

# FH

**FOREST HILLS**  
— PUBLIC SCHOOLS —



## **Student/Family Handbook 2024-2025**

### **Elementary and 5/6 Schools**

REVISED August 2024

# FOREST HILLS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

620 Forest Hill Ave. SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49546  
PH: (616)493-8800 • FAX: (616)493-8560  
[www.fhps.net](http://www.fhps.net)

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**Julie Davis**  
Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations

**Christine Annese**  
Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources

*(Please refer to the district website for the most up-to-date versions of policies outlined in the student handbook.)*

Dear Families:

This student handbook was developed to answer many of the commonly asked questions that you and your family may have during the school year and to provide specific information about certain Board policies and procedures. This handbook contains important information that you should know. Become familiar with the following information and keep the handbook available for frequent reference by you and your family. If you have any questions that are not addressed in this handbook, you are encouraged to talk to your teachers or the school principal.

This handbook summarizes many of the official policies and administrative guidelines of the Board of Education and the District. To the extent that the handbook is ambiguous or conflicts with these policies and guidelines, the policies and guidelines shall control. This handbook is effective immediately and supersedes any prior handbook and other written material on the same subjects.

This handbook does not equate to an irrevocable contractual commitment to the student, but only reflects the current status of the Board's policies and the school's rules. If any of the policies or administrative guidelines referenced herein are revised after June 30<sup>th</sup> of the calendar year, the language in the most current policy or administrative guideline prevails.

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## Vision

Forest Hills Public Schools...all learners achieving individual potential

## Mission

In partnership with our community, Forest Hills Public Schools will provide all learners with opportunities to acquire the knowledge, skills, and experiences necessary to build meaningful and productive lives.

## Guiding Principles

We believe Forest Hills Public Schools is a learning organization, built upon integrity, and to this end:

We are committed to the principle of **Caring**.

We believe in:

- maintaining a family atmosphere
- supporting each other
- being warm, sincere and genuine
- accepting and including everyone
- confronting the tough issues
- keeping each other safe and secure

We are committed to the principle of

**Collaboration**.

We believe in:

- solving problems together
- working toward win/win
- building partnerships
- sharing best practices
- volunteering
- being generous
- engaging parents as full partners

We are committed to the principle of **Open Communication**.

We believe in:

- listening
- sharing
- promoting trust
- building community through dialogue
- encouraging participation from all

We are committed to the principle of **Diversity and Inclusiveness**.

We believe in:

- helping students value their unique talents and gifts
- knowing, understanding and appreciating each other
- valuing individual differences
- celebrating our heritage
- healing racism
- embracing differences to enrich, strengthen and connect our community
- striving for equity
- considering all viewpoints to arrive at better decisions

We are committed to the principle of **High Expectations**.

We believe in:

- expecting all children to learn
- requiring all to give their best
- providing opportunities for all to contribute
- assuming parents want what's best for their child
- maintaining high academic standards
- offering challenging opportunities
- helping students make healthy choices
- contributing to the development of good character

We are committed to the principle of **Learning**.

We believe in:

- learning for its own sake
- offering a range of educational opportunities
- providing diverse experiences
- individualizing learning programs
- accommodating multiple intelligences and learning styles
- preparing students for lifelong learning
- providing quality resources
- accessing the world beyond our classrooms

We are committed to the principle of **Respect**.

We believe in:

- fostering high regard for self and others
- modeling civility
- appreciating differences
- adhering to our code of conduct
- having zero tolerance for inappropriate behaviors

We are committed to the principle of **Trust**.

We believe in:

- being honest
- being consistent
- being loyal
- assuming others' intentions are good
- keeping promises
- demonstrating good stewardship



# Forest Hills Public Schools Directory

<p><b><u>ADA ELEMENTARY</u></b> 731 Ada Drive SE Ada, MI 49301 Phone: 616-493-8940 Principal: <u>Melanie Hoeksema</u></p>	<p><b><u>ADA VISTA ELEMENTARY</u></b> 7192 Bradfield SE Ada, MI 49301 Phone: 616-493-8970 Principal: <u>Allison Woodside</u></p>	<p><b><u>COLLINS ELEMENTARY</u></b> 4368 Heather Lane SE Grand Rapids, MI 49546 Phone: 616-493-8900 Principal: <u>Mitchell Balingit</u></p>	<p><b><u>KNAPP FOREST ELEMENTARY</u></b> 4243 Knapp Valley Dr. NE Grand Rapids, MI 49525 Phone: 616-493-8980 Principal: <u>Lisa Roedel</u></p>
<p><b><u>MEADOW BROOK ELEMENTARY</u></b> 1450 Forest Hill Avenue SE Grand Rapids, MI 49546 Phone: 616-493-8740 Principal: <u>Dawn Heerema</u></p>	<p><b><u>ORCHARD VIEW ELEMENTARY</u></b> 2770 Leffingwell NE Grand Rapids, MI 49525 Phone: 616-493-8930 Principal: <u>Christina Mendoza</u></p>	<p><b><u>PINE RIDGE ELEMENTARY</u></b> 3250 Redford Avenue SE Grand Rapids, MI 49546 Phone: 616-493-8910 Principal: <u>Nathan Peltz</u></p>	<p><b><u>THORNAPPLE ELEMENTARY</u></b> 6932 Bridgewater Dr. SE Grand Rapids, MI 49546 Phone: 616-493-8920 Principal: <u>David Lyon</u></p>

<p><b><u>CENTRAL WOODLANDS</u></b> 400 Alta Dale Avenue SE Ada, MI 49301 Phone: 616-493-8790 Principal: <u>Amy Burton-Major</u></p>	<p><b><u>GOODWILLIE ENVIRONMENTAL</u></b> 8400 2 Mile Road NE Ada, MI 49301 Phone: 616-493-8633 Principal: <u>Jason Yelding</u></p>	<p><b><u>NORTHERN TRAILS</u></b> 3777 Leonard Street NE Grand Rapids, MI 49525 Phone: 616-493-8990 Principal: <u>Bill Cataldo</u></p>
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<p><b><u>CENTRAL MIDDLE</u></b> 5810 Ada Drive SE Ada, MI 49301 Phone: 616-493-8750 Principal: <u>Jeff Simon</u></p>	<p><b><u>EASTERN MIDDLE</u></b> 2200 Pettis Avenue NE Ada, MI 49301 Phone: 616-493-8850 Principal: <u>Kristine Yelding</u></p>	<p><b><u>NORTHERN HILLS MIDDLE</u></b> 3775 Leonard Street NE Grand Rapids, MI 49525 Phone: 616-493-8650 Principal: <u>David Simpson</u></p>
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<p><b><u>CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL</u></b> 5901 Hall Street SE Grand Rapids, MI 49546 Phone: 616-493-8700 Principal: <u>Jon Haga</u></p>	<p><b><u>EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL</u></b> 2200 Pettis Avenue NE Ada, MI 49301 Phone: 616-493-8830 Principal: <u>Amy Pallo</u></p>	<p><b><u>NORTHERN HIGH SCHOOL</u></b> 3801 Leonard Street NE Grand Rapids, MI 49525 Phone: 616-493-8600 Principal: <u>Heather McKinney-Rewa</u></p>
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<p><b><u>FLEX ACADEMY</u></b> 3775 Leonard Street NE Grand Rapids, MI 49525 Phone: 616-493-8670 Administrator: <u>Jon Gregory</u></p>	<p><b><u>TRANSITION CENTER</u></b> 640 Forest Hill Ave. SE Grand Rapids, MI 49546 Phone: 616-493-8660 Supervisor: <u>Sarah Castro</u></p>
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<p><b><u>Student Services (Special Education)</u></b> 640 Forest Hill Ave. SE Grand Rapids, MI 49546 Phone: 616-493-8660 Director: <u>Daniel Brant</u></p>	<p><b><u>Food Service</u></b> 160 Alta Dale SE Ada, MI 49301 Phone: 616-493-8774 Director: Vacant/TBD</p>	<p><b><u>Transportation</u></b> 6001 Hall SE Grand Rapids, MI 49546 Phone: 616-493-8785 Director: <u>Carrie Whipple</u></p>	<p><b><u>Communications</u></b> 620 Forest Hill Ave. SE Grand Rapids, MI 49546 Phone: 616-493-8800 Director: <u>Elizabeth Brink</u></p>
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# Notice of Nondiscrimination Including Unlawful Harassment and Retaliation

Forest Hills Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, gender identity, or sexual orientation), national origin, disability, or any other legally protected class in any of its programs and activities, including employment opportunities.

Any person who believes that s/he has been discriminated against on the basis of his/her race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, gender identity or sexual orientation), national origin, disability, or any other legally protected class that has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment or unreasonably interfering with the student's ability to benefit from the District's education programs or activities while at school or a school activity should immediately contact the school district's compliance officer listed below.

If you or someone you know has been the victim of sex-based discrimination, harassment, or retaliation, you may file a complaint with:

Christine Annese, Title IX Coordinator  
Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources  
Forest Hills Public Schools  
620 Forest Hill Ave. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546  
616-493-8800  
cannese@fhps.net

If you or someone you know has been the victim of disability-based discrimination, harassment, or retaliation, you may file a complaint with:

Sarah Castro, Student Section 504 and Special Education Coordinator  
640 Forest Hill Ave. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546  
616-493-8660  
scastro@fhps.net

Christine Annese, Section 504 Coordinator (non-student)  
620 Forest Hill Ave. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546  
616-493-8800  
cannese@fhps.net

If you or someone you know has been the victim of any other type of unlawful discrimination, harassment, or retaliation, including unlawful conduct based on race, color, or national origin, you may file a complaint with:

Christine Annese, Civil Rights Coordinator  
620 Forest Hill Ave. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546  
616-493-8800  
cannese@fhps.net

A complaint of unlawful discrimination, including unlawful harassment or retaliation, may be made verbally or in writing.

