



Ferrisburgh Central School
Parent-Student Handbook
2003-04

Ferrisburgh Central School
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Acceptable Student Use of Electronic Resources and The Internet

Students of Ferrisburgh Central School have access to the School's electronic resources and the Internet for school-related assignments, activities, communication and research. All users of the School's network need to follow the rules of personal and ethical conduct regarding electronic resources; teachers will guide students in learning acceptable use, and students are responsible for appropriate behaviors when using school networks, just as they are in classrooms, school hallways and common areas. A copy of the policy and procedures relating to the safe and appropriate use of electronic resources is available through the FCS Office.

Act 51 - Drug & Alcohol Education

Act 51 and State Board Rule #4200 require all schools to teach substance abuse prevention in compliance with the Vermont Drug Education Curriculum Plan. At Ferrisburgh Central School, drug and alcohol prevention-based activities are facilitated by classroom teachers, guidance counselor, and school nurse and relate directly to the ANWSU Health Curriculum and its unit objectives: effects of drugs on body functions; use of alcohol and drugs in society; use, misuse and addiction; self-concept, interpersonal skills, communication skills, coping skills, and responsible decision- making.

Currently, Ferrisburgh Central School addresses these objectives (K-6) through the social skill building and drug and alcohol prevention curricula "Know Your Body" (grades K-2) and "Life Skills Training" (grades 3-6). Other prevention activities coordinated by student representatives and staff include special school-wide assemblies, activities and small group work on drug and alcohol prevention-related issues.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding drug and alcohol abuse prevention activities, please contact the guidance counselor, the school nurse or the principal.

After-School Activities

Many activities are offered to students during after school hours. These may be provided by staff members or by volunteers from the community. Some activities are sponsored by the school (i.e. Ferrisburgh Children's Theater, Destination Imagination, basketball league, activity clubs) while others are supported by outside agencies such as Boy/Girl Scout Programs, Rokeby Museum and the Ferrisburgh Recreation Department. While the school cannot accept responsibility for the management and supervision of programs that are not approved by the FCS Board, it will encourage and support these efforts when they are in the best interest of students and promote child development. Parents should make sure that they are clearly aware of the nature of a program and its supervisory structure before they permit children to participate. It is particularly important that parents and children are mutually aware of daily transportation arrangements. If a child is absent from school, it is not appropriate for her/him to take part in any after school activities.

FCS is also a site for a supervised activity-based after-school program run by the Mary Johnson Children's Center (Middlebury). Enrolled students move into the program at the end of the regular school day and stay until picked up by parent(s) or authorized person. More information about the Mary Johnson After-School Program at FCS can be obtained by calling the Mary Johnson Children's Center at 338-2853

Art Program

All students in grades K-6 receive art instruction once weekly for a period of 40-50 minutes. The main emphasis of the art curriculum is to encourage self-expression and creativity through exploration of a wide range of art media. Lessons expose students to the basic elements of line, form, color and texture and the fundamentals of art criticism through observation of master works. Art work is displayed throughout the school on a continual basis so that students can take pride in their work and enjoy the work of others. An annual exhibit of selected work from all ANWSU schools is displayed at the Bixby Library in June. Bi-annually, there is a District Arts Festival, a visual arts and music celebration revolving around a central theme in which each child has art work displayed. Art instruction and experiences are further complemented by specific project work and annual artist-in-residency programs made possible by the support of the FCS Parent-Teacher Organization and other community groups.

Attendance

School attendance is required by Vermont Law unless students are excused for illness or family emergency (VSA, T. 16). Regular attendance is vital for school achievement and in establishing habits significantly impacting on future success in the work force. As well as being unlawful, excessive absence or tardiness is detrimental to a child's education and must be reported to the Superintendent of Schools, the Agency of Social and Rehabilitation Services and the State's Attorney. Please call the School Office by 8:00 a.m. if your child is going to be absent for any reason. This will alleviate the need for us to call you at home or work to notify you that your child is not in school.

Breakfast and Lunch Program

The school operates a comprehensive Food Services program providing a healthy breakfast, lunch and snack/juice program for students whose families wish to participate. Menus are published on a monthly basis; copies are sent home with students. Breakfast is available from 7:40-7:55 am.

Current prices for 2003-2004 are as follows:

Breakfast per meal: Full price = \$0.75	Lunch per meal: Full price = \$1.45
Reduced = \$0.30	Reduced = \$0.40
Adults = \$1.00	Adults = \$3.25

Snack program (Morning) - \$.25

Snack Milk and Juice = \$0.30. Twelve-ounce cans of juice and 20-ounce bottles of water are available from a vending machine for \$.75 during lunch/after-school hours for students in grades 4-6.



Information on program participation and the meal pre-payment system will be sent home in a packet from the Food Services Director during the first week of school. **Applications for the subsidized Free/Reduced Breakfast/Lunch program will also be sent home during the first week of school, but parents may apply at any time.** All families who qualify are encouraged to apply for this Federal Program as it benefits the children, Food Services Program, and the FCS participation in grant entitlement programs. Applications are accepted at any time in the year.

Busing

General Information - Vermont Statutes Sections 1221-1222 and ANWSU Policy #8100 permit transportation of students at the discretion of the local School Board. The Ferrisburgh Board contracts with a private carrier for student transportation. Bus routes can be obtained by calling the FCS Office.

Bus Pick-up and Drop-off Guidelines - Students will be picked up and dropped off at specific points in the vicinity of their homes for the normal trip to and from school. The School Board reserves the right to establish such points for safety and efficiency. In the interest of safety and security, students will not be permitted to board or exit the bus at other points without the prior written permission of a parent/guardian and approval of the FCS administration.

