

# 2024 - 2025

# DFMS STUDENT/PARENT

# HANDBOOK



The mission of Dutch Fork Middle School is to  
**S**trategically implement an engaging and  
challenging curriculum that will integrate  
**T**echnology while encouraging students to  
**E**ffectively communicate, critically think,  
collaborate, and be creative. By partnering  
with our community, students will be  
**A**ccountable for their learning as they are  
**M**entored to be successful contributors to a  
global society.

“SHAPING THE FUTURE...  
MAKING CONNECTIONS”

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## PARENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Code KBB Issued

The board has adopted the following statement on the rights and responsibilities of parents/legal guardians to describe the role of the parent/legal guardian and the role of the school in supporting a successful school experience for each child as well as establishing and maintaining a parent-friendly school setting.

For purposes of this policy, the term "parent" refers to custodial and noncustodial parents.

Generally, it is the intent of the board to recognize all the rights, duties, powers, responsibilities, and authority that, by law, a parent/legal guardian has in relation to his/her child. For example, every parent/legal guardian has the following rights:

- to be treated with courtesy by all members of the school staff
- to be respected as an individual regardless of race, color, immigration status, national origin, disability, religion, sex, or age
- to secure as much help as is available from the school district to further the progress and improvement of his/her child
- to receive reasonable protection for his/her child from physical harm while under school authority
- to organize and participate in organizations for parents
- to participate in his/her child's school activities (unless prohibited by court order)

### *Receiving information*

- to be informed of academic requirements of any school program
- to be informed of school policies and administrative decisions
- to be informed of procedures for seeking changes in school policies and for appealing administrative decisions
- to expect that school personnel will make reasonable attempts to ensure that parents/legal guardians receive important school news and messages
- to be informed of education and cultural programs available to public school children

### *Conferences*

- to participate in meaningful parent-teacher conferences to discuss his/her child's school progress and welfare

### *Records*

- to inspect his/her child's education record in conformity with current guidelines established by state and federal law

Additionally, every parent/legal guardian has the following responsibilities:

- to make reasonable efforts to provide for the physical needs of the child
- to prepare the child emotionally and socially to make the child receptive to learning and discipline
- to hold high expectations for academic achievement
- to expect and communicate expectations for success
- to recognize that parental involvement in middle, intermediate and high school is equally as critical as in elementary school
- to ensure attendance and punctuality

- to attend, when possible, parent-teacher conferences
- to monitor and check homework
- to communicate with the child's teachers
- to build partnerships with teachers to promote successful school experiences
- to attend, when possible, school events
- to model desirable behaviors
- to use encouraging words
- to stimulate thought and curiosity
- to show support for school expectations and efforts to increase student learning
- to encourage appropriate behavior at school and during school-sponsored events
- to report inappropriate behavior of a student, teacher or any district employee

Cf. KB

Adopted ^

Legal references:

- A. Federal Law:
  1. The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 U.S.C.A. Section 1232g.
- B. S.C. Code, 1976, as amended:
  1. Section 63-5-30 - Parental right to participate in child's school activities unless prohibited by court order.
  2. Sections 59-28-100 through 59-28-220 - Parental Involvement in Their Children's Education Act.
  3. Section 59-59-160 - South Carolina Education and Economic Development Act; parenting counseling conferences.

*School District Five of Lexington and Richland Counties welcomes input and suggestions from our community and from our parents concerning Title I programs and funding. The following is a DRAFT of a District Parent Policy we are considering. We are asking parents and community members to review the document and give us feedback, suggestions and/or recommendations for revisions as we work to make this a document that reflects the climate and the needs of our community. Please forward your comments or suggestions to Sara R. Kearns, Coordinator of Academic Assistance and Professional Development, School District Five of Lexington and Richland Counties, 1020 Dutch Fork Road, Irmo, SC 29063; FAX to 803-476-8215; or, drop suggestions by the District Office.*

### **Parent Involvement Policy – District Written Policy**

District Five encourages, supports, and values the participation and involvement of parents and families in the educational experiences of their children. The District recognizes each parent as their child's first teacher and acknowledges the powerful influence of parents on their child's life. The District, therefore, is committed to developing family-friendly schools, offices, and programs to welcome and serve parents and families in positive and supportive environments.