## Current District Calendar [Link](#)

### Start and End Times

SCHOOL	START	END
<b>Ada, Collins, Meadow Brook, Pine Ridge, Thornapple (K-4) Knapp Forest, Orchard View (K-5)</b> (Two-hour delay start time 10:55 a.m.)	8:45 a.m.	3:45 p.m.
<b>Ada Vista (K-4)</b> (Two-hour delay start time 10:10 a.m.)	8:10 a.m.	3:10 p.m.
<b>Central Woodlands 5/6, Northern Trails 5/6</b> (Two-hour delay start time 10:55 a.m.)	8:45 a.m.	3:45 p.m.
<b>Goodwillie Environmental 5/6</b> (Two-hour delay start time 10:10 a.m.)	8:10 a.m.	3:10 p.m.

### Early Arrivals / Late Departures

Unless students are involved in a before or after school activity, they should arrive at school no earlier than 10 minutes prior to the start of the school day and should not remain at school more than 20 minutes after the end of the school day.

### Child Care

Fee-based, before- and after-school child care is available for children that are five years old by September 1<sup>st</sup> of the calendar year, in all elementary schools including Central Woodlands, and Northern Trails. Additional programs are offered when school is closed to those registered in the Child Care Program. Please [click here](#) to visit our child care web page for more details on program offerings.

Our Child Care provides children with a safe, well supervised, and developmentally appropriate program, and accommodates many different schedule needs. Additional information can be obtained by contacting the office or visiting the [website](#).

### Family Involvement

The Board of Education recognizes and values parents/guardians and families as children's first teachers and decision-makers in education. The term "families" is used in order to include children's primary caregivers, who are not their biological parents, such as foster caregivers, grandparents, and other family members. The Board believes that student learning is more likely to occur when there is an effective partnership between the school and the student's parents/guardians and family. Such a partnership between the home and school and greater involvement of parents/guardians in the education of their children generally results in higher academic achievement, improved student behavior, and reduced absenteeism.

Through this policy, the Board directs the establishment of a Family Involvement Plan by which a school partnership can be established and provided to the parent of each child in the District. The plan must encompass parent participation, through meetings and other forms of communication. The Family Involvement Plan shall reflect the Board's commitment to the following:

- A. Relationships with Families
  1. Cultivating school environments that are welcoming, supportive, and student-centered;
  2. Providing professional development for school staff that helps build partnerships between families and schools.
  3. Providing family activities that relate to various cultures, language, practices, and customs, and bridge economic and cultural barriers.

4. Providing coordination, technical support and other support to assist schools in planning and implementing family involvement activities.
- B. Effective Communication
1. Providing information to families to support the proper health, safety, and well-being of their children.
  2. Providing information to families about school policies, procedures, programs, and activities.
  3. Promoting regular and open communication between school personnel and students' family members.
  4. Communicating with families in a format and language that is understandable, to the extent practicable.
  5. Providing information and involving families in monitoring student progress.
  6. Providing families with timely and meaningful information regarding Michigan's academic standards, state, and local assessments, and pertinent legal provisions.
  7. Preparing families to be involved in meaningful discussions and meetings with school staff.
- C. Volunteer Opportunities
1. Providing volunteer opportunities for families to support their children's school activities.
  2. Supporting other needs, such as transportation and child care, to enable families to participate in school-sponsored family involvement events.
- D. Learning at Home
1. Offering training and resources to help families learn strategies and skills to support at-home learning and success in school.
  2. Working with families to establish learning goals and help their children accomplish these goals.
  3. Helping families to provide a school and home environment that encourages learning and extends learning at home.
- E. Involving Families in Decision-making and Advocacy
1. Involving families as partners in the process of school review and continuous improvement planning.
  2. Involving families in the development of its District-wide parent involvement policy and plan, and distributing the policy and plan to families.
- F. Collaborating with the Community
1. Building constructive partnerships and connecting families with community-based programs and other community resources.
  2. Coordinating and integrating family involvement programs and activities with District initiatives and community-based programs that encourage and support families' participation in their children's education, growth, and development.

## **Student Growth Conferences**

Formal conferences are held twice during the school year. Evening and day appointments are available. You will have an opportunity to give your preference for the conference appointment(s), and you will be notified about the specific day(s) and time(s) in advance. Please call the school if you need to cancel or reschedule your conference. The district will also provide a translator if needed.

## **Parent/Guardian Role in Student Conduct**

The Board needs parents/guardians to assume and exercise responsibility for their children's behavior, including the behavior of students who have reached the legal age of majority (eighteen [18]), but are still supported by the parents. During the school hours, the Board, through its

designated administrators, recognizes the responsibility to monitor students' behavior and, as with academic matters, the importance of cooperation between the school and the parents/guardians in matters relating to conduct.

For the benefit of the child, the Board encourages parents/guardians to support their child's career in school by:

- Working with school staff to develop and implement strategies to help their child achieve the appropriate learning outcomes;
- Providing a home environment, which encourages learning and augments the learning experiences provided by the school;
- Supporting the learning outcomes for their child with the goal of developing a responsible, adult member of society;
- Supporting a consistent and shared approach to child guidance and discipline;
- Providing for the proper health, safety, and well-being of their child;
- Assisting school staff to develop their child's English language proficiency;
- Participating in school functions, organizations and committees;
- Supporting the teachers and the schools in maintaining discipline and a safe and orderly learning environment;
- Requiring their child to observe all school rules and regulations;
- Supporting or enforcing consequences for their child's willful misbehavior in school;
- Sending their children to school with proper attention to his/her health, personal cleanliness, and dress;
- Maintaining an active interest in their child's daily work, monitoring and making it possible for him/her to complete assigned homework by providing a quiet place and suitable conditions for study;
- Reading all communications from the school, signing, and returning them promptly when requested;
- Cooperating with the school in attending conferences set up for the exchange of information about their child's progress in school, and by attending school open houses or curriculum nights.

## **Student Rights and Responsibilities**

The rules and procedures of the school are designed to allow each student to obtain a safe, orderly, and appropriate education. Students can expect their rights to freedom of expression and association and to fair treatment as long as they respect those rights for their fellow students and the staff. Students will be expected to follow teachers' directions and to obey all school rules. Disciplinary procedures are designed to ensure due process (a fair hearing) before a student is removed because of his/her behavior.

Families have the right to know how their child is succeeding in school and will be provided information on a regular basis. Many times it will be the student's responsibility to deliver that information. If necessary, the mail or hand delivery may be used to ensure contact. Families are encouraged to build a two-way link with their child's teachers and support staff by informing the staff of suggestions or concerns that may help their child better accomplish his/her educational goals.

Students must arrive at school on time, prepared to learn and participate in the educational program. If, for some reason, this is not possible, the student should seek help from the School Office.

## **Student Well-Being**

Student safety is a responsibility taken very seriously by our staff. All staff members are familiar with emergency procedures such as fire, lock down, and tornado drills and accident reporting procedures. Should a student be aware of any dangerous situation or accident, s/he must notify any staff person immediately.

## Injury and Illness

A student who becomes ill during the school day should request permission to go to the office. An appropriate adult in the office will determine whether or not the student should remain in school or go home. No student will be released from school without proper parental/guardian permission.

All injuries must be reported to a teacher or the office. The school makes every effort to prevent accidents. When they do occur, first aid is given and parents/guardians will be notified as quickly as possible. If an emergency situation is apparent, 911 will be called and emergency responders are expected to respond and treat as necessary. Any treatment beyond first aid is entirely the parents/guardians' responsibility. As soon as the parents/guardians have been notified, it is expected they will take full charge of the child and see that proper medical attention is obtained. Parents/Guardians must complete emergency forms at the beginning of each school year and are responsible for keeping the information updated.

Good attendance is desirable. However, a child should never be sent to school if he/she has symptoms of illness. ***A child must be free of fever for 24-hours without the assistance of medication before they return to school.*** To protect themselves and classmates, children should be kept at home if they have any of the following symptoms:

- Sore throat
- Nausea or vomiting
- Flushed face or abnormal temperature
- Diarrhea
- Skin rash
- Inflamed eyes or eye discharge
- Earache or ear discharge
- Restlessness, listlessness, or overly tired
- Running nose, cough, sneezing, chills, etc.
- Swollen glands
- Fever
- Sores on the skin such as impetigo, scabies, or ringworm

## Homebound Instruction

The District shall arrange for individual instruction to students of legal school age who are not able to attend classes because of a physical or emotional disability.

Parents/Guardians should contact the school administration regarding procedures for such instruction. Applications must be approved by the Student Services Department. The District will provide homebound instruction only for those confinements expected to last at least five (5) days.

Applications for individual instruction shall be made by a physician licensed to practice in this state, parent/guardian, student, or other caregiver. A physician must: certify the nature and existence of a medical condition; state the probable duration of the confinement; request such instruction; and present evidence of the student's ability to participate in an educational program.

# SECTION I – GENERAL INFORMATION

## Enrolling in the School

In general, state law requires students to enroll in the school district in which their parent or legal guardian resides, unless enrolling under Schools of Choice.

New students under the age of 18 must be enrolled by their parent or legal guardian. When enrolling, families must provide copies of the following:

- Proof of residency in Forest Hills Public Schools (e.g., closing document, rental agreement, utility bill).
- Original birth certificate (raised seal) or passport.
- Court papers allocating parental rights and responsibilities, or custody (if appropriate).
- Proof of immunizations.
- Copy of most recent report card.
- Hearing and vision screening results (kindergarten).
- Most recent physical (kindergarten).

Homeless students who meet the federal definition of homeless may enroll and will be under the direction of the District Liaison for Homeless Children with regard to enrollment procedures.

A student who has been suspended or expelled by another public school in Michigan may be temporarily denied admission to the District's schools during the period of suspension or expulsion even if that student would otherwise be entitled to attend school in the District. Likewise, a student who has been expelled or otherwise removed for disciplinary purposes from a public school in another state and the period of expulsion or removal has not expired, may be temporarily denied admission to the District's schools during the period of expulsion or removal, or until the expiration of the period of expulsion or removal, which the student would have received in the District had the student committed the offense while enrolled in the District.

## Scheduling and Assignment

The principal will assign each student to the appropriate classroom and program. Any questions or concerns about the assignment should be discussed with the principal and/or class placement team.

## Early Dismissal

No student will be allowed to leave school prior to dismissal time without custodial parent(s)/guardian(s) request or a person whose signature is on file in the school office or the parent/guardian coming to the school office to request the release. No student will be released to a person other than a custodial parent(s)/guardian(s) without permission by the custodial parent(s) or guardian.

