and have my materials for learning.
- I take pride as a Muñiz student!
- I am comfortable seeking support.
- I am willing to go beyond the required assignments.

*We live in community and we bring our best self every day!*

*We matter as individuals and we care about each other!*

## QUALITIES OF THE MUÑIZ SCHOLAR

Every Muñiz student demonstrates the following key Qualities of a Scholar through actively engaging in learning in every academic, arts, and wellness experience. Students must demonstrate these Qualities in our Zona de Logros exhibitions of work for every class.

### Investigate and Think Critically

I seek out valid sources, analyze evidence, and make decisions grounded in sound reasoning.

### Build Cultural Competence

I explore my own worldview and interact appropriately with people across cultures.

### Collaborate

I work with diverse teams and contribute appropriately to the effort and final product.

### Communicate

I read, write, listen, and speak effectively for a variety of purposes in both English and Spanish.

### Demonstrate Creativity

I generate original ideas and pieces of work.

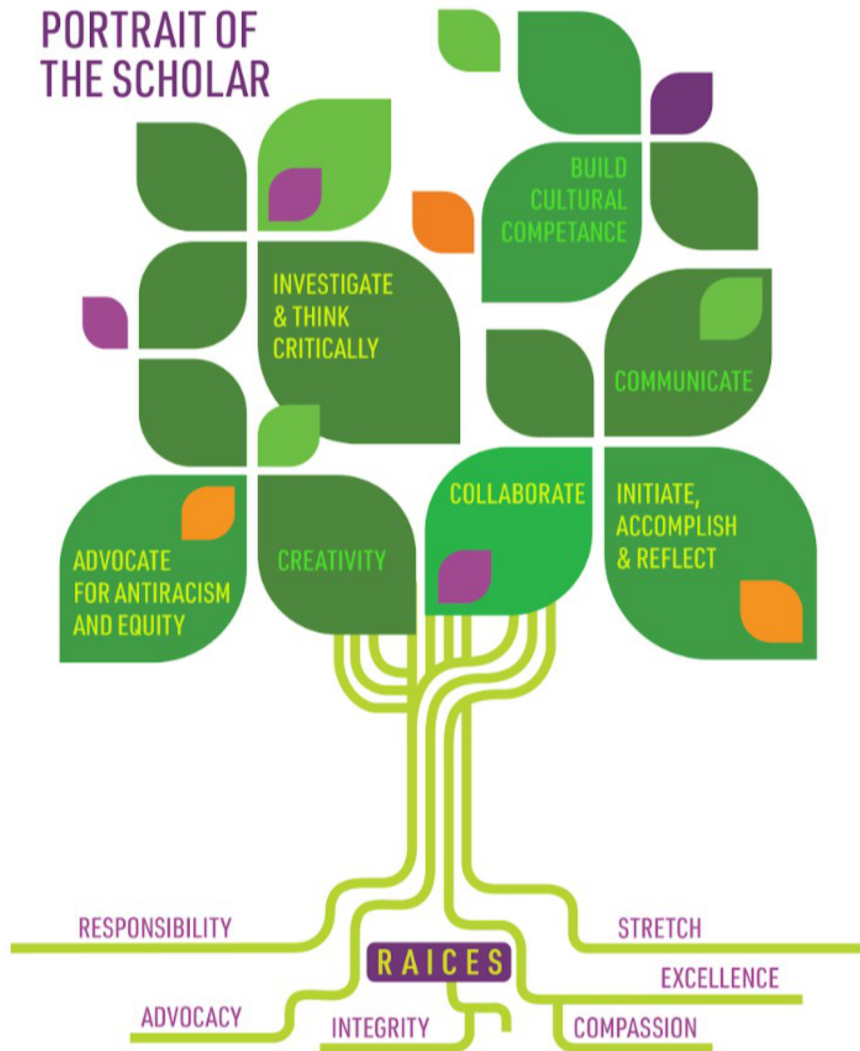
### Initiate, Accomplish, Reflect

I persist in bringing tasks and projects to completion.

### Advocate for Anti Racism and Equity

I participate responsibly and courageously in a democratic society to challenge injustices for all.

## PORTRAIT OF THE SCHOLAR



## CREW – YOUR CREW IS YOUR TEAM!

### Your Crew Leader is Your Guide for the Year!

We believe that an important element in every student's success is knowing each other well as learners and members of the community. Crew is designed to ensure that every student has a connection to one adult who will mentor and guide each student throughout the year.

