

# Elementary Student Handbook

## 2023-2024



**We are committed to providing a safe environment where ALL students are nurtured to actively acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to reach their full potential.**

**Please sign and return the last page of this handbook by September 18th.**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contact Information	4
Elementary Testing Program	5
Code of Conduct	6
Progressive Assistance and Disciplinary Consequence	7
Dress Code	7
Electronic Devices	8
Dignity For All Act	9
Student Bill of Rights & Responsibilities	12
Expectations	13
Attendance Policy and Procedures	17
Emergency Closing	19
Arrival and Dismissal Procedures	20
Homework	21
Promoting a Safe Learning Environment	23
Visitor Procedures	25
Prohibited Student Conduct	25
Basic Procedures for Disciplinary Consequences	29
Glossary of Specific Violations	29
Internet Acceptable Use Policy	32
<b>Parent Permissions / Acknowledgment of Understanding (Please sign and return by September 18th)</b>	35



Dear Fort Edward Elementary Parents,

A strong family, school, and community partnership helps to support a child's success in school. When parents and communities involve themselves in the activities of the school, children have a better attitude toward learning, and their academic achievement increases. At Fort Edward Elementary, we recognize the importance of the family and community working together to support children as they grow and develop as successful and independent learners. This partnership is a requisite for student achievement. Successful partnerships empower parents as supporters, decision-makers, and advocates for their children and support the school to provide children with the skills, knowledge, and attitudes they will need to build their futures as caring and responsible citizens.

I look forward to the 2023-24 school year and working with all of you to provide our children an excellent education.

Sincerely,

Dr. Richard DeMallie  
Superintendent of Schools

**Please feel free to contact us anytime**

**Administrators**

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518-747-4529, Ext. 3123

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**Board of Education**

Thomas Roche, President  
Ella Collins, Vice President  
Tim Clark  
Amanda Durkee  
John Guglielmo  
Taylor Boucher

**ELEMENTARY TESTING PROGRAM – 2023-2024**

Testing generally occurs in the morning on the dates noted. For NYS tests, please avoid scheduling doctor appointments on the testing dates.

Our district has an extensive student testing program that provides for a wide range of objectives. Nationally standardized tests, such as the iReady diagnostics that we give in the fall and spring, enable us to compare our students with others on a national scale. State mandated tests, such as the New York State assessments in reading and math in grades three through eight and science at grades four and eight, help us identify students in need of assistance. These assessments are also used to compare our students with those on a statewide and local basis. Our district’s tests help ensure that we have comparable programs among grade levels. These tests also provide us additional information on a local level. All this information is also helpful to use as we analyze our strengths and weaknesses and seek ways in which we may improve our performance. Note that tests mandated by the state are given on dates set by the state each year and include very restrictive make-up dates.

Monday, April 15 – Friday, April 19	Grade 3-8 English Language Arts Test
Monday, April 29 – Friday, May 3	Grade 3-8 Mathematics Test
Monday, May 13 – Friday, May 17	Grade 5 + 8 Science Performance Test

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**CONFERENCE DAYS**

**November 20 & 21**

12:00 p.m. dismissal, conferences in the p.m.

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For the most up-to-date information,  
please consult our website at  
**[www.fortedward.org](http://www.fortedward.org)**

## **CODE OF CONDUCT: GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

### **Philosophy Statement**

At the Fort Edward Union Free School District, we feel that learning is best achieved in an orderly, purposeful atmosphere where positive behavior is encouraged and reinforced. It is our desire to maintain a learning environment that is not oppressive but is supportive of teaching and learning.

We realize that within the Fort Edward Elementary School, there needs to exist an atmosphere that is orderly, quiet and conducive to the achievement of desired goals and objectives. We want to promote a school climate that is warm and responsive, emphasizes learning and provides instructional support for all learners.

Maintaining an active, responsive learning environment is one of our great challenges. We know that the effort is needed because a well-disciplined school not only promotes achievement, but also significantly promotes the idea that students become self-disciplined managers of their own actions and resources.

### **School Conduct and Discipline**

All members of the school community, including visitors, are expected to conduct themselves appropriately. It is the Board's belief that each student should be treated as a person who can reasonably be expected to be responsible for his/her own behavior. The school administration will assist each student in this program of personal responsibility with a few sensible rules of conduct, focusing on safety and respect for the rights and property of others. Students who cannot accept this responsibility and violate school rules will be required to accept the penalties.

Discipline is most effective when it deals directly with the problem at the time and place it occurs, and in a way that is viewed as fair and impartial by the student. Therefore, before seeking outside assistance, teachers will first use all their resources to create a change of behavior in the classroom. When the teacher has made every effort to bring about positive behavioral changes, and has been unsuccessful, the student will be referred to the administration. Once done, the administration assumes the role of deciding what further action will be taken.

Disciplinary action, when necessary, will be firm, fair and consistent in order to be most effective in changing behavior.

## **PROGRESSIVE ASSISTANCE & DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES**

### **For Minor Violatic**

Discussion  
Warning  
Loss of Recess  
Time Out  
Apologies Required  
Lunch Detention

### **For Moderate Violations**

Time After School with the Tea  
Behavioral Contract  
Peer Mediation  
Guidance Referral  
Referral to School Psychologist  
After School Detention  
Exclusion from a Class Privileg  
Limited Bus Suspension  
Referral to a Community Agenc  
**PARENTAL CONTACT**

### **For Serious Violations**

Teacher Removal from Class  
Removal from Field Day  
Removal from Field Trips/Activi  
Monetary Restitution Required  
In-School Suspension  
Out-of-School Suspension  
Permanent Bus Suspension  
PINS Diversion Application  
Referral to Law Enforcement  
Superintendent's Hearing  
**PARENTAL CONTACT**

## **DRESS CODE**

All students are expected to give proper attention to personal cleanliness and to dress appropriately for school and school functions. Students and their parents or guardians have the primary responsibility for acceptable student dress and appearance. Teachers and all other district personnel should exemplify and reinforce acceptable student dress and help students to develop an understanding of appropriate appearance in the school setting.

A student's dress, grooming and appearance, including hair style/color, jewelry, make-up and nails, shall:

1. Be safe, appropriate and not disrupt or interfere with the educational process.
2. Not include items that are offensive, vulgar, obscene, libelous, or denigrate others on account of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation or disability.
3. Not promote and/or endorse the use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs and/or encourage other illegal or violent activities.

The New York State Commissioner of Education has established the following guidelines:

1. Decency (no revealing attire)
2. Health (no dirty clothing)
3. Safety (footwear)
4. Clothing which is disruptive or interferes with the educational process will not be permitted to be worn by students in school or on school premises (profanity, offensive messages, promotion of drugs, alcohol, tobacco).
5. Students must wear footwear, pants, shorts or skirts, of appropriate length, some type of shirt or dress (no bare midriffs, no spaghetti straps, no halter tops, no tube tops, no exposed underclothing, plunging necklines).
6. Certain insignias designated or inferred as inappropriate or obscene or in bad taste will not be permitted.

7. Hats or other headgear (visors, scarves, bandanas) will not be permitted during the school day and are to be removed upon entering the school building.
8. No coats or jackets will be worn in the building during the school day.
9. No sunglasses will be permitted unless prescribed by a physician.
10. No jewelry with sharp edges, heavy ornamental chains or dog collars will be permitted in school.

The building principal will inform students and their parent or guardian of the student dress code at the beginning of the school year and any revisions to the dress code made during the school year. Interpretation of the dress code will be at the discretion of the building administration.

