

## 2020-2021 PGMS Student Handbook

**Vision:** Poplar Grove Middle seeks to use a whole child philosophy and positive behavior support system to inspire all students to become innovative thinkers and problem-solvers in a learning environment that prepares them for the rigor of high school and beyond while encouraging overall well-being through mutual respect and support for others.

**Mission Statement:** Poplar Grove Middle School recognizes the need to educate the whole child in a safe and supportive space: academically, socially, and emotionally. As such, we will create a welcoming environment that is safe and inclusive of all students. Students will be matched with an adult mentor to provide guidance and support during the middle school years. Students will be taught the character traits of kindness, courage, wisdom, and respect. Our teachers will engage students in purposeful, meaningful, relevant, and challenging curricula designed to ensure ALL students meet their fullest potential. Our teachers and staff will participate in ongoing professional learning to ensure the most impactful teaching practices are used in every classroom. Through community partnerships, we will provide our students with access to programs providing emotional support.

**SCHOOL HOURS** School hours for the 2020-21 school year are 7:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Doors open to students at 7:00 am. Students arriving prior to 7:20 a.m. will report to the gym upon arrival and sit in designated areas. Students may go to the library to read and study or to the cafeteria for breakfast. **Students who choose to go to the library or gym must remain there until 7:20.** All students are expected to be in their homebase when the tardy bell rings at 7:30 a.m. **Buses load and unload in front of the middle school entrance. Students arriving by car may not be dropped off in this area.** In the morning, bus students will enter through the main entrance of the *middle school* and proceed directly to the main gym, cafeteria, or library. In the afternoon, bus students will exit the main entrance of the middle school and go directly to their bus.

**Cars load and unload in front of the elementary school entrance.** In the morning, car riders will enter through the main entrance of the *elementary school* and proceed directly to the main gym, cafeteria, or library. In the afternoon, car riders will exit through the main entrance of the elementary school and proceed to the waiting area until their name is called to load. **Car riders are not allowed to load/unload in the middle school bus lane.**

The dismissal procedure starts at 2:26 p.m. with the “get ready” bell. Please follow dismissal announcements appropriately. Hallway and bus expectations should be followed at all times. Dismissal will be completed by 2:40. Supervision is not available after 2:45 p.m. In the interest of your child’s safety, please do not leave your child unsupervised. If a parent is unable to pick his/her child up by 2:45 p.m. and the child is not under the direct supervision of a teacher, we recommend that the child be enrolled in the FSSD MAC program. Inquire at the middle school front office if you need this service.

**CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT** The purpose of the Code of Student Conduct at Poplar Grove Middle School is to clearly and deliberately communicate to all Middle School students our rules and expectations and to maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning. In keeping with the guidelines set forth by the Franklin Special School District Board of Education (***FSSD Board Policy 6.313***), consequences are detailed in the Consequence Chart.

It shall be the policy of the Franklin Special School District Board of Education that school authorities adopt rules and regulations regarding student conduct consistent with the concept of assertive discipline in order to maintain discipline and an atmosphere conducive to learning in the school. It is expected that all staff members adhere to the discipline policy and procedures adopted by each local school. All students are to respect and obey such school rules and regulations while under the supervision of principals, assistant principals, teachers, substitute teachers and teacher assistants. These rules and regulations shall be fairly enforced on all school property, on any school-provided transportation, and at all school-sponsored activities. Failure to comply will necessarily result in appropriate disciplinary action.

FSSD's code of conduct as provided herein separates serious from trivial misbehavior by dividing offenses into four levels of misconduct, each with a different discipline procedure.

The following levels of misbehavior and disciplinary procedures and options are designed to protect all members of the educational community in the exercise of their rights and duties and to maintain a safe learning environment where orderly learning is possible and encouraged. These misbehaviors apply to student conduct on school buses, on school property, and while students are on school sponsored outings.

#### **MISBEHAVIORS: LEVEL I**

Minor misbehavior on the part of the student which impedes orderly classroom, school, playground, or hall procedures or interferes with the orderly operation of the school, but which can usually be handled by an individual staff member (teacher, para-professional, substitute teacher, student teacher).

#### **Examples (not an exclusive listing):**

- School or class tardiness (unexcused/habitual)
- Unacceptable language
- Classroom disturbances
- Lack of classroom materials
- Cheating and/or lying
- Non-defiant failure to do assignments or carry out directions

- Wearing while on the grounds of a public school during the regular school day, clothing that exposes underwear or body parts in an indecent manner that disrupts the learning environment
- Victimization of any student (Harassment (Sexual, Racial, Ethnic, Religious), Bullying Cyber-bullying, and/or Hazing)

**Disciplinary Procedures:**

- Staff member intervenes immediately.
- Staff member determines what offense was committed and its severity.
- Staff member determines who committed the offense and if he/she understands the nature of the offense.
- Staff member employs appropriate disciplinary options.
- The record of the offense and disciplinary action shall be maintained by staff member.

**Disciplinary Options (not an exclusive listing):**

- Verbal reprimand
- Parent/guardian conference
- Detention
- Special Assignment
- Restricting activities
- Assigning work details
- Counseling
- Withdrawal of privileges
- Issuance of demerits
- Strict supervised study
- In-school suspension

**MISBEHAVIORS: LEVEL II**

This level includes misbehavior whose frequency or seriousness tends to disrupt the learning climate of the school. These misbehaviors do not represent a direct threat to the health and safety of others but have educational consequences serious enough to require corrective action on the part of administrator/designee.

