



## Fairfield Woods Middle School

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# Student Handbook

In partnership with parents and students, the staff of FWMS shares a commitment to foster a caring community of active learners and leaders. In our middle school, the love of learning and the joy of discovery are valued and nurtured. Staff and students at FWMS are encouraged to use their intellect, creativity and talents. High expectations for student success are balanced with the recognition of individual differences. We are striving for a learning community in which young people can feel good about themselves while learning to be caring individuals. Our mission is to serve the intellectual, emotional, social and physical needs of our students and to create an environment designed to respond to the unique characteristics of early adolescents.

### To serve these needs, WE BELIEVE:

- ❖ We have responsibility for the success of every child at FWMS.
- ❖ We make a difference in the lives of children.
- ❖ We create an environment that promotes exploration, inquiry, reflection, independence, and challenge.
- ❖ We help each student develop a positive self-concept through achievement in arts and academics and valued life experience.
- ❖ We foster a respect for the natural environment.
- ❖ Students need to develop habits of mind to become life-long learners.
- ❖ All students need to develop a strong sense of self-discipline based on good decision-making and problem-solving skills.
- ❖ Students will thrive when developmentally responsive and meaningful instruction is presented.
- ❖ All children can learn.

# WELCOME!

We welcome you to a new school year at **FAIRFIELD WOODS MIDDLE SCHOOL!** Whether you are beginning your sixth, seventh or eighth grade year, we are certain you will find your school filled with challenging and diverse opportunities for success. We hope you will be conscientious students and be aware of our traditions and expectations. Please be serious about your work. Get involved in the life of the school. Show pride in all you do. If you have the spirit to do these things, your rewards will be many, both here, at school, and in the future.

## WHAT IS MIDDLE SCHOOL ALL ABOUT?

*Middle School helps you answer these questions:*

- Who am I?
- Where am I going?
- How will I get there?
- How will I fit in?

*Fairfield Woods is not a super-sized elementary school or a miniature high school. Fairfield Woods is a special place that offers*

- A variety of teachers.
- Classes of different sizes and different subjects.
- Performance/Skill based assignments.
- Opportunities for independent study.
- A chance to share and discuss opinions.
- An opportunity to make your own choices and decisions.
- A chance to strengthen yourself in new areas of exploration.

## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

As a student at FWMS, **you are a member of a team.** Teams have their own identity and are involved in special projects, trips or activities which are an outgrowth of your classroom work.

The teachers for your team usually include your Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, Science, World Language, and Reading teachers. Your team of teachers has common planning time to organize interdisciplinary instruction, monitor your progress, meet with your parents or counselors, and organize special programs that occur throughout the year. Each team has a liaison, or teacher leader, who will serve as a bridge between students, parents and teachers, and is responsible for conducting team meetings.

## BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL HOURS

**School opens at 7:45 a.m. No student should be on school grounds prior to 7:45 a.m. unless under the direct supervision of a teacher. Students arriving early must have a dated pass signed by the supervising teacher. This rule is for the safety of the students. Homeroom begins at 8:10 a.m. Please be on time.**

School is dismissed at 2:50 p.m. After school, all school rules remain in effect. Students not involved in a supervised after school activity must leave school grounds as supervision is limited.

All students should be off school grounds by 3:00 p.m. unless supervised by a teacher. Those waiting for the late bus must wait on the porch, away from the driveway, or quietly in the main lobby. **Students who leave school grounds at 3:00 may not use the late bus at 4:00.**

## HOMEROOM

Your homeroom is your home base at school. Your homeroom teacher is someone you will see each morning and he/she is a person who will be available to help you if you have a minor difficulty that you cannot resolve. During homeroom, attendance will be taken, announcements will be read, and students should come prepared to read.

## ATTENDANCE POLICIES

### LATE TO SCHOOL

A little late is too late! If you are late to school, you must: 1. Sign in with the attendance secretary in the front office before going to homeroom or a class, 2. Bring a note from home signed by your parent. The only "excused tardies" are for religious observances or doctor and dentist appointments. This will be monitored by the Dean of Students:

- After 10 tardies have occurred = Lunch Detention
- At tardy 15 = a Parent Conference will be scheduled
- In School Tardies - 3= Lunch Detention / 4+ Parent Conference

### WHAT DO YOU DO IF YOUR BUS IS LATE?

If your bus arrives late in the morning, go directly to the front office, where you will be checked in by the secretary and then sent to your class.

### ABSENCE - Use School Dismissal Manager

We believe that regular school attendance is essential for your success as a student. If it is necessary for you to be absent or tardy, please have your parent enter your absence on School Dismissal Manager. Accounts are set up at the start of each year. If your family has an issue entering the absence, they can call us at 203-255-8490. This number may be called anytime of the day or at night. If we do not hear from your family when you are absent, we will call home to verify the absence. It is your responsibility to see that you get any make-up work from your teachers. Parents will be notified when absences exceed 10 in a semester by letter. Four unexcused absences in a month, or 10 per year, will result in a truancy referral. (See Truancy policy) Dean will request a meeting with the Parent and School Counselor if there are 4 unexcused in one month or exceeding 10 in the school year.

### ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL MEANS ABSENT FROM SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

A student is considered to be in attendance if present at his/her assigned school, or at an activity sponsored by the school, for at least half of the regular school day. A student who is serving an out-of-school suspension or an expulsion is always considered absent. **If you are absent from school or miss more than 1/2 of a day, please remember that you cannot attend the activity scheduled for that same day or evening.**

### VACATION POLICY

The administration and faculty of the Fairfield Public Schools would like to emphasize the importance of regular school attendance for each pupil. We recognize that there are times when illness, a family emergency, or a religious holy day makes it necessary for a pupil to be absent.

However, in recent years, we feel that there has been a growing tendency for parents to remove children from school for reasons other than those cited above. In particular, we are concerned about the number of families who take their children out of school for planned family vacation during school time.