Students who violate the student dress code shall be required to modify their appearance by covering or removing the offending item and, if necessary or practical, replacing it with an acceptable item. Any student who refuses to do so shall be subject to discipline, up to and including in-school suspension for the day. Any student who repeatedly fails to comply with the dress code shall be subject to further discipline, up to and including out of school suspension.

**Remember this about dress and appearance:**

**How you look affects how you feel and behave;**

**How you look affects how others feel and behave**

**Use common sense**

## **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

### **Student Use of Electronic Communication Devices**

Students are prohibited from using or having on or in an operational mode, any mobile telephone, cellular telephone, laser pointer or pen or any other type of telecommunications or imaging device during the school day. Students do not need a cellphone during the school day. If they need to call home, they can use a school phone; if they become ill during the day, they can go to the school nurse who will then call a parent if necessary. Therefore, we encourage students to keep their cell phones at home. If a student does bring a cell phone or any other communications device to school, it needs to be turned off upon entering the school building. The cell phone should stay in the student's backpack, or in their teacher's desk drawer (safer), all day long. Elementary students will no longer be permitted to use cell phones or other electronics during lunch or recess. This time is intended for students to socialize with one another and/or exercise for a few minutes during the school day, and excessive cell phone use impedes this. At the end of the day, the student can retrieve their phones from the teacher or their backpacks, and they may turn them back on as they leave the building (walkers) or get off the bus (bus riders).

Please note that the Fort Edward School District is not responsible for any phones or other items that may be lost, stolen or damaged. As always, please contact the office if you have any questions.



## DIGNITY FOR ALL ACT

### **Definitions**

In accordance with the Dignity for All Students Act, School District policy and practice must ensure that no student is subject to discrimination or harassment, based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity or sex by school employees or students on school property, on a school bus, or at a school function.

***School property*** means in or within any building, structure, athletic playing field, playground, parking lot, or land contained within the real property boundary line of a public elementary or secondary school or in or on a school bus (Education Law Section 11[1]).

***School bus*** means every motor vehicle owned and operated for the transportation of pupils, children of pupils, teachers and other persons acting in a supervisory capacity, to or from school or school activities, or, privately owned and operated for compensation for the transportation of pupils, children of pupils, teachers and other persons acting in a supervisory capacity to or from school or school activities (Education Law Section 11[1] and Vehicle and Traffic Law Section 142).

***School function*** means a school sponsored extracurricular event or activity (Education Law Section 11[2]).

***Disability*** means (a) a physical, mental or medical impairment resulting from anatomical, physiological, genetic or neurological conditions which prevents the exercise of a normal bodily function or is demonstrable by medically accepted clinical or laboratory diagnostic techniques or (b) a record of such an impairment or (c) a condition regarded by others as such an impairment, provided, however, that in all provisions of this article dealing with employment, the term must be limited to disabilities which, upon the provision of reasonable accommodations, do not prevent the complainant from performing in a reasonable manner the activities involved in the job or occupation sought or held (Education Law Section 11[4] and Executive Law Section 292[21]).

***Employee*** means any person receiving compensation from a school district or employee of a contracted service provider or worker placed within the school under a public assistance employment program, pursuant to title nine B of article five of the Social Services Law, and consistent with the provisions of such title for the provision of services to such district, its students or employees, directly or through contract, whereby such services performed by such person involve direct student contact (Education Law Section 11[4] and 1125[3]).

***Sexual orientation*** means actual or perceived heterosexuality, homosexuality, or bisexuality (Education Law Section 11[5]).

***Gender*** means actual or perceived sex and includes a person's gender identity or expression (Education Law Section 11[6]).

***Harassment*** means the creation of a hostile environment by conduct or by verbal threats, intimidation or abuse that has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional or physical wellbeing or conduct, verbal threats, intimidation or abuse that reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to

cause a student to fear for his or her physical safety such conduct, verbal threats, intimidation or abuse includes but is not limited to conduct, verbal threats, intimidation or abuse based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex (Education Law Section 11[7]).

**Race** means a group of persons related by a common descent or heredity. For purposes of enumeration the U.S. Census Bureau uses terms such as: "White/Caucasian", "Black/African American/African-descent", "Asian", "Bi-racial", and "Hispanics/Latinos" etc. to describe and classify the inhabitants of the United States.

**Color** means the term refers to the apparent pigmentation of the skin, especially as an indication or possible indication of race. Weight means aside from the obvious meaning in the physical sciences, the word is used in reference to a person's "size". National Origin means a person's country of birth or ancestor's country of birth.

**Ethnic group** means a group of people who identify with each other through a common heritage including language, culture, and often a shared or common religion and or ideology that stresses ancestry.

**Religion** means specific fundamental beliefs and practices generally agreed to by large numbers of the group or a body of persons, adhering to a particular set of beliefs and practices.

**Religious practice** means a term including practices and observances such as attending worship services, wearing religious garb or symbols, praying at prescribed times, displaying religious objects, adhering to certain dietary rules, refraining from certain activities, proselytizing, etc.

**Sex** means the biological and physiological characteristics that define men and women. (MALE and FEMALE denote "sex".)

**Gender** means the socially constructed roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women. (MASCULINE and FEMININE denote "gender".)

**Sexual orientation** means the sex to which a person is sexually attracted. Someone attracted primarily or exclusively to members of the opposite sex is characterized as straight or heterosexual. Someone attracted primarily or exclusively to members of the same sex is characterized as homosexual. A person with a strong or viable attraction to both genders is characterized as bisexual or pansexual.

**Disability** means any restriction or lack (due to any impairment) of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered typical.

**Disruptive student** means a student under the age of 21 who is substantially disruptive of the educational process or substantially interferes with the teacher's authority over the classroom.

**Parent** means the biological, adoptive or foster parent, guardian or person in parental relation to a student.

**Violent student** means a student under the age of 21 whom:

- Commits an act of violence upon a school employee.
- Commits, while on school property or at a school function, an act of violence upon another student or any other person lawfully on school property or at a school function.

- Possesses while on school property or at a school function a weapon.
- Displays, while on school property or at a school function, what appears to be a weapon.
- Threatens, while on school property or at a school function, to use a weapon.
- Knowingly and intentionally damages or destroys the personal property of any school employee or any person lawfully on school property or at a school function.
- Knowingly and intentionally damages or destroys school district property.

***Weapon*** means a firearm as defined in 18 USC 921 for purposes of the Gun Free Schools Act. It also means any other gun, dagger, dirk, razor, stiletto, switchblade knife, gravity knife, brass knuckles, slingshot, metal knuckle knife, box cutters, cane sword, electronic dart gun, Kung Fu star, electronic stun gun, pepper spray, or other noxious spray, explosive or incendiary bomb, or other device, instrument, material or substance that can cause serious physical injury or death when used as a weapon.

## STUDENT BILL OF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Our school system exists for many reasons. Primarily, it provides all students with the rights of access to the educational opportunity available in this community. The required courses for graduation are provided to every student and the elective courses are determined by desire and ability. In addition, all extra-curricular clubs, classes, events and athletic teams are examples of the community's continuing commitment to provide a varied and enjoyable set of experiences for all students.

The following list of rights and responsibilities are provided to better underline the attitude that students, parents, and school staff can work together to achieve a combined effort to reduce problem situations and create positive ones.