Student Behavior - Parents are encouraged to discuss the importance of appropriate behavior on the buses with their children on a regular basis. Poor behavior on the bus is an extreme safety hazard and cannot be tolerated. Because of the seriousness of this issue, parents of students who disregard bus safety rules may be called to school to resolve recurring problems. If inappropriate behavior persists, students may be denied access to buses as a way to travel to and from school. Parents should remind students that school bus transportation is a privilege that can be denied if abused. The following general rules govern student conduct on school buses:

Ferrisburgh Bus Guidelines

All students who choose to ride on the buses will:

- Understand that riding on the school bus is a privilege, not a right.
- Follow the directions of the driver without question.
- Respect all other riders, the driver, and the bus at all times.
- Refrain from loud, abusive, or inappropriate language.
- Remain seated at all times - Once seated, students are not to change seats unless directed to do so by the driver.
- Keep hands and body to self at ALL times. Avoid overt physical contact with other students, including "horseplay" or fighting.
- Not throw objects of any kind.
- Know that smoking or the use of drugs or alcohol on the bus is strictly prohibited.
- Not use radios or other electronic sound devices (walkman, cassette players, etc.) on the bus unless headphones are used.
- Keep all body parts inside the bus at all times and out of the aisles.
- Sit in seats assigned to them by the driver.

Due to safety and space issues, the following are not permitted on buses: sleds, snowboards, skis, or live animals of any kind. Larger musical instruments may need to be limited, also.

Computer Lab/Technology

Knowing and applying the tools of technology are necessary learning skills that all students must have as part of their educational journey. These skills include demonstrated understanding in basic operations and concepts, technology productivity, research, communication, problem-solving and decision-making tools. All students have weekly time in the computer lab to work on mastering essential skills for computer and internet-related learning. When possible, these skills are integrated into students' existing curriculum. Students also use computers throughout their daily learning activity. The Computer Lab is open and supervised during the school day for students to work independently or in small groups.

Discipline

A clearly articulated system of school discipline provides the foundation for positive social, emotional, physical and cognitive growth and development. Our Core Values preserve the dignity and self-worth of all. These values for a well-disciplined school community are:

- Respectful and Honest Interaction
- Responsibility and Accountability
- Emotional and Physical Safety
- High Standards and Expectations

Behavior management and discipline are the means of teaching, reinforcing, and maintaining the Core Values. These values foster and promote respect, responsibility, safety, growth, cooperation, and kindness. The purpose for having a behavior management and discipline program is to provide the skills to follow a path of respectful, responsible and contributing citizenship. It is critical that behavior management concepts, skills, and content are clearly articulated, systematically taught and practiced, and consistently applied across settings. They are best learned when all:

- Feel safe and supported
- Have ownership in the process
- Have positive adult and peer role models

FCS staff, parents, and students all have rights and bear responsibility for insuring that a climate conducive to a positive educational atmosphere exists at our school. *Our School Rules foster respect, responsibility and safety for ourselves, others, our learning and our environment.*

At FCS, logical consequences for misbehavior are progressive in nature, with the goal of solving problems and issues at the earliest possible stage and always a) related to the student's behavior, b) respectful of the student and classroom, and c) reasonable to help children fix their mistakes and know what to do or what is expected next time. Each level of the interactive process will offer the student an opportunity to resolve a problem and preclude further action.

Reasonable and logical responses to misbehavior are a part of the educational process. All documentation of violations of school rules will be kept confidential. Only a student, family and appropriate school personnel will have access to this information. Parents and legal guardians will be informed by FCS staff at the earliest possible time, either by phone or mail (if necessary) whenever an issue involving discipline arises, and every effort will be made to work with parents to improve student behavior and support positive social skill development.

Ferrisburgh Central School reserves the right to search a student's belongings when there is reason to suspect that the student is in possession of any object that violates school rules and state/federal laws. Parents will be notified when such a search takes place.

The Three-Level System

When a student violates school rules, staff members use a set of skills and procedures designed to guide the student quickly and efficiently back to task. This approach helps the student make choices prompted by clear and consistently utilized responses. The Three-Level Discipline System recognizes that clear and consistent adult responses to low-level challenging behaviors produces a positive school climate in which more serious infractions will be minimized.

The Three-Level System is an explicit protocol to be used by all staff members when reacting to student misconduct. It does not include an exhaustive list of every student infraction followed by concrete consequences. Instead, a range of student behavior is followed by appropriate adult responses with discretion based on the type of behavior. The Three-Level System assigns responsibility for handling different levels of student behavior to specific adults.

Level One Behaviors: Primary Responsibility – Teacher or Supervising Adult

Student Behaviors	Supportive Teacher Behaviors	Consequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Off-task behaviors • Minor to moderate disruption • Inappropriate verbal and non-verbal interactions • Non-responsive to teacher direction • Inattention to classroom work • Unprepared for class • Improper use of school and others' property 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planned Ignoring • Non-verbal intervention (i.e. eye contact, proximity, shoulder touch) • Affirmation • Active Listening • Change/Modify Task (Redirection) • Offer Choice • Supportive Guidance Back to Task <p>Directive Teacher Behaviors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Script for Limit-Setting: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are you doing? 2. What are you supposed to be doing? 3. What do you choose to do? (give two choices) • Use of "I" statements • Transition from supportive behaviors to directive behaviors at appropriate time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for recognition and achievement • Positive reinforcement for task completion and class cooperation • Parent notification and involvement • In-class time out • Work completion during recess/after-school • Loss of privileges • Restitution (You "break" it, you "fix" it)