## Transfer Out of the District

If a student plans to transfer, the custodial parent(s) or guardian must notify the school office personnel. Transfer will be authorized only after all the school materials are returned and any fees or fines are paid. School records, may not be released if the transfer is not properly completed. Custodial parent(s) or guardians are encouraged to contact their school office personnel for specific details.

School officials, when transferring student records, are required to transmit disciplinary records including suspension and expulsion actions against the student.

## Withdrawal from School

No student under the age of eighteen (18) will be allowed to withdraw from school without the written consent of her/his parent(s)/guardian(s).

## Immunizations

Students must be current with all immunizations required by law or have an authorized waiver from State immunization requirements. If a student does not have the necessary shots or waivers, the principal may remove the student or require compliance with a set deadline. This is for the safety of all students and in accordance with State law. Any questions regarding immunizations or waivers should be directed to the Health and Wellness Coordinator at (616) 493-8635 or [click here](#) to visit the Health and Wellness webpage on our website.

Immunization requirements for children entering kindergarten, seventh grade or children entering a new school district in Grades 1-12 are outlined on the [Health and Wellness webpage](#) on the district website.

If you have a religious or medical reason why your child cannot be immunized, a certified waiver from the Kent County Health Department must be completed and signed before starting the first day of school (for required immunizations only).

You are encouraged to discuss these changes with your health care provider or local Health Department.

**Failure to meet these requirements, as set by the Michigan Department of Public Health, requires the school principal to exclude the child from attendance.** Please call the FHPS District Health and Wellness Coordinator at (616) 493-8635, if you have any concerns or questions.

## Health Care Needs

If your child has a medical condition such as diabetes, epilepsy, asthma, acute allergies (food, insect bites, animals), or a physical disability, and/or requires treatments or procedures during school hours, please inform a school staff member prior to the first day of school.

An Emergency Care Plan (ECP) is needed for those students with potential complications such as allergies, asthma, seizure disorder, or diabetes. The ECP must be signed by both the physician and the parent/guardian. See your school secretary for forms.

## Use of Medications (Prescribed and Over the Counter (OTC)/Treatments)

For the safety of your children, Forest Hills has a medication/treatment policy, which requires signatures from either the healthcare provider and/or the parent/guardian before any medication (including OTC) or treatment may be administered by an authorized school staff member. See your school secretary for a copy of the form(s), which you may present to your healthcare provider. We are committed to the development of prevention programs that ensure effective responses to urgent and emergent health problems of students in the school community. We invite you to direct your questions to your child's school office staff, or the Health and Wellness Coordinator at (616) 493-8635.

Administration of medication by injection, rectal, pump, inhalation or ultrasonic Nebulizer will be individually planned with the student's parent/guardian, Health and Wellness Coordinator, health care provider, building office staff, and principal.

School personnel are not permitted to honor independent requests from a parent/legal guardian to administer medication other than as specified on the medication authorization form.



Any change in medication, dosage, or directions will require the completion of a new Medication Authorization Form.

All signatures, including health care provider, parent/guardian, must be original and handwritten. Faxed Medication Authorization Forms requiring a health care provider's signature must be sent directly to the school from the health care provider's office.

The only medications that can be carried and self-administered by elementary students are metered-dose inhalers and emergency injectable medications, if authorized in writing by both the student's health care provider and parent/legal guardian.

In those circumstances where a student must take **ANY** medication during the school day, the following guidelines are to be observed:

- Parents/Guardians should, with their physician's counsel, determine whether the medication schedule can be adjusted to avoid administering medication during school hours.
- The Medication Authorization Form must be filed with the respective building principal's office staff before the student will be allowed to begin taking any medication during school hours.
- Medication that is brought to the office will be properly secured.
- All prescription medication must be delivered to school by the parent/guardian or other authorized adult, in the current original container with an unaltered prescription label attached. A two to four (2-4) week supply of medication is recommended.
- Medication MAY NOT be sent to school in a student's lunch box, pocket, or other means on or about his/her person, except for emergency medications for allergies/reactions or asthma.
- Any unused medication unclaimed by the parent or guardian will be destroyed by school personnel when a prescription is no longer to be administered or at the end of a school year.
- The parent(s) or guardian shall have sole responsibility to instruct their child to take the medication at the scheduled time, and the child has the responsibility for both presenting himself/herself on time and for taking the prescribed medication.
- A log for each prescribed medication shall be maintained which will note the personnel giving the medication, the date, and the time of day. This log will be maintained along with the physician's written instructions and the parent/guardian written permission release.

## **Inhalers and EpiPens**

Students, with appropriate written permission from the physician and parent/guardian, may possess and use a metered dose inhaler or dry powder inhaler to alleviate asthmatic symptoms. Epinephrine (EpiPen) is administered only in accordance with a written medication administration plan and is updated annually.

## **Misuse of Medications**

If a student is found using or possessing a non-prescribed medication without parent/guardian authorization, s/he will be brought to the school office, and the parent/guardian will be contacted. The medication will be confiscated until authorization is received.

Any student who distributes a medication of any kind to another student or is found to possess a medication other than the one authorized is in violation of the school's Code of Conduct and will be disciplined in accordance with the drug-use provision of the Code.

## **Control of Casual Contact Communicable Diseases**

Because a school has a high concentration of people, it is necessary to take specific measures when the health or safety of the group is at risk. The school's professional staff has the authority to remove or isolate a student who has been ill or has been exposed to a communicable disease or highly transient pest, such as lice.

Specific diseases include; diphtheria, scarlet fever, strep infections, whooping cough, mumps, measles, rubella, and other conditions indicated by the local and state health departments.

Any removal will only be for the contagious period as specified by the Health and Wellness Coordinator and local health department.

Please notify the school office if your child develops a communicable disease.

## **Control of Non-Casual Contact Communicable Diseases**

In the case of non-casual contact, communicable diseases, the school still has the obligation to protect the safety of the staff and students. In these cases, the person in question may have his/her status reviewed by a panel of resource people, including the county health department, to ensure that the rights of the person affected and those in contact with that person are respected. The school will seek to keep students and staff persons in school unless there is definitive evidence to warrant exclusion.

Non-casual contact communicable diseases include sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), ARC-AIDS Related Complex (condition), HIV (Human-immunodeficiency), HAV, HBV, HCV (Hepatitis A, B, C); and other diseases that may be specified by the State Board of Health.

As required by federal law, parent(s)/guardian may be requested to have their child's blood checked for HIV, HBV, and other blood-borne pathogens when the child has bled at school and students or staff members have been exposed to the blood. Any testing is subject to laws protecting confidentiality.

## **Individuals with Disabilities**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act provide that no individual will be discriminated against on the basis of a disability. This protection applies not just to the student, but to all individuals who have access to the District's programs and facilities.

A student may be eligible to access special education or 504 accommodations through the proper evaluation procedures. Parent/Guardian involvement in this procedure is important and required by federal (IDEA) and state law. Contact your school counselor or principal to inquire about school and district interventions and evaluation procedures.

## **Special Education Services**

Programs and services are offered to students who are found eligible for special education. Programs include resource and categorical classrooms. Related services may include teacher consultant support, speech and language, social work, occupational therapy, and/or physical therapy as determined by an individualized educational plan. Students identified for special education programs and/or services must meet state and federal eligibility guidelines. Parents/Guardians who suspect their child may have a disability should contact the school counselor or principal for further consultation.

## **Student Records and Directory Information**

The School District maintains many student records including both directory information and confidential information. Directory information includes: a student's name; address, telephone number, photographs or videos depicting a student's participation in school related activities; date and place of birth; major field of study; grade level; enrollment status; dates of attendance; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; height and weight of athletic team members; degrees, honors, and awards received; and the most recent educational agency or institution attended. Parents/Guardians may refuse to allow the school to disclose any or all of such

“directory information” upon written notification to the school. Other than directory information, access to all other student records is protected by (FERPA) and Michigan law.

Students and parents/guardians have the right to review and receive copies of all educational records. To review student records please provide a written notice identifying requested student records to the school principal. You will be given an appointment with the appropriate person to answer any questions and to review the requested student records.

Parents/Guardians and adult students have the right to amend a student record when they believe that any of the information contained in the record is inaccurate, misleading or violates the student’s privacy. A parent/guardian or adult student must request the amendment of a student record in writing and if the request is denied, the parent/guardian or adult student will be informed of their right to a hearing on the matter.

Individuals have a right to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education if they believe that the District has violated FERPA. Consistent with the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), no student shall be required, as a part of the school program or the District’s curriculum, without prior written consent of the student (if an adult, or an emancipated minor) or, if an unemancipated minor, his/her parents/guardian, to submit to or participate in any survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:

- A. political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student’s parent/guardian;
- B. mental or psychological problems of the student or the student’s family;
- C. sexual behavior or attitudes;
- D. illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating or demeaning behavior;
- E. critical appraisals of other persons with whom the student has close family relationships;
- F. legally recognized privileges and analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
- G. religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or the student’s parent/guardian; or
- H. income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such a program).

Consistent with the PPRA and Board policy, the Superintendent shall ensure that procedures are established whereby parents/guardians may inspect any materials used in conjunction with any such survey, analysis, or evaluation.

Further, parents/guardians have the right to inspect, upon request, a survey or evaluation created by a third party before the survey/evaluation is administered or distributed by the school to the student. The parent/guardian will have access to the survey/evaluation within a reasonable period of time after the building principal receives the request.

The Superintendent or designee will notify parents/guardians of:

1. this Policy and its availability upon request;
2. how to opt their child out of participation in activities as provided for in this Policy;
3. the approximate date(s) when a survey, evaluation, or analysis that would reveal sensitive information is scheduled or expected to be scheduled;
4. the approximate date(s) when the District or its agents intend to administer a non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening required as a condition of attendance (except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings); and
5. how to inspect any survey or other material described in this Policy.

This notification will be given to parents/guardians at least annually at the beginning of the school year and within a reasonable period after any substantive change to this Policy.

Parents/Guardians who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Christine Annese  
620 Forest Hill Ave. SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49546  
Telephone: (616) 493-8805

OR

Student Privacy Policy Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202

## Surveys

Consistent with the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), no student shall be required, as a part of the school program or the District's curriculum, without prior written consent of the parent/guardian to submit to or participate in any survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:

- political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent/guardian;
- mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
- sexual behavior or attitudes;
- illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating or demeaning behavior;
- critical appraisals of other persons with whom the student has close family relationships;
- legally recognized privileges and analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
- religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or the student's parents;
- income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such a program).