Parents are involved in the development of the LEA (Lead Education Agency) plan and the process of school review and improvement by being part of a planning team that develops an overall Parent Involvement Policy. In addition, all parents are surveyed. This plan is distributed to all parents with children participating in Title I schools and to the community at large. An annual evaluation of the effectiveness of parent involvement will be conducted.

District Office staff provides technical assistance, coordination, and support to participating Title I schools. To assist these schools, District Office staff will be available to assist in the writing of the Title I grant, assist in procurement, attend school improvement/renewal team meetings, assist the schools in implementing effective parent involvement activities and Parent-Teacher organization meetings. Additional responsibilities will be to provide assistance in any area requested to bring about school improvement and increase parental involvement. The District will assist each school in the development of a school-level Parent Involvement Policy. District Office staff will also see that state and federal guidelines are followed.

The schools and parents will build the capacity for strong parental involvement by entering into School-Parent-Student Compacts with staff and families of students attending Title I schools. Compacts are signed by the Principal, Teacher, Parent, and Student. Efforts to increase parent involvement will also include annual conferences to accommodate varied family schedules. In addition, an annual meeting for parents/families of students served in Title I schools will be held to provide information on Title I legislation, instructional programs and the desired outcomes for students of Title I Targeted Assistance schools. Parents will impact policy-making via opportunities to serve on School Improvement Councils, completion of parent surveys, preview of Title I plans in each school Media Center and/or serving as mentors or through other volunteer efforts. Schools will provide a number of Parenting activities during the year such as Technology, Literacy, Math/Science, Fine Arts, Testing, Cultural Celebration, Academic Information, and other student performance/academic presentations.

The Parenting Program served through Title I will coordinate and join together with other programs by inviting parents to attend parenting classes, Adult Ed classes, workshops and seminars offered by the District and/or state. Additional efforts will be made to work with other community programs to provide information and assistance regarding Title I Targeted Assistance programs.

Regarding funding, the District will reserve not less than one percent (1%) of the total Title I allocation to carry out parental involvement to include family literacy and parenting skills.

District Five will also implement the following provisions as set forth by *ESEA*:

- Parental Choice will be offered if a school is labeled as “persistently dangerous.”
- Public School Choice will be offered when a school is labeled as a Focus or Priority School.
- Supplemental Educational Services will be offered for before- or after-school utilizing tutorials, Academic Assistance, or remediation for eligible students in schools labeled as Focus or Priority schools.
- Highly Qualified Teachers will be placed in schools. Parents have the right to ask the school administration if a teacher possesses proper certification to teach the grade and content area he or she has been assigned. The District will ensure that parents are notified if students are taught for more than four consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified.

### STUDENT RECORDS

As stated in School Board Policy JR, student records will be handled in a manner consistent with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), as amended.

If a student transfers and enrolls in a school other than Dutch Fork Middle School, his/her educational records will be transferred to that school or school system upon request by the school/school system. The parent/eligible student has the right to request a copy of the record that was disclosed. Parents/eligible students also have a right to request an amendment of educational records if they believe the record contains information that is inaccurate or misleading.

### DIRECTORY INFORMATION

According to school board policy JRA, Public Use of School Records, directory information regarding students will be handled in a manner consistent with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), as amended.

Information that the District has designated as "directory information" regarding a student may be released to outside organizations upon request and without prior written consent from the parent/eligible student. The District defines directory information as a student's name, address, telephone number, photograph, grade level, school to which he/she is assigned, years of attendance at that school, awards received, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, and weight and height of athletic team members. Outside organizations requesting directory information include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, the No Child Left Behind Act requires that local high schools must provide military recruiters, upon request, access to secondary school students' names, addresses, and telephone listings.

If you do not wish Dutch Fork Middle School to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the School in writing no later than 30 calendar days after the first day of school.