**School is in session for 182 days during the year, and we send each family a calendar of those dates. Please use it to plan family trips at times other than school days.**

If you **must** take a family vacation during school time, the following will be the responsibility of both the parents and the student:

- Parents should fill out an [extended absence form](#) or enter on online at School Dismissal Manager, at least one week prior.
- Upon the student's return to school, all work that the teacher assigns must be made up and handed in within **two weeks** of the return to school. Please know that the "participation" part of the work missed cannot be made up and may lower the grade. Students may seek extra help, if needed, from their teacher outside of the school day.

### SCHOOL VISITOR POLICY

All visitors must enter via the secure main entrance. A visitor's badge will be given to anyone who will enter the building. Visitors who are not authorized are considered to be loitering and can face a misdemeanor charge of trespassing. Please know that Non-Fairfield Woods students **are not** allowed to attend school.

## EARLY DISMISSAL

A student being dismissed early must be entered into Student Dismissal Manager online. An Early Dismissal Pass will be provided to the student leaving early and should be presented in the main office when he/she signs out. Students may not be released without checking out in the Main Office.

## PARENT PICK-UP AND DROP-OFF

Drop-off and pick-up procedures are revised each year. Please visit [this link](#) for specific instructions.

## FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are important extensions of our curriculum and the middle school experience. However, if students do not attend a field trip, they are expected to be in school. No student will be allowed to go on a field trip without a signed permission slip from a parent or guardian.

Student field trip eligibility is subject in part to criteria established by the FWMS Code of Conduct. Because field trips entail a much greater degree of responsibility for teachers and chaperones and students, a special screening procedure may be used to reduce the likelihood of any discipline problems on such a trip. A merit / demerit system will be established and students will be given ample opportunity to exhibit self-control and respect for school rules. Parents will be notified if their child is not demonstrating appropriate standards of behavior and is in danger of being removed from the trip.

If a parent needs to pick up a child while on a field trip, please request a form outlining our policy at least four days in advance.

# HEALTH AND WELLNESS POLICIES

**Important:** Students **SHOULD NOT** call a Parent/Guardian from their cell phone or the office phone prior to meeting with the Nurse. Students must be evaluated by the Nurse prior to leaving school if they don't feel well. If a child feels that they need to speak with a parent/guardian about how they feel, arrangements will be made for the child to use the phone in the nurse's office.

## ALLERGIES

In an effort to help keep everyone healthy and safe at Fairfield Woods we need to work cooperatively and be sensitive to the needs of others. We often have several students with severe peanut and tree nut allergies. Because these are life threatening we are no longer cooking with peanut butter or peanut oils. At this time we ask parents to be cautious if they bring food to school celebrations. Please **do not** use these ingredients and label all ingredients used in cooking. Students who bring peanut butter sandwiches for lunch are asked to wash their hands immediately after lunch. This prevents any cross-contamination.

## SCHOOL NURSE

Our nurse's office is located opposite the cafeteria. The nurse is available for the entire day. If you need to see the nurse, get a pass from your teacher AFTER you report to class. If you want to consult the nurse about a problem, leave a note in her office with your name and homeroom, and she will leave a pass with your homeroom teacher. However, school-nursing services are provided for those who are sick during the day and emergency situations. If you feel ill before coming to school, then please stay home or see your physician. We hope that you never need to go home from school sick, but if you do, our nurse will assess the illness and will make the decision to send you home. **The nurse will handle all the necessary phone calls and paperwork. Students should not contact home directly about feeling sick unless they have seen the nurse first.**

**There are other things you should know about the health office:**

- **Medication:** You are not to take any form of medication in the school without the knowledge and supervision of the school nurse. She will also store and/or administer medicines as are prescribed by your family physician. Medical permission forms are available in the health office for the purpose of administering allergy medicines, etc.
- **Physical Examinations:** All students entering 7th Grade must have a health assessment completed by his/her physician prior to the first day of school. All students who take part in our interscholastic sports

teams must show evidence of their good health and ability to participate in a given sport by their physician's certification. Special forms will be provided to those to whom this may apply.

- **Physical Testing:** The school health office will administer a screening test for scoliosis to grade 7 students. All students new to the Fairfield school system will be tested for vision and hearing.
- **Major Impairment:** Any impairment that may cause you to miss P.E. or affect your classes must be documented with a doctor's note that contains specific instructions on how the school can support the student's care plan during school hours.
- **Temporary Disability:** If an elevator is necessary to access other floors please see the main office secretary for an elevator key contract.

## ACADEMIC POLICIES

### SCHEDULE CHANGES

If there is a question about your schedule, check first with your homeroom teacher. If your teacher cannot solve the problem, please speak with your School Counselor. If you have any other concerns about any of your classes -- the level of work, other students, the teacher -- bring them to the attention of your teacher, counselor, or the Dean.

### SCHOOL COUNSELORS

Fairfield Woods has school counselors who are available to help you with problems that may affect your schoolwork. To see your counselor, please see the Counseling Secretary in the Counseling Office to schedule a meeting with your School Counselor. Parents who object to student use of guidance services are asked to notify the main office in writing so that we can honor your wishes.

### RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES

Our faculty is sensitive to the assignment of schoolwork around religious holidays. In the event that homework or an assessment is given that conflicts with a religious observance of your family, just send in a note to the teacher. You could also provide advance notice of an observance so other arrangements can be made with the teachers. In all such cases, the student will not be penalized and will be given time to make up the work.

### HOMEWORK

Home study is a necessary part of every student's education. It is an excellent time to share with parents your ideas and the exciting things you are studying. Homework helps you learn how to work independently, organize time, develop effective work habits, develop self discipline, and accept responsibility.

Students often ask, "***How much time should be spent on homework?***" Our advice is, spend as long as it takes to get the assignments done properly! Students should expect daily homework. Suggested time allotments are listed below:

Grade 6 - 20-30 min. daily

Grade 7 - 30-40 min. daily

Grade 8 - 40-60 min. daily

Language Arts classes require a minimum of 20 minutes of reading per night. This is a standing assignment no matter what other assignments are given. Other homework may vary depending on the assignments or projects being conducted in class. If you have any questions regarding homework responsibilities, do not hesitate to contact the individual teachers.