### CREW Highlights:

- Crews focus on character and social support (RAICES, community service, team building) as well as on academic support (study skills, reflecting on grades).
- Crew leaders are the primary contact with families; they contact families at least 1-2 nights/month.
- The Crew Adviser may advocate on student's behalf and help students learn how to effectively advocate for what they need. In order to pass Advisory, students need to:
  - Attend regularly.
  - Participate in community service projects.
  - Participate in college visit exploration day.
  - Participate in their narrative conferences with their parent/caretaker and adviser.
  - Complete Zona de Logros

### Wellness

We believe in paying attention to the whole student...your mind and spirit! Sports and physical fitness are important. Empowering you as a person is also important. We make sure that we also give students space when they need support for challenging situations or to explore who you are and deepen your identity. Students can access different people who will also support you: our School Social Worker, our School Counselors, Family Liaisons, Athletic Coaches and our Nurse.

### College and Career Readiness for All Muñiz Academy Students

College and Career Readiness at the Muñiz means that all students establish an empowered identity to envision a future for themselves, develop the academic and professional skills to succeed after high school, and build the knowledge to create and revise their own post-secondary plans, in short - identity, skills, and knowledge.

## Muñiz Academy Scholarships

Muñiz Academy students are eligible for three different scholarships to those seniors following a path to college and universities. The Camayd Scholarship is awarded to seniors who demonstrate exceptional work and progress in academics, leadership, language learning and the arts. Our Trailblazer Scholarship is awarded to eligible seniors who have been awarded a partial scholarship from their college or university. The Trailblazer Scholarships closes the gap in scholarships and financial aid for a full four years as long as the student is attending and in good standing with their grades. We have a special scholarship for seniors who are accepted to Boston University to support their tuition and college expenses.

## Path to Graduation

**Electives COUNT! Students must take and pass electives in order to graduate!**

Required CORE COURSES 4 Years – Take and PASS!  
1 CREDIT = 1 YEAR LONG COURSE

**English:** 4 Credits

**Math:** 4 Credits

**Science:** 4 Credits (Muñiz Requires an Additional Year of Science)

**History:** 3 Credits (History in English or History in Spanish\*\*)

**Spanish:** 2 Credits/Mass Core + 2 Additional Spanish Credits Required for Muñiz Academy\*\*

\*\*Students take 3 years of History in Spanish, plus 1 year of AP Spanish  
OR Students take 4 years of Spanish as a Second Language

## Electives

6 Credits: Visual Arts, Music, Physical Education, College and Career Class – TAKE AND PASS for Graduation

## Required Assessments

MCAS: Math, ELA, Science; Senior Portfolio

## Arts Classes

Students at Muñiz Academy take arts classes every year  
Students in Grades 7 and Future Grade 8: Band/music classes and Computer Science

Students in Grades 9 to 12: Visual arts, Music/Band Ensemble, Steel Pan Group, Piano, Graphic Arts

Band Groups present twice a year in our winter and spring concerts. Arts classes present their work in our annual exhibition at the Museum of Fine Arts.

## Early College

Starting in 10th Grade, students have the opportunity to take Early College Classes with UMass Boston and earn up to 18 College Credits by graduation!

## Sports at Muñiz

**Students are eligible to join one of our Phoenix Sports Teams:**

Must be passing ALL Classes.

Must have good attendance.

Must have a physical on file with the nurse.

Must follow all sports team rules.

## Our Teams Include:

Fall: Girls' Volleyball

Winter: Boys and Girls Basketball

Spring: Girls Softball and Boys Baseball

## Student Council

Students elect TWO representatives for each grade the first week of November each year. Student Council members are responsible for being ambassadors of our community as well as representing student ideas and interests.

## Other Learning Experiences at Muñiz Academy

### Dual Enrollment in College Courses

- BU UPWARD BOUND
- SUMMER SEARCH
- DEBATE League
- HARVARD CRIMSON
- MINDS MATTER
- ARTWARD BOUND
- LASELL TEACHER PIPELINE
- HARVARD MED SCIENCE
- YOUTH BUILD

### Grade Level Clubs

School wide Clubs: Gender and Sexuality Alliance, Afro-Latino Alliance, Chess Club, Debate Club

Starting every spring, we assist students in applying to summer jobs and internships.