# Lexington-Richland School District Five

## 2024-2025 Year-Round Modified Academic Calendar

**July 2024**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

**August 2024**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

**September 2024**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

**October 2024**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

**November 2024**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

**December 2024**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

**January 2025**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

**February 2025**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	

**March 2025**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

**April 2025**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

**May 2025**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

**June 2025**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

August 1.....First Day for Teachers  
 August 1-7.....Teacher Work Day/Staff Dev.  
 August 8.....First Day for Students  
 September 2.....Labor Day Holiday  
 October 11.....Teacher Work Day/Fall Break  
 October 14.....Fall Break  
 November 5.....Election Day  
 November 27-29.....Thanksgiving Holidays  
 December 23-January 6.....Winter Break  
 January 7.....Teacher Work Day/Staff Dev.  
 \* Work day for 240-day employees

January 8.....Students Return to School  
 January 20.....Dr. M. L. King, Jr. Holiday  
 February 14.....Teacher Work Day/Staff Dev.  
 February 17.....No School for Teachers or Students  
 March 14.....Teacher Work Day/Staff Dev.  
 March 17.....No School for Teachers or Students  
 April 14-21.....Spring Break  
 May 26.....Memorial Day Holiday  
 May 27-29.....Half Days for Students  
 May 29.....Last Day for Students  
 May 30.....Teacher Work Day

Possible severe weather make-up days: October 11, February 17, March 17  
 Half Days for Students: May 27-29  
 Parent/Teacher Conferences: October 11

School District Five is a SCDE approved eLearning district. The current provision allows the district to use up to five (5) days in eLearning. These days are for emergency situations, such as inclement weather or utility interruptions (for example, water line breaks or power outages). They are not planned days on the calendar.

Additional student learning opportunities will be provided during the school year on dates to be determined and communicated to families by the individual schools.

<span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #28a745; border: 1px solid black;"></span> School Day	<span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #dc3545; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Schools & Offices Closed *Work day for 240-day employees	<span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #17a2b8; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Staff Development/ Teacher Work Day No School for Students	<span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #c6e0b4; border: 1px solid black;"></span> School Day/End of Nine Weeks
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## DFMS Bell Schedule 2024-2025



Arrival 7:45	Students in Cafeteria and Gym (7:45-8:10) 8:05-8:10 – Dismissal from Cafeteria and Gym 8:10 – First Bell 8:15 – Tardy Bell					
8:15 - 9:10	Instructional Period 1 <b>GREEN WEEK</b> (55 min) Instructional Period 6 <b>SILVER WEEK</b> (55 min)					
9:10 - 9:14	Class Change					
9:14 - 10:09	Instructional Period 2 (55 min)					
10:09 - 10:13	Class Change					
10:13 - 10:43	DEN (30 min)					
10:43 - 10:47	Class Change					
10:47 - 11:42	Instructional Period 3 (55 min)					
11:42 - 11:46	Class Change					
11:46 - 1:32	Team	Team 71/73A	Team 72/73B	Team 81/83A	Team 82/83B	
	Lunch	11:46 - 12:12 (26)	12:12- 12:38 (26)			
	Refocus	12:12 - 12:38 (26)	11:46 - 12:12 (26)			
	4.7	12:38 - 1:32 (54 min)				
	4.8				11:46 - 12:40 (54 min)	
	Lunch				12:40 - 1:06 (26)	1:06 - 1:32 (26)
	Refocus				1:06 - 1:32 (26)	12:40 - 1:06 (26)
1:32 - 1:36	Class Change					
1:36 - 2:31	Instructional Period 5 (55 min)					
2:31- 2:35	Class Change					
2:35 - 3:30	Instructional Period 6 <b>GREEN WEEK</b> (55 min) Instructional Period 1 <b>SILVER WEEK</b> (55 min)					