### EXTRA HELP AND MAKE-UP ARRANGEMENTS

You may always seek extra help from your teachers if you do not understand an assignment, if the work is difficult for you, or if you have been out of class for any reason and have missed assignments and class discussions. Arrange a conference time with your teacher before or after school, or at another time convenient for both of you, such as Flex time.. A teacher will sometimes request that a student stay after school if it is apparent that the student is having difficulty. This is not to be thought of as a punishment, but rather as the desire of the teacher to help ensure your success.

### MAKE-UP POLICY

Students will have three days from the day of return from an absence, to make up their work and hand it in to the teacher, unless special arrangements can be made with the teacher, as in the case of a prolonged absence. It is the

responsibility of the student to obtain make-up work. Students who fail to do so within the required time will receive a zero for all work missed.

### **PARENT CONTACT**

We believe the school and parents are partners in your education. Regular communication between parents and school is extremely important. Our effectiveness as a school is greatly enhanced by cooperative and concerned parents. Conferences are scheduled after the first marking period and other conferences can be scheduled as needed. We welcome parents to contact the teachers, counselors, dean, or administration if you have any questions or concerns.

## **STUDY HABIT SUGGESTIONS/ LOCKER USE**

- Use an assignment book or an “agenda.”
- Make and keep a study schedule.
- Study in the same quiet place every day.
- Keep all materials, including a notebook, in a study place.
- Plan to study a little bit each night. Chunk do not cram!
- Plan ahead by estimating the amount of time it will take to complete the assignments.
- Always read the directions before starting.
- If the assignment seems difficult, read the directions aloud. If you still don’t understand, read them to someone else. If the directions are still not clear, ask the teacher the next day.

**Homework is your responsibility.** If you don’t do your homework, your teacher and your parents will work out a plan to help you successfully complete your assignments. Remember that if you choose not to do homework, your grades will suffer and you could lose privileges at home and at school.

### **LOCKS AND LOCKERS**

You will be assigned a hall locker for your coat, books and other school items. Lockers are the property of the school and are assigned to students for their use. We retain the right to examine the content of lockers at any time, with reasonable cause, for hazardous or illegal materials. **The school is not responsible** for items missing from your locker. Keep valuables at home and do not share your locker or lock combination.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASS TIPS FOR SUCCESS**

You must have a written note from your family physician in order to be excused from physical education. Depending on the circumstances, a note from your home may be acceptable for a one-class excuse. If you choose to change, lockers are available for your clothing. Proper gym clothing **includes sneakers**, clean shirt, shorts or sweats. No Crocs or sliders can be worn.

#### **Obligation Policy:**

Textbooks, Language Arts books, and devices are individually barcoded and checked out to students. Students are responsible for returning all items in good condition and in a timely manner.

Students are expected to pay for lost, missing, or damaged items. The bookroom cannot accept replacement items in place of payment for lost or damaged materials. This includes damage to technology.

Refunds: Grades 6 and 7: Refunds will be issued if materials are returned within twelve months of payment.  
Grade 8: Refunds will be issued if materials are returned before October 1 of 9th grade.

## **AFTER SCHOOL AND INTRAMURAL ACTIVITIES**

There is a wide range of after school activities available for FWMS students. Sign-ups are announced during lunches and sign-up sheets are posted in the cafeteria and on the bulletin board nearest the small gym. A notice of school activities is available on the school website.

## LATE BUS

A late bus is available to students on Mondays & Thursdays during the week. Students should board the bus at 4:00 pm. You can check the bus routes in the main office or on our web page. Students are only allowed to use the late bus if they stayed after school for a Fairfield Woods activity.

## CUSTOM CREATED CLUBS

Students may ask to start a new club if they are able to get a group of at least 8 or more students who are committed to attending regularly AND a faculty member who will serve as club advisor. Please see the Dean for more details on how to start a club.

# CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STUDENTS

Also can be found on the Dean Website on our [FWMS Website](#)

## SCHOOL DISCIPLINE PLAN FOR FWMS

We care deeply about the safety of every child. We feel that all students have the right to learn and that teachers have the right to teach, free from distractions, in a safe and orderly environment. Therefore, all students have the responsibility to behave in a manner that does not interfere with another person's rights. To help students follow our code of conduct, all teachers have in effect a classroom management plan. A plan is made up of expectations - behaviors needed to be successful in class, consequences when expectations are not met, and positive recognition for all students.

If a student makes a poor choice concerning behavior, consequences may follow, which include but are not limited to: lunch or after-school detentions, restorative conversations, community service, suspension, calls home, loss of social privileges, referral to the Dean of Students. See Board of Education Policy on Student Discipline #5119 listed later in this handbook.

## THE "WOODS" BILL OF RIGHTS

These rights apply to all people – students and staff – and to the entire school day, including travel to and from school.

- The right to develop one's own personality (so long as it doesn't interfere with the rights of others) without disrespectful criticism or pressure from cliques.
- Freedom from physical and mental abuse such as name-calling, intimidation, or harassment. • Freedom from being set apart, mocked, or made fun of because of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, physical strength, size, features, friendship groups, age, culture, handicap, financial status, clothing, classroom performance, or **any other reason**.
- The right to be treated with respect.
- The right to an education, which means that teachers are free to teach and students are free to learn without being interrupted by unruly or inconsiderate students.
- The right to have personal and school property respected. Our school community is a safe place for property as well as people.