**With every right comes a responsibility.**

<i><b>It is the student's right:</b></i>	<i><b>It is the student's responsibility:</b></i>
To attend school in the district in which one's parent or legal guardian resides.	To attend school daily, regularly and on time, perform assignments, and strive to do the highest quality work possible and be granted the opportunity to receive a good education.
To expect that school will be a safe, orderly and purposeful place for all students to gain an education and to be treated fairly.	To be aware of all rules and expectations regulating student's behavior and conduct oneself in accordance with these guidelines.
To be respected as an individual.	To respect one another, and to treat others in the manner that one would want to be treated.
To express one's opinions verbally or in writing.	To express opinions and ideas in a respectful manner so as not to offend, slander, or restrict, the rights and privileges of others.
To dress in such a way as to express one's personality.	To dress appropriately in accordance with the dress code, so as not to endanger physical health, safety, limit participation in school activities or be unduly distracting.
To be afforded equal and appropriate educational opportunities.	To be aware of available educational programs in order to use and develop one's capabilities to their maximum.
To take part in all school activities on an equal basis regardless of race, color creed, religion, religious practice, sex, sexual orientation, gender, national origin, ethnic group, political affiliation, age, marital status, or disability.	To work to the best of one's ability in all academic and extracurricular activities, as well as being fair and supportive of others.
To have access to relevant and objective information concerning drug and alcohol abuse, as well as access to individuals or agencies capable of providing direct assistance to students with serious personal problems.	To be aware of the information and services available and to seek assistance in dealing with personal problems, when appropriate.
To be protected from intimidation, harassment, or discrimination based on actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, or religious practice, sex, gender/gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability, by employees or students on school property or at a school-sponsored event, function or activity.	To respect one another and treat others fairly in accordance with the District Code of Conduct and the provisions of the Dignity Act. To conduct themselves in a manner that fosters an environment that is free from intimidation, harassment, or discrimination. To report and encourage others, to report any incidents of intimidation, harassment or discrimination.

## **Expectations for Parents**

1. Recognize that the education of their children is a joint responsibility of the parents or guardians and school community.
2. Send their children to school ready to participate and learn as required by New York State Education Law and in accordance with the District's Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy (#7110). Ensure that children attend school regularly and on time. Ensure absences are excused.
3. Insist their children be dressed and groomed in a manner consistent with the student dress code.
4. Help their children understand that in a democratic society appropriate rules are required to maintain a safe, orderly environment.
5. Know school rules and help their children understand them to maintain a safe, orderly environment in accordance with the District Code of Conduct.
6. Convey to their children a supportive attitude towards education and the District.
7. Build good relationships with teachers, other parents and their children's friends.
8. Work with our schools to maintain open and respectful communication.
9. Help their children deal effectively with peer pressure.
10. Inform school officials of changes in the home situation that may affect student conduct or performance.
11. Provide a place for study and ensure homework assignments are completed.
12. Teach their children respect and dignity for themselves, and other students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity, or sex, which will strengthen the child's confidence and promote learning in accordance with the Dignity for All Students Act.

## **Expectations for Teachers**

1. Maintain a climate of mutual respect and dignity for all students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity, or sex, with an understanding of appropriate appearance, language, and behavior in a school setting, which will strengthen students' self-image and promote confidence to learn.
2. Be prepared to teach.
3. Demonstrate interest in teaching and concern for student achievement.
4. Know school policies and rules and enforce them in a fair and consistent manner.
5. Communicate to students and parents:
  - a. Course objectives and requirements.
  - b. Marking/grading procedures.
  - c. Assignment deadlines.
  - d. Expectations for students.
  - e. Classroom discipline plan.
  - f. Communicate regularly with students, parents and other teachers concerning growth and achievement.
6. Confront issues of discrimination and harassment in any situation that threatens the emotional or physical health or safety of any students, school employee or any person who is lawfully on school property or at a school function.
7. Address personal biases that may prevent equal treatment of all students in the school or classroom setting.

8. Report incidents of discrimination and harassment that are witnessed or otherwise brought to a teacher's attention to the building administrator and/or Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC) in a timely manner.

### **Expectations for School Counselors**

1. Assist students in coping with peer pressure and emerging personal, social and emotional problems.
2. Initiate and appropriately document teacher/student/counselor conferences and parent/teacher/student/counselor conferences, as necessary, as a way to resolve problems.
3. Regularly review with the students their educational progress, career plans and graduation requirements.
4. Provide information to assist students with career planning.
5. Encourage students to benefit from the curriculum and extracurricular programs.
6. Coordinate Intervention Support Services, as needed, with student, parent, Building Principal and teachers.
7. Maintain and encourage a climate of mutual respect and dignity for all students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity, or sex, with an understanding of appropriate appearance, language, and behavior in a school setting, which will strengthen students' self-image and promote confidence to learn.
8. Report incidents of discrimination and harassment that are witnessed or otherwise brought to the counselor's attention to the building administrator and/or Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC) in a timely manner.

### **Expectations for Student Support Service Personnel**

1. Support educational and academic goals.
2. Know school rules, abide by them and enforce them in a fair and consistent manner.
3. Assist students in coping with peer pressure and emerging personal, social and emotional problems.
4. Set a good example for students and colleagues by demonstrating dependability, integrity and other standards of ethical conduct.
5. Maintain confidentiality about all personal information and educational records concerning students and their families.
6. Initiate teacher/student/counselor conferences and parent/teacher/student/counselor conferences, as necessary or requested, as a way to resolve problems and communicate as necessary in any other manner with parents and other staff regarding student progress and needs.
7. Regularly review with students their educational progress and career plan.
8. Provide information to assist students with career planning.
9. Encourage students to benefit from the curriculum and extra-curricular programs.
10. Maintain and encourage a climate of mutual respect and dignity for all students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity, or sex, with an understanding of appropriate appearance, language, and behavior in a school setting, which will strengthen students' self-image and promote confidence to learn.
11. Report incidents of discrimination and harassment that are witnessed or otherwise brought to the staff member's attention to the building administrator and/or Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC) in a timely manner.

## **Expectations for Other School Staff**

1. Follow the Code of Conduct; know, abide by and enforce school rules in a fair and consistent manner.
2. Set a good example for students and other staff by demonstrating dependability, integrity and other standards of ethical conduct.
3. Assist in promoting a safe, orderly and stimulating school environment.
4. Maintain confidentiality about all personal information and educational records concerning students and their families.
5. Maintain and encourage a climate of mutual respect and dignity for all students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity, or sex, with an understanding of appropriate appearance, language, and behavior in a school setting, which will strengthen students' self-image and promote confidence to learn.
6. Report incidents of discrimination and harassment that are witnessed or otherwise brought to a staff member's attention to the building administrator and/or Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC) in a timely manner.

## **Expectations for Principals**

1. Promote a safe, orderly and stimulating school environment, supporting active teaching and learning.
2. Ensure that students and staff have the opportunity to communicate regularly with the Principal and approach the Principal for redress of grievances.
3. Evaluate on a regular basis the effective safety, behavioral and school management issues related to all instructional programs.
4. Support the development of and student participation in appropriate extracurricular activities.
5. Be responsible for enforcing the Code of Conduct, ensuring that all cases are resolved promptly and fairly and, when necessary, appropriately documenting actions.
6. Maintain and encourage a climate of mutual respect and dignity for all students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity, or sex, with an understanding of appropriate appearance, language, and behavior in a school setting, which will strengthen students' self-image and promote confidence to learn.
7. Follow up on any incidents of discrimination and harassment that are witnessed or otherwise brought to the Principal's attention in a timely manner in collaboration with the Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC).

## **Expectations for the Superintendent**

1. Promote a safe, orderly, respectful and stimulating school environment, free from intimidation, discrimination and harassment, supporting active teaching and learning.
2. Review with District administrators the policies of the Board of Education and state and federal laws relating to school operations and management.
3. Inform the School Board about educational trends, including student discipline.
4. Work to create instructional programs that minimize problems of misconduct and are sensitive to student and teacher needs.

5. Work with District administrators in enforcing the Code of Conduct and ensuring that all cases are resolved promptly and fairly.
6. Address all areas of school-related safety concerns.