Level Two Behaviors: Primary Responsibility – Teacher and Behavioral Support Staff (Guidance, School-Based Counselor, Other Teachers, Principal, Behavioral Consultants)

<p>Student Behaviors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes all Level One behaviors in which a student remains non-compliant and disruptive to his/her or others' learning or responsibilities. Behavior continues despite teacher intervention. • Physically/verbally aggressive behavior 	<p>Teacher Behaviors</p> <p>Immediate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Script (see above) • Direct student to out-of-class spaces (partner room) or pre-arranged location • With ongoing student refusal, summon crisis team <p>Follow-Up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach alternative behaviors • Working with school supports including: Guidance staff, Principal, Learning/Behavioral Specialists • Referral to Educational Support Team for assessment and Behavior Intervention Plan 	<p>Consequences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in development of Behavior Intervention Plan • Removal from classroom • Restitution (You “break” it, you “fix” it) • Parent Notification • Work completion during recess/after-school • Class failure • Loss of privileges
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Level Three Behaviors: Primary Responsibility – School Administration

<p>Student Behaviors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chronic violation of school or class rules • Serious verbal aggressions, harassment, or threat • Serious damage to property • Serious physical altercations • Weapons possession, threat or actual use • Tobacco, drugs and alcohol possession or use • Unlawful activities 	<p>Teacher Behaviors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referral to Principal • Seek help of Crisis Support Team and other school-wide supports • Participate in parent conferences and re-entry meetings • Provide work for in-school suspension • Referral for Functional Assessment and Behavior Intervention Plan (if appropriate) 	<p>Consequences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interagency referral and planning (law enforcement, SRS, etc.) • Parental notification and involvement • Restitution • Short-term suspension (in or out of school) • Long-term suspension • Consideration for placement in alternative program • Expulsion • School failure
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A copy of the complete packet containing “Ferrisburgh Central School Prevention and Response to Challenging School Behaviors” can be obtained from the School Office.

Dismissal Procedures/Early Dismissal

To avoid the “mass confusion” that often characterizes the end of the school day, Ferrisburgh Central School uses a two-phase dismissal procedure. As soon as all buses arrive, usually by 3:00 p.m., students who take the bus home or to an arranged after-school location will be dismissed first and escorted down the halls to the front doors (grade 3-6). All “walkers,” students attending after-school programs/activities and students being picked up by a parent/authorized adult will wait in classrooms under supervision. Once all buses pull out of the entrance area, usually by 3:05, an intercom announcement will “dismiss” remaining students and staff will escort them to the front lobby.

If your child must leave school early, please send a note indicating the reason, time and the person who will be picking the child up at school. An “early dismissal” pass will then be issued at the FCS Office. All authorized adults who come to pick up a child must have parent/guardian permission to do so, check in at the Office and "sign" the child out. Please try to schedule appointments outside of regular school hours whenever possible

Parking Lot Safety – please help insure pedestrian safety by adhering to the safety signs and one-way traffic flow of the Circle in front of the school at all times. Peak bus drop-off and pick-up times are 7:40-7:45 and 2:55-3:05 and it is advisable that cars plan on entering the Circle outside of those times. Please use the sidewalk for dropping off and picking up students as per signage. Vehicles cannot be left unattended at this pick-up/drop-off area. If you need to leave your vehicle and enter the school at arrival, dismissal or any time, please park at one of the “Visitor” spaces provided.

Dress/Appearance

Per ANWSU Policy #3224, parents are asked to ensure that children arrive at school with clothing and appearance conducive to a positive educational atmosphere. Students may be asked to change clothing if dress is seen as offensive to others, promotes alcohol, tobacco or drug use, or exhibits improper or socially unacceptable language. Examples of inappropriate school attire might include but are not limited to: halter tops, half shirts, fish net shirts, "short" shorts, etc. We ask parent cooperation in this area.

Educational Support Team

Our school has available a number of services and supports to assist FCS students in becoming successful learners. Ferrisburgh Central School adheres to the provisions of Vermont's Act 117 requiring the establishment of Educational Support Teams (EST) in all Vermont Schools. The Education Support System is a school-based system designed to help all students improve their school performance and help them grow academically, socially, emotionally and physically. The system provides a way for schools to offer direct student, staff and parent support and resources to address students' varying needs in school.

The EST is composed of a team of staff members who meet regularly to review individual student referrals. It receives referrals for assistance from teachers, parents or other staff members. At the initial meeting, the Team considers what classroom accommodations and interventions have already been tried and assists teachers in planning and providing additional services and accommodations to meet student needs. The Team develops a specific plan of action, assigns a case manager and schedules follow-up sessions to monitor student progress and the plan effectiveness. More information about our EST can be found on the following website: www.anwsu.org. Go to Resources and click on Educational Support Services. You may also obtain more information or discuss a referral to the Educational Support Team by calling the school.

Emergency Situations

Procedures are in place at Ferrisburgh Central School to deal with crisis and emergency situations, including threats to safety. In the rare instance of an emergency, it may be necessary to institute an early dismissal from school. It is extremely important that children understand where they are to go in the event of such an early dismissal. For obvious reasons, we cannot be responsible for calling individual homes. We will, however, do our best to insure that children are taken to a location determined to be safe, given the circumstances (i.e the Grange, Vergennes Union High School) and widely broadcast.