**Examples (not an exclusive listing):**

- Continuation of unmodified Level I behaviors
- School or class truancy

- Leaving school without permission
- Using forged notes, excuses, admit slips, and corridor passes
- Disruptive classroom behavior
- Disrespect or insubordination
- Use of profanity
- Obscenity
- Sexual misconduct
- Intimidation
- Committing any act of civil wrong or crime
- Victimization of any student (Harassment (Sexual, Racial, Ethnic, Religious), Bullying, Cyber-bullying, and/or Hazing)
- Use, possession, sale, and/or distribution of tobacco products in any form, electronic/battery operated devices, vapor products, and all other associated paraphernalia during the regular school day while on school campus or on school-provided transportation (includes all student participants in all educational and/or extra-curricular functions)

**Disciplinary Procedures:**

- The student is referred to the administrator/designee for appropriate disciplinary action.
- The administrator/designee communicates with the student and teacher.
- The administrator/designee hears the accusation made by the teacher and allows the student the opportunity to explain his/her conduct.
- The administrator/designee takes appropriate disciplinary action and notifies the teacher of the action.
- The record of offense and disciplinary action shall be maintained by the school administrator.

**Disciplinary Options (not an exclusive listing):**

- Parent/guardian conference/notification
- In-school suspension
- Notify law enforcement agency and/or file legal charges
- Modified probation
- Behavior modification
- Social probation
- Peer counseling
- Referral to outside agency
- Detention
- Suspension from school-sponsored activities or from riding school bus

- Restricting school related honors student is otherwise due
- Out-of-school suspension (not to exceed ten (10) days)

### **MISBEHAVIORS: LEVEL III**

Acts directly against persons or property but whose consequences do not seriously endanger the health or safety of others in the school.

#### **Examples (not an exclusive listing):**

- Continuation of unmodified Level I and II behaviors
- Fighting (simple)
- Vandalism (minor)
- Stealing
- Threats to others
- Victimization of any student (Harassment (Sexual, Racial, Ethnic, Religious), Bullying, Cyber-bullying, and/or Hazing)
- Breaking and entering
- Committing any act involving a serious civil wrong or crime]

#### **Disciplinary Procedures:**

- The student is referred to the administrator/designee for appropriate disciplinary action.
- The administrator/designee communicates with the student and teacher.
- The administrator/designee hears the accusation and allows the student the opportunity to explain his/her conduct.
- The administrator/designee takes appropriate disciplinary action.
- The administrator/designee may refer the incident to the director of schools and make recommendations for consequences.
- If the student's program is to be changed, adequate notice shall be given to the student and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) of the charges against him, his/her right to appear at a hearing, and his/her right to be represented by a person of his/her choosing.
- Any change in school assignment is appealable to the board.
- The record of offense and disciplinary action shall be maintained by the school administrator.

#### **Disciplinary Options (not an exclusive listing):**

- Parent/guardian conference/notification
- Notify law enforcement agency and/or file legal charges

- In-school suspension
- Out-of-school suspension not to exceed ten (10) days
- Detention
- Restitution from loss, damage or stolen property
- In-school counseling
- Expulsion

#### **MISBEHAVIORS: LEVEL IV**

This level of misbehavior includes acts which result in violence to another's person or property or which pose a threat to the safety of others in the school. These acts are so serious that they usually require administrative actions which result in the immediate removal of the student from the school, the intervention of law enforcement authorities, and/or action by the board. If a student's action poses a threat to the safety of others in the school, a teacher, principal, school employee, or school bus driver may use reasonable force when necessary to prevent bodily harm or death to another person.

#### **Examples (not an exclusive listing):**

- Unmodified Level I, II and III behaviors
- Possessing or using a controlled substance or drug paraphernalia on school property or at any school-related function, unless the substance was obtained as the result of a valid prescription or doctor's order and being used as prescribed by the individual for whom prescribed
- Use, possession, sale, and/or distribution of drugs and/or alcohol, includes being under the influence of alcohol or drugs (i.e. any controlled substance, controlled substance analogue, or legend drug)
- Death threat (hit list)
- Extortion
- Bomb threat or false fire alarm
- Possession/use/transfer of dangerous weapons
- Assault that results in bodily injury upon any teacher, principal, administrator, any other employee of the school, or a school resource officer\* or anyone who is lawfully on school property
- Aggravated assault
- Vandalism
- Theft/possession/sale of stolen property
- Arson/possession of unauthorized substances
- Use/transfer of unauthorized substances

- Victimization of any student (Harassment (Sexual, Racial, Ethnic, Religious), Bullying, Cyber-bullying, and/or Hazing)
- Electronic threat to cause bodily injury or death to another student or school employee

**Disciplinary Procedures:**

- The administrator/designee confers with appropriate staff members and with the student.
- The administrator/designee hears the accusations and allows the student the opportunity to explain his/her conduct.
- The parent(s)/guardian(s) are notified.
- Law enforcement officials are contacted.
- The incident is reported, and recommendations made to the director of schools.
- Complete and accurate reports are submitted to the director of schools.
- The parent(s)/guardian(s) and student are offered the opportunity for a hearing before disciplinary hearing authority.

**Disciplinary Options (not an exclusive listing):**

- Expulsion
- Alternative schools
- Other hearing authority or Board action which results in appropriate placement
- Expulsion/Remand for a period of not less than one (1) calendar year subject to modification by the director of schools on a case-by-case basis.

**ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES:**

- A student shall not be suspended solely because charges are pending against him/her in juvenile or other court.
- An administrator/designee shall not impose successive short term suspensions that cumulatively exceed ten (10) days for the same offense.
- A teacher or other school official shall not reduce or authorize the reduction of a student's grade because of discipline problems except in deportment or citizenship.
- A student shall not be denied the passing of a course or grade promotion solely on the basis of absences except as provided by board policy.
- A student shall not be denied the passing of a course or grade promotion solely on the basis of failure to pay any activity fee; pay a library or other school fine; or make restitution for lost or damaged school property.