### **Board of Education**

1. Collaborate with students, teachers, administrators and parent organizations, school safety personnel and other school personnel to develop a Code of Conduct that clearly defines expectations for the conduct of students, District personnel and visitors on school property and at school functions.
2. Approve and review at least annually the District's Code of Conduct to evaluate the code's effectiveness and the fairness and consistency of its implementation.
3. Appoint a Dignity Act Coordinator in each school building. The Dignity Act Coordinator will be thoroughly trained to handle human relations in the areas of race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity, and sex. The Dignity Act Coordinator will be accessible to students and other staff members for consultation and advice as needed on the Dignity Act.
4. Lead by example by conducting Board meetings in a professional, respectful and courteous manner.

### **FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)**

Pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, Fort Edward Union Free School District hereby notifies parents and guardians that they have the right to: Inspect and review a student's educational record and seek correction of parts of a student's education record which he or she believes to be inaccurate, misleading or in violation of the student's rights. These rights include the right to a hearing to present evidence that the record should be changed if the district decides not to alter it according to the parent's or an eligible student's request.

Parents also have a right to report or file a complaint with the Department of Education if the school district violates FERPA and exercise a limited control over the student's education records, in a hearing if necessary.

Parents are further advised that the district shall limit the disclosure of information contained in the student's education records except:

- a. by prior written consent of the student's parents or an eligible student,
- b. directory information or
- c. under certain circumstances, as permitted by FERPA, state and federal law.

All rights and protections given to parents under FERPA and this policy transfer to the student when the student reaches 18 or enrolls in a post-secondary school.



## ATTENDANCE POLICY

### **Grades K-5**

Regular attendance is a necessary requirement in the learning process. Student absenteeism at the elementary level, when unchecked, negatively impacts academic progress and may impact future academic placement. It is our goal to inform parents and guardians when student absenteeism approaches an unacceptable level, and to work with them collaboratively to promote better attendance. It is the responsibility of the parents and guardians to comply with New York State Education Law, which mandates that children be in attendance every day that school is in session. If, after appropriate notification to parents and guardians that absenteeism is unacceptable, and the situation does not improve, the school will take further measures to ensure the welfare of the child or children involved.

### PROCEDURES REGARDING ABSENCES AND ATTENDANCE

The compulsory education law requires that all children in New York State between the ages of six and sixteen years in proper physical and mental condition receive full time instruction in school.

#### **Excused vs. unexcused absences and tardiness**

The following reasons for pupil absences, tardiness, and early departure shall be considered by the Board of Education to be excused:

- a. bereavement
- b. religious observance
- c. required court appearances
- d. participation in a school-sponsored activity
- e. suspensions

*Any other student absence, tardiness or early departure is considered by the Board of Education to be unexcused.*

#### **Coding System**

Each absence, tardiness and early departure shall be accounted for by the teacher in the register of attendance and shall be entered as excused or unexcused. The following symbols are to be used:

Excused Absence	E
Unexcused Absence	U
Tardiness	T
Excused Dismissal	ED

#### **Procedures for Excused Absences**

1. It is the responsibility of the parents or persons in parental relation of the student to notify the office by telephone on the morning of the absence or tardiness or at the time of early departure as to the reason for such absence, tardiness or early departure. As a follow up to any oral notification, parents or persons in parental relation to the student shall provide a written excuse within three (3) school days containing the date of the absence, tardiness, or early departure and reason for such. Failure to provide a written excuse may result in the absence being considered unexcused.
2. Any student who becomes ill during the regular day must report to the teacher; the teacher will then send the student to the nurse's office.
3. No student is to ever leave the school premises or go to an authorized place, due to illness, without the knowledge of the school nurse.

4. Students absent from school may not participate in any extracurricular activity, practice or sporting event on the day(s) of the absence.

### **Rules Governing Unexcused Absences**

1. When a student is truant from school for a full day or any part of the day, he or she will be excluded from all school activities, including rehearsals, practices, and athletic events on the days of absences, and will be subject to disciplinary consequences.
2. Excessive absences for unexcused reasons may be subject to disciplinary measures contingent upon a review of the entire attendance record of the student.

### **Procedures for Excessive Absences**

It is the goal of the Fort Edward UFSD to facilitate assistance to students and their families. It is the responsibility of the school to take a number of proactive steps to ensure the safety and well-being of students. Communication between parents and school personnel encourages a collaborative effort in assisting students who have excessive absences. Parents will receive an informational letter with each progress report and report card indicating individual cumulative absences and tardies up to that point.

***“All children between the ages of six and sixteen years in proper physical and mental condition must receive full time instructions in public, private or parochial schools, or at home.”***

1. A student who is absent seven (7) or more days within the first marking period, or who accumulates seven (7) absences, will be referred to the Pupil Services Team (PST). The principal will meet with PST and a member of the team will contact the student’s parents to discuss the reason(s) for the absence(s), and to determine what assistance may be needed to resolve the problem. A parent conference may be arranged.
2. The procedure for a student who has been absent a total of 14 days will be the same as outlined in Number 1 above. Additionally, the principal will meet with the student’s teacher and other staff as appropriate to discuss the impact of the absences on the child’s academic progress. The Pupil Services Team will review and a parent conference will be scheduled. Once the PST has reviewed the case, a referral to the PINS Diversion program or to Child Protective Services may be made. A written notification from the Principal will be sent to the parents, warning that continued absences could negatively impact the student’s academic placement for the following year. Fort Edward Union Free School District will be notifying Washington County regarding your child’s attendance.
3. Once a student has been absent 21 days, the principal must be notified by the Guidance Counselor. A letter shall be sent to the student’s parents. If a student’s academic success has been significantly impacted by excessive absenteeism, and the absenteeism continues, retention may be recommended. The principal will review the case with all involved parties before a decision is made. A referral to the PINS Diversion Program or to Child Protective Services may be made.

### **Tardiness**

Chronic tardiness negatively impacts the student who is tardy as well as the students in class who are disrupted by a person arriving late. It is good practice to teach young people the value of timeliness. We will inform parents when chronic tardiness becomes a problem, and work with them collaboratively to assist students in coming to school on time. If the situation does not improve within a reasonable amount of time, the school will take further measures to ensure the welfare of the student(s) involved.

## **Procedures for Tardiness:**

1. The school day begins promptly at 8:00 A.M. Students in grades K through 5 who have not reported to their class by 8:10 A.M., must report to the Elementary Office for a late pass.
2. Once a student has accumulated numerous tardy days, students will conference with the Principal, and their parents will be contacted by phone or by letter. The purpose of both is to determine the reason(s) for the tardiness, to offer assistance, and to warn of the consequences of chronic tardiness.
3. Continued chronic tardiness may lead to a referral to the Pupil Services Team, Child Protective Services, or other agencies.

## **School Hours**

Students are not to enter the building prior to 7:30 a.m. and must leave the building by 2:45 P.M. unless staying for an activity supervised by an adult. Students who eat breakfast may go to the cafeteria beginning at 7:30 a.m.

## **STUDENT ABSENCES**

The Board of Education of the Fort Edward Union Free School District recognizes that student attendance in school is an important component of student success. Student interaction with teachers and other students in class helps to enhance the academic learning experience and provides a basis by which students can demonstrate mastery of subject matter.

The following reasons for pupil absences, tardiness, and early departure shall be considered by the Board of Education to be excused:

- Bereavement
- Religious observance
- Required court appearances
- Participation in a school-sponsored activity
- Pre-approved college visits
- Approved cooperative work programs
- Approved military commitments
- Suspensions

When you expect your child will be sick and cannot attend school:

- Call the school as early as possible in the morning and inform the office that the child will be absent.
  - Main Office: (518) 747-4529, ext. 3111
- Write and sign a note which the child will submit to the attendance office when he or she returns to school.