## EXPECTED BEHAVIORS:

The Code of Conduct at FWMS is derived from the Native American concept of the Circle of Courage based on four key principles: Mastery, Independence, Generosity, and Belonging. To help illustrate these pillars of respect, we created the "FWMS anagram":

**F** – Family – Everybody belongs and is an important part of the Woods community. As a community member, you have rights and responsibilities. (Belonging)

**W** – Welcoming/warmth/wonder – Everyone, staff, students, parents and community members should feel comfortable, safe and welcomed at our school. We believe that to build this generosity of spirit everyone should "choose kind". (Generosity)

**M** – Mastery of academic and social skills is the driving force behind all our work. (Mastery)

**S** – Self-directed learning and discipline leads to success both in and out of school. (Independence)

**SCHOOL RULES** –Are in effect from the time you board the bus in the morning until the time you disembark the school bus in the afternoon. Following these will ensure success and safety for all. Not following these may result in disciplinary action.

- Follow directions
- Keep hands/feet/objects to yourself
- Come to school and class on-time
- Be prepared for class with all required materials
- No swearing, teasing, name-calling, threatening or mean-spirited behavior

## PROHIBITED ITEMS/ACTIONS

- Hoodies up in school
- Skateboards/Rollerblades/Heelys
- Gambling
- Real or toy weapons
- Candy
- Asking others for money
- Put-downs or any mean behavior
- Selling anything!
- Phone use
- Recording of other students or staff without permission

## POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES:

- **Parent Contact** will occur if academic or behavioral difficulties are persistent or of a serious nature. This may occur by phone, by letter or email, or through a conference with the teacher, the counselor, the dean, and/or an administrator.
- **Detention** may be assigned by a teacher to a student for infractions of acceptable student behavior. Detentions may be assigned for the morning, during lunch or after-school.
- **Referral to the Dean** occurs when a student is sent to the Dean for breaking school rules, our primary goal is to find a solution to the problem. Another aspect of being referred is that the students have chosen by their behavior a limit setting consequence. Students referred to the Dean will remain in the Dean Suite for the



duration of that class period, and the parent will be notified. After the second referral, a Parent conference will be required.

- **Restorative Conversation** - this is meant to restore and repair a relationship that may be harmed. •
- **Community Service** happens when students are asked to contribute some positive service around the school. They may work after the lunch shift or be assigned work time after school.
- **Social Probation** is when students lose the privilege of attending after school activities, or dances, for a period of time. This probation may occur for repeated misbehavior, lack of academic motivation, cheating, or serious offenses against the school community.
- **In-School/Out-of-School Suspension and Expulsion** regulations are dictated by Board of Education Policy #5119. Please see below:

The following is excerpted from Fairfield Board of Education Policy # 5114(a-f) – Suspension/Expulsion/Due Process. The complete policy together with the entire Fairfield Board of Education Policy Manual is available, in writing, in all school and district offices and online at [www.fairfieldschools.org](http://www.fairfieldschools.org).

## **SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION / DUE PROCESS 5114(a)**

### **I. Definitions**

**A. Emergency** means a situation in which the continued presence of the student in school poses such a danger to persons or property or such a disruption of the educational process that a hearing may be delayed until a time as soon after the exclusion of such student as possible.

**B. Exclusion** means any denial of public school privileges to a student for disciplinary purposes.

**C. Expulsion** is defined as an exclusion from school privileges for any student in grades three through twelve, inclusive for more than ten (10) consecutive school days and shall be deemed to include, but not be limited to, exclusion from the school to which such student was assigned at the time such disciplinary action was taken, provided such exclusion shall not extend beyond a period of one (1) calendar year. Such period of exclusion may extend to the school year following the school year in which such exclusion was imposed.

**D. Removal** is the exclusion of a student for a class period of ninety (90) minutes or less.

**E. School Days** shall mean days when school is in session for students.

**F. School-Sponsored Activity** means any activity sponsored, recognized or authorized

**G. Seriously Disruptive of the Educational Process** means any conduct that markedly interrupts or severely impedes the day-to-day operation of a school.

**H. Suspension** means the exclusion of a student from school and/or transportation services for not more than ten (10) consecutive school days, provided such suspension shall not extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed; and further provided no student shall be suspended more than ten (10) times or a total of fifty (50) days in one school year, whichever results in fewer days of exclusion, unless such student is granted a formal hearing as provided below. All suspensions pursuant to this Policy shall be in-school suspensions unless during the hearing held pursuant to Section V of this Policy, (1) the administration determines that the student in grades three through twelve, inclusive being suspended poses such a danger to persons or property or such a disruption of the educational process that the student shall be excluded from school during the period of suspension, or (2) the administration determines that an out-of-school suspension is appropriate for such student based on evidence of (A) previous disciplinary problems that have led to suspensions or expulsion of such student, and (B) efforts by the administration to address such disciplinary problems through means other than out-of-school suspension or expulsion, including positive behavioral support strategies. An in-school suspension may be served in the school that the student attends, or in any school building under the jurisdiction of the board of education. A student in grades preschool to two, inclusive, may be given an out-of-school suspension if it is determined by the administration that such suspension is appropriate based on evidence that the student's conduct on school grounds is of a violent or sexual nature

that endangers persons. In addition, a person's duty as a mandated reporter to report suspected child abuse or neglect is not limited by this provision.

**I.** Notwithstanding the foregoing, the reassignment of a student from one regular education classroom program in the district to another regular education classroom program in the district shall not constitute a suspension or expulsion. **J. In-School Suspension** is defined as an exclusion from regular classroom activity for not more than ten consecutive school days, but not an exclusion from school, provided such exclusion shall not extend beyond the

end of the school year in which such in-school suspension was imposed. An in-school suspension may include reassignment to a regular classroom. Program in a different school in the school district; such reassignment shall not constitute a "suspension" or "expulsion" under this policy. In-school suspensions shall be served in the school attended by the student.

## **II. Scope of the Student Discipline Policy**

### **A. Conduct on School Grounds or at a School-Sponsored Activity:**

Students may be disciplined for conduct on school grounds or at any school-sponsored activity that endangers persons or property, is seriously disruptive of the educational process, or that violates a publicized policy of the Board.