**The Poplar Grove Middle School administration reserves the right to adjust consequences when deemed necessary or appropriate.**

**GANG ACTIVITY OR ASSOCIATION** Gangs, which initiate, advocate, or promote activities which threaten the safety or well being of persons or property on school grounds or which disrupt the school environment are harmful to the educational process. Incidents involving initiations, hazing, intimidations, and/or related activities of such group affiliations which are likely to cause bodily danger, physical harm or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to students are prohibited. Any student wearing, carrying or displaying gang paraphernalia, or exhibiting behavior or gestures which symbolize gang membership, or causing and/or practicing in activities which intimidate or affect the attendance of another student shall be subject to disciplinary action.

**STUDENT DISCIPLINARY HEARING AUTHORITY** The Franklin Special School District in accordance with the state law has established a Disciplinary Hearing Authority (DHA) to conduct hearings for students who have been suspended for more than ten (10) school days. Copies of the policy including the appeals process and appropriate forms are available in the principal's office.

**DEFINITION OF DISCIPLINARY TERMS** The meaning of the word discipline is "to teach." It is our philosophy at Poplar Grove Middle that consequences for violations of the Code of Student Conduct align with the meaning of discipline. Encouraging students to dialogue, examine, plan and ultimately change inappropriate behavior is one of the most valuable interventions that students, teachers, administrators, and parents can accomplish collaboratively.

**Office Discipline Referrals (ODR):** Office Discipline referrals are sent using Jupiter.

**Admin Lunch Detention:** Admin lunch detentions will occur in the ISS room and may only be assigned by an administrator. Students may bring their own lunch or eat lunch served by the cafeteria. Misbehaviors during admin lunch detention will result in additional consequences.

**Grade Level Lunch Detention:** Grade level lunch detentions may be assigned by faculty and staff, and will be held by teachers in a designated classroom.

**Morning Detention:** Detention assigned by a teacher or an administrator held in the designated detention room. A teacher or administrator may assign morning detention for missed work or behavior. Failure to serve morning detention will result in an ODR.

**In-School Detention:** A detention that requires a student to be removed from the classroom for a designated period of time during an instructional school day. Teachers will send classroom work for the student to complete for the period of time the student was out of the classroom. ISD can only be assigned by an administrator.

**In-School Suspension:** ISS is designed to provide a disciplinary alternative to out-of-school suspension. The student is removed from the classroom for a designated number of days.



During that time, classroom work is provided for the student. ISS can only be assigned by an administrator.

- Students must bring their own textbooks, writing materials, workbooks, and other material necessary to work on/complete course assignments. The ISS teacher will give assignments generated by a teacher to the student. Students are not permitted to go to lockers or be in the hallway (except for afternoon dismissal) during the school day.
- Students may bring lunch from home or purchase a lunch from the cafeteria.
- Classroom disruption, talking, or moving about the classroom will not be tolerated.
- Students are expected to use this time for constructive school-related work and reading. Tapping pens and pencils, talking, drawing, and sleeping are prohibited. Getting up from assigned desks is prohibited. Students must sit forward, feet facing in, with head and shoulders facing the cubby.
- A student must complete his/her assigned number of days. **An absence during an ISS assignment will be treated as any other absence. The ISS assignment will be continued until the original number of assigned days are completed.**
- A student's assigned ISS time will not be counted as complete unless the student conforms each day to the classroom requirements.
- Misbehaviors in ISS may result in OSS.

**Extended Alternative Classroom:** Extended Alternative Classroom (EAC) is designed to provide a disciplinary alternative to out-of-school suspension and to the placement at the Alternative Learning Center. This program does not completely eliminate the use of these disciplinary tools, but it does offer another opportunity for behavior modification within the home-school setting before such measures are taken. The EAC enables a student to receive all of his/her educational services, but it separates him/her from the general student population. The program is therapeutic in nature, in that various strategies will be employed in an attempt to determine the underlying causes of the misbehavior. Based on the information acquired, suitable interventions will be explored. EAC is located at Freedom Middle School.

**Alternative Learning Center:** A restricted classroom serving students throughout the county who have demonstrated chronic discipline problems. Placement to ALC may be made through Juvenile Court or school administration.

**Students placed in OSS/ISS/EAC/ALC are NOT allowed to participate in or be present at school related extracurricular activities during the same day(s) of their suspension.**

**CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT: FIELD TRIPS** Poplar Grove Middle School provides field trip opportunities that are specifically designed to provide real life experiences that support concepts aligned with grade level curriculum. It is imperative that all students who participate in field trips conduct themselves in a respectful way that brings pride to Poplar Grove Middle School. The following behavioral expectations will guide each and every student's opportunity to participate in field trips at Poplar Grove Middle School.

- Students who have exhibited chronic disruptive behavior at school may not be allowed to participate in field trip opportunities. **Any student with more than 3 office discipline referrals in one academic quarter may not attend field trips during that academic quarter.** This will be communicated through Jupiter and/or phone call.
- Any student who commits a zero tolerance offense will immediately be put on Field Trip Suspension and no longer has the opportunity to participate in field trips for the remainder of the academic year.
- Any student who is in ISS or absent on the day of the field trip may not be reimbursed.

**BUS CONDUCT** Riding the bus is considered an extension of a school activity. Students are to ride only on assigned buses and under no circumstance have friends not assigned to that bus ride with them. The Code of Student Conduct applies to all students who ride the bus (**See FSSD Board Policy #6.308 for rules and regulations**). In order to maintain conditions and atmosphere suitable for learning, no person shall enter onto a school bus except students assigned to that bus. Parents of students or persons with lawful and valid business on the bus must have prior approval by the supervisor of transportation and/or the director of schools.

Since the school bus is an extension of school activity, bus students shall conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the established safety standards and classroom conduct.