If your child becomes sick during the day:

- The student should report his or her illness to his or her teacher.
- The teacher will sign a pass for the student to proceed to the nurse's office. The school nurse will take appropriate action, possibly calling the student's parent or guardian.

## **EMERGENCY CLOSING**

In order to ensure the safety of students and staff, the Fort Edward School will close in inclement weather.

Our district uses a notification system which allows us to reach parents, students and staff members instantly. If our school will be closed or delayed, you will be notified by an automated phone message.

You may also tune to the local network television affiliates (WRGB, WTEN, WNYT, and WXXA), Capital News 9, or the regional FM and AM radio stations. Websites associated with each of these media outlets are also excellent sources of school closing information. Also, be sure to check the Fort Edward Union Free School District website (<http://www.fortedward.org>) for any up-to-the-minute cancellation information.

We ask that you do not telephone the school.

### **ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES**

Case Street from Broadway to McIntyre is all One-Way. Please drive slowly and carefully, being alert for children at all times. If you are dropping off a student, please pull up to the drop off area near the main entrance of the school. If traffic is at a standstill, please let your student out of the car on the passenger side only. Drivers must remain in the car.

In the morning, please say goodbye to your child in front of the school doors. Allowing children to walk to class independently, with the help of our hall monitors and teachers, will enhance the children's confidence and independence. For safety and security, parents are not allowed to escort their students to the classroom. In the afternoon, we ask that you allow room in front of the main entrance for students to exit the building.

School hours are 8:00 a.m. to 2:34 p.m, please do not send them to school earlier than 7:30 a.m. Please have children dress appropriately for the weather in case they need to wait outside, under supervision, for up to fifteen minutes. If students arrive early, they will be escorted to the main gym where they will be asked to sit quietly on the bleachers until it is time to go to class. They will be well supervised at all times.

Dismissal time will be in two phases: parent pick-ups at 2:32p.m (Grades K-3), at the back of the building. Grades 4 & 5 only, are dismissed from the front door at 2:38 p.m. If you are picking up your child at dismissal, please wait outside the door closest to the office. If someone other than yourself will be picking your child up, please inform his or her teacher with a note. Only adults with written permission and a photo ID to pick up a child will be able to do so.

Dismissal is a very busy time. If you need to make a change in your child's dismissal plan, please inform his or her teacher with a note. In case of emergency, changes to dismissal may be made via phone call before 1:30 p.m. Your child's safety is our primary concern. We have worked hard to create a safe and nurturing learning environment. The main entrance will be locked during school hours. Visitors are requested to use the intercom buzzer to gain entrance. All visitors must report immediately to the main office when they enter the school building. Visitors must sign in and out of the building, and must indicate their destination within the building.

With respect to visitors: if you wish to meet with one of your child's teachers, please make an appointment in advance. Teachers can be reached most easily via email, or you can call the school and leave a message to set up a meeting. Teachers are NOT able to have spur-of-the-moment parent-teacher conferences, as discussing a student's progress requires preparation and advanced notice. If you come to school without warning intending to discuss your child, you will be asked to make an appointment for a meeting or phone conference to take place at a later date and time. Thank you for your support.

## HOMEWORK

### **Purposes of Homework**

Homework for young children should help them develop good study habits, foster positive attitudes toward school, and communicate to them that learning takes place at home, as well as at school. Homework can have a positive effect on character development and serve as a vital link between the school and family. Homework assignments keep parents informed about what children are learning in school. Current educational research indicates that study skills are widely recognized as key to successful learning. The most effective way to achieve a high level of study skills for all children is through a partnership with the school; parents and teachers support the same requirements and hold students accountable for meeting them.

It is important that children acquire a strong sense of responsibility and study skills through homework and the use of a homework planner. Homework expectations vary by grade level based on the developmental needs of the children. As the child progresses through the grades, teacher assigned tasks will be more frequent and the benefit is building responsibility for learning.

Homework may take any of the following forms:

**1. Practice Activities**

Children often require practice with concepts taught in the classroom in order to internalize the new learning.

**2. Preparation Activities**

Teachers often ask children to prepare for a classroom activity by gathering information outside of school or by bringing materials to the classroom.

**3. Extension Activities**

These assignments are designed to extend or enhance concepts taught during classroom instruction. These assignments may require a child to apply knowledge taught in the classroom to a new situation.

**4. Creative Activities**

Teachers often ask students to demonstrate their understanding of concepts in a variety of ways. At the conclusion of a unit of study, a teacher may provide a list of possible activities and the students are asked to select one to complete at home.

### **Time Expectations**

Based on research studies, the following guidelines are developmentally appropriate for each age/grade level. They also reflect a recommended amount of time to be spent on homework. Time requirements should increase with maturity, reflecting the changing needs and abilities of students as they progress through our school. Homework requirements become more complex with each level, and daily assignments may vary from one to multiple activities.

Grade level approximate amount of time per evening\*

Kindergarten	15 min.
First Grade	20 min.
Second Grade	25 min.
Third Grade	30 min.
Fourth Grade	45 min.
Fifth Grade	55 min.

*\*Should your child consistently need an excessive amount of time (more than expected), notify your child's teacher to discuss the situation.*

## **Homework – Parent’s Role**

A parent sets the stage with praise and encouragement and with routine requirements for homework. This support helps students develop positive attitudes about themselves and about school.

The following guidelines will help you plan and establish a homework routine with your child:

- Plan a regularly scheduled daily homework time based upon your family’s activities and your child’s best personal time pattern (e.g., right after school vs. right after dinner). Once homework time is established, it should be consistent and take priority over all other activities.
- Establish a consistent homework place – this can be in any part of the home: kitchen, bedroom, living room, den, etc. This study area should be well lit, comfortable, and a place where your child can concentrate. Each child is different, and although some children prefer a quiet study area, others need or benefit from background sounds. Some children learn better if they sit on a couch or pillow, etc., and others do better with formal types of seating. Your child can add his/her own personal touch to make the homework environment an inviting space. You can help by keeping telephone calls and other interruptions to a minimum during homework time.
- Keep necessary supplies accessible to your child’s ‘homework place’ – paper, pens, pencils, markers, crayons, scissors, tape, dictionary, wastebasket, etc. These supplies can be organized in a special container. Having all supplies available will prevent your child from being continually distracted by the need to go searching for materials and will strengthen organizational skills.
- Discuss daily homework assignments with your child. Completing homework and bringing homework assignments back to school is an important responsibility your child must develop. Many families find it beneficial to organize backpacks before bedtime to help children develop the habit of always putting completed assignments in the same place each night. Make sure it is a convenient location free of clutter.
- Keep the tone positive during homework time.
- Listen attentively and show enthusiasm.
- Provide encouragement and focus on your child’s progress.
- Emphasize the importance of individual strengths and interests for all children, but especially for the child who has academic difficulties.
- Emphasize successes, acquisition of a skill, completion of a difficult assignment or portion of a difficult assignment and meeting individual goals. Avoid anger or punishment. Focus on what your child learned from his or her mistakes and concentrate on the next steps to take.
- If your child is having difficulty completing an assignment, please make a note in your child’s homework planner.

## **Daily Planner**

We ask that students in grades 3, 4, and 5 utilize a daily planner. Parents are asked to check the planner for homework assignments, long term projects, and other class assignments. The planner may also be used to communicate with the classroom teacher.