## GRADES

- Grades reflect a student's current level of achievement on skills and content.
- Semester grades are the average of a student's Learning Target marks.
- The final course grade is the average of the entire year's academic learning targets.
- A scale of 1 to 4 is used to assess student mastery of each Learning Target.
- A minimum of "Approaching" / 2 is required to pass a class.

Families receive a Progress Report in November, February, and April. A Final Grade Report is sent in June.

### Grade Point Average

Your Grade Point Average – GPA – is super important as you apply for SPORTS, Other Learning Opportunities, and applying to College and Career Opportunities!

Every class has a grade. All of your work creates a 'grade point average' – the average of all the grades for that class.

All the grades for EACH CLASS create your OVERALL Grade Point Average.

## Honor Roll

At the end of every quarter, we celebrate students who have a GPA of 3.0 or Better!

### Academic Integrity

Muñiz Academy expects all students to adhere to the accepted norms of intellectual honesty in their academic work. Any form of cheating, plagiarism, dishonesty, or collusion in another individual's dishonesty is a fundamental violation of these norms.

PLAGIARISM is the deliberate act of taking the words, ideas, data, illustrative material, or statements of someone else, without full and proper acknowledgment, and presenting them as one's own. Plagiarism includes the inappropriate use of Artificial Intelligence. We will not tolerate any of the following kinds of plagiarism.

### Process for Students Not Meeting Grade and Course Requirements

Crew leaders will have a continuous conversation with students about their progress and grades. Students not meeting grade and course requirements must take summer courses to make up course credits only on approval of the academic faculty and the Head of School and Asst. Head of School.

Students failing 3 or more courses may repeat the academic year after discussions and careful consideration with the student, faculty, and parents or family members.



## How Our Grades Work

### Exemplary - 4

The student's demonstration of understanding or of proficiency is an exemplary model of what is described in the learning target.

For example, a student completed a term paper, meeting all of the learning targets; the product is very high quality and demonstrates the student's learning.

### Accomplishing - 3

The student has met the learning target.

For example, a student completed the term paper and met all of the learning targets. The product is evidence of quality work at the grade level. This student demonstrated their skills and knowledge for the learning targets.

### Approaching - 2

The student demonstrates partial progress toward the learning target.

For example, a student completed the term paper but has many key required elements missing or incomplete. This student has more work to demonstrate their skills, and knowledge toward meeting the learning target.

### Beginning - 1

The student has not made substantial progress toward meeting the learning target.

For example, this student has not yet demonstrated their skills and knowledge in their work and in class participation.

This student may be handing in their work but they have not yet demonstrated their understanding and developed their skills for this learning target.

## Zona de Logros and Senior Portfolios

“Zona de Logros” celebrates Muniz students’ learning and high quality work. This event brings our Qualities of a Muñiz Scholar to life through the students’ achievements. Students are required to present two classes at Zona de Logros at the end of each quarter to help students (and staff!) better prepare for the June Zona de Logros. Seniors must present their Senior Portfolios as part of our graduation requirements.

### What is the purpose of organizing a Zona de Logros and Portfolios?

As with the year-end Zona de Logros, the quarterly presentations will provide students the opportunity to showcase their work in an open exhibition to the community in both English and Spanish. By presenting to an authentic audience, students will connect more deeply with their learning experiences, and have a stronger sense of accomplishment about their work.

### Student-Led Conferences – Connecting With Families

Students have a key role in sharing their progress with their families. Teachers support students in selecting work and preparing reflections to share with families. Student-family conferences are held in November and March. Students must take the responsibility for their learning and to see themselves as the key leader in their success.

Student must:

- maintain a portfolio of work
- reflect on their work and progress
- discuss their learning during family conferences
- present their work in public presentations and exhibitions of learning.

### Student Led Conferences

- November 13 through Dec. 22, 2024
- February 26 through March 22, 2025

## The Daily Experience at Muñiz Academy

### Student Dress Code

Muñiz Academy is committed to creating a respectful, welcoming learning environment for all students, families, and staff. While we encourage student's self-expression and individuality, we are establishing dress code standards that help foster a secure, appropriate setting where all students can focus on their educational goals towards success as a learner and community member.