Bus students are under the supervision and control of the bus driver while on his/her bus.

Video cameras may be used to monitor student behavior on school vehicles transporting students to and from school or extracurricular activities. Video surveillance shall be used only to promote the order safety and security of students, staff and property. Students shall ride only on assigned buses and under no circumstance shall friends not assigned to that bus ride with them.

To ensure a safe and orderly means of transport, the following guiding principles are established for riders:

- Be at the bus stop prior to the arrival of the bus.
- Wait on the sidewalk, away from the curb, until the bus comes to a complete stop and the driver opens the door.
- Go directly to an available seat and be seated.
- Keep aisles and exits clear.
- Keep noise at classroom level.
- Keep head, hands, and objects inside the bus

- Respect the rights and property of others.
- Obey the driver promptly and respectfully.
- Remain seated until the bus has come to a complete stop and use the emergency door only in an emergency.
- No profanity, chewing gum, eating or drinking on the bus.
- No drugs, weapons, hazardous materials, or animals shall be allowed on the bus.
- No throwing or passing objects shall be allowed on, from, or onto the bus.
- No objects on board that cannot be held on lap.

Failure to adhere to these and other established rules and regulations will subject the student to discipline measures which may vary from a verbal reprimand to expulsion from the bus as determined by prior record, the severity of the offense, the age of the child, and frequency of the occurrence.

Bus service, like all other school activities, is the responsibility of the building principal. Therefore, all communications involve the principal or his/her designee. The parent/legal guardian is held legally responsible for any damage to the bus and/or bus equipment by his/her child.

**HOMEWORK POLICY Communication:** The most important aspect of this policy is communication. Timely and open communication between students, teachers, parents, and administrators is essential in implementing this policy. The student and his/her achievement is at the heart of all communication. ***Teachers and administrators may make variations to the following policy based on student need and academic achievement.***

**Time Spent on Homework:** The following time frames are based on a student working at a reasonable pace and using his/her time wisely. These time frames reflect the amount of minutes a student will dedicate to homework on average.

- 5<sup>th</sup> Grade-50 minutes per day
- 6<sup>th</sup> Grade-60 minutes per day
- 7<sup>th</sup> Grade-70 minutes per day
- 8<sup>th</sup> Grade-80 minutes per day

*An additional 20 minutes of homework per day per course may apply to any student taking a course for High School Credit and/or a performing music class. Assigned independent reading is not included in these time frames.*

**Type of Homework:** On a consistent basis, teachers will assign homework that focuses on reviewing previously taught concepts, reinforcing newly taught concepts and preparing students for learning new concepts. *The emphasis of homework at Poplar Grove Middle School is on the process of learning without the student feeling the work has to be 100% correct.* Late work will be accepted; however, teachers **may** deduct 5 points per day up to a 20 point deduction for late work. All student work must be submitted by the end of each grading period.

**Student Responsibility:**

- Students are responsible for writing all assignments in their planner on a daily basis.
- Students are responsible for completing assigned homework and turning it in on the designated due date.
- Students are responsible for asking for help from a teacher, parent, family member, and/or friend if they do not understand their homework.
- Students are responsible for communicating to their parent, in a timely manner, if they need materials or resources to complete a homework assignment.
- When absent, students are responsible for obtaining and completing missing assignments.

**Parent Responsibility:**

- Parents are responsible for assisting their child in locating the best place and time to complete their homework.
- Parents are responsible for monitoring their child during homework time, if necessary.
- Parents are responsible for encouraging their child to seek appropriate help if he/she does not understand their homework.
- Parents are encouraged to contact their child's teacher as their first line of communication.

**DRESS CODE** The PGMS dress code has been created with the idea of promoting a positive learning atmosphere and a wholesome attitude for each and every student. Safety, neatness, cleanliness, good taste, and common decency will be the guiding standard of appropriateness for all student dress.

The PGMS dress code will be in effect during the school year and summer school. All clothing should be size appropriate and worn at the waistline. Clothing, jewelry, hair color etc., should not disrupt the classroom environment. Students are required to wear fold-down collared shirts or a FSSD/PGS shirt. Any color will be acceptable. If the collared shirt has buttons, no more than two buttons may be open. Collarless dresses are acceptable.

<u>Permitted</u>	<u>Not Permitted</u>
Hoodies, sweatshirts, zip-up jackets  *Coats may be worn if room temperature is such that a coat is needed	Athletic, sport, recreational, lounge shorts or pants
Joggers not appearing to be sweatpants  Opaque leggings may be worn with an opaque top garment extending to the mid-thigh	Holes (with skin showing), frays or shorts not covering the legs to mid-thigh
Collared shirts, FSSD/PGS T-shirts	Clothing that is revealing, exposes the midriff, and tops that reveal cleavage or undergarments
Shorts, skorts, skirts, and dresses no shorter than 3 inches above the knee	Sunglasses, hats, hoods, headphones, earbuds, bandanas, sweatbands, curlers, rollers, gloves, caps. (Admin may make allowances on certain dress up days)
Tank top with straps at least 3" wide (on dress down days)	Gang related slogans, names, apparel

**The PGMS dress code will be enforced. The dress code is subject to amendment at any time at the discretion of the administration. Teachers will check for dress code compliance each morning. Any student who fails to comply with the dress code will be sent to the office where appropriate clothing will be provided for his/her inappropriate clothes if available. School issued clothing must be worn when issued. Students will be required to return clothing by the following day. Non-compliance with the dress code will result in a violation of the Code of Student Conduct.**

**ATTENDANCE** The sole authority for the enforcement of the compulsory attendance laws are placed on the local Board of Education & its designated employees (TCA 49-6-3006).