## **PROMOTING A SAFE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

### **General School Environment Rules**

Students are expected to:

- Be on time and arrive at school no earlier than 7:30AM.
- Follow directions the first time they are given.
- Comply with directives given by adults.
- Be courteous, polite and respectful to the school community.
- Show respect and consideration toward peers, underclassmen and adults.
- Use appropriate language.
- Be honest in their pursuit of academic success.
- Be honest in interpersonal relationships.
- Dress appropriately for all classes.
- Keep hands, feet and objects to themselves.
- Treat school property and the property of others with respect
- Walk to and from the buses, walk in hallways and in all areas of the school building in an orderly manner
- Attend school regularly.
- Stay on school grounds during the school day.
- Solve differences with peers and adults using positive, non-violent means.
- Be drug free.
- All personal electronic equipment should not be used or visible during school hours; and, we encourage students to keep their electronic items at home. The school is not responsible for any lost or stolen electronic equipment, therefore students must keep all such items secured.
- Leave objects that may be considered a weapon at home.
- Leave weapons at home.

### **Cafeteria Rules**

Students are expected to:

- Keep food and food wrappers on the table until disposal time.
- Treat all adults and your peers with dignity and respect.
- Clean up your own table spot.
- Leave the cafeteria only if you have a pass and have signed out with a supervising adult.
- Use the appropriate bathroom after first obtaining permission from a supervising adult.
- Move from your seat only when necessary.
- Talk quietly.
- Follow the directives of the supervising adults.

### **Playground Rules**

Students are expected to:

- Play in the assigned area only.
- Play safely with equipment.
- Share school equipment and games and return them to the proper place.
- Be considerate of others at play.
- Follow the directives of the supervising adults.
- Appropriate footwear, i.e. NO flip flops, open-toed shoes, or open-backed sandals.

## Bus Safety

Safety is the primary concern in transporting students. Video camera boxes have been installed on all buses; cameras are rotated randomly. The following guidelines have been established to ensure that safety is maintained throughout the trip. Proper bus behavior is taught to all children. Any continued misbehavior that distracts the driver jeopardizes the safety of all the passengers. When a bus driver or bus aide has instructed a student several times on proper behavior and the student still does not comply, a referral form will be completed and submitted to the building administrator. Students may be assigned consequences for the following inappropriate behaviors:

- Smoking
- Throwing objects out of the bus, or within the bus
- Tripping others, kicking, pushing, shoving, pinching, spitting
- Vandalism

## Bus Rules

Students are expected to:

- Follow directions of the bus driver and/or the bus aide at all times, the first time they are given.
- Show respect for the authority of the bus driver.
- Show consideration of other students on the bus.
- Use appropriate language.
- Remain seated with arms and hands inside the bus and aisles.
- Obey all bus safety rules.
- Behave appropriately at the bus stop immediately prior to and after a scheduled pick up or drop off.
- Leave objects or substances that are inappropriate or dangerous at home.
- Settle differences with peers in a non-violent manner.
- Follow all rules and principles as outlined in this Code of Discipline.





## **VISITOR PROCEDURES**

### **ALL OUTSIDE DOORS ARE LOCKED.**

Visitors must enter the school through the Main Entrance. The school uses a video entry system. Visitors press the call button next to the door outside and identify themselves. Office personnel will release the door to allow visitors to enter.

Visitors to include: Non-staff members, parents, workmen, and others, will be directed to sign in at the office and give a driver's license to scan to obtain Visitor's Pass.

Visitor badges and a sign-in log are on the office counter, for Substitute Staff. Visitors are asked to wear a badge. They will also be asked to include their name, phone number, time-in, and destination. Visitors must also sign-out prior to leaving the school.

Visitors who go only to the office or who plan to wait for children at dismissal in the foyer will not need to sign-in or wear visitor badges. All other reasons for a visit will need to sign-in and obtain a badge.

## **PROHIBITED STUDENT CONDUCT**

The Board of Education expects students to conduct themselves in an appropriate and civil manner, with proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, district personnel and other members of the school community, and for the care of school facilities and equipment.

The best discipline is self-imposed, and students must learn to assume and accept responsibility for their own behavior, as well as the consequences of their misbehavior. District personnel who interact with students are expected to use disciplinary action only when necessary and to place emphasis on the students' ability to grow in self-discipline.

The Board recognizes the need to make its expectations for student conduct while on school property or engaged in a school function specific and clear. The rules of conduct listed below are intended to do that and focus on safety and respect for the rights and property of others. Students who will not accept responsibility for their own behavior and who violate these rules will be required to accept the penalties for their conduct.

Students may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension from school, when they:

- A. Engage in conduct that is disorderly. Examples of disorderly conduct include:
  1. Running in hallways.
  2. Making unreasonable noise.
  3. Using language or gestures that are profane, lewd, vulgar or abusive.
  4. Obstructing vehicular or pedestrian traffic.
  5. Engaging in any willful act that disrupts the normal operation of the school community.
  6. Trespassing. Students are not permitted in any school building, other than one they regularly attend, without permission from the administrator in charge of the building.
  7. Misusing computer/electronic communications devices, including any unauthorized or inappropriate use of computers, software, or Internet/intranet account; accessing inappropriate websites; evading the District's content filter; using an outside wireless network; or any other violation of the District Acceptable Use Policy.
  8. Unauthorized use of personal electronic devices/equipment (i.e., cell phones, MP3 devices, cameras, and other personal electronic devices deemed inappropriate by the administration).

9. Unauthorized use of personal computer, laptop, tablet or e-reader and/or other computerized information resources through the District computer system is prohibited.
- B. Engage in conduct that is insubordinate. Examples of insubordinate conduct include:
1. Failing to comply with the reasonable directions of teachers, school administrators or other school employees in charge of students or otherwise demonstrating disrespect.
  2. Lateness for, missing or leaving school without permission.
  3. Skipping detention.
- C. Engage in conduct that is disturbing. Examples of disturbing conduct include:
1. Failing to comply with the reasonable directions of teachers, school administrators or other school personnel in charge of students.
  2. Being late for school or class.
  3. Being unprepared for class.
- D. Engage in conduct that is violent. Examples of violent conduct include:
1. Committing an act of violence (ex. Hitting) upon a teacher, administrator or other school employee.
  2. Committing an act of violence (ex. Hitting) upon a student or any other person lawfully on school property.
  3. Engaging in harassing conduct, verbal threats, intimidation, or abuse that reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for his or her physical well-being.
  4. Possessing a weapon. Authorized law enforcement officials are the only persons permitted to have a weapon in their possession while on school property or at a school function “Weapon” means gun, pistol, revolver, shotgun, rifle, machine gun, disguised gun, dagger, dirk, razor, stiletto, switchblade knife, gravity knife, metal knuckle knife, box cutters, cane sword, electronic dart gun, Kung Fu star, electronic stun gun, pepper spray or other noxious spray, explosive or incendiary bomb, or other dangerous instrument that can cause injury or death.
  5. Displaying what appears to be a weapon.
  6. Threatening to use a weapon.
  7. Intentionally damaging or destroying the personal property of a teacher, administrator, other district employee or any person lawfully on school property. This includes graffiti or arson.
  8. Intentionally damaging or destroying school district property.
- E. Engage in any conduct that endangers the safety, morals, health, or welfare of others. Examples of such conduct include:
1. Lying to school personnel.
  2. Stealing District property or the property of other students, school personnel or any other person lawfully on school property or attending a school function.
  3. Defamation, which includes making false or unprivileged statements or representations about an individual or identifiable group of individuals that harm the reputation of the person or the identifiable group by demeaning them. This can include posting or publishing video, audio recordings or pictures (written material, cell phones, Internet, YouTube, etc.).
  4. Discrimination, based on a person’s actual or perceived race, age, sexual orientation, use of a recognized guide dog, hearing dog or service dog, color, creed, national

- origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, sex, sexual orientation, gender or gender identity, marital or veteran status, or disability as a basis for treating another in a negative manner on school property or at a school function.
5. Harassment, the creation of a hostile environment by conduct or by verbal threats, intimidation or abuse that has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional or physical well-being based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, political affiliation, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, marital or veteran status, use of a recognized guide dog, hearing dog or service dog, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex.
  6. Bullying or harassment as defined in the district bullying and harassment policies.
  7. "Internet bullying" (also referred to as "cyberbullying"), including the use of instant messaging, email, websites, chat rooms, text messaging, or by any other electronic means, when such use interferes with the operation of the school; or infringes upon the general health, safety and welfare of students or employees.
  8. Sexual harassment, which includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, taking, sending or receiving sexually explicit videos, pictures or auditory recordings and other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature.
  9. Displaying signs of gang affiliation or engaging in gang-related behaviors that are observed to increase the level of conflict or violent behavior.
  10. Hazing, which includes any intentional or reckless act directed against another for the purpose of initiation into, affiliating with or maintaining membership in any District or school sponsored activity, organization, club or team.
  11. Selling, using, possessing or distributing obscene material.
  12. Possessing, consuming, selling, attempting to sell, distributing or exchanging alcoholic beverages, tobacco, tobacco products or illegal and/or controlled substances, counterfeit and designer drugs, or paraphernalia for use of such drugs or being under the influence of any such substances on school property or at a school function. "Illegal substances" include, but are not limited to, inhalants, marijuana, synthetic cannabinoids, cocaine, LSD, PCP, amphetamines, heroin, steroids, look-alike drugs, drug paraphernalia and any substances commonly referred to as "designer drugs".
  13. Inappropriately using, sharing, selling, attempting to sell, distributing or exchanging prescription and over-the-counter drugs.
  14. Possessing, consuming, selling, attempting to sell, distributing, or exchanging "look-alike drugs"; or, possessing or consuming (without authorization), selling, attempting to sell, distributing or exchanging other substances such as dietary supplements, weight loss pills, etc.
  15. Gambling and gaming.
  16. Inappropriate touching and/or indecent exposure.
  17. Initiating or reporting warning of fire or other catastrophe without valid cause, misusing 911, or inappropriately discharging a fire extinguisher.
  18. Violating gender privacy when using school restroom facilities.
- F. Engage in misconduct while on a school bus. It is crucial for students to behave appropriately while riding on district buses, to ensure their safety and that of other passengers and to avoid distracting the bus driver. Students are required to conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with established standards for classroom behavior. Excessive noise, pushing, shoving, harassment, discrimination, and fighting will not be tolerated. Students waiting for buses not on school property are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the

district code of conduct.

G. Engage in any form of academic misconduct. Examples of academic misconduct include:

1. Plagiarism.
2. Cheating.
3. Altering records.
4. Accessing other users' email accounts or network storage accounts and/or attempting to read, delete, copy, modify, and interfere with the transferring and receiving of electronic communications.
5. Violation of the District Acceptable Use Policy for technology.
6. Assisting another student in any of the above actions.

### **REPORTING VIOLATIONS**

Students are expected to promptly report violations of the code of conduct to a teacher, guidance counselor, building principal or an adult employee of the school district. Any student observing a student possessing a weapon, alcohol or illegal substance on school property shall report this information immediately.

All district staff who are authorized to impose disciplinary consequences are expected to do so in a prompt, fair and lawful manner. District staff who are not authorized to impose disciplinary consequences are expected to promptly report violations of the code of conduct to their supervisor, who shall act upon the matter, if so authorized, or refer the matter to a staff member who is authorized to investigate and determine disciplinary action.

Staff members should confiscate any weapon, alcohol or illegal substance found, if possible, followed by immediate notification to the building administrator.

The building principal will notify appropriate local law enforcement agencies of any violations that constitute a crime no later than the close of the business day when the information was disclosed.

All serious disciplinary code violations will be reported to a parent/guardian as soon as practicable, by phone, or, when phone contact is not possible, by letter.

### **CONSEQUENCES FOR MISBEHAVIOR**

At the elementary school level, consequences for student violation of rules will be fair and consistent, based upon investigation and the best possible judgment of the administrator(s) in charge. Positive motivation and strategies to encourage appropriate behaviors will be initiated before negative consequences are assigned. Student discipline will progress from less stringent consequences, assigned by both teachers and administrators, to more stringent consequences, depending upon the severity of the offense, federal and state laws which may apply to the offense, the number of disciplinary referrals, and the age of the child. Acts resulting in stringent disciplinary measures will be recorded on students' permanent records. Criminal acts will be reported to the proper legal jurisdiction.

Please refer to the next page for a listing of progressive actions which may be taken to assist a child having difficulty maintaining proper behavior, as well as disciplinary consequences that may be imposed. The specific actions listed in each of the three groups may not necessarily be taken in the order given. It is our practice to use a combination of strategies with children experiencing difficulties, progressing from the more "Minor" types of assistance or consequences to the "Moderate" and "Serious" when indicated by the violation. However, both "Moderate" and "Serious" consequences will result in parental contact.

## **BASIC PROCEDURES FOR DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES**

In all cases, regardless of the penalty imposed, the school personnel authorized to impose the penalty must inform the student of the alleged misconduct and must investigate, to the extent necessary, the facts surrounding the alleged misconduct. All students will have an opportunity to present their version of the facts to the school personnel imposing the disciplinary penalty.

### **Communication**

It is the responsibility of teachers to notify and/or discuss recurring behavioral issues with parents on a consistent basis. When a moderate or major code violation occurs, warranting a more severe disciplinary consequence, parents will be notified, and meetings arranged as appropriate. In rare cases, when the code violation may also be a criminal offense, parents will be notified as well as law enforcement agencies.

### **Detention**

Teachers, principals and the superintendent may use after school detention as a penalty for student misconduct in situations where other disciplinary actions would be inappropriate. Students will be notified in advance of the date and time for a detention penalty; parents will be contacted by phone, or a letter if phone contact is not possible.

### **Suspension**

In all suspensions from school, all procedures mandated by Education Law 3214 will be followed. These include due process rights of students.

### **PINS Petition**

The principal may file a PINS petition when a student in need of supervision exhibits a pattern of disciplinary code violations and/ or a serious disciplinary code violation. Parents and guardians will receive notification of the intent to file a PINS Diversion by the Principal.

A PINS petition is automatically filed by the school when a crime has been committed.

## **GLOSSARY OF SPECIFIC VIOLATIONS**

### **Obscene Language**

Our goal is to teach students the ability to communicate clearly using the acceptable standards and structure of the English language. These standards are to be exemplified by all members of the school community. Obscene language will not be tolerated within the school environment.

### **Dishonesty**

#### *Cheating*

Students are expected to be honest in test situations and when completing homework. Cheating in any form is a serious offense. The principles of integrity, individual accountability, and honesty are required of the entire school community.

#### *Lying*

Providing false information, either verbally or in written form, is prohibited.

## **Insubordination**

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a polite and courteous manner, this is learned developmentally. Insubordination occurs when a student is capable of proper behavior given his/her age openly defies and willfully disregards a directive issued by a staff member. Examples include deliberate disobedience, flagrant acts of rudeness, refusal to report to the office upon direction, disrespectful language.

## **Harassment**

Harassment is the persistent annoyance or bullying of an individual or individuals by one or more individuals. Harassment also includes verbal or physical threats. Protection against harassment is mandated by Federal and State Laws. Harassment should be reported to an adult immediately, so investigation can be initiated. Severe harassment may result in out-of-school suspension, or referral to a law enforcement agency.