### **B. Conduct off School Grounds:**

1. Students may be disciplined for conduct off school grounds if such conduct is seriously disruptive of the educational process and violative of a publicized policy of the Board. In making a determination as to whether such conduct is seriously disruptive of the educational process, the Administration and the Board of Education may consider, but such consideration shall not be limited to, the following factors: (1) whether the incident occurred within close proximity of a school; (2) whether other students from the school were involved or whether there was any gang involvement; (3) whether the conduct involved violence, threats of violence, or the unlawful use of a weapon, as defined in section Conn. Gen. Stat. §29-38, and whether any injuries occurred; and (4) whether the conduct involved the use of alcohol.

In making a determination as to whether such conduct is seriously disruptive of the educational process, the Administration and/or the Board of Education may also consider whether such off-campus conduct involved the use of drugs. 2. When considering whether conduct off school grounds is seriously disruptive of the educational process, the term "weapon" means any pistol or revolver, any dirk knife or switch knife, any knife having an automatic spring release device by which a blade is released from the handle, having a blade of over one and one-half inches in length, and any other dangerous or deadly weapon or instrument, including any BB gun, sling shot, blackjack, sand bag, metal or brass knuckles, stiletto, knife, the edged portion of the blade of which is four inches and over in length, or any martial arts weapon as defined below at section VI.B. **III. Actions Leading to Disciplinary Action, Including Removal from Class, Suspension and / or Expulsion** Conduct which may lead to disciplinary action (including, but not limited to, suspension and/or expulsion) includes conduct on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity, and conduct off school grounds, as set forth above. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Striking or assaulting a student, members of the school staff or other persons.
2. Theft.
3. The use of obscene or profane language or gestures.
4. Violation of smoking, dress, transportation regulations, or other regulations and/or policies governing student conduct.
5. Refusal to obey a member of the school staff, law enforcement authorities, or school volunteers, or disruptive classroom behavior.
6. Any act of harassment based on an individual's sex, sexual orientation, race, color, religion, disability, national origin or ancestry.
7. Refusal by a student to identify himself/herself to a staff member when asked, or misidentification of oneself to such person(s).
8. A walk-out from or sit-in within a classroom or school building or school grounds.
9. Blackmailing, threatening or intimidating school staff or students (or acting in a manner that could be construed to constitute blackmail, a threat, or intimidation, regardless of whether intended as a joke).
10. Possession of any weapon, weapon facsimile, deadly weapon, pistol, knife, blackjack, bludgeon, box cutter, metal knuckles, pellet gun, explosive device, firearm, whether loaded or 'unloaded, whether functional or not, or any other dangerous object.
11. Unauthorized entrance into any school facility or portion of a school facility or aiding or abetting an unauthorized entrance.
12. Possession or ignition of any fireworks or other explosive materials, or ignition of any material causing a fire.
13. Unauthorized possession, sale, distribution, use or consumption of tobacco, drugs, narcotics or alcoholic beverages (or any facsimile of tobacco, drugs, narcotics or alcoholic beverages, or any item represented to be tobacco, drugs or alcoholic beverages). For the purposes of this Paragraph 13, the term "drugs" shall include, but shall not be limited to, any medicinal preparation (prescription and non-prescription) and any controlled substance whose possession, sale, distribution, use or consumption is illegal under state and/or federal law.
14. Possession of paraphernalia used or designed to be used in the consumption, sale or distribution of drugs, alcohol or tobacco, as described in subparagraph (13) above.
15. The destruction of real, personal or school property, such as, cutting, defacing or otherwise damaging property in any way.
16. Accumulation of offenses such as school and class tardiness, class or study hall cutting, or failure to attend detention.
17. Trespassing on school grounds while on out-of-school suspension or expulsion.
18. Making false bomb threats or other threats to the safety of students, staff members, and / or other persons.
19. Defiance of school rules and the valid authority of teachers, supervisors, administrators, other staff members and/or law enforcement authorities.
20. Throwing snowballs, rocks, sticks and/or similar objects, except as specifically authorized by school staff.
21. Unauthorized and/or reckless and/or improper operation of a motor vehicle on school grounds or at any school-sponsored activity.
22. Leaving school grounds, school transportation or a school-sponsored activity without authorization.
23. Use of or copying of the academic work of another individual and presenting it as the student's own work, without proper attribution.
24. Possession and/or use of a radio, walkman, beeper, paging device, cellular telephone, walkie talkie or similar electronic device on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity without the written permission of the principal or his/her designee.

25. Unauthorized use of any school computer, computer system, computer software, Internet connection or similar school property or system, or the use of such property or system for unauthorized purposes.

26. Possession and/or use of a laser pointer.

27. Hazing.

28. Bullying is defined under Sec. 10-222d. as amended by PA 08-160 as: any overt acts by a student or a group of students directed against another student with the intent to ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate the other student while on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity, which acts are repeated against the same student over time.

29. Any other violation of school rules or regulations or a series of violations which makes the presence of the student in school seriously disruptive of the educational process and/or a danger to persons or property.

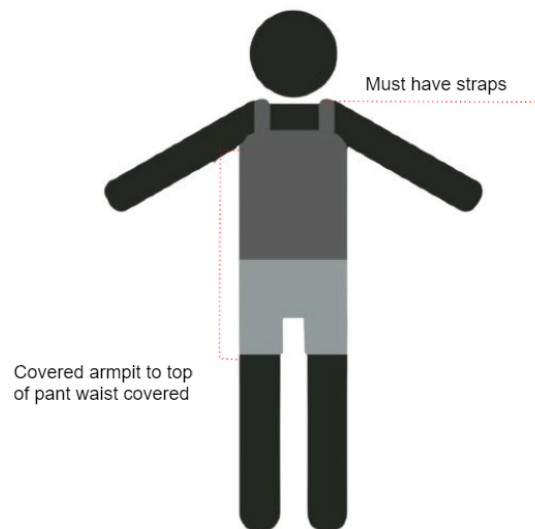
30. Any action prohibited by any Federal or State law which would indicate that the student presents a danger to any person in the school community or school property.