Parents/Guardians may inspect any materials used in conjunction with any such survey, analysis, or evaluation.

## Student Fees, Fines, and Supplies

The District will provide all basic supplies needed to complete the required course curriculum. The student and/or his/her family may choose to purchase their own supplies if they desire to have a greater quantity or quality of supplies, or desire to help conserve the limited resources for use by others. The teacher or appropriate administrator may recommend useful supplies for these purposes.

Fees may be waived in situations where there is financial hardship. Please contact school principal for more information.

Students using school property and equipment can be fined for excessive wear and abuse of the property and equipment. The fine will be used to pay for the damage, not to make a profit. Late fines can be avoided when students return borrowed materials promptly. Other students may need the use of these materials.

## **Student Fundraising**

Students participating in school-sponsored groups and activities will be allowed to solicit funds from other students, staff members, and members of the community in accordance with school guidelines. The following general rules will apply to all fundraisers.

Students who engage in fund-raisers that require them to exert themselves physically beyond their normal pattern of activity, such as "runs for..." will be monitored by a staff member in order to prevent a student from over-extending himself/herself to the point of potential harm.

Students may not participate in a fund-raising activity conducted by or for a parent/guardian group, booster club, or community organization on school property without the approval of the principal.

## **Student Valuables**

Students are encouraged not to bring items of value to school. Items such as cell phones, computers, jewelry, expensive clothing, electronic equipment, are tempting targets for theft and extortion. The school cannot be responsible for their safekeeping and will not be liable for loss or damage to personal valuables. The school cannot pursue losses or damages caused by other students.

## **Review of Instructional Materials and Activities**

Parents/Guardians have the right to review any instructional materials being used in the school. They also may observe instruction in class and review materials when arrangements have been made in advance with the principal. Because classroom visitations can be distracting to students, visits are subject to reasonable restrictions and limits.

## **Food Service**

The Board believes the development of healthy behaviors and habits with regard to eating cannot be accomplished by the District alone. It will be necessary for the school staff, in addition to parents/guardians and the public at large, to be involved in a community-wide effort to promote, support, and model such healthy behaviors and habits. Parents/Guardians interested in being involved should contact the Director of Food Service.

The school participates in the National School Lunch Program and makes lunches available to all students. Current lunch prices are listed on the menus and on our district website: <http://www.fhps.net/food-service/> under Our Schools and Food Service. Students also may bring their own lunch to school to be eaten in the school's cafeteria. No student shall be allowed to leave school premises during the lunch period without specific written permission granted by the principal.

Applications for the school's Free and Reduced-Priced Meal program are available at all school offices and at <http://www.fhps.net/food-service/>

Please visit our website to download the interactive school menu app or [click here](#).

### ***Beverages***

High caffeine and energy drinks, such as Monster, Full Throttle, etc., are not permitted at school.

### ***Lunch Program – Menu and Cards***

Lunch menus are available on our district website: <http://www.fhps.net/food-service/>, or in your school's office, or by using the interactive school menu app. Current lunch prices are found on the menu. Students may purchase either milk only or a hot lunch that includes milk through our debit card system.

- Parents/Guardians are always welcome to join their children for lunch. Many parents/guardians have lunch at school on their child's birthday.

- Student identification cards also serve as our lunch debit cards. Money may be deposited in your child's account on any weekday by accessing SchoolPay through the [Parent Portal](#) of PowerSchool. Parents/Guardians also can use this website to check their child's food purchases.
- All students should have their lunch money in an envelope marked with their name and/or student number, amount, and teacher's name. Checks are encouraged and should be made out to the school.

### ***A La Carte – Grades 5 and 6***

There are many daily entree choices and a variety of a la carte (snack) items from which to choose. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to review menus and help guide their children to a nutritious balance in their lunch selections. Menus are available each month on the schools' websites. Since the menus are printed in advance and certain food items or quantities are not always in ready supply, please advise your child to have an alternate choice in mind.

### Meal Charge Policy ([Policy 5707](#))

The District's policy on charged meals is:

If a student has no funds available to pay for a meal, the student will be provided a meal, and the student's account will be charged. However, the student will not be allowed to purchase any a la carte items.

Students who qualify for free meals will not be denied a reimbursable meal, even if they have accrued a negative balance from other food purchases.

The District will encourage Parents to complete financial eligibility forms as part of the student enrollment process to determine eligibility for free or reduced-price meals.

The Board directs the Superintendent to include this Policy in the student handbook and to distribute it to Parents.

## **Food in the Classroom**

### ***Guidelines***

We recognize that food has had an important role in celebrating accomplishments and milestones in our classrooms. To promote good nutritional practices and provide the safest environment for all students, we have developed the following Guidelines for Food-in-Classrooms.

- We strongly recommend that special events be celebrated with either nutritious "snacks" or remembrances such as pencils, stickers, note pads, donation of a game or book in the child's name for his/her classroom or school library.
- Any food or drinks brought in to school for instructional purposes or celebrations will be authorized at least two days in advance **by both the classroom teacher and the principal**. This will ensure that the needs of students with food allergies (e.g., soy, red dye, milk, wheat, egg, yeast, chocolate, cheese, etc.) will be met.
- If food is authorized to be brought into the classroom, parents/guardians and staff are asked to supply edible snacks that are commercially prepared by a licensed food vendor. (This can include fruit and vegetable trays.) Pre-packaged foods should list all ingredients on the labels. **No food or drinks will be permitted without prior authorization.**

### ***Birthdays***

Birthdays are special for the child celebrating his/her special day, but we want to make sure that the feelings of all are considered. We ask that party invitations be passed out in class ONLY if there is one for every child. Otherwise, we ask that you make party arrangements in another manner. Please check with your child's teacher on how best to celebrate the birthday inside the classroom. Birthday decorations on lockers are not permitted.

## **Fire, Lock Down, and Tornado Drills**

The school complies with all safety laws and will conduct drills in accordance with state law. Specific instructions on how to proceed will be provided to students by their teachers who will be responsible for safe, prompt, and orderly evacuation of the building.

## **Emergency Closings and Delays**

When weather conditions or utility problems dictate a delay of school opening or other changes in the school day schedule, local radio and television stations are notified immediately and parents/guardians are encouraged to use these as sources of information, as well as setting your preferences for receiving SchoolMessenger messages by visiting the online [parent/guardian portal](#). This information also is posted on our district website at [www.fhps.net](http://www.fhps.net), on Twitter (sign up for Twitter on the website home page), and on the district Facebook page.

When uncertain weather conditions exist, decisions to open or delay school are made one to two hours before buses depart because drivers must be notified. Conditions can change significantly during this window of time in the morning. Parents/Guardians are reminded that their decision is respected in these matters and guaranteed that no child will be penalized if a parent/guardian believes changing weather conditions have made transportation unsafe.

A family emergency plan for changes in the school day should include before, during, and after school arrangements.

School district policy requires that when school is closed, all after-school events are canceled. Any exceptions to this rule will be considered on an individual basis and participants will be notified if an event is **not** canceled. Community Services classes held for youth and adults also are canceled when school is closed.

We urge parents/guardians to refrain from coming to school to pick up their child during a tornado warning. The process of checking a child out of school diverts the attention of staff when their presence is needed to perform other important tasks during a warning. Please discuss with your family what should be done during periods of threatening weather.

If you have any questions regarding the District's procedures during a tornado watch or warning, feel free to contact your child's principal. For contact information, please visit your child's school website.

## **Windchill**

All children will go outside for recess unless the actual or windchill temperature is below zero. Each building may have extenuating circumstances, and the principal will make a decision based on site conditions.

## **Preparedness for Toxic and Asbestos Hazards**

The School is concerned for the safety of students and attempts to comply with all Federal and State Laws and Regulations to protect students from hazards that may result from industrial accidents beyond the control of school officials or from the presence of asbestos materials used in previous construction. A copy of the School District's *Asbestos Management Policy* and asbestos management plan will be made available for inspection at the Building and Grounds Offices upon request.

## **Visitors**

Visitors, particularly adult family members, are welcome at the school. In order to properly monitor the safety of students and staff, each visitor must report to the office upon entering the school to

obtain a pass. Any visitor found in the building without a pass shall be asked to report to the main office. If a person wishes to confer with a member of the staff, s/he should call for an appointment prior to coming to the school in order to schedule a mutually convenient time.

Student visitors are discouraged at the elementary level. Lunch guests who are accompanied by an adult family member may be permitted with prior permission from the principal.

## **Parking**

Parents/Guardians and other visitors are requested to park in the designated parking areas. Cars should not interfere with the operation of school buses and/or emergency vehicles. Please obey handicapped parking regulations. Be aware that the yellow lines indicate fire lanes and cars may be ticketed. Each building has its own procedure for parking, student pickup, and student drop-off.

## **Media Center**

The media center is open daily for use by students and staff. Each grade level has specific curriculum content. Students are encouraged to check out books and other materials. Books may be checked out for one week and renewed as needed.

The number of books checked out per student is determined by grade level and the individual classroom teacher. Students are encouraged to take responsibility for returning their books on the date due, which is their next scheduled classroom session in the media center. No fines are charged for overdue books, but students are unable to check out additional books until the overdue book is returned. If a book is lost or destroyed while checked out, that student is responsible for paying the replacement cost of the book.

## **Lost and Found**

Students who have lost items should check with the lost and found and may retrieve their items. Unclaimed items will be given to charity with advance notice.

If items are left on a bus, check with the Transportation Department at (616)493-8785. Lost items are kept on each bus for several days but unclaimed items or valuables are brought into the Transportation Department and placed in the lost and found, and like at the schools, unclaimed items are given to charity periodically throughout the school year.

## **Collectibles**

To prevent problems of lost items, theft, hurt feelings, and distractions to class time, *collectibles* are not permitted.

## **Student Sales**

No student is permitted to sell any item or service in school without the approval of the principal. Violation of this may lead to disciplinary action.

## **Use of Telephones**

Office telephones are not to be used for personal calls. An office phone will be available for use for extenuating circumstances.