Please be advised that any written, spoken or implied threat to the health and safety of students and/or staff at FCS will be taken seriously, regardless of the age of the alleged perpetrator. This could include referral to the Superintendent of Schools and legal authorities for action, possible dismissal and/or other appropriate disciplinary measures.

Emergency Telephone Numbers

FCS staff must know how to get in contact with parents and/or authorized adults in the event of need. We must have an emergency telephone number on file for each student at all times. If the home or work phone number(s) provided on the Emergency Contact sheet (obtained at the beginning of the year)change, please notify the Office immediately to update your emergency contacts.

Enrichment/Challenge Program

The Enrichment/Challenge Program at Ferrisburgh Central School provides the opportunity for an array of alternative and supplementary learning experiences. Small group activities are structured to allow students to work with a peer group in open-ended learning. Here, students are encouraged to develop higher level thinking skills and tools for advanced problem-solving and creativity. Individual opportunities for independent study are offered to the motivated and advanced student. Meeting times occur during the school day. Any interested student may participate in enrichment activities at some level. Areas of group or individual study have included art, music composition, animation, computer programming, creating models, robotics, wildlife migration and seasonal change, among many other topics of teacher and/or student interest.

Facility Use by the Public

The FCS building and grounds are available for use by the general public when not required for school purposes. Please request application forms and information from the School Office. Scheduling as far in advance as possible is recommended to avoid conflicts. Terms of use and charges are determined by the Ferrisburgh School Board Policy #4330P.

Federal Education Rights to Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (**FERPA**) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. They are:

1) The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the District receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the records(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask Ferrisburgh Central School to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If FCS administration decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, FCS will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3) The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that **FERPA** authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the District has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

4) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of **FERPA**. The name and address is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-4605

Field Trips

The community-at-large is an important resource for many of our instructional programs. Out-of-classroom trips are planned to reinforce classroom learning activities and to provide students with a "real world" perspective on their education. Ferrisburgh Central School-sponsored field trips generally fall into one of the following categories:

- Curriculum/Instruction-Based Field Trips
- Club/Organization Field Trips
- Contest/Competition Field Trips

Educational field trips can be taken during the school day, a portion of the day, or as an overnight trip. Although field trips can have significant educational value, they do require careful planning and supervision. The Board expects the FCS administration to screen all field trip requests and base approval or denial on educational value, funding, and the availability of staff/chaperones both going on the trip and remaining at school.

Funding of school-sponsored field trips and other activities bearing a cost shall be borne by the school budget or by contributions and support from grants, the FCS PTO, or other funding sources. In cases when the opportunity to enrich an FCS student's learning experience through attendance on a school-sponsored field trip is dependent upon a small family contribution, families may be asked to help fund the cost of admission tickets, fees, busing (driver's costs and gas mileage), etc. In a limited capacity not to exceed twice yearly, families may be asked by classroom teachers or club/organization sponsors to contribute a maximum of \$5.00 per child per event. Donations from alternative funding sources will be solicited to support families for whom this request is prohibitive. No student will be denied access to a field trip due to an inability to pay any additional cost.

A signed permission note is required for all activities occurring off school grounds. Students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with normal school behavioral standards on all trips. We often need parent volunteers to assist with supervision on trips and greatly appreciate this assistance. Students who do not participate in trips for any reason will be provided with suitable alternative activities at school.

Film/Photo/Videotape Permission

There are numerous occasions during the school year when the school, district, local media organizations, or authorized individuals photograph, videotape or interview students and staff members in school for legitimate purposes. Photos and audio/videotapes are used to document instructional programs and/or inform parents and public. Group and individual students are shown as they take part in school-related events. Another purpose for the photography or videotaping is to allow students and teachers to review in-class activities. As a result, some photos and tapes may be retained for an extended time.

Though Ferrisburgh Central School would like all students to participate in whatever documentation is considered appropriate to instruction or public information, the decision regarding participation rests with parents. If you rather that your FCS student not be photographed or audio/videotaped at any time, please indicate that in writing to the FCS Office.

Foreign Language Program

During the school year, an 18-week tutorial program in Spanish language and culture is offered for FCS students in grades 3-6. The Spanish tutorial provides students with exposure to a second language and multi-cultural perspectives and establishes a foundation for a more comprehensive program at the middle/high school.



Fundraising by Students

School Board Policy permits students to participate in the raising of funds for school activities or charitable causes in limited capacities. School staff will provide coordination and direction on these projects. The safety of our children is a major consideration. Participation in all fundraising events always rest with parents and students. Parents are encouraged to discuss any questions or concerns with FCS classroom teachers or principal. The FCS fundraising policy can be obtained from the principal upon request.

Guidance Services

School counseling services at FCS are based on the premise that each person is unique and entitled to explore his/her potential for self-fulfillment in a nurturing atmosphere. The primary role of the school counselor is to implement a comprehensive developmental school counseling program that will help all students acquire skills in personal, emotional, social, educational and vocational areas necessary for living in a multi-cultural society. All services are delivered with the belief that every student possesses individual worth and the potential for growth. Recognizing that individuals experience definable stages of personal growth and developmental tasks, the goal is to provide all students with a comprehensive, responsive and pro-active school counseling program suited to their developmental needs. As partners in this process, the cooperative efforts of the entire school community are necessary to assist each student's growth and development to promote independence, self-realization and responsible living. The school counselor is part of an educational team working to facilitate each student's learning as well as to prevent and manage crisis situations to further enable students to fully meet the educational mission of FCS.