## GENERAL SCHOOL POLICIES

### Dress Standard

In the interest of supporting the learning environment, your fellow classmates, and your community, we encourage dress that reflects an attitude of respect for oneself and for your school. The following guidelines will contribute to the safety and comfort of all members of the school community and it will prepare students for higher education and the professional world. (Note: The Dress Standard was revised May 2021 by a committee consisting of students, teachers and community members.)

- Clothing that promotes or depicts alcohol, drugs, tobacco, violent behavior, culturally insensitive or sexually explicit or suggestive words or pictures are prohibited.
- Outerwear that could be a disruption to class should be kept in the locker (sunglasses, hoods, hats etc)...
- Specialized classes may have specific dress requirements in order to ensure the safety of each individual.
- see diagram below\* clothing should be of appropriate length and fit.



## ELECTRONIC DEVICES

### **Bell-to-Bell Cell Phone Regulations for Middle School Students**

In line with all Fairfield middle schools, we have implemented **Bell-to-Bell Cell Phone Regulations** for all students in Grades 6–8. From the first bell 8:10 a.m. to dismissal 2:50 p.m., students must keep their cell phones, Smartwatches, and Airpods **turned off and stored in their lockers. Cell phones are not to be in student pockets or on their person.** This rule applies throughout the entire school day, including passing time, lunch, and assemblies.

We truly appreciate your support as we work together to reduce distractions, protect student privacy, and support mental well-being.

### **Important Reminders:**

- Devices **may not be used** in restrooms, locker rooms, or during drills/emergencies unless directed by staff.
- **Cyberbullying, harassment, or misuse** of devices will lead to disciplinary action.

### **Violation Consequences:**

- **1st Offense:** Verbal warning; device held in the main office for parent pickup
- **2nd Offense:** Detention; parent pickup required
- **3rd Offense:** Device not allowed at school for 10 days; parent conference and detention
- **4th Offense:** In-school suspension; device not allowed for the remainder of the school year

### **Need to get in touch during the day?**

- **Families:** Call the main office if there's a real emergency.
- **Students:** Can use the main office or counseling office phone with staff permission for urgent situations.

We also ask that families make after-school plans ahead of time, as students won't be able to check phones during the day.

Thank you for working with us to create a school environment where students can stay present, safe, and engaged in learning.

### **STUDENT USE OF OFFICE TELEPHONES/ PARENTS CONTACTING STUDENTS**

Office phones will only be available for student use during the school day with administrative permission.

Occasionally your child might forget lunch money, homework, forms, etc. Your child can check the office between classes and during lunch. (We will not interrupt class to call your child to the office.)

We are trying to promote student responsibility and we encourage you to establish a daily routine at home that fosters this responsibility. We discourage parents from calling to leave messages for their children. With such a large population of students, this can become an impossible task. Messages will be delivered during lunch or at the end of the day. In the case of an emergency, your child will be called from class.

## **BUILDING SECURITY**

Safety and Security are a top priority at Fairfield Woods. In order to assure the safety of all students and staff **all visitors** to Woods must come through the front entrance after being cleared by the main office. Once in the school, all visitors must receive and wear a visitor pass before moving about the building during regular school hours. The only doors available for entry into the building are the main doors nearest the main office. The other doors are only available in the event of an emergency.

Parent cooperation is critical for this procedure to be effective. Please be advised that cameras are in operation monitoring entrances and hallways throughout the school. Students ARE NOT to contact parents via the students cellphone. **If the student is ill, they MUST be seen by the nurse and the nurse will contact the parent. If the student needs to contact the parent for anything else, the student MUST go to the main office or the Dean. A consequence will be issued for any violation of this policy.**

## **WALKING, BIKING, OR SKATEBOARDING TO SCHOOL**

Many students live close enough to FWMS to walk or ride their bikes every day. Please walk on the sidewalks around the school, and use the crosswalks when crossing the school's driveways. Bikers are not to ride their bikes in the driveway and should walk their bikes on the sidewalks. Please avoid dangerous behaviors like riding on the handlebars. All bicycles must be placed in the bike rack and be locked.

**Skateboards and rollerblades are not to be used on school property. This is a matter of safety, as school grounds are not designed for this equipment. Do not climb on brick walls or benches in front of building.**

## **THE CAFETERIA**

The school cafeteria is maintained as a vital part of the health program at school. The lunch room staff and your fellow students will appreciate your cooperation in following the procedures listed below.

- Enter the cafeteria and be seated at your assigned homeroom table (when assigned seats are in effect).
- Once served, please stay seated.
- Refrain from sharing food.
- Recycle all bottles and cans, dispose of other items in the appropriate compost and/or waste barrels.
- Make sure the table and floor around your table is clean.
- Stand quietly and wait your turn in the lunch lines -- single file, please.
- No throwing food or other objects -- food is for eating only.
- Keep your voices down -- loud talking, noises or rowdy behavior will result in removal from lunch or community service.
- Treat all food service personnel with respect. "Please" and "Thank you" go a long way and are keys to success.

**We ask that parents refrain from sending in birthday cakes, cupcakes etc. and pizzas to celebrate their children's birthdays in school. These celebrations are exclusionary by nature and can create problems in our cafeteria.**

## **HALLWAYS**

Corridors can become very congested as all students pass from class to class. Please remember a few simple rules for safe and quick passage:

- Keep to the right.

- No running or jumping.
- Keep voices low, as some classes will be in session while you pass.
- You must always have a pass to be in the halls during class time.
- Respect that some bathrooms are reserved specifically for students with a physical impairment or other disability.

### **BUS SAFETY RULES -School Rules Apply**

The bus driver is charged with the safe transportation of students to and from school and must have the full cooperation of all students on the bus at all times.