## **Advertising Outside Activities**

Students may not post announcements or advertisements for outside activities without receiving prior approval from the principal. The principal will try to respond to requests for approval within 24 hours of their receipt. Information regarding outside activities is available in the main office.



## SECTION II – ACADEMICS

### Educational Field Trips

Educational field trips are academic activities that are held off school grounds. There are also trips that are part of the school's co-curricular and extra-curricular program. No student may participate in any school-sponsored trip without parental/guardian consent.

### Academic Reporting

Please [click here](#) to view A Guide for Families: Understanding the Elementary Report Cards.

### Homework

Homework is assigned as a continuation or outgrowth of an academic topic or project. Completion of homework assignments is the responsibility of the student only. Typically, parents/guardians can expect ten minutes of homework per night per grade level beginning in kindergarten. Any concerns about the amount of homework should be discussed with the classroom teacher first. Homework requests due to illness will be honored.

### Computer Technology and Networks

Before any student may take advantage of the school's computer network and the Internet, s/he and his/her adult family member must sign an agreement, which defines the conditions under which the student may participate. Failure to abide by all of the terms of the agreement may lead to termination of the student's computer account and possible disciplinary action as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct or referral to law enforcement authorities. A copy of the School District's *Student Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy* and the requisite digital signature form are located on the district's website where it can be electronically signed at the start of each school year. The digital citizenship webpage can be found on our website or [click here](#) to access the page directly.

### Multilingual Learners (MLL)

Limited proficiency in the English language should not be a barrier to equal participation in the instructional or extra-curricular programs of the District. It is, therefore the policy of this District that those students identified as having limited English proficiency will be provided additional support and instruction to assist them in gaining English proficiency and in accessing the educational and extra-curricular program offered by the District. Parents/Guardians should contact their principal to inquire about evaluation procedures and programs offered by the District.

Please note that the district website ([www.fhps.net](http://www.fhps.net)) can be translated by using the "select language" field in the lower right corner of all webpages.

### Reproductive Health and AIDS Education

The Reproductive Health and AIDS Education program has been adopted by the Board of Education. A copy of the Reproductive Health objectives for fifth and sixth grade is available for review in the office. Parents/Guardians may opt their child out of participation through an opt-out form which can be obtained from the school office.

### Water Safety

Students in second grade receive a water safety program that is presented at the Forest Hills Community and Aquatic Center. Water-related emergencies and practical lifesaving skills are taught.

## SECTION III – STUDENT ACTIVITIES

### **Before- and After-School Clubs and Activities**

The District will attempt to inform families regarding the opportunity to broaden their child's learning through curricular-related activities. Parents/Guardians are responsible for providing timely transportation to and/or from any before- and after- school activities. Parents/Guardians are required to inform the sponsoring organization if there are changes to their child's schedule.

Extra-curricular activities do not reflect the school curriculum, but are made available to students to allow them to pursue additional activities such as recreational sports, drama, etc. All students are permitted to participate in the activities of their choosing, as long as they meet the eligibility requirements.

Please visit our Community Services website at [www.enjoylearning.com](http://www.enjoylearning.com) to view all of our community offerings.

### **Non-School Sponsored Clubs and Activities**

Non-school sponsored student groups organized for religious, political, or philosophical reasons may meet during non-instructional hours. The application for permission must be obtained from the principal. The applicant must verify that the activity is being initiated by students, that attendance is voluntary, that no school staff person is actively involved in the event, that the event will not interfere with school activities and that non-school persons do not play a regular role in the event. All school rules will still apply regarding behavior and equal opportunity to participate.

No non-district sponsored organization may use the name of the school or school mascot.

## SECTION IV – ATTENDANCE

### **Attendance**

#### ***School Attendance Policy***

It is imperative that students be in attendance each school day in order not to miss a significant portion of their education. Important learning results from active participation in classroom and other school activities, which cannot be replaced by individual study.

Attendance is important in the development of a high quality work ethic, which will be a significant factor in a student's success with future employers. One of the most important work habits that employers look for in hiring and promoting a worker is his/her dependability in coming to work every day and on time. This is a habit the school wants to help students develop as early as possible in their school careers.

#### ***Notification of Absence***

An excused absence allows the student to make up all possible work. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain missed assignments. It is possible that certain kinds of schoolwork such as labs or skill-practice sessions cannot be made up and, as a result, may negatively impact a student's grade.

Parents/Guardians must provide an explanation for their child's absence by no later than 9:30 a.m. on the day of the absence. They are to call the Attendance Office at their school and explain the reason for the absence. If the absence can be foreseen, the parent/guardian should arrange to

discuss the matter with the school principal as many days as possible before the absence will occur so that arrangements can be made to assist the student in making up the missed school work.

**Students will strive to attend 90% or more of scheduled school days.** If there is a pattern of frequent absence for "illness," the parents/guardians will be required to provide a statement from a physician describing the health condition that is causing the frequent illness and the treatment that is being provided to rectify the condition.

At any time, a student has accumulated >10% of school days, a documented attendance procedure will occur. If it continues, the student may be denied the opportunity to participate in noncurricular school activities and events and a notation made on his/her grading record.

### ***Chronic Absenteeism***

1. Chronic absenteeism refers to students missing an extended period of school when both excused and unexcused absences are taken into account. Chronic absence is defined as missing 10% or more of the school year regardless of whether absences are excused or unexcused.
2. The Forest Hills Public School Board of Education strongly supports a policy utilizing every resource available to involve students in an ongoing educational program on the basis of regular attendance in school.
3. Unexcused absence from school (truancy) is not acceptable. Students who are truant will receive no credit for schoolwork that is missed.
  - Assignment to an alternative placement with loss of participation in school activities and events
  - A report to local authorities concerning lack of parental/guardian responsibility in providing proper care and supervision of a child.

### ***Excused Absences***

Students may be excused from school for one or more of the following reasons and will be provided an opportunity to make-up missed schoolwork and/or tests:

1. the student's physical or mental illness (a physician's verification is required after 4 consecutive days of absence for illness);
2. severe weather;
3. medical appointments for the student;
4. death or serious illness of the student's family member;
5. attendance at a funeral, wedding, or graduation;
6. appearance at court or for other legal matters;
7. observance of religious holidays of the student's own faith;
8. college planning visits; and
9. personal or family vacations.

Students with a health condition that causes repeated absence are to provide the school office with an explanation of the condition from a registered physician.

### ***Unexcused Absences***

Any student who is absent from school for all or any part of the day without a legitimate excuse shall be considered an "unexcused absence," and the student and his/her parents/guardians shall be subject to the truancy laws of the state.

### ***Tardiness***

A student who is not in his/her assigned location at the start of the instructional day shall be considered tardy. Any student arriving late to school is to report to the school office before proceeding to class.

- Tardy <30 minutes late (.2 day)

- Extended tardy >30 minutes late (.5 day)
- Early dismissal leaving before period bell

### ***Suspension from School***

Absence from school due to suspension shall be considered an authorized absence, neither excused nor unexcused.

A suspended student will be responsible for making up school work lost due to suspension. It is recommended that a student complete missed assignments during the suspension and turn them in to the teacher upon his/her return from school. Assignments may be obtained from the teacher beginning with the first day of a suspension. Make up of missed tests may be scheduled when the student returns to school.

The student will be given credit for properly-completed assignments and a grade on any made-up tests.

### ***Vacations During the School Year***

Parents/Guardians are discouraged from taking their child out of school for vacations. When a family vacation must be scheduled during the school year, the parents/guardians should discuss the matter with the principal and the student's teacher(s) to make necessary arrangements.

## **Student Attendance at School Events**

The school encourages students to attend as many school events held after school as possible, without interfering with their schoolwork and home activities. Enthusiastic spectators help to build school spirit and encourage those students who are participating in the event. However, in order to ensure that students attending evening events as nonparticipants are properly safeguarded, it is an expectation that students be accompanied by a parent/guardian or adult chaperone when they attend the event. The school will not be able to supervise unaccompanied students nor will it be responsible for students who arrive without an adult chaperone.

The school will continue to provide adequate supervision for all students who are participants in a school activity. Students must comply with the Code of Conduct at school events, regardless of the location.

# **SECTION V – STUDENT CONDUCT**

## **School Discipline Philosophy**

Our discipline philosophy is based on two general goals: to provide a safe, caring and effective learning environment for all students, and to have students show respect for school, student property, and other people. The district supports the utilization of Restorative Practices for community building and conflict resolution. Restorative Practices will be utilized as part of the disciplinary procedures when appropriate.

Discipline procedures include student/teacher discussion, parent/guardian contact, noon, before school, after school and Saturday detention. In-school and/or out-of-school suspension may be assigned. Discipline and consequences are designed to motivate students to make better choices and decisions. If it becomes apparent one mode of discipline is not effective, others will be tried. The first step is, of course, teacher contact with the parent(s)/guardian(s) involving misbehavior of a minor nature. Major discipline problems will be dealt with immediately and contact with parent/guardian made after the fact.

Certain types of behavior are never appropriate in the Forest Hills Public School District and are considered to be serious violations. The following are the most common examples of disciplinary

violations. The listed penalties are “suggested guidelines.” **It is understood that a lesser/greater penalty may be imposed if, in the judgment of the administration, the situation warrants.** The severity of the punishment will depend upon the circumstances, intent, and the severity of the offense. The administration has the right to invoke any disciplinary measure necessary to insure the safe and positive operation of the school.

To review the K-6 PBIS Behavior Definitions and Continuum of Responses rubric, [click here](#).

## Code of Conduct

A major component of the FHPS educational program is to prepare students to become responsible workers and citizens by learning how to conduct themselves properly and in accordance with established standards.

### ***Expected Behaviors***

Each student shall be expected to:

- Abide by national, state, and local laws as well as the rules of the school;
- Respect the rights of others;
- Act courteously to adults and fellow students;
- Be prompt to school and attentive in class;
- Work cooperatively with others when involved in accomplishing a common goal, regardless of the other's race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, gender identity, or sexual orientation), national origin, disability, or any other legally protected class.
- Complete assigned tasks on time and as directed;
- Help maintain a school environment that is safe, friendly, and productive;
- Act at all times in a manner that reflects pride in self, family, and in the school.