**A. Excused Absences FSSD Board policy 6.200** on attendance lists excused absences as follows:

- Personal illness or illness of immediate family member
- Personal Injury
- Homebound
- Hospitalization
- Pregnancy

- Death in the family
- Extreme weather conditions
- Religious observances
- Military service of parent or guardian
- School sponsored or school endorsed activities
- Summons, subpoena, or court order
- Extenuating circumstances which, in the judgment of the principal, create emergencies over which the student has no control, determined on a case-by-case basis

Absences not due to reasons above will be considered unexcused and the student will be responsible for making up missed work upon his/her return. **When a student is absent, please call the school by 9:00 A.M.** and state the reason for the absence. This helps as the attendance secretary is verifying absences and assists her with accountability of all students. The attendance secretary will call a student's parent/guardian regarding all absences not verified. When your child returns to school, please email [konopkanan@fssd.org](mailto:konopkanan@fssd.org) or hand deliver a note to the attendance secretary explaining the absence(s) within 7 days from the day the child returns to school. Otherwise, the absence will be marked as unexcused. If you send the note to school through your child, we encourage you to follow up by phone or email with the attendance secretary to ensure that it has been received and properly documented.

**B. Unexcused Absence Laws LAWS (Tennessee Code Annotated – TCA)** TCA 49-6-3007 authorizes judges to assess a \$50.00 fine against parents when a child has more than 5 unexcused absences during a 6-week period. TCA 49-6-3007 requires the principal to notify parents when a child is absent 5 cumulative days. TCA-49-6-3001 School Attendance Law which requires all children ages 6-17 inclusive to attend school each day. (TCA-49-6-3007) communicates the steps involved in the required Tiered Truancy Intervention Plan

**TRUANCY PLAN (UNEXCUSED ABSENCES)** Truancy only refers to UNEXCUSED absences. All schools now must follow a new state law that requires school personnel to follow a truancy intervention plan for students who are accruing unexcused absences. Tier 1 intervention will be implemented when a child has accrued **5 unexcused absences**. Tier 1 will require tasks to be completed by parent/guardian and student. Should Tier 1 requirements not be met and the student acquires 3 more UNEXCUSED absences, totaling **8 UNEXCUSED absences**, Tier 2 will be implemented for the parent/guardian and the student. If UNEXCUSED absences continue to accumulate, Tier 3 will be implemented for the parent/guardian and the student. Tier 3 interventions may result in a referral to the Williamson County Juvenile Court for truancy and a referral to the Department of Children's Services.

**CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM (EXCUSED AND UNEXCUSED ABSENCES)** Chronic absenteeism includes both excused and unexcused absences. Research shows that for student achievement, days absent from school can be an indicator for poor student success. In FSSD,

attendance is monitored to determine what barriers, if any, are impacting a child's ability to be in school on time and for the full day. We want to help eliminate ALL barriers that keep children out of school so our school attendance secretaries, principals and/or the district safety and attendance supervisor will contact parents/guardians if absences appear to be leading toward chronic absenteeism. The Tennessee Department of Education's reporting standards use attendance data as an indicator of school quality and student success.

**NOTIFICATIONS OF ABSENCES AND TARDIES** When a student accumulates 5 unexcused absences or 5 unexcused tardies, the parent will receive a letter from the attendance secretary. When a student accumulates 8 unexcused absences or 8 unexcused tardies, the parent will receive a letter from the attendance secretary. When a student accumulates 10+ absences (excused or unexcused) and/or 10+ tardies (excused or unexcused), a referral will be made to the district safety and attendance supervisor. A letter will be sent to the parent from the district safety and attendance supervisor indicating that excessive absences may result in juvenile court proceedings. Once a student accrues 10+ absences or tardies, he/she will also be required to submit a doctor's note for absences or tardies to be excused for the remainder of the school year. It should be noted that if a student is not in school for three (3) hours and 15 minutes, the student is considered absent according to state regulations.

**C. Early Dismissal** Leaving school early is strongly discouraged due to the loss of instructional time and disruption to the learning environment. However, if you know your student will need to be checked out early, please send a note to the teacher. Students leaving early must be signed out in the school office by parents/guardians. If the student is leaving early because of a medical appointment, parents/guardians are encouraged to get an excuse note prior to leaving the medical facility and provide it to the front office upon the student's return. We appreciate your efforts to make appointments during non-school hours. Please note, an early dismissal is also considered a tardy. Please **refrain from picking your child up after 2:15** unless it is an unavoidable situation.

**D. No Advance Assignments** Teachers will not send makeup work for days absent in advance. It will be the parent and student's responsibility to get the work when the student returns. This allows the teacher to set aside work as the week goes on, rather than having to hastily prepare it prior to the absence.

**E. Tardiness** A student is considered tardy to school if he/she is not in his/her homeroom when the bell rings at 7:30 a.m. or if he/she is checked out from the office before the school day ends. There will be exceptions for students arriving on late buses. Tardiness related to oversleeping, traffic, weather, or not leaving home on time is unexcused. A student who is tardy to school must report to the office **with a parent to sign in** and get a class admission slip. If a student is late because of a medical appointment, please provide an excuse note from the medical office. When a child comes to school late, it causes him/her to get off to a delayed start and disrupts the classroom.

**TARDY TO CLASS** Students are expected to arrive to class on time. For a tardy to be excused, a student must have a note in advance from a teacher that includes the date and time. Teachers will use good judgment when a student requests an excused tardy for using the restroom. If possible, students should report to class first then obtain a pass to use the restroom. Teachers will be present in the hallways during the passing periods. Teachers will immediately begin teaching when the passing period is over. If a student is late, he/she should not enter the classroom without a tardy pass. Students will be allowed two unexcused tardies during a nine-week period without further consequence. However, students will be assigned a morning detention on the third tardy and each subsequent tardy during the nine-week period. If a student receives in excess of five tardies during a nine-week period, in-school detention (ISD) will be assigned for each infraction. If tardies reach 9 or more during a nine-week period, In-school suspension will be assigned.