The counseling program at FCS consists of many activities and learning experiences for students. All students will be involved through classroom meetings, small group experiences or individual meetings with the school counselor. Activities will be centered around age-appropriate themes and issues (e.g. friendship, conflict resolution, etc). The school counselor often consults with students, teachers, staff members, parents, and community agencies concerning various issues/problems involving students. In a collaborative agreement between Ferrisburgh Central School and the Counseling Service of Addison County (CSAC), FCS children and families can also be supported in academic and social growth through the services of a school-based clinician. As a member of a child's support team and providing supportive counseling, the school-based clinician can provide case management and home-based services. Parents are part of all referral procedures. For more information about the FCS-CSAC school-based clinician collaboration, please contact the FCS Office.

Harassment

Ferrisburgh Central School adheres to Vermont Act #120 (7/00), assuring that all Vermont educational institutions provide safe, orderly, civil and positive learning environments in which all may learn and grow. "Harassment, hazing and bullying have no place and will not be tolerated in Vermont schools. No Vermont student shall feel threatened or be discriminated against while enrolled in a Vermont school." Any form of unlawful harassment on the basis of disability, mental status, national origin, race, religion, sex or sexual orientation is prohibited. Behaviors deemed sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent enough to interfere with a student's ability to participate in or benefit from school are unlawful. These include but are not limited to physical aggression or force, demeaning comments or behaviors, slurs, mimicking, jokes, gestures, name-calling, graffiti, stalking, sexual advances, use of nicknames emphasizing stereotypes, comments on manner of speaking, negative references to customs, and derogatory comments regarding surnames. ANWSU Policy for the Prevention of Harassment of Students (F13) outlines procedures for all reported instances of harassment, a copy of which can be obtained from the School Office.

Health Services

All children deserve the best possible health care to insure fulfillment of their learning potential and allow them to experience the true value of their individual worth. The Health Services Program is designed to meet the needs of children while they are in school but not to replace or supplant the services provided by a child's physician. We ask that children not be sent to school in the morning if they have a fever, exhibit symptoms of illness in any other way, or have experienced diarrhea or vomitus in the past 24 hours. Schools

place children in close contact with each other for extended periods; it is not appropriate to expose them to illness. We remind parents to check for head lice on a regular basis (see below). Your physician or pharmacist will assist you if a problem develops. We appreciate being advised if children contract contagious diseases as soon as they are diagnosed as this assists us in attempts at controlling the spread of these illnesses. Routine first aid is provided by the school nurse. More serious injuries/illnesses will be handled in accordance with the guidance provided by parents on the Emergency/Health Update Form. In these instances, every attempt will be made to contact parents or designated emergency contacts. In cases where this is not possible, the child will be given appropriate care at school or transported to the designated medical facility.

Medication - Medication should be administered at home whenever possible. In exceptional circumstances, the school nurse or principal's designee will administer oral medication subject to the following requirements:

A. Written instruction signed by the parent and/or physician will be required to include: (1) student's name, (2) name of medication, (3) purpose of medication, (4) time of administration, (5) dosage, (6) possible side effects, and (7) termination date. Prescription medications must be accompanied by a doctor's signature for medication to be administered by the nurse at school.

B. The school nurse will: (1) inform appropriate school personnel of the medication, (2) record each administration, (3) keep medication in a locked cabinet, and (4) return unused medication to the parent only.

Medication must be provided in a container appropriately labeled by the physician or pharmacist. The parent must assume the responsibility for informing the school of any change in the child's health or medication. The School District retains the right to reject requests for administration of medication.

Screening - Annual health screening will be conducted for each student for vision, hearing, scoliosis, blood pressure, height, and weight. Evaluations may also be requested by a parent, physician or teacher. If you do not want your child to participate in any screening, please notify the Health Office in writing by September 10th.

Immunizations - Vermont's Department of Education and Health mandates that all students entering a Vermont school meet the following requirements:

DTP - A minimum of three (3) doses with at least six months separating the last two doses (for a booster effect).

POLIO - A minimum of three (3) doses with at least six months separating the last two doses.

MEASLES/RUBELLA (MMR) - Two (2) doses if administered on or after their first birthday with at least 28 days or more separating the two doses.

TETANUS BOOSTER - Every ten (10) years.

HEPATITIS B - Students will need to be immunized or in the process of receiving the three dose series before entering seventh grade.

Children may be exempted from immunization for medical reasons if a signed statement from a physician that immunization is contraindicated and the reason and length of time the exemption is in force.

Exemption requests for moral or religious reasons must be accompanied by a signed statement from the parent that immunization is against their religious or moral beliefs.

Pediculosis (Head lice)

Head lice tends to be a problem in school-age children and is not only related to personal hygiene. Lice are transmitted directly from one person to another, or by contact with articles (such as combs and brushes, hats, scarves, bedding, and upholstery) that have been used by an infested person. Once infested, head lice multiply rapidly, especially in the school environment where close personal contact is common in the classroom, on the playground and on the school bus.

Parents can aid in the detection of head lice by observing children for intense itching of the scalp especially at the nape of the neck and behind the ears. **If head lice are found, the child should be treated immediately.** There are several over the counter preparations (RID, NIX, A-200) available. It is important that you notify the school as soon as possible so your child's classroom can be checked. If your child is found to have head lice at school, you will be notified, and your child will be dismissed from school to receive treatment. Children absent from school due to head lice will be re-admitted only after examination by the School Nurse and when found to be nit-free.