### ***Dress and Grooming***

While fashion changes, the reason for being in school does not. Students are in school to learn. Any fashion (dress, accessory, or hairstyle) that disrupts the educational process or presents a safety risk will not be permitted. Personal expression is permitted within these general guidelines.

Students should consider the following questions when dressing for school:

- Does my clothing expose too much? (no)
- Does my clothing advertise something that is prohibited to minors? (no)
- Are there obscene, profane, drug-related, gang-related, or inflammatory messages on my clothing? (no)
- Am I dressed appropriately for the weather? (yes)
- Do I feel comfortable with my appearance? (yes)

If a student has selected a manner of appearance that is beyond mere freedom of expression and disrupts the educational process or presents risk to them or others, they may be removed from the educational setting or provided with alternate clothing to wear.

Student clothing at school:

- Should protect the health of the student.
- Should include a shirt/top with fabric in the front and back, fabric on the sides under the arm, and fabric over the shoulder.
- May not be see-through.
- Ensures that underwear/undergarments are not visible.
- Must cover the midriff when arms are at the student's side
- Should not expose the buttocks.
- May not have rips above mid-thigh
- Includes footwear that is worn at all times
- May never promote alcohol or drug use, depict violence, hatred, gang-related, or sexually suggestive material.

- Hats may not be worn in the school building (exception: special staff-approved school/classroom events)
- Flags are not clothing and may not be worn in school.

## **Student Discipline Code**

The school staff is committed to providing a safe and orderly learning environment. History has shown that certain student actions are not compatible with a safe and orderly environment. Discipline is within the sound discretion of the School's staff and administration. Due process ensures that disciplinary action is imposed only after review of the facts of the situation. The district supports the utilization of Restorative Practices for community building and conflict resolution. Restorative Practices will be utilized as part of the disciplinary procedures when appropriate.

### ***Terms and Explanations Related to Student Discipline***

Each of the behaviors described below may subject the student to disciplinary action including suspension and/or expulsion from school.

#### **1. *Aiding or Abetting Violation of School Rules***

If a student assists another student in violating any school rule, they will be disciplined and may be subject to suspension or expulsion. Students are expected to resist peer pressure and exercise sound decision-making regarding their behavior.

#### **2. *Criminal Acts***

Any student engaging in criminal acts at or related to the school will be reported to law enforcement officials as well as disciplined by the school. It is not considered double jeopardy (being tried twice for the same crime), when school rules and the law are violated.

Students should be aware that state law requires that school officials, teachers and appropriate law enforcement officials be notified when a student of this District is involved in crimes related to physical violence, gang related acts, illegal possession of a controlled substance, alcohol or other intoxicants, trespassing, property crimes, including but not limited to theft and vandalism, occurring in the school as well as in the community.

#### **3. *Damaging Property***

Vandalism and disregard for school property will not be tolerated.

#### **4. *Disobedience***

School staff is acting "in loco parentis," which means they are allowed, by law, to direct a student as would a parent/guardian. This applies to all staff, not just teachers assigned to a student. If given a reasonable direction by a staff member, the student is expected to comply.

#### **5. *Displays of Affection***

Students demonstrating affection between each other is personal and not meant for public display. This includes touching, handholding, kissing, or any other contact that may be considered sexual in nature.

#### **6. *Disruption of the Educational Process***

Any action or manner of dress that interferes with school activities or disrupts the educational process is unacceptable. Such disruptions also include delay or prevention of lessons, assemblies, field trips, athletic, and performing arts events.

#### **7. *Explosives***

Explosives, fireworks, and chemical-reaction objects such as smoke bombs, pipe bombs, bottle bombs, small firecrackers, and poppers are forbidden and dangerous.

## **8. Extortion**

Extortion is the use of threat, intimidation, force, or deception to take, or receive something from someone else, and is against the law.

## **9. False Alarms, False Reports, and Bomb Threats**

A false emergency alarm, report or bomb threat endangers the safety forces that are responding, the citizens of the community, and persons in the building. What may seem like a prank is a dangerous stunt.

## **10. Falsification of Schoolwork, Identification, Forgery**

Forgery of hall/bus passes and excuses as well as false I.D.'s are forms of lying and are not acceptable.

Plagiarism and academic dishonesty/cheating are also forms of falsification and subject the student to academic penalties as well as disciplinary action. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

## **11. Gambling**

Gambling includes casual betting, betting pools, organized-sports betting, and any other form of wagering. Students who bet on an activity in which they are involved may also be banned from that activity.

## **12. Knowledge of Dangerous Weapons or Threats of Violence**

Because the Board believes that students, staff members, and visitors are entitled to function in a safe school environment, students are required to report knowledge of dangerous weapons or threats of violence to the principal. Failure to report such knowledge may subject the student to discipline.

## **13. Persistent Absences or Tardiness**

Attendance laws require students to be in school all day or have a legitimate excuse. It is also important to establish consistent attendance habits in order to succeed in school and in the world-at-work. Excessive absence could lead to school intervention.

## **14. Physically Assaulting a Staff Member/Student/Person Associated with the District**

Physical assault at school against a District employee, volunteer, or contractor, which may or may not cause injury may result in charges being filed and subject the student to expulsion. Physical assault is defined as "intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical harm to another through force or violence."

## **15. Possession of a Firearm, Arson, and Criminal Sexual Conduct**

In compliance with State law, the Board shall permanently expel any student who possesses a dangerous weapon in a weapon-free school zone or commits either arson or criminal sexual conduct in a District building or on District property, including school buses and other school transportation.

A dangerous weapon is defined as "a firearm, pneumatic gun, dagger, dirk, stiletto, knife with a blade over three (3) inches in length, pocket knife opened by a mechanical device, iron bar, or brass knuckles" or other object used, intended, or represented to inflict serious bodily injury or property damage.

## **16. Possession of a Weapon**

A weapon includes, but is not limited to, firearms, guns of any type whatsoever including air and gas-powered guns (whether loaded or unloaded), knives, razors, clubs, electric weapons, metallic knuckles, martial arts weapons, and explosives. It may also include any toy that is presented as a real weapon or reacted to as a real weapon. Criminal charges

may be filed for this violation. Possession of a weapon may subject a student to expulsion and possible permanent exclusion. It makes no difference whether or not the weapon belongs to someone else, unless the student can provide convincing evidence that the weapon was placed in the student's possession without his/her knowledge. If it can be confirmed that a weapon was brought on District property by a student other than the one who possessed the weapon, that student shall also be subject to the same disciplinary action.

State law may require that a student be permanently expelled from school, subject to a petition for possible reinstatement if s/he brings onto or has in his/her possession on school property or at a school-related activity any of the following:

- Any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas including bombs, grenades, rockets, missiles, mines, or device that can be converted into such a destructive item.
- Any cutting instrument consisting of a sharp blade over three inches long fastened to a handle.
- Any similar object that is intended to invoke bodily harm or fear of bodily harm (e.g., air gun, blow-gun, toy gun, etc.).

### ***17. Purposely Setting a Fire***

Anything, such as fire, that endangers school property and its occupants will not be tolerated. Arson is a felony and will subject the student to expulsion.

### ***18. Profanity***

Any behavior or language, which in the judgment of the staff or administration, is considered to be obscene, disrespectful, vulgar, profane and/or violates community held standards of good taste will be subject to disciplinary action.

### ***19. Refusing to Accept Discipline***

The school may use informal discipline to prevent the student from being removed from school. When a student refuses to accept the usual discipline for an infraction, the refusal can result in a sterner action such as suspension or expulsion.

### ***20. Safety Concerns***

Students should not use roller blades, bicycles, skateboards scooters, or any other form of personal transportation device in school hallways or District pedestrian traffic areas. Exceptions may be made to reasonably accommodate students with mobility impairments. Use of any means of travel within buildings and on grounds by other than generally accepted practices where appropriate is prohibited. Students violating this expectation will be subject to disciplinary action.

### ***21. Student Disorder/Demonstration***

Students will not be denied their rights to freedom of expression, but the expression may not infringe on the rights of others. Disruption of any school activity will not be allowed. If a student (or students) feels there is need to organize some form of demonstration, s/he is encouraged to contact the principal to discuss the proper way to plan such an activity.

### ***22. Theft***

When a student is caught stealing school or someone's property, s/he will be disciplined and may be reported to law enforcement officials. Students are encouraged not to bring anything of value to school that is not needed for learning without prior authorization from the teacher. The school is not responsible for personal property.



### **23. Trespassing**

Although schools are public facilities, the law does allow the school to restrict access on school property. If a student has been removed, suspended, or expelled, the student is not allowed on school property without authorization of the principal. In addition, students may not trespass onto school property at unauthorized times or into areas of the school determined to be inappropriate.

### **24. Unauthorized Use of School or Private Property**

Students are expected to obtain permission to use any school property or any private property located on school premises. Any unauthorized use shall be subject to disciplinary action. This includes use of the Internet and communication networks in a manner not sanctioned by policy and administrative guideline.

### **25. Use of Drugs**

The school has a "Drug Free" zone that extends 1000 feet beyond the school boundaries as well as to any school activity and transportation. This means that any activity, possession, sale, distribution, or use of drugs, alcohol, look-alike drugs, steroids, inhalants, or look-alike drugs is prohibited. Attempted sale or distribution is also prohibited. This includes non-alcoholic beers and wines, and the like. If caught, the student could be suspended or expelled and law enforcement officials may be contacted. Sale also includes the possession or sale of over-the-counter medication to another student. Students who violate these rules may be suspended or expelled and law enforcement officials may be contacted. Many drug abuse offenses are also felonies.

### **26. Use of an Object as a Weapon**

Any object that is used to threaten, harm, or harass another may be considered a weapon. This includes but is not limited to padlocks, pens, pencils, laser pointers, jewelry, and so on. Intentional injury to another can be a felony and/or a cause for civil action.

### **27. Use of Tobacco**

Smoking and other tobacco uses are a danger to a student's health and to the health of others. The school prohibits the sale, possession, distribution, dispensation, or use of any form of tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, vaporizers, and all electronic nicotine delivery systems on property owned or operated by the district or at any school activity. This prohibition also applies when going to and from school and at school bus stops. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion. "Use of tobacco product" shall mean the carrying by a person of a lighted cigar, cigarette, pipe, other lighted smoking device, or electronic nicotine delivery system; the inhaling or chewing of a tobacco product; the placing of a tobacco product within a person's mouth; or the smoking or use of electronic vapor or other substitute forms of cigarettes, clove cigarettes, other lighted smoking devices, or other electronic nicotine delivery systems for consuming or inhaling tobacco or any other substance.