- Students should dress casually and comfortably for school while wearing clothing that is well suited for a school environment.
- Clothing, drawings, tattoos and accessories that display or promote hurtful, violent or bias-based images are not permitted. These could include gang insignia or weapons; drug, alcohol or tobacco-related information; and obscenities, put-downs, stereotypes, sexual innuendos, or offensive words or graphics.
- Face covering will be allowed pending regulations by the district to address health safety for the community. Only medical masks will be allowed.
- Students may choose to wear the Muñiz Academy polo shirts, t-shirts, sweatshirts and pants that will be available for purchase.

A violation of the dress code will require a change of clothing. Sound judgment and reasonableness will be applied in interpreting the dress code. Special circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis by members of the administration.

### School Schedule and Hours

- The school hours for students are from 8:30 am to 3:30 pm, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday.
- On Friday, the school operates from 8:30 am-12:30 pm for students; staff remain until 3:00 to allow for professional development and common meeting time.
- After school programs are to be scheduled from 3:30 to 4:30.

### School Calendar

The School Calendar will follow the Boston Public Schools.

## Attendance

**Being present is the first step to success. Being present reflects RAICES.**

Muñiz Academy is designed to prepare every student as a citizen and scholar. Our collective work as students, staff, and families is completely focused on this critical time for learning and preparation for college and beyond. We ask that every student invest 100% of their time as learners invested in becoming powerful citizen scholars.

### Before and After School Hours

Students arriving before 8:00AM are to report to the Cafeteria.

Every teacher takes daily first period attendance on ASPEN.

Every teacher takes attendance for every period on JumpRope.

Excused absences require a note or reliable call from the parent. Our School Secretary records excused absences on Aspen.

### Attendance and Grading

Each teacher will clearly share a late work policy to students and families.

### Students Arriving Late to School

Students arriving late to school - anytime after 8:30 - must report to the main office to record their tardy and receive a pass generated by ASPEN from our school secretary.

Each student who does not sign-in by 10:30 am will be marked ABSENT for the day.

### Hallways

There is sufficient time between classes for students to use the bathroom, retrieve materials from their lockers, and get to their next class on time. During class time, students will be allowed to leave only during real emergencies. An "emergency" will be defined by the teacher.



## Community Norms

At the Muñiz Academy, we adhere to the BPS Code of Conduct as well as the following standards, designed to support our shared values. These standards were created by committees of students, parents, faculty, and Board members and are reviewed annually.

Classroom expectations are based on RAICES. Expectations across classrooms should be consistent, though teachers may have some of their own unique rules.

**Muñiz Academy expects EVERY Scholar to develop and demonstrate RAICES.**

**All Staff and Students Are Part of Your Community**

**All students must use the main entrance of our building on Child Street.**

**The building is open for breakfast to students starting at 8:00 am.**

**Classes start at 8:30 am sharp!**

You will meet teachers and staff who are not your teachers. If you see them in a class, in the hallways or in meetings, they are here to support you!

Say hello and identify yourself!

Pause to listen to a staff member who may ask you what you might need or where you are going or for your pass.

## Lunchtime

Students in Grades 7 and 11 will have lunch from 11:30 to 11:55.

Students in Grades 8 and 12 will have lunch from 12 to 12:25.

Student in Grades 9 and 10 will have lunch from 12:30 to 12:55.

- As the weather allows, students may go outside in the field and patio with staff.
- Students are expected to leave the cafeteria as clean as they received it! CLEAN!
- The Plaza is no longer open during lunch. Students must have a pass if they are joining teachers in their classrooms.

## Dismissal

**Dismissal Time Is at 3:30 – Monday to Thursday and 12:30 on Fridays**

Students who are taking a school bus, must report to the bus on time at dismissal.

## Stairwells and Hallways

Students may enter the building for breakfast and class preparation at 8:00 am each morning. All meals will be consumed in the cafeterias.

All Muñiz Academy staff and students will use Stairwell B (in the middle of the floor) and C (near the elevator) to go UP and DOWN to the second and third floors.

Students may not use the elevator unless they have a medical need or are accompanied by a staff member. Please limit the number of persons in the elevator at a time.

## Class Transitions

We have 2-minute transitions between class periods. Bathroom breaks are allowed after the first 10 minutes of class and before the last 10 minutes of class.