Homework Expectations

Meaningful homework appropriate to age and stage can be expected at each grade level. We believe that assigned out-of-class work is educationally sound because it helps students:

- develop responsibility
- complete unfinished class work
- practice skills
- promote parent awareness of student work and progress
- promote good study skills and work habits

We expect that homework will be turned in when it is due, neatly representing the student's best work. It is the responsibility of the teacher to make parents aware of expectations. Parents are asked to monitor assignments each evening. Fifth and sixth grade children are provided with special Assignment Books which indicate daily homework expectations. There is also space for communication between teachers and parents. Parent cooperation in checking these is essential to establish positive study habits. It is also important that students are provided with an atmosphere that is conducive to completion of the homework assignment. This should include:

- a. A regular time for homework
- b. A quiet, well-lit work area for study
- c. Access to the supplies and materials necessary to complete assignments

The FCS staff encourages and welcomes parent questions and input regarding homework assignments. Please call!

Important Miscellany

1. On rare occasions it may be necessary for children to remain after school for individual help, make-up work, or make-up time. You will be notified in advance if this should be necessary. We appreciate your cooperation in providing transportation in these instances.
2. Children should not bring radios, personal listening devices (i.e. walkman), expensive electronic games, trading cards, etc. to school. These are easily lost, damaged, and often the source of distraction and do not add to the educational environment.
3. While we understand the convenience of having your child deliver party invitations to friends at school, we ask that parents avoid this practice because it can lead to great disappointment and unhappiness for other children.

Library/Media Center

The Hattie Little Library/Media Center at Ferrisburgh Central School focuses primarily on two areas. Students are encouraged to develop the habit of reading for pleasure and personal interest. Children are also taught how to use the resources of the library for information-search. Each child visits the library/media center at a scheduled time at least once each week. Classes use the facility at other times for special projects. Materials are borrowed for one week. Though there are no fines for overdue materials, each child is responsible for the return of books in a timely manner. Parents may be asked to pay the replacement costs of any books/materials lost or destroyed beyond normal wear and tear. Parents/Community members are welcome to visit the library/media center to borrow materials. There is a special collection of materials dealing with parenting issues.

Lost and Found

Unfortunately, children sometimes lose personal clothing or equipment between home and school. We make every effort to locate and return these but are always amazed at the number of unclaimed items that seasonally pile up. Parents can assist in the return of misplaced articles by clearly marking clothing with the student's name. A "lost and found" box is set up so that lost articles will be claimed by its owner. Please call as soon as you become aware that something is missing. This is very helpful in the identification process.

Lunch Room Expectations

Breakfast and Lunch time should be an enjoyable and relaxed part of students' social experience at school. Respect for all is supported and reinforced. In order to insure a pleasant atmosphere, we have established the following expectations for our students while they are in the cafeteria:

- a. Students should enter the lunch room in an orderly manner.
- b. Students in grades 4-6 can choose a place to eat, and students in grades 1-3 can eat with their grade-mates
- c. Quiet conversation is encouraged.
- d. To avoid waste, students are encouraged to select food items from a menu of options. We will attempt to notify parents if we become aware that children are routinely failing to choose sufficient amounts of food.
- e. Rules of conduct in the cafeteria are identical to normal expectations for behavior at meal time at home and will be reviewed/reinforced with students at various times throughout the year.
- f. Students are expected to "bus" their trays and utensils after eating and according to a process outlined for them.

Moving?

If you are planning to move out of the Ferrisburgh District during the school year, please notify the school ASAP. This permits early contact with the new school and can make the transition much easier for your child and family.

Music Program

All students in Grades 1-6 receive one 40-minute period of instruction in general music per week. Kindergarten students receive 30 minutes of instruction. This program emphasizes listening skills, singing, exposure to basic instruments, and other activities designed to teach the appreciation of music as an art form. Themed concert programs are held during the year. Beginning in the 4th grade, students can elect to participate in the FCS instrumental music program which provides individual, small group and Band instruction on instruments of the student's choice. Parents are responsible for providing instruments for their child. If this is not possible, special arrangements can be made. The opportunity to join the FCS Chorus is also available to students beginning in Grade 4. The Band and Chorus perform at least two concerts yearly and often participate in out-of-school events (i.e. Holiday parades, school exchange concerts).

Non-Discrimination Policy

The Ferrisburgh Central School will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, place of birth, age, sex (including sexual harassment) or handicap/disability in all aspects of admission to, access to, treatment in, application for employment or employment in its programs or activities as required and to the extent provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (pertaining to race, color and national origin), Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (pertaining to unlawful employment practices on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (pertaining to sex), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (pertaining to handicap), the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (pertaining to disabilities), the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (pertaining to age) 21 V.S.A. Chap.5, subchapter 6 (pertaining to fair employment practices).

Parent Concerns

We are anxious to address specific concerns of parents in a direct and forthright manner and at the level at which resolution can best occur. If you have a concern with any aspect of school operations, we ask that you first contact the person responsible for the program or activity. If the situation is not resolved, please contact the principal or guidance counselor for assistance. PLEASE feel free to contact the principal at any time to discuss any topic of concern. Ferrisburgh School Board Policy #4312 also provides guidelines for the resolution of public concerns.

Parent Conferences

Twice yearly (prior to the end of the first trimester marking period and in the spring), all parent(s)/guardians are invited to participate in an individual or student-involved conference reviewing academic and social growth at school and progress towards specific goal attainment. Often, this involves a portfolio review of work "to date." This is a very important part of a child's education as it provides a unique opportunity for teachers, parents and students to exchange information which can improve each child's school experience. If you cannot attend the scheduled conference, please call for an alternate conference time. Informational notices and tips for parents on how best to maximize the benefits of a parent-teacher (and sometimes student) conference will be sent home closer to conference time.