### **28. Verbally Threatening a Staff Member/Student/Person Associated with the District**

Verbal assault at school against a District employee, volunteer, or contractor or making bomb threats or similar threats directed at a school building, property, or a school-related activity will be considered verbal assault. Verbal threats or assault may result in suspension and expulsion. Verbal assault is a communicated intent to inflict physical or other harm on another person, with a present intent and ability to act on the threat.

### **29. Violation of Individual School/Classroom Rules**

Each learning environment has different rules for students. Individual rules are for the safe and orderly operation of that environment. Students will be oriented to specific rules, all of which will be consistent with the policy of the school.

# Harassment, Hazing, Bullying, and Other Aggressive Behavior Toward Students

## **Harassment:**

Harassment of students is prohibited, and will not be tolerated. This includes inappropriate conduct by other students as well as any other person in the school environment, including employees, Board members, parents/guardians, guests, contractors, vendors and volunteers. It is the policy of the District to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment for all of its students. This policy applies to all activities on school property and to all school sponsored activities whether on or off school property.

“Unlawful harassment” is verbal, written, or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward a student because of the student’s race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, gender identity, or sexual orientation), national origin, disability, or any other legally protected class that has the purpose or effect of:

1. creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment; or
2. unreasonably interfering with the student’s ability to benefit from the District’s educational programs or activities.

**Harassment through any means, including electronically transmitted methods (e.g., internet, telephone or cell phone, laptop or any electronic device [ED]), may be subject to District disciplinary procedures. Such behavior is considered harassment whether it takes place on or off school property, at any school-sponsored function, or in a school vehicle if it is considered to have a negative impact on the school environment.**

Any student that believes s/he has been/or is the victim of harassment should immediately report the situation to District personnel.

Every student should, and every staff member **must** report any situation that they believe to be improper harassment of a student. Reports may be made to District personnel.

If the investigation finds harassment occurred, it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial action. This may include up to expulsion for students, up to discharge for employee, exclusion for parents/guardians, guests, volunteers and contractors, and removal from any officer position and/or a request to resign for Board members.

Retaliation against any person for complaining about harassment, or participating in a harassment investigation, is prohibited. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as harassment. Intentionally false harassment reports, made to get someone in trouble, are also prohibited. Retaliation and intentionally false reports may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

The following definitions are provided for guidance only. If a student or other individual believes there has been harassment, regardless of whether it fits a particular definition, s/he should report it and allow the administration to determine the appropriate course of action.

## **Race, Color, and National Origin Harassment**

Race, color, and national origin harassment is unwelcome conduct based on a student’s actual or perceived race, color, or national origin. Race, color, and national origin harassment can take many forms, including slurs, taunts, stereotypes, or name-calling, as well as racially motivated physical threats, attacks, or other hateful conduct. Under this Policy, harassment based on ethnicity,

ancestry, or perceived ancestral, ethnic, or religious characteristics, will be considered race, color, and national origin harassment.

### **Disability Harassment**

Disability harassment is unwelcome conduct based on a student's actual or perceived disability. Disability harassment can take many forms, including slurs, taunts, stereotypes, or name-calling, as well as disability motivated physical threats, attacks, or other hateful conduct.

**Sex-based Harassment**, may include, but is not limited to:

Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment can include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature, including sexual assault or any act of sexual violence. Examples of conduct that may constitute sex-based harassment include, but are not limited to:

1. Verbal: unwelcome comments, including the use of derogatory, sexually suggestive, or vulgar language; the use of sexual innuendo; unwelcome advances or repeated requests for dates or sexual favors; threats based on or motivated by a person's sex; demanding or pressuring another person to submit to sexual requests or advances to attain academic or other achievements or advancements; threatening another person's academic or other accomplishments or reputation if that person does not submit to sexual requests or advances; or any other similar behavior.
2. Visual: subjecting another person to sexually suggestive, pornographic, or obscene images, text, or cartoons, including by electronic mail, text message, letter, or any other medium; the use of obscene gestures toward or around another person; leering at another person; or any other similar behavior.
3. Physical: unwanted kissing, touching, patting, hugging, pinching, or any other unwanted physical contact; impeding another person's normal movements; stalking, assault, or battery based on the victim's sex; any other physical interference with another person based on that person's sex; or any other similar behavior.

Sex-based harassment does not require a specific target, an intent to harm, or repeated incidents.

Sex-based harassment may include allegations of harassment involving an alleged perpetrator and victim who are members of the same protected class.

Sexual conduct or relationships between District employees and students are prohibited. Consent is irrelevant.

### **Hazing:**

The Board of Education believes that hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational process and prohibits all such activities at any time in school facilities, on school property, and at any District-sponsored event.

Hazing is an intentional or reckless act directed against a student that endangers the student's physical or mental health or safety that is done for the purpose of pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, participating in, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization, activity, team, or social group. This Policy applies regardless of a student's consent, permission, or assumption of risk. Any student who engages in hazing may be subject to discipline.

Hazing includes, but is not limited to:

- physical brutality or punishment (e.g., whipping, beating, striking, branding, or placing a harmful substance on a student's body);

- physical activity that subjects a student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects a student's physical or mental health or safety (e.g., sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement in a small space, or undressing or exposing a student);
- consumption of food, liquid, alcohol, drugs, or other substance that subjects a student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects a student's physical or mental health or safety;
- an activity that induces, causes, or requires a student to commit a crime or an act of hazing;
- intentional humiliation or embarrassment of a student;
- detention or seclusion of a student; and
- other activities that subject a student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affect a student's physical or mental health or safety.

**Bullying:**

All types of bullying, including cyberbullying, without regard to subject matter or motivating animus, are prohibited. Please visit our website or [click here](#) for the most current anti-bullying policy (5207) information.

**Discipline**

It is important to remember that the school's rules apply going to and from school, at school, on school property, at school-sponsored events, on school transportation, and at the bus stop. The school also may discipline a student for misconduct that occurs away from school, school transportation or school events if the student's actions cause a substantial disruption to the school environment. In some cases, a student can be suspended from school transportation for infractions of school bus rules. In all cases, the school shall attempt to make discipline prompt and equitable and to have the punishment match the severity of the incident.

FHPS makes a sincere effort to have disciplinary actions take place that will allow the student to remain in school. If a disciplinary action does not result in removal from school, it is not appealable. Should a student or parent/guardian have questions regarding the propriety of an in-school disciplinary action, they should contact the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources.

Students being considered for long-term suspension or expulsion may or may not be immediately removed from school. A hearing is scheduled with the Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources during which the student may be represented by his/her parents/guardian(s), legal counsel, and/or by a person of his/her choice.

Within two days after notification of long-term suspension or expulsion, the long-term suspension or expulsion may be appealed, in writing, to the Board of Education. The appeal will also be formal in nature with sworn testimony before official(s) designated by the Board of Education. The appeal will be heard in an open session unless the student or the student's parent or guardian requests a closed session. Again, the right to representation is available. All opportunity to earn grades or credit ends when a student is expelled.

***Suspension***

The student shall be informed of the specific charges which could be the basis for disciplinary action to be taken against him/her. The student will have the right to present to the school administrator any relevant information that will support his/her defense. Absence from school due to suspension shall be considered an authorized absence, neither excused nor unexcused.

If the school administrator suspends the student from school, the school will:

- Notify the parents/guardians as soon as possible of the suspension, the reasons for it, and the steps necessary to affect the student's return.
- If needed, meet with the parent/guardian and the student to plan the satisfactory return of the student to the school setting.

### ***Expulsion***

The superintendent shall have authority to expel a student for persistent disobedience of school rules or for a malicious or willful violation of school rules whenever the superintendent determines such action to be necessary. State law may also *require* the superintendent to expel a student if he or she engages in specific acts of misconduct, such as possessing a dangerous weapon in a weapon-free school zone, committing arson on school property, or committing criminal sexual conduct on school property. The administrator will adhere to existing Board policy. The student and his/her parent/guardian shall be informed in writing of the alleged violation and the discipline imposed.

### ***Discipline of Students with Disabilities***

Students with disabilities may be entitled to the rights and procedures afforded by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (I.D.E.A.) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.), or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

## **Due Process Rights**

Before the District suspends or expels a student from school, the following procedures will apply:

### ***Suspension from School***

When a student is being considered for a suspension of 10 days or less, the administrator in charge will notify the student of the charges. The student will then be given an opportunity to explain his/her side and the administrator will then provide the student an explanation of the evidence supporting the charges. After that informal hearing, the principal will make a decision whether or not to suspend. If a student is suspended, s/he and his/her parents/guardians will be notified within one day, of the reason for and the length of the suspension. The suspension may be appealed, within two school days after receipt of the suspension notice, to the Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources. The request for an appeal must be in writing.

The appeal shall be conducted in a private meeting and the student may be represented. The decision of the Assistant Superintendent is final.

When a student is suspended, s/he may make-up work missed while on suspension.

Any learning that cannot be made up such as labs, field trips, skill-practices, or any learning that the student chooses not to make-up may be reflected in the grades earned.

A student being considered for suspension of more than ten (10) days will be given due process as described in the expulsion section below.

### ***Long-term Suspension or Expulsion from School***

In addition to the procedures described above, a student facing a long-term suspension (more than 10 days) or expulsion is entitled to a hearing before the Superintendent. Prior to the hearing, the student will receive a letter of notification addressed to the parents/guardians, which will contain:

- The time, date and place of the hearing.
- The reasons being considered as justification for the suspension or expulsion.
- The length of the recommended suspension or a recommendation for expulsion.
- A list of the District's principal witnesses.
- Notice that the student may give testimony, present evidence, and provide a defense.

- Notice that the student may be represented parents, guardians, or other counsel (at the student's expense).
- A brief description of the hearing procedure.

The Board shall act on any appeal, which must be submitted in writing. The hearing may be private, but the Board must act publicly.