Tardy passes will be written in the office. A tardy log will be kept in office and can be referenced by staff members as needed.

**STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES Health and Medication Policies** First aid and health care provided by the school nurse is primarily for illness and injuries that occur during the school day. The school nurse, according to law, is not allowed to make a diagnosis, prescribe treatment or administer medication without a signed medication consent form. Please help us to provide a safe and healthy environment by reading and following the policies and procedures below. Feel free to contact the school nurse to discuss any health concerns you have regarding your child.

**Medications at School** State law prohibits dispensing of medications, prescription, non-prescription, and complementary alternative medications (CAMs) at school without a completed medication form. This includes medications such as rescue inhalers, cough drops, Tylenol, Motrin and ointments such as Neosporin. If your child requires medication during the day, or if you would like to have medications available at school to be given if needed, please complete a medication request form. These forms are available in the school clinic or can be downloaded from the website at [www.fssd.org](http://www.fssd.org). Parents are to pick up medications at the end of the school year. New forms must be completed each school year.

**Prescription** medications require both a doctor's signature and a parent/guardian signature. The medication must be brought to school in a labeled prescription medication bottle from the pharmacy. **Non-prescription** (over the counter) medications require a parent/guardian signature. The medication must be in a new, unopened container with the name of the medication and expiration date clearly visible.

**Medications MUST be brought to the school clinic by a parent or guardian. It is a violation of State Law and school policy for a child to bring medication to school.**



**Student Illness Students should not come to school if:**

- They have had a temperature of 100 degrees or greater in the past 24 hours.
- They have had vomiting or diarrhea two or more times in the past 24 hours.
- They are on antibiotics for strep throat, pink-eye, or other infections for **less** than 24 hours.

**Students will be sent home for:**

- Fever of 100 degrees or higher - Student must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Vomiting/Diarrhea - Student must be free of vomiting/diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Unexplained rash – Student must have a doctor’s note that they are not contagious to return to school.
- Suspected pinkeye – Student must be on antibiotics treatment for 24 hours before returning to school or a note from the doctor stating the student is not contagious.

We ask that ill students be picked up in a timely fashion as we have limited space in the clinic and we want to expose as few students, staff and faculty to illness as possible. It is very important that we have your home, work, and cell phone numbers. Please make sure to notify the school of changes. PGMS must be able to contact you in case of an emergency, illness, or injury.

**HEALTH SCREENINGS** In compliance with the Tennessee Department of Education, FSSD offers free health screenings during the school year. These screenings include, but are not limited to, vision, hearing, height, weight, BMI and blood pressure. We check students in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades with parental consent. Routine health screenings can identify conditions, which interfere with learning and provide early detection of conditions, which if untreated, can lead to more serious health concerns.

**IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS Rising seventh graders:** Students entering seventh grade must have a Tdap booster, as well as either 2 doses of the chickenpox vaccine or history of disease. The information must be documented on a Tennessee Department of Health Certificate of Immunization. Immunization certificates are available from the child’s physician, or the local health department.

**SCHOOL CLOSINGS** Please watch local news media, visit their websites, or the FSSD website ([www.fssd.org](http://www.fssd.org)) for school closings. We are listed as Franklin Special School District. A ConnectED message will also be sent out if school is closed.

**VISITORS** Special visitors and parents are encouraged to come to Poplar Grove Middle School. Visitors must present a valid government issued ID. Please report to the main office, **sign in**, and receive a visitor's badge before visiting any part of the building. Please sign out and return the visitor badge to the office before leaving the building. **Visitors under the age of 18 must be accompanied by an adult or have prior approval from the principal.** During the school day, parents must make appointments with their child's teacher or obtain permission from the principal in order to walk down to their child's classroom.

In a continuing effort to prioritize the safety and security of our school campuses and the students and employees therein, the Franklin Special School District Board of Education amended its Board Policy 1.501 (Visitors to School/District Properties – Security Management.) on Monday, May 8, 2017. From this date forward, **“all visitors shall be required to present a valid, government-issued photo ID when they enter any school building or office during normal hours of operation and all visitors may be subject to a background check.”**

Those who are simply visiting the office for the purpose of speaking to staff, filling out paperwork, or dropping items off do not need to present identification. However, anyone who wishes to visit an area beyond the office must abide by this revised policy. Public schools are *not* public places and school officials have a duty to protect the students while they are on campus. While we always welcome visitors and guests, we understand this very serious obligation and are proud that our school board has deemed this a priority by placing it in policy.

**STUDENT LOCKERS** Students are issued lockers for personal use in keeping notebooks, supplies, coats, etc. Students are not allowed to switch lockers with other students without teacher permission. Each middle school student should keep his/her items in his/her locker. Lockers may not be shared. Lockers should be kept in good condition. Students may not write on lockers. Decals and stickers may not be placed on lockers. Violations of above rules may result in loss of locker privilege. Lockers are the property of FSSD made available for student use. Should there be any reason to believe that a locker contains stolen items and/or items that are hazardous to the health and welfare of students, a search may be conducted. Homebase teachers will conduct periodic locker checks and clean out days throughout the school year.

**PLANNERS** Students have the responsibility to take their PGS student planner to all classes. It is mandatory that all middle school students have a PGS student planner. Replacement cost of such planner is \$5.00 and may be purchased in the 5-8 office. If a student loses or damages his/her planner, he/she must replace it.

**HALL PASSES** Students must be in their assigned areas at all times unless otherwise directed by a teacher. If a student must leave his/her assigned area, he/she must have his/her planner filled out with their teachers' signature.