Parent Newsletter

Each Friday, FCS publishes a combined School Newsletter/Activity Calendar. This contains important announcements and other information essential to your knowledge about FCS policies, programs and events. Non-profit community groups often use the FCS Newsletter as a way to publicize child/family-centered events as well. Please check backpacks for the newsletter every Friday! The weekly newsletter can also be found on the FCS website at www.vita-learn.org/fcs

Parent-Teacher Organization

A vital Parent-Teacher Organization is important to the well-being of any school, and FCS is blessed with an active and organized PTO. While the PTO does raise funds to support and enhance school activities (i.e. artist residencies, literary collections, family learning nights, craft fairs, field trips), it also plays a strong role in sponsoring an array of activities and advising the staff and administration on school curriculum and programs. Your attendance, participation and support are essential aspects of a rich connection to your child(ren)'s school, and PTO membership can also provide connections to other parents and the entire FCS community. The FCS PTO meets monthly, and all parents are encouraged to become active members!

Physical Education

All FCS students have physical education classes twice each weekly. Classes are held in the FCS multi-purpose gym or outdoors when possible/appropriate and cover a wide variety of activities designed to provide students with the life-long health-related skills, attitudes and interests necessary for physical and emotional growth. In order to permit safe and effective movement, students are required to wear sneakers to class. Short-term requests for non-participation must be accompanied by a note from a parent or guardian. Long-term requests for non-participation must be accompanied by a note from a physician.



Recess

Recess periods are provided for all grades before or immediately after lunch. On cold weather days, please make sure that children have appropriate boots, mittens and clothing for potential outside play. While we do stay inside in the event of severe cold/wind chill or heavy rain, children really need outdoor activity whenever possible, both for directed/non-directed social play and as a healthy alternative to being indoors. Proper clothing for seasonal weather conditions is absolutely essential.

Reporting Student Progress

Frequent exchange of information on student progress is an important element in establishing and maintaining a home-school partnership leading to the academic success of students. To strengthen this linkage, the FCS staff uses a variety of reporting techniques:

1. *Report Cards* - Issued three times per year, these provide a periodic review of student progress. Parents are asked to review these indicators with students and sign and return the report card envelope to ensure that the report card was not "lost in transit."
2. *Parent/Teacher Conferences* - These are scheduled for all students during the first and third trimester period and at other times based on need. They provide an opportunity for teachers and parents to discuss student progress and other topics in depth. Often, students "lead" conferences and report out on their own learning, both to date and where they see themselves along the learning continuum.
3. *Literacy and Math Profiles* – Student progress towards ANWSU grade-level standards are assessed and three times per year and charted in their K-6 Literacy and Math Profiles. Profiles in other content areas are in development.
4. *Portfolio Assessments* - Students may be formally assessed according to State-established standards at the end of 4th grade in mathematics and at 5th grade level in writing. Participation in the Vermont Portfolio Assessment is not currently a component of the ANWSU Comprehensive Assessment Plan.
5. Criterion and Norm-referenced *Standardized Tests* - Administered to students at the 2nd-6th grade levels. These tests provide a measurement of individual and group progress in a wide variety of areas, and scores are based on state and/or national norms. Results are sent home to parents shortly after their return to school and reported to the community during Assessment Informational Nights and in the annual Town Report.
6. *Teacher Constructed Assessments* - Teachers use a variety of assessment tools to monitor student progress. These results form the basis of the trimester report card.
7. *Interim Progress Reports* - Teachers may also use interim progress reports to indicate growth and/or concerns between the more formal reporting periods.

Rights of Non-Custodial Parents

In cases where there are court-ordered legal restrictions on the access to children for non-custodial parents, it is necessary for the school to have a copy of documents from legal authorities indicating the scope of these restrictions. Otherwise, we must afford the same rights to both parents. In all cases, unless otherwise determined by a judicial process, FCS will assign legal rights afforded non-custodial parents to participation in their child's education, including access to school records. Please call the principal or counselor if there are questions in this area.

School Closing

School may be cancelled for the day due to inclement weather or other circumstance. The decision to close school will be made by the Superintendent of Schools. This decision will be conveyed to local radio/television stations as early as possible in the morning. Parents should monitor a radio or television station if the weather is predicted to be potentially hazardous for school buses. On rare occasions, it may be necessary to dismiss school early due to deteriorating road conditions or facility issues. In the event of early dismissal, every attempt will be made to notify parents. Please remember that we have limited telephone capabilities and personnel, so you can expect delays in contacting the school directly. It is most helpful if parents who transport their own children can pick them up as soon as possible.

In the event of a closing or delayed opening (typically one or to-hour), please listen to your radio for information before calling school. Stations will broadcast this information as soon as a decision is reached. These include WFAD(1490), WVMT(620), WSKI(1240), WKDR(1390), WJOY(1230), WEZF(92.9), WOKO(98.9), WNCS (104.7), and WIZN (106.7).

School Hours

School is open for students at 7:40 a.m, with a 7:55 “start” time to the instructional day. Please do not allow children to arrive earlier than 7:40 a.m. as proper supervision cannot be guaranteed. Students who plan to eat breakfast must arrive no later than 7:50 a.m. Students will be dismissed at 2:55 p.m. and buses depart at approximately 3:00 p.m. Kindergarten students have a half-day of school on Fridays and are dismissed at 11:15 a.m. (no bus transportation is offered). Students may be picked up after the departure of the buses. For pedestrian safety reasons, we ask that all drivers respect the bus drop-off and pick-up zone until after buses leave.