- Students should be at the designated bus stop at least 5 minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive.  
Students are to conduct themselves in a safe manner on the bus as well as at the bus stop. It is also important that the student respect the property of citizens living near the bus stop.
- Students are not to attempt to board the bus until the bus has come to a complete stop. Students are to enter the bus in an orderly fashion, without pushing or shoving. They are to go to their seats promptly and remain there until arrival at their destination. Students, who must cross the highway, after alighting from the bus, will pass in front of the bus, not behind it.
- There will be no eating on the school bus.
- Do not throw anything out of the bus windows or on the bus floor.
- Students are to ride only on the bus routes to which they are assigned and get on and off at their designated bus stop.
- Loud talking, laughter and unnecessary confusion can divert the attention of the driver and could result in a serious accident. Ordinary conversation is encouraged.
- Smoking, vulgarity or other improper conduct will not be permitted on the bus.
- Bus driver and/or the Dean may assign seats to students, if necessary.
- All students are to remain seated while the bus is in motion.
- Refrain from pushing, shoving, and wrestling on the bus or at the loading areas.
- No running between the buses.
- Harassment, of any kind, may result in loss of bus privilege.

### **CONSEQUENCES FOR MISBEHAVIOR ON BUS OR AT BUS STOPS - School Rules Apply**

1. Warning / detention
2. Loss of bus privilege -- 1 day
3. Loss of bus privilege -- 5-10 days
4. Removal from the bus, conference with parents, transportation director and the Dean

*For serious misbehavior:*

Steps 1 and 2 may be bypassed. If an incident takes place on the afternoon run, the driver may return to school and have the student removed from the bus. Parents will be responsible for immediate pick-up.

### **SUBSTANCE ABUSE (BOE Policy #5313)**

It is the policy of the Fairfield Schools to prevent and prohibit the possession, use and/or distribution of any drug (narcotics and alcohol) or drug paraphernalia on school property, at school-sponsored events, on school buses, and to and from school by any mode of travel.

Violations of this policy, including the possession, use, distribution of any drug or drug paraphernalia and being under the influence of any drug on school property or at any school-sponsored event, will be dealt with in accord with the procedures developed by the administration and Board of Education Policy. The consequences of such violations may ultimately result in expulsion from school.

Recognizing that drug use and abuse may be indicative of serious underlying problems, every effort will be made to offer a student help and assistance, including early identification, referral for treatment, and after care support. Disciplinary procedures will be administered with the best interests of the student, the school population and the community in mind.

Due consideration will be given to the rights of the students:

- Questioning of a student on school premises will take place only in the presence of a school building administrator and/or dean;
- A student's right to remain silent or to speak through an attorney or parent or guardian may not be abridged; and • A school building administrator and/or dean will maintain a record of all proceedings under this policy, which shall be available to the student.

## **DANGEROUS OBJECTS, STEALING OR ASSAULT**

The safety of all students is our highest concern. Therefore, students who bring to school, use, sell, or attempt to sell a firearm, deadly weapon, dangerous instrument or facsimiles of weapons will be suspended from school and reported to the Fairfield Police Department. State law specifically prohibits such behavior. **Such behavior may result in the expulsion from school for a period up to, but not exceeding, 182 school days.**

The building administrators shall notify the police department of all crimes of a serious nature, such as carrying a weapon or dangerous object\*, assault, possession of a controlled substance, vandalism on school grounds, and larceny. The consequences of such violations may ultimately result in expulsion from school. (\*Dangerous objects: fireworks of any kind, toy guns -- "look-alikes", pellet guns, nunchuks, chain wallets, etc.)

Board of Education property includes all public schools and adjoining property, office facilities, buses used for student transportation, whether owned or contracted, and properties used by the Board of Education for educational purposes.

## **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY (BOE Policy #5330)**

Bullying behavior by any student in the Fairfield Public Schools is strictly prohibited and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school.

Bullying is defined under Sec. 10-222d. as amended by PA 08-160 as: any overt acts by a student or group of students directed against another student with the intent to ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate the other student while on school grounds or at a school sponsored activity, or on a school bus, which acts are committed more than once against any student during the school year. Bullying which occurs outside of the school setting may be addressed by school officials if it has a direct and negative impact on a student's academic performance or safety in school.

Students and parents may file verbal or written complaints concerning suspected bullying behavior, and students shall be permitted to anonymously report acts of bullying to teachers and school administrators. Any report of suspected bullying behavior will be promptly reviewed. If acts of bullying are verified, prompt disciplinary action may be taken against the perpetrator, consistent with his/her rights of due process. No disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Board Policy 5330 and its accompanying regulation set forth this prohibition and the related procedures in detail, and are available to students and their parents/guardians upon request or at the following site: <http://fairfieldschools.org/board-of-education-policy-5000.htm>.

The school investigation of reports of bullying may include:

- Interviewing the parents and student of the alleged victim
- Interviewing the alleged perpetrator and informing the parents
- Discussion with adult staff who may have been in proximity
- Providing an opportunity for anonymous written testimony/input from potential witnesses
- Follow up individual/small group conversations with witnesses
- Review of video surveillance (subject to availability)

We always try to maintain confidentiality for all parties who provide us with information.

From the information we gather, we make a determination of whether bullying occurred under State Statute. We also make a determination of whether disciplinary action is warranted – whether actual “bullying” per state definition happened or not, and consequences are assigned. Just as important as consequences, we also provide counseling and guidance to all parties involved in the incident. We ask perpetrators to learn from mistakes and recognize the consequences of their behavior. We support victims, bystanders, and allies through teaching of a variety of strategies of how to handle these situations in the future and to help them deal with the difficulties that have arisen. We also have anonymous reporting forms and boxes in guidance, the

nurse, and the main office. The TIPS online reporting can also be used, which can be found on the FWMS website.

## **SMOKING AND VAPING POLICY**

Smoking any substance is considered hazardous to your health and **IS NOT PERMITTED** in school, on school buses or school grounds.

### ***Consequences:***

***First Offense:*** One-day Internal Suspension and a parent phone call.

***Second Offense:*** One-day External Suspension.

## **TRUANCY POLICY**

Under the law, a student who is truant is subject to the jurisdiction of the Superior Court (Juvenile Division) on a delinquency petition. General Statutes S10-190a (a) defines “truant” to mean “a child enrolled in a grade from kindergarten to eight, inclusive, in a public or private school, who has four unexcused absences from school in any one month or ten unexcused absences from school in any school year; and a “habitual truant” means any such child who has twenty unexcused absences within a school year.