**HALLWAY BEHAVIOR** Students are expected to display appropriate behavior at all times. This includes no running, loud voices, horseplay, or disrespect to others. Teachers will monitor student behavior. Violations will be handled in accordance with the PGS/FSSD Code of Student Conduct as outlined in the Student Handbook.

**TEACHER WORKROOMS** Students may not go into teacher workrooms at any time.

**VALUABLES** The school cannot be responsible for lost or stolen items.

**POSSESSION OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES** A student may not use any device to photograph or record the activities of other students or staff while on school property or a school sponsored activity unless expressly authorized in advance by the building principal and with the consent of the individual(s) being recorded. FSSD Board policy states, “ These (electronic devices) must be turned off and stored out of view such as in a backpack, purse, personal carry-all or pocket”.

**SEARCHING ELECTRONIC DEVICES** If an administrator has reasonable suspicion that an electronic device contains evidence of a violation of the law or school policy, the contents of the device may be reviewed.

**ELECTRONIC DEVICE PENALTIES** Unauthorized use or improper storage of a device will result in confiscation until the student's parent or guardian collects the device. A student in violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary actions as follows:

- 1<sup>st</sup> offence - An ODR will be written by the teacher. Student receives a warning.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> offence - Students will receive an ODR and must serve a morning detention.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> offences - Student will receive an ODR and an ISD
- Subsequent violations will result in progressive discipline

**CANINE SEARCHES** Random canine sweeps of the school campus and parking lots may be conducted periodically throughout the school year as a proactive approach to maintaining a drug free environment, which in turn supports a positive school climate.

All planned canine sweeps are scheduled by the school administrator and the district safety supervisor in conjunction with the Williamson County Sheriff's Office and without prior notice to parents, guardians, students or staff. All canine sweeps will be conducted in a manner that is minimally disruptive to the learning environment and in compliance with FSSD Board Policy 6.303:

Interrogations and Searches.

The use of canine-assisted narcotics sweeps does not indicate that a particular school has illegal contraband on campus. It indicates a willingness to remain proactive in efforts to ensure

the safety and security of the school. Parents and guardians are typically informed after a search has been conducted at their child's school.

**ONLINE PRIVACY** When attending school events, the Franklin Special School District recognizes that attendees often want to videotape and/or photograph the students. However, in an effort to respect the privacy concerns of others, as well as to honor the state and federal privacy laws of individual students whose parents/guardians have specifically requested not to be photographed, the District strongly requests that any video footage and/or still images of non-custodial students NOT be posted online to sites such as, but not limited to, Facebook, Flickr, YouTube, etc. Although the FSSD strongly urges attendees to respect the privacy of others, families must also recognize that the District has no means for preventing attendees from taking such actions. A general courtesy is to ask for parental permission before posting video or photographs of students/families online.

**OFFICE PHONE USE** The office phone is to be used for emergency purposes only. Students must have their planners signed by their teachers or have a pass from their teachers prior to using the phone. Students are also required to fill out the phone log. Students will not be allowed to call home for any forgotten homework or supplies.

**LOST AND FOUND** Items that are found should be turned in to the office. Inquire about lost items there. Every nine weeks unclaimed items will be donated to charity.

### **DINING HALL PROCEDURES**

- Refer to PGMS behavior expectation matrix on the PGMS website
- Breakfast served from the cart may be eaten in the classroom. All other food in the classroom is at the teachers' discretion.
- Students are to arrive and depart from the dining hall promptly.
- Students must sit in designated area.
- All trays should be returned to the dishwashing area.
- Students are to clear debris and spills from tables and the area they are seated.
- No energy drinks are allowed at school or lunch.
- No gum is allowed at school or lunch.
- Do not bring food from a restaurant.
- Do not bring items for celebrations such as: cupcakes, cookies, or other edible items.

**Meal Charge Administrative Procedure** Families will have access to the meal charge administrative procedure via publication in the student handbook, FSSD website, and included with the Free and Reduced applications. Families of transfer students (during the year) will receive a written copy of the district-wide charge administrative procedure in the student handbook and FSSD website. **Local Charge Administrative Procedure Considerations**

Students who are unable to pay for their meals at the time of the meal service are allowed to charge Breakfast and Lunch. Students charging breakfast and/or lunch will receive reimbursable meals. Students with a negative balance will not be able to charge ala carte items. If a Parent send in cash for an ala carte item the student may use the cash for that item.

**Household Notification** Negative balance notification: 1. The CNP department will send out a negative balance email to the parent's email address each Saturday. 2. The CNP manager at the student's school will send home a notice through the child's teacher weekly. 3. The CNP department will use Blackboard Connect Ed to call every family with a negative balance of \$20.00 or more on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of the month. 4. Any student's whose account is over \$50.00 will receive a phone call from the CNP manager at that child school. 5. Any account over \$75.00 will be referred to the FSSD Social Worker for evaluation on the family's need for assistance.

**Delinquent Debt** Delinquent debt is defined as overdue unpaid meal charges that are considered collectable, with efforts being made to collect them. The debt may remain on the accounting documents until it is collected. The debt will be carried over at the end of the school year. Report cards will be withheld at the end of the school year until all monies owed FSSD are paid. Skyward Family access may be suspended until account is paid.

**Repayment plans** Each household may request a repayment plan that will include payment levels and due dates appropriate to a household's particular circumstances. Please contact Robbin Cross, [crossrob@fssd.org](mailto:crossrob@fssd.org) , 615-794-6624 for establishing a repayment plan.

**Bad Debt** Bad debt is determined to be uncollectable, with that further collection efforts for delinquent debt deemed useless or too costly. Delinquent debt will be considered as bad debt 90 days after the child leaves FSSD.