School Pictures

School pictures are taken each year, typically in the Fall and through a commercial photography studio. While buying school photos and/or packages is a very popular program with many parents, the purchase of pictures/packages is solely a family decision and no parent should feel obligated to participate at any time.

School Property

Respecting self, others and our environment (including school property) are core values at Ferrisburgh Central School. Caring for our school building, equipment, texts, books and materials issued for instructional purposes is an expectation and responsibility of all. When these learning tools are issued, each student is responsible for maintaining their condition throughout the year. If books or materials are lost or damaged beyond normal use, students/families will be required to pay for the cost of replacement. Please discuss these responsibilities with your child at the beginning of the year.

Snacks

There is an opportunity for mid-morning snacks in all classrooms. We find that many students benefit from this nutritional "boost." In the interest of reinforcing good eating habits and nutritional wellness, we ask that parents send healthy snacks. Good snacks include: celery or carrot sticks, fruit, peanut butter crackers, granola bars, etc. Children will be offered milk or juice at school during snack time. Gum, soda and candy are not allowed in school during the day.

Special Education Services

Ferrisburgh Central School offers a variety of educational services in order to meet the needs of all students. Students may receive supplemental or alternative instruction in reading, reading comprehension, mathematics calculation, mathematics reasoning, oral and written expression and listening comprehension, behavioral skills and specific related therapy services (i.e. speech/language, physical and occupational).

In order to receive Special Education services, a student is usually referred by a parent or classroom teacher for a comprehensive evaluation in order to determine if the student is eligible for services under state and federal guidelines. Parental consent is necessary before any evaluation is conducted and before a student may receive these services. If a student is found to be eligible, an individualized education plan (IEP) is developed for the student by a team consisting of parents, school personnel, and others who may have information/interest vital to a student’s opportunity to learn. If a student is not eligible for services, recommendations for other remedial instruction may be offered in accordance with Vermont's Act 117.

If you would like more information about Special Education and/or supplemental services, please contact your child's classroom teacher, FCS learning specialists, or the principal.

Student Insurance

Parents may purchase accident insurance for children. Information on this program will be sent home the first week of school. This is not a school-affiliated program, but FCS does supply the necessary forms and information for your convenience and interest.

Student Records (see Federal Education Rights to Privacy Act) **Supplementary Reading/Math Support and Reading Recovery Program**

FCS provides supplemental reading and mathematics instruction to students experiencing difficulty in meeting grade-level standards. The goal of this supplementary program is to assure that all students acquire the basic skills they need to become independent and successful as they progress through school. Instruction focuses on identifying learning gaps as early as possible and to design intervention strategies to support academic growth.

Supplemental literacy support is flexible and designed to best meet student's needs. We provide both in-class support and instruction out of the classroom for students identified using a variety of assessment measures. Booster Groups are an out-of-class support given to small groups of students with similar needs. Reading Recovery (RR) is a specific early intervention for first graders. The program is administered by highly trained staff and intended to boost the acquisition of early literacy skills for first graders experiencing difficulty in learning to read. Intensive intervention through daily tutorial instruction and assessment seek to bring students enrolled in RR up to the average of the class as quickly as possible. Parents of students being considered for RR or Booster Groups will be notified by classroom teachers.

Tardiness

Beginning the day at school with other classmates is key to a child's sense of readiness and belonging, and also insures greater awareness of the daily schedule and expectations. This is important to the development of key school and work habits. Please make every attempt to see that your child arrives at school by the start of school (7:55 a.m.) and no later than 8:00 a.m. Excessive tardiness will necessitate follow-up procedures that could involve administrative action and collective problem-solving.

Telephone Use by Students

Use of the school telephone by students is discouraged in order to insure access to the school's limited phone lines. We recognize that there may be times when student phone use is necessary in emergency situations. After-school visits or forgotten items do not constitute emergencies. When necessary, important messages from parents to students will be delivered at an appropriate time. We ask that these be limited to items of significant importance.

Visitations

Parents are always encouraged to visit our school, its programs and classrooms. Advance notice of anticipated visits is requested so that the staff can plan accordingly. Given their scope of responsibilities, teachers cannot normally be available for individual conferences during the school day unless arranged ahead of time. For security reasons, all visitors are asked to check in at the Office prior to visiting staff or rooms .

Volunteering at School

We welcome and encourage parents who wish to volunteer in our school. A wide variety of opportunities exist for those interested in working in our classrooms and supporting programs. Parents and community members represent a rich resource for our students. Areas of need include: classroom help, individual or group tutoring, America Reads volunteer reading buddies, field trip chaperoning, medical screening, tech lab support, learning center help, etc. If you are interested in these or other ways to support our instructional purpose, PLEASE call.

Weapons Policy

In accordance with the Gun Free School Acts of 1994 and Act No. 35 of the Vermont General Assembly, Ferrisburgh Central School will abide by the following general provisions as summarized below:

1. Any student who brings a gun to school or to any school sponsored activity shall be brought by the Superintendent to the School Board for an expulsion hearing. A student found by the board to have brought a gun to school shall be expelled for at least a calendar year. However, the board has the discretion to modify the expulsion if it finds circumstances that would dictate such action. Any student who brings a gun to school shall be referred to a law enforcement agency, as well.

2. Any student who brings a weapon other than a gun to school or to any school sponsored activity may be brought to the School Board upon the discretion of the Superintendent of Schools. A “weapon” is any destructive device including, but not limited to, firearms, explosives, or knives.

3. It is also a violation of Vermont State Law (T.13 Sec. 4004) for a person to carry a weapon into a school building.

Copies of the full Weapons Policy are available at the Main Office.