Some examples of harassment include:

- Ridicule of an individual who is physically or mentally handicapped.
- Repeated derogatory comments that belittle a person.
- Any verbal threat of physical assault against another person.

## **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual Harassment means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical conduct or other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature. Protection from sexual harassment is mandated by Federal and State laws. The Board of Education's Sexual Harassment Policy and Regulation is available upon request. All reports of sexual harassment will be investigated, and appropriate measures enforced against offenders. Severe cases may result in severe consequences, including but not limited to out-of-school suspension or referral to a law enforcement agency.

## **Assault**

Any physical attack upon another person is an assault. Instances of assault upon any member of the school community will be investigated and appropriate disciplinary action taken. Assault may result in several days of out-of-school suspension and possible referral to a law enforcement agency.

## **Objectionable Behavior**

Our school community should be a congenial and safe place for all students and staff. Any objectionable behavior affecting the rights of others, especially that which could possibly result in bodily or emotional injury, will not be tolerated. Some examples of objectionable behavior include:

- Fighting
- Running, pushing, shoving, slapping, pinching, kicking, tripping, hair pulling
- Irresponsible actions that might cause injury in the general school environment
- Throwing objects
- Misuse of property belonging to others
- Offensive gestures/language
- Inappropriate display of intimate affection
- Deliberate littering
- Possession or display of pornographic material
- Repeated non-compliance with staff directives
- Use of noise-producing devices

- Throwing snowballs on school grounds
- Use of objects as weapons
- Endangering the safety of self and others
- Behaving in a substantially disruptive manner

## **Theft**

Stealing is against the law. Our goal is to promote respect for the rights and property of the entire school community. Students who engage in stealing will be subject to school and/or legal action.

## **Vandalism**

Vandalism is the intentional damage to the property of the school district or of any personal property of any member of the school community, which results in the cleaning, repairs, or replacement of the property vandalized. A penalty ranging from community service to suspension and/or referral to the appropriate law enforcement agency from school may result. Parents/guardians are responsible for the first \$2,500 of vandalism committed by their child. (Education Law, S1709). A reasonable effort must be made to repay the damages within a time limit arranged by the parent/guardian and the administration. A small claims action may be initiated to collect damages.

## **Intentionally Making a False Alarm**

Misuse of equipment that protects the school community, or threatening violence, may result in severe disciplinary actions and referral to a law enforcement agency. This includes making a verbal or written bomb threat (now a penal offense), making a threat of violence against a member of the school community or the school, pulling the fire alarm when there is no fire, and calling 911 without a valid reason.

## **School Hours**

Students are not to enter the building prior to 7:30AM and must leave the building by 2:45PM unless staying for an activity supervised by an adult.

## **Truancy**

Truancy is an illegal absence from school or class. Truancy creates unnecessary hardship to school personnel, as the attendance officer and school nurse must track such students by phoning or visiting the home.

Truancy is a serious violation of school rules and will be treated accordingly; the students will receive zeros in all classes missed that day and be responsible for making up all schoolwork missed. Further disciplinary action may be taken.

## **Drugs/Alcohol**

The entire school community strives to maintain an environment that is drug and alcohol free. Students believed to be under the influence of, or in possession of, either alcohol, drugs, or drug paraphernalia, will be subject to out-of-school suspension, a possible Superintendent's Hearing, and legal action.

## **Tape Recording on School Property**

There will be no tape recordings of parent-teacher-administrator or student conferences, any meetings between a parent or student and teachers or administrators, or classroom and other school activities unless pre-approved by the teacher or administrator involved. However, this shall not preclude any statutory right to tape record public meetings at the School District, a meeting of the Committee on Special Education by the parent involved, or activities required by the student's individualized education program.

## ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR INTERNET USE

### **Philosophy of Internet Use**

The Fort Edward Union Free School District recognizes the tremendous opportunities presented to students through access to the Internet and fully supports use of this information as an educational tool. Use of the Internet allows students to access libraries, databases and other resources as well as global communications that otherwise would be unavailable. However, use of this wide variety of information also permits access to sources which may not be acceptable. For that reason, the district does support the use of filtering software. In addition, during the school day the staff will guide younger students toward appropriate materials in using the computer network, just as parents guide children at home regarding the use of any information available on the Internet, from television or other electronic sources. The district shall make every effort to ensure that students use this source of knowledge responsibly. This includes communication of the concept that the validity of information found on the Internet may be questionable as well as the need to always reference materials. However, in the final analysis, it is the students themselves as well as their parents and guardians who are responsible for student behavior. This includes appropriate behavior when using the Internet. It is parents and guardians who set the standards which their children should follow when accessing information of any kind.

The Internet is used as an instructional tool by the staff of the Fort Edward Union Free School District. Use of the Internet by students is a parental choice, and the school district recognizes and supports this fact. Before any student utilizes the Internet at school, parents/guardians and students are required to sign the acceptable use policy.

### **Responsibilities and Rules for Internet Use**

The school district recognizes that internet access is a privilege for students, not a right. With this right comes certain responsibilities. Inappropriate use of the internet will lead to a suspension or cancellation of this privilege. Students are responsible for their behavior and must realize that unacceptable behavior on the computer network will result in disciplinary consequences in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

Once the Acceptable Use Agreement has been signed, the school district assumes that the student will indeed honor the rules and regulations. Staff will make every effort to restrict, monitor and control the communications of students using the computer network. Standards of behavior will be clear, and Internet use by students will be monitored as much as possible. Ultimately, each student is responsible for his/her behavior. Other than making these standards clear and monitoring Internet use by students as much as possible, the school district is not responsible for restricting, monitoring or controlling the communications of students using the computer network. The District shall not be responsible for any unauthorized charges resulting from Internet use.

The building principal shall have the authority to determine what is inappropriate use of the computer network. The District has the right to terminate or restrict access of the computer network to any individual at any time and impose consequences in accordance with the District's discipline policy.

### **PROHIBITIONS AND RESTRICTIONS**

- Use of the computer network for any illegal activity.
- Use of the computer network for plagiarism or any other illegal copying.
- Use of the computer network by an individual for any personal, for-profit activity.
- Use of the computer network to send or display any offensive messages or pictures.
- Use of the computer network to send any insulting or harassing messages.
- Use of obscene language.
- Use of e-mail for other than educational purposes.



- Using the identity or password of another individual.
- Invading the files or folders of another individual.
- Use of the computer to view or obtain any pornographic materials.
- Willful damage to the computer or to its operating system.
- Intentional disruption of the network system.

## **CONSEQUENCES OF PROHIBITED ACTIONS**

- Suspension and/or termination of network access.
- Suspension and/or termination of computer access.
- School suspension.
- Superintendent's Hearing.
- Legal action and prosecution.
- Any other disciplinary action imposed in accordance with the Code of Conduct.





**Parent Permissions / Acknowledgement of Understanding**

(Please sign and return to your child’s teacher by the end of September)

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student’s Grade & Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

I do hereby give permission for, and acknowledge understanding of the following (please check to approve):

- I authorize my child’s image to be used in school publications and resources.
- I authorize my child to participate in school sponsored off campus field trips with prior notice.
- I have read and understand the Code of Conduct as presented.
- I have read, understood and will require that my child comply with the District’s Acceptable Internet Use Policy. If, at any time, I change my mind and decide to revoke my child’s access to the Internet, I understand that I must notify the District in writing.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Acknowledgement of Understanding**

- I have read and understand the Code of Conduct as presented.
- I have read, understood and will comply with the District’s Acceptable Internet Use Policy. I realize that access to and use of the computer and of the Internet is a privilege, not a right. I realize that if I exhibit unacceptable behavior, there will be consequences for my action(s).

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return this form to the Main Office by September 18, 2023**