## Hallway Passes

Students are required to have SINGLE USE passes to move throughout the building during class time.

## Leaving Class

The teacher always has the right and the authority to ask a student to leave the room, and the student must do so immediately and without disruption. Students asked to leave must go directly to the main office where they will wait to meet with staff and they will fill out a paper that asks for an account of the event.

Students who do not go directly to the office may be suspended. After the incident, students have the right to appeal to the Head of School.

## Leaving School Grounds

No student may leave the school's grounds without the express permission from Head of School or member of the administrative team as well as parental approval. The school sees the violation of this rule as a serious disciplinary infraction due to the peril that such a violation poses. A student who leaves school grounds will be suspended for a period of one day and require a parent conference. **NO STUDENT UNDER THE AGE OF 16 WILL BE RELEASED WITHOUT A PARENT OR GUARDIAN.**

## Lockers

Students will resume their access to lockers this year. Time for locker clean out and set up will be scheduled during the first week of school.

## Bathrooms

We want to ensure that each student is feeling safe, healthy, and able to focus on class. Students must use a pass to use the bathroom.

The second floor bathrooms are only for middle school students and the third floor bathrooms are for high school students. The main office bathrooms are all gender bathrooms and can be used by any student.

## School Policies

### Cell Phone / Smart Watches / Electronics Policy

Students will give their first period teacher their cell phone for storage for the day.

At the end of the day, students will return to their first period teacher to retrieve their phone.

If a student needs to communicate with family members, they can request to make a call with a staff member.

Cell phone charging is not allowed.

Students cannot video chat nor take videos in class or in school.

### Vape Policy

Holding vapes in your book bags or pockets is not allowed.

Vaping in any part of our school, classrooms, bathrooms, or outside on our school property is NOT allowed.

Students who are suspected of holding vapes or vaping will be searched as per BPS Code of Conduct policies.

Vapes will be confiscated and not returned.

Consequences for holding vapes or using vapes will be done according to BPS Policy.

## Bullying/Cyberbullying Definition and Prohibition

Bullying is defined as a repeated act by one or more students by means of written, verbal, or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at a victim:

- Causing physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property
- Placing the victim in reasonable fear of harm to themselves or of their property
- Creates a hostile and volatile environment at the school; or
- The orderly operation of the school.

If any one person thinks or knows of someone being bullied, or are being bullied themselves, it is strongly encouraged that they report it to a trustworthy staff in the building.

Cyberbullying is when children/teens and or adults bully each other using the Internet, mobile phones or other cyber technology. This can include:

- Sending mean text, email, or instant messages;
- Posting nasty pictures or messages about others in blogs or on Web sites;
- Using someone else's user name to spread rumors or lie about someone.

Any act of cyber-bullying that occurs on school grounds, at any school sponsored event or activity, on or off campus, through the use of the school's computer system while on or off campus, and through the use of any personal digital device on campus and in any non-school related situations if the bullying affects the school environment or creates a hostile environment at school for the victim is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary actions. For more information on cyberbullying, please go to [www.bostonpublicschools.org/antibullying](http://www.bostonpublicschools.org/antibullying) for online resources and information.

## Communication via Electronic Platforms

All students are expected to use emails, Google Classroom and other electronic platforms for communication with respectful language and norms.

## Acceptable Computer Use Policy

Muñiz Academy provides computer resources to enhance the educational experiences of its students.

Students are expected to exercise their privilege to use these resources in a manner consistent with the mission of the school, existing school policies and the policies of our Internet service providers, as well as all Federal, State and Local laws.

Any activity, which is unethical, illegal, disruptive, offensive or mischievous, is inappropriate. The student is ultimately responsible for his/her actions while using any facet of the computer system at Muñiz Academy.

## Internet Policy

It is a privilege to use the Internet. Students must sign the BPS Internet Policy Statement and must adhere to it.

Students are not allowed to access inappropriate and/ or blocked sites, play computer games, send or receive Instant Messages ("IMs").

## Contacting Our School

**School Phone:** 617-635-8198.

**School Website:** [munizacademy.org](http://munizacademy.org)

Families are always welcome to visit with or without an appointment! School staff, Crew Leaders and administrators will share their contact information with families as well.

## Muñiz Organization Chart for School Year 2025-26