**Middle School Late Start Dates  
2024-2025**

**Wednesday, September 11, 2024**

**Wednesday, October 2, 2024**

**Wednesday, November 20, 2024**

**Wednesday, February 5, 2025**

**Wednesday, March 12, 2025**

**Wednesday, April 30, 2025**

## Who's Who at DFMS?

Web Address – [www.lexrich5.org/dfms](http://www.lexrich5.org/dfms) Main Line 803-476-4800 Fax Line 803-476-4820

Vernon Sava, Principal (476-4810)

Andrew Smith, Principal's Secretary (476-4811)

David Sunday, Assistant Principal/Instruction (476-4813)

Kelly Thacker, 7<sup>th</sup> grade Assistant Principal (476-4814)

LuAnn Graul, 8<sup>th</sup> grade Assistant Principal (476-4815)

Shannon Koch, Clerical Assistant to Assistant Principals (476-4812)

Marlo Wright, School Counseling Director (476-4898)

Leah Morvey, School Counselor (476-4897)

Cheryl Cooley, School Counselor (476-4896)

Melinda Morris, School Counseling Administrative Assistant (476-4805)

Mary Alice Laubach, Special Education (476-4900)

Celeste Creel, Registrar (476-4840)

Guy Moorman, III, Social Worker (476-4833)

Kelly Lilie, Attendance Clerk (476-4804)

Heather Johnson, Receptionist (476-4801)

Terri Arndt, Bookkeeper (476-4838)

Aiko Selage, RN, School Nurse (476-4809)

TBD, Clerical Assistant to the AP of Instruction (476-4903)

TBD, Instructional Coach (476-4826)

Sierra Stokes, Cafeteria Manager (476-4808)

# Who Should I Contact if I Have a Question?

## **INSTRUCTIONAL/CLASSROOM ISSUES**

- ✓ When a problem arises in the classroom, **please be sure to contact the teacher.**  
If an in-person meeting or a virtual meeting is needed, please call and set up an appointment with the teacher.
- ✓ If your problem can't be solved at the teacher level, **please contact the appropriate assistant principal or guidance counselor:**
  - 7<sup>th</sup> grade Assistant Principal: Kelly Thacker
  - 8<sup>th</sup> grade Assistant Principal: Mrs. LuAnn Gaul
  - Assistant Principal for Instruction: Mr. David Sunday
  - School Counselors:
    - Mrs. Marlo Wright, Director
      - Student Last Names Q-Z
    - Mrs. Cheryl Cooley
      - Student Last Names A-H
    - Mrs. Leah Morvey
      - Student Last Names I-P

## **DISCIPLINARY ISSUES**

- ✓ Please contact your child's grade level administrator for any discipline related issues or concerns you may have.

## **CAFETERIA ACCOUNTS**

- ✓ Contact the cafeteria manager (Sierra Stokes, 476-4808).

## **ATHLETICS**

- ✓ Contact your child's coach to discuss the matter.
- ✓ Contact the athletic director at Dutch Fork High school (476-3306) if the matter is not settled to your satisfaction.
- ✓ You may want to contact the middle school principal, too. However, please note that all sports activities come under the jurisdiction of the athletic department of Dutch Fork High.

## **ACADEMIC RECOGNITION**

A student must maintain a minimum average of 90 in each subject for which he/she is enrolled in order to be eligible for the A Honor Roll. A student must maintain a minimum average of 80 in each subject for which he/she is enrolled in order to be eligible for the A/B Honor Roll. No student who is enrolled for fewer than six blocks is eligible for the honor roll.

## **ACTIVITIES**

Dutch Fork Middle School (DFMS) offers a variety of student activities.

The extra-curricular programs offered below are an integral part of the total instructional program with a goal of addressing individual student needs and interests. **NOTE:** These programs are offered based on interest and availability.



## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Academic Team
- Beta Club
- C-Team Sports
- Dazzlers
- Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA)
- Math Counts
- Student Government
- Robotics
- Yearbook

## ATTENDANCE

### ***Intermediate/Middle School Attendance Guidelines***

***Please carefully read the following information about South Carolina School Attendance Laws and District 5 of Lexington and Richland Counties Guidelines for student attendance. Attendance is a vital factor in student achievement, and any absences from school represents a potential educational loss to the student. However, there are some absences that cannot be avoided so District 5 has established attendance guidelines to assist with these types of absences.***

Students are expected to attend school each day in accordance with the approved school calendar. Any student who misses school must present a written excuse within **3** days (Board Policy JH), signed by a parent/guardian, or the medical professional who treated the child. If the student fails to submit a valid excuse to school, he/she will automatically receive an unexcused absence. The building principal must approve or disapprove individual absences in excess of ten days regardless if those absences are lawful, unlawful, or a combination of the two.

#### **Absences:**

In accordance with *State Board Regulation 43-274*:

<p>Students are considered <u>lawfully</u> absent when:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. They are <b>ill</b> and their attendance in school would endanger his or her health or the health of others</li> <li>2. There is a <b>death or a serious illness</b> in their immediate family - with proper documentation (i.e. bulletin, death notice, obituary, etc)</li> <li>3. There is a <b>recognized religious holiday</b> of their faith</li> <li>4. The student is <b>suspended</b> from school</li> <li>5. There is an absence due to <b>an activity that is pre-approved</b> by the school building principal</li> </ol> <p>Please keep in mind that parent notes are considered excused within the first 5 absences for a semester and 10 for a yearlong course <b>ONLY</b> if the reason for the absence is lawful</p>	<p>Students will be considered <u>unlawfully</u> absent when:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There is an absence <b>without</b> the knowledge of the parent/guardian</li> <li>2. There is an absence with the knowledge of the parent/guardian but is <b>not considered a lawful absence</b></li> </ol>
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If a student misses 3 full-day consecutive unlawful/unexcused days and/or misses a total of 5 or more full-day unexcused absences, then the student is considered **truant** (*South Carolina State Board Regulation 43-274*). Once a student is determined to be truant, parents/guardians will receive a letter requesting a conference so that an **Attendance Intervention Plan (AIP)** can be put into place. It is imperative that the school and family collaborate in order to ensure the student's attendance improves. In the event of continued unlawful absences after the AIP has been held, the child/family may be referred to Family Court.

#### **Chronic Absenteeism:**

In accordance with the Office of Civil Rights (OCR), schools are now required to capture the exact amount of instructional time that a student is missing throughout the day. The OCR deems a student to be defined as "chronically absent" when meeting the following:

- Students are considered chronically absent if/when:
1. Any student in grades K-12 who misses **50 percent or more of the instructional day** for any reason for 10% or more of the enrollment period



### High School Credit:

Any student enrolled in a high school credit course must not exceed a total of **five** absences in a semester course or **10** absences in a year long course to be awarded high school credit (Board Policy JH) before recapture may be required.

## ALCOHOL AND DRUG USE

The possession, sale, distribution, or use, in any amount, of alcohol, marijuana, hallucinogenic drugs, or any controlled substance on the school grounds, in the school buildings, on buses, on any school/sponsored events, or during any other time that the student is under the administrative jurisdiction of the school whether on or off the school grounds, shall be prohibited. The principal may recommend to the Student Services Officer appointed by the Board of Trustees that the student be expelled for the remainder of the particular school year.

All principals are instructed to cooperate fully with law enforcement agencies and are to report to them any and all information that would be considered pertinent or beneficial to their efforts to stop the sale, possession, and use of illegal drugs and controlled substances.

## ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TIMES



The school day is from 8:15 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.. Students should not arrive at school earlier than 7:45 a.m. nor remain after 4:00 p.m. (unless riding an early or late bus or participating in a school - sponsored activity). Adequate supervision (*to safely and effectively supervise and tend to student's needs*) is not available prior to 7:45 a.m. or after 4:00 p.m..