***Discipline of Students with Disabilities***

Students with disabilities may be entitled to the rights and procedures afforded by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (I.D.E.A.) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.).

**Search and Seizure**

Search of a student and his/her possessions, may be conducted at any time the student is under the jurisdiction of the Board of Education, if there is a reasonable suspicion that the student is in violation of law or school rules. A search may also be conducted to protect the health and safety of others. All searches may be conducted with or without a student's consent.

Students are provided lockers, desks, and other equipment in which to store materials. It should be clearly understood that this equipment is the property of the school and may be searched at any time if there is reasonable suspicion that a student has violated the law or school rules. Locks are to prevent theft, not to prevent searches. If student lockers require student-provided locks, each student must provide the lock's combination or key to the principal.

Anything that is found in the course of a search that may be evidence of a violation of school rules or the law may be taken and held or turned over to the police. The school reserves the right not to return items which have been confiscated. In the course of any search, students' privacy rights will be respected regarding any items that are not illegal or against school policy.

All computers located in classrooms, labs, and offices of the District are the District's property and are to be used by students, where appropriate, solely for educational purposes. The District retains the right to access and review all electronic, computer files, databases, and any other electronic transmissions contained in or used in conjunction with the District's computer system, and electronic mail. Students should have no expectation that any information contained on such systems is confidential or private.

Such information may be reviewed by the District with or without the student's knowledge or permission. The use of passwords does not guarantee confidentiality and the District retains the right to access information in spite of a password. All passwords or security codes must be registered with the instructor. A student's refusal to permit such access may be grounds for disciplinary action.

**Care of Property**

Students are responsible for the care of their own personal property. The school will not be responsible for personal property. Valuables such as jewelry, designer clothing, or irreplaceable items should not be brought to school. The school may confiscate such items and return them to the student's parents/guardian.

Damage to or loss of school equipment and facilities wastes taxpayers' money and undermines the school program. Therefore, if a student does damage to or loses school property, the student or his/her parents/guardians will be required to pay for the replacement or damage. If the damage or loss was intentional, the student will also be subject to discipline according to the Student Discipline Code.

## Electronic Devices/Cell Phones

Forest Hills Public Schools is a learning organization. We continuously review research and our own practices in order to improve the educational experience for our students. Reviewing research on the use of cell phones by school-aged children has allowed us to reflect on how to best support our students as they learn and grow. It has become clear that excessive exposure to cell phones has a negative effect on school-aged children. In view of the research findings, we have reflected on how we can modify district practices to support all students.

We are grateful to our community for their support of previous bond proposals which have allowed the district to purchase technology that provides all students with access to learning without using their personal cell phones during the school day. Students will not be allowed to carry or use cell phones during the school day. Phones are available in the office of each school should a student need to contact their parent/guardian. If families believe that their child needs access to a cell phone before or after school, it will be the student's responsibility to ensure that their phone remains stored away from the classroom while they are at school.

### **Cell Phones/Electronic devices are not permitted during the school day and will be confiscated.**

**\*\*Refusal to give-up device to staff member may result in more severe consequences**

- **First offense**, the student may pick up his/her device from an administrator at the end of the day.
- **Second offense** will result in the confiscation of the property until claimed by a parent/guardian.
- **Third offense** will result in additional consequences at the discretion of the principal.

*\*\*Reminder: The school prohibits the use of any video device in or near any restroom, locker room, or other location where individuals have a reasonable expectation of privacy. Taking or transmitting images or messages during testing is also prohibited.*

## Inappropriate Use of Personal Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices

While on school property, participating in an extracurricular activity or attending a school event or activity, students may not use cell phones or other electronic devices to bully, harass, demean, or degrade other students, school staff, teachers, administrators or other members of the community. In addition, use of electronic devices in a way that threatens or otherwise interferes with the District's ability to effectively educate students is strictly prohibited, regardless of whether that use occurs on or off of school property.

While on school property, participating in an extracurricular activity or attending a school event or activity, students are also prohibited from using a cell phone or other electronic devices to send, receive, download or store any image in which a person is partially or completely nude. **Please be aware that sending, receiving, downloading, or storing these images can have extremely serious and life-changing consequences. Students caught with nude or partially nude pictures of underage people could face felony child pornography charges, and Michigan law may require their expulsion. Also, if convicted, the student could be forced to serve time in prison/juvenile detention and would be required to register as a sex offender.**

Please be aware that any cellular phone or other electronic device brought onto school property or to a school activity or event may be searched by school personnel if the District has a reasonable suspicion that the student has violated this policy. A student who violates this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including expulsion. The student takes full responsibility for the safety and security of these devices.

## **Student Rights of Expression**

The District will balance student speech and expression rights with its responsibility to provide a safe, orderly learning environment.

Students may not engage in speech or expressive conduct that would materially and substantially interfere with or disrupt school operations, including school activities and educational programming. An actual disruption is not required before school officials may regulate student speech or impose discipline if they can reasonably forecast a substantial and material disruption or interference with school operations.

Students may be disciplined for speech or expressive conduct that: is materially and substantially disruptive or that school officials can reasonably forecast will create a substantial disruption; is obscene, sexually explicit, indecent, or lewd; promotes the use of or advertises illegal substances; incites violence; contains “fighting words” or constitutes a true threat of violence; involves a student walkout; urges a violation of law, Board Policy, or rule; or is not constitutionally protected. Administrators will evaluate student speech on a case-by-case basis before imposing discipline. Student activism is subject to the above standards.

As used in this Policy, “fighting words” are words that tend to provoke a violent response amounting to a breach of the peace.

All items must meet the following school guidelines:

- A. A material cannot be displayed if it:
  - 1. is obscene to minors, libelous, indecent and pervasively or vulgar.
  - 2. advertises any product or service not permitted to minors by law.
  - 3. intends to be insulting or harassing.
  - 4. intends to incite fighting or presents a likelihood of disrupting school or a school event;  
or
  - 5. presents a clear and present likelihood that, either because of its content or manner of distribution or display, it causes or is likely to cause a material and substantial disruption of school or school activities, a violation of school regulations, or the commission of an unlawful act.
- B. Materials may not be displayed or distributed during class periods, or during passing times between classes. Permission may be granted for display or distribution during lunch periods and after school in designated locations, as long as exits are not blocked and there is proper access and egress to the building.

Students who are unsure whether or not materials they wish to display meet school guidelines may present them to the principal 24 hours prior to display.

## **Student Concerns, Suggestions, and Grievances**

The school is here for the benefit of the students. The staff is here to assist each student in becoming a responsible adult. If a student has suggestions that could improve the school, s/he should feel free to offer them. Written suggestions may be presented directly to the principal or to the student government.

When concerns or grievances arise, the best way to resolve the issue is through communication. No student will be harassed by any staff member or need fear reprisal for the proper expression of a legitimate concern. Any suggestions, concerns, and grievances may be directed to the principal or to the student government.



A student may have the right to a hearing if the student believes s/he has been improperly denied participation in a school activity or has been subjected to an illegal rule or standard. A student may not petition to have a change in grade.

## SECTION VI – TRANSPORTATION

### Bus Transportation to School

The transportation schedule and routes are available by contacting the Transportation Department at 616-493-8785.

Students may only ride assigned school buses and must board and depart from the bus at his or her assigned bus stop. Students will not be permitted to ride unassigned buses for any reason other than an emergency, except as approved by the principal or director of transportation or designee.

The school principal, in cooperation with the director of transportation or designee, may approve a change in a student's regular assigned bus stop to address a special need, upon the principal's approval of a note from parent/guardian stating the reason for the request and the duration of the requested change. Day-to-day changes in a student's bus assignment are reserved for emergency situations. Changing a bus assignment due to play dates, club, group activities, or parties is not allowed due to assigned capacity on our buses.

Please visit our website or [click here](#) to review the bus rider rules and regulations.

### ***Bus Conduct***

Students who are riding to and from school on transportation provided by the school are required to follow all basic safety rules. This applies to school-owned buses as well as any contracted transportation.

The driver may assign seating or direct students in any reasonable manner to maintain transportation safety.

Students must comply with the following basic safety rules:

#### **Previous to Loading** (on the road and at school)

Each student shall:

- Be on time at the designated loading zone (five minutes prior to scheduled stop), drivers will not wait for students who are not at their designated stops on time.
- Stay off the road at all times while walking to and waiting for the school transportation.
- Line up single file off the roadway to enter.
- Keep back a safe distance (approximately 20 feet) away from where the vehicle comes to a stop.
- Wait until the school transportation is completely stopped before moving forward to enter.
- No running, playing, pushing, or shoving while waiting.
- Refrain from crossing a highway until the driver signals it is safe to cross.
- Go immediately to a seat and be seated.

It is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to inform the bus driver when their child will not be aboard school transportation. The bus will not wait.

#### **During the Trip**

Each student shall:

- Remain seated while the vehicle is in motion
- Keep head, hands, arms, and legs inside the school vehicle at all times

- Not litter in the school vehicle or throw anything from the vehicle
- Keep books, packages, coats, and all other objects out of the aisle
- Be courteous to the driver and to other riders
- Not tamper with the school vehicle or any of its equipment

### **Leaving the Bus**

Each student shall:

- Remain seated until the vehicle has stopped
- Cross the road, when necessary, at least 10 feet in front of the vehicle, but only after the driver signals that it is safe
- Be alert to a possible danger signal from the driver

The driver will not discharge students at places other than their regular stop at home or at school unless s/he has proper authorization from school officials.

### ***Videotapes on School Buses***

The Board of Education has installed video cameras on school buses to monitor student behavior.

If a student misbehaves on a bus and his/her actions have been recorded on video, the video may be submitted to the principal and may be used as evidence of the misbehavior. Since these videos are considered part of a student's record, they can be viewed only in accordance with federal law.

### ***Penalties for Infractions***

A student who misbehaves on the bus shall be disciplined in accordance with the Student Discipline Code and may lose the privilege of riding on the bus.

## **Walkers and Bikers**

Students may walk or ride to and from school with the express permission of parent(s)/guardian(s). Bicycles are to be placed in bicycle racks and secured. Bicycles must be walked across intersections and on the school property. Bike helmets are required by township ordinance. For safety reasons, students are not allowed to use scooters, skateboards, and roller blades at school.