Truancy is often symptomatic of other problems with the child or the child’s home. Truant students, or students who are cutting class, will be assigned In-School Suspension, late detentions and/or social probation. Chronic truancy will result in a referral to the courts.

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY**

It is the policy of the Fairfield Public Schools to maintain a working and learning environment free from harassment, insults or intimidation on the basis of sex or sexual orientation. Sexual harassment is against the law and against school district policy -- Connecticut General Statutes Section 46a - 60, as amended, and Title VIII and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (29 C.F.R. SS1604.11).

Every student and staff member has the right to an environment free from profane, obscene or generally unacceptable displays of clothing, books, language, gestures, etc.

This policy will be applied equally to behavior between and among students, as well as between students and any member of our staff, professional and non-professional, and visitors.

Any student who wishes to register a complaint should see the Dean of Students for an application of grievance procedures.

## **Title IX Prohibition of Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment**

**Incident prior to August 1, 2024** TITLE IX OF THE EDUCATION AMENDMENTS OF 1972 – 5145.4(a)  
PROHIBITION OF SEX DISCRIMINATION AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT - [5145.4](#)

**Incident on or after August 1, 2024** TITLE IX OF THE EDUCATION AMENDMENTS OF 1972 – 5145.4(a)  
PROHIBITION OF SEX DISCRIMINATION AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT - [5145.4](#)

## **LASER POINTERS – State statute:**

- Prohibits anyone from selling or otherwise providing persons under 18 years of age with laser pointers, except for temporary transfers to such persons for educational or other lawful purposes under specified conditions (Effective October 1, 1999).
- Prohibits persons under 18 years of age from possessing laser pointers on school grounds or in any public place, except for temporary transfers to such persons for educational or other lawful purposes under specified conditions (Effective October 1, 1999).
- Prohibits the shining, pointing or focusing of a laser pointer, directly or indirectly, upon or at another person in a manner that can reasonably be expected to cause harassment, annoyance or fear of injury to such other person (Effective October 1, 1999).

## **RELOCATION POLICY**



The Fairfield Public School System provides services to ensure students, parents and other persons access to meetings, programs and activities. The school system will relocate programs in order to ensure accessibility of the programs and activities to disabled persons. To make arrangements, please contact: Pupil and Special Education Services, 501 King's Highway, Fairfield, CT 06824 - - Telephone: 255-8379.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

It is the policy of the Fairfield Board of Education that no person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise discriminated against under any program, including employment, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, mental retardation, mental or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness.

## **ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The school's asbestos containing materials management plan is available for review in the main office. E.P.A. Reg 763.93 (4).

## **NETWORK CODE OF CONDUCT – ACCEPTABLE USE GUIDELINES (BOE Policy #6417AR)**

Use of the network, which includes the local Fairfield Public Schools' computer network as well as the Internet, shall be in support of education and research that is consistent with the mission of the district. Internet use is limited to those students who have completed the Acceptable Use Agreement Form located on Infinite Campus.

The district reserves the right to remove a user's account if it is determined that the user is engaged in unauthorized activity or is violating this code of conduct.

NOTE: You will be asked to read and agree to abide by the terms of the Acceptable Use Guidelines.

### **1. Behave ethically and responsibly when using District Technology Resources.**

- a. Refrain from utilizing proxy gateways or similar technologies to bypass the technology monitoring and filtering.
- b. Handle technology resources and equipment with care. Refrain from deleting, destroying, modifying, abusing, or moving resources without permission or accessing unauthorized technology resources.
- d. Do not breach or disable network security mechanisms or compromise network stability or security in any way or download or modify computer software in violation of the district technology's licensure agreement(s) and/or without authorization from the Technology Department.

### **2. Use District Technology Resources, transmit communications or access information only for legitimate, educationally relevant purposes and to access educationally appropriate content.**

- a. Refrain from sending any form of communication that breaches the district technology's confidentiality requirements or the confidentiality of students.
- b. Refrain from sending any form of communication that harasses, threatens, bullies, or is discriminatory.
- d. Refrain from using social network tools for personal use.

### **3. Respect the privacy of others and treat information created by others as the private property of the creator.**

- a. Maintain confidentiality of your username and password by not sharing it with others and not using another person's username and password.
- b. Maintain the integrity of files and data by not trespassing, modifying, copying or deleting files of other users without their consent.
- c. Protect the confidentiality and safety of others when sharing work and images. Share, post and publish only within the context of the district **Publishing Guidelines**.
- d. Respect copyright and fair use laws; these policies and procedures apply in digital contexts, as well. Plagiarism is prohibited.
- e. Users will utilize appropriate online behavior, including interactions with others in social media sites or chat rooms, and refrain from cyber-bullying behavior.

## **CHEATING/PLAGIARISM**

Copying other's work, whether a friend's homework, another student's test paper or a pre-written essay from the internet violates the Code of Conduct and will result in loss of academic credit and disciplinary action.

## **VIDEO RECORDING/PHOTOGRAPHS**

Because we live in a video age, we will be videotaping and photographing children in classrooms throughout the year for educational purposes or for newspapers, orientation slides, web page, posters or student memorabilia. If you DO NOT want your child photographed or videotaped, please write to Mrs. Duguid in the FWMS office before the school year begins. (Children's pictures on the web site do not include their full names.) We ask students NOT to photograph or video one another with cell phones, cameras, or other digital devices unless assigned to do so by the yearbook director or by their teacher as part of a class or school assignment.

**Surveillance:** The Board of Education authorizes the use of video cameras on district property and school

transportation vehicles to ensure the health, welfare and safety of all staff, students, and visitors to district property, and to safeguard district facilities and equipment. Video recordings establishing a violation of Board policies, administrative regulations and school rules may be used to support appropriate disciplinary actions or may be provided to law enforcement agencies even in the case of individuals who are not students or staff.