**Additional Resources** Families may find assistance with applying for free or reduced price schools meals by contacting any of the following FSSD staff members at 615-794-6624: Robbin Cross, FSSD CNP Supervisor, [crossrob@fssd.org](mailto:crossrob@fssd.org). Amanda Fisher, FSSD Social Worker, [fisherama@fssd.org](mailto:fisherama@fssd.org) Diane Price, FSSD Translator, [pricedia@fssd.org](mailto:pricedia@fssd.org)

**STUDENT ELIGIBILITY FOR ATHLETICS AND/OR CLUBS** Poplar Grove Middle School students must maintain passing grades to be eligible to participate in after-school athletics and/or clubs. Eligible Poplar Grove sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students may participate in athletics at Freedom Middle School in any sport that is **not** offered at Poplar Grove School. If a student makes an "F" on his/her report card, he/she will be placed on probation and is not allowed to participate in any sport or other extracurricular activity for three weeks from the day the report card is issued. At that time, if the student has brought his/her grade up to a passing grade, he/she may return to participation in the sport or activity. If a student continues to have a grade of "F" he/she will continue to be on probation for an additional three weeks. This applies to all sports and clubs.

**LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER** Our library has a wide range of fiction, non-fiction, biographies,

reference, periodicals, and online materials for information and leisure reading. The library provides books to support the Tennessee State Curriculum and the Reading Renaissance Program. Students may participate in the Volunteer State Book Award program by reading and voting on the nominated books each year. Library hours are from 7:00 a.m. until 2:25 p.m. The following regulations apply to the library:

- All library books are due two weeks after they are checked out. A reminder in the form of a bookmark is stamped with the due date and given to each student.
- A book may be renewed if a student is still reading it. The book must be brought back into the library to be renewed.
- Students may not check out more than three (3) books at a time.
- A fine of five cents per day will be charged for each overdue book. Fines will not accumulate over weekends or holidays. Overdue lists are emailed daily to homebase teachers. Notices are sent home to parents in the **Tuesday Communication Folders**. Balances should be kept current.
- When a student checks out any materials from the library, the student and parents automatically assume responsibility for payment of loss or damage to materials.

**Students are expected to follow the rules of the library:**

- Respect your privilege and the right of others to use the library
- Use a quiet voice
- No running
- Keep all four legs of a chair on the floor and feet off the furniture
- No food or drink is allowed in the library
- Fees charged for lost books may be refunded if the book is found, up until the last full week of school (or whenever the library begins year-end inventory). At that point, no refunds will be given.

*Students who do not comply, or show a pattern of non-compliance of the library rules, will be subject to consequences as they appear in the Code of Student Conduct.*

**COMPUTER USAGE POLICY** The Franklin Special School District Board of Education supports the right of students to have reasonable access to various information formats and believes it is incumbent upon students to use this privilege in an appropriate and responsible manner. Parents and students are required to read, sign, and return the “FSSD Network and Internet Use Agreement” form and laptop contract in order for students to have access to electronic data. Prohibited or illegal activities, are inclusive of, but not limited to:

- Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures
- Using obscene language

- Electric devices that are not purchased by FSSD are not allowed to access school networks.
- Harassing, insulting, or attacking others
- Damaging computers, computer systems, or computer networks
- Violation of copyright laws
- Trespassing in another's folders, work, or files
- Intentional misuse of resources
- Using another's password
- Employing the network for commercial purposes
- Revealing the personal address or phone number of yourself or any other person without permission from the teacher
- Use of the network for commercial purposes
- Buying or selling on the Internet

Violations of procedures may result in a loss of access as well as other disciplinary or legal action.

### **RIGHT TO REVIEW TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS**

Parents of Franklin Special School District students have the right to know professional qualifications of the classroom teachers who instruct their children. Federal law, under ESSA § 1112(e)(1)(A), allows them to ask for certain information about classroom teachers, which the school district will provide in a timely manner.

Specifically, parents have the right to ask for the following information about each child's classroom teacher:

- Whether the Tennessee Department of Education has licensed or qualified the teacher for the grades and subjects he or she teaches.
- Whether the Tennessee State Department of Education has decided that the teacher can teach in a classroom without being licensed or qualified under state regulations because of special circumstances.
- Whether the teacher is teaching in the field of discipline of their certification.
- Whether any teachers' aides or similar paraprofessionals provide services to your child and, if they do, their qualifications.

If you would like to receive any of this information, call the FSSD Human Resources Department at 615-794-6624.

**GUIDANCE SERVICES** Our school offers guidance services ranging from personal, social, and academic counseling. The counselor works with students individually and in groups. Students may see the counselor through a teacher or self-referral. Parents are encouraged to call the guidance office for any questions they may have or for an appointment.

**POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORT (RTI<sup>2</sup>-B)** PGMS will continue to implement a Positive Behavior Support program for 2020-2021. RTI<sup>2</sup>-B is a school-wide program of support that includes proactive strategies for defining, teaching, and supporting appropriate student behavior to create positive school environments. The program will be based on three school wide expectations:

- 1. Be Responsible   2. Be Respectful   3. Show Pride!**

Instead of expecting students to know the correct behaviors in various school settings when they enter middle school, we will teach our expectations directly at the beginning of the year and review these often. Parents will also have a chart at home showing the expected behaviors in different school locations (classroom, cafeteria, hallway, recess area, buses, etc.) Students will be rewarded often when demonstrating these appropriate behaviors. Rewards will be tangible and intangible. The goal of PBS is to make negative behaviors less effective and positive behavior more rewarding for student to engage in when interacting with each other and with adults in the school.

**Policies, guidelines, and procedures are not all inclusive. They may be amended as deemed appropriate by the Poplar Grove administrators.**

**Notes:**

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