## BULLYING PREVENTION PLAN

We stand committed as a team of professionals to work addressing and eradicating the bullying behaviors of students at DFMS. Together we will work to ensure that students can come to school and learn without dealing with issues of bullying by following the plan as described below:

1. Administration and school counselors will attend bully education and information seminars and training to keep up with the latest data and prevention methods.
2. Administrators will meet with students to discuss the seriousness of bullying and that it is unacceptable at Dutch Fork Middle School.
3. Administrators will meet with teachers to discuss the bullying policy and stress the importance of reporting incidents (on a referral) directly to administration when they have witnessed the bullying first hand. When students report a bullying situation, teachers will use their professional judgment and refer students either to school counselors or to administration. School counselors will always submit a report to administration in addition to giving students support and counseling. It is essential, however, that a report be made.
4. School counselors will provide staff development for teachers regarding a definition of bullying, recognizing bullying behaviors, and supporting students in advocating for self and others.
5. Administrators will address every incident of bullying that is reported and consequences will reflect professional discretion upon investigating these incidents. If necessary, a referral will be made to a school counselor for appropriate follow up services.
6. The school will present lessons that will enhance staff and student education and awareness on bullying and related personal/social behaviors. Teachers will be provided with suggested talking points for group discussion as follow-up.

7. School counselors will provide classroom guidance lessons during class or DEN to help students process the personal/social effects of bullying and anti-bullying strategies.
8. Issues of bullying will be discussed in meetings of student concerns so that administrators, teachers, and counselors are kept informed about what must be done to support students.

## **BULLYING POLICY**

School District Five of Lexington and Richland Counties prohibits any acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying of a student by students, staff and third parties which interferes with or disrupts a student's ability to learn and the school's responsibility to educate its students in a safe and orderly environment, whether such acts occur in a classroom, on school premises, on a school bus or other school-related vehicle, at an official school bus stop, at a school sponsored activity or event whether or not it is held on school premises, or at another program or function where the school is responsible for the student.

For purposes of this policy, harassment, intimidation or bullying is defined by the District as a gesture, a written, verbal, physical or sexual act, or electronic communication, to include cyber bullying (which is the use of cell phones, instant messaging, email, chat rooms or social networking sites such as Facebook, Snapchat and Twitter) that is reasonably perceived to have the effect of either of the following.

- Harming a student physically or emotionally or damaging a student's property or placing a student in reasonable fear of personal harm or property damage
- Insulting or demeaning a student or group of students causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school

Any student who believes that he/she has been subjected to harassment, intimidation or bullying in violation of this policy is encouraged to file a complaint in accordance with procedures established by the District. Complaints will be investigated promptly, thoroughly and confidentially. All school employees are required to report alleged violations of this policy to the principal or his/her designee. Reports by students or employees may be made anonymously, although disciplinary action will not be taken against any person solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

The District prohibits retaliation or reprisal in any form against a student or employee who has filed a complaint or report of harassment, intimidation or bullying. However, the District prohibits any person from falsely accusing another of harassment, intimidation or bullying.

The board expects students to conduct themselves in an orderly, courteous, dignified and respectful manner. Students and employees have a responsibility to know and respect the policies, rules and regulations of the school and district. Any student who is found to have engaged in the prohibited actions as outlined in this policy will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the district's student behavior code. Any employee who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action. The district also may refer any individual who has violated this policy to law enforcement officials. The district will take any other appropriate steps to correct or rectify the situation.

## **STOPit APP & MESSENGER**

With STOPit, students have the power to protect themselves and others from harmful, inappropriate, or unsafe behavior. [STOPit](#) allows students to anonymously report incidents to the school. When logging in be sure to use the SCHOOL CODE - **FoxStars**.



# **BUS TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION**

## **Safe & Secure School Bus Transportation**

The safety and security of students, staff, and schools is a top priority for School District Five. In an effort to ensure a safe bus ride for all students, the school district has issued the following procedures:



## **General School Bus Procedures**

The School District of Lexington and Richland Counties must safely transport all bus riders to and from school. Students will be denied the privilege of riding the bus if their behavior is unacceptable or infringes on the rights of other bus riders. It will be the responsibility of the parent or guardian to see that the student is transported to school during this time.

The parents or guardians of a child are responsible for the safety and conduct of the child prior to the arrival of the school bus at the child's designated school bus stop for pick up and transport to school, and after the school bus drops off the child and departs the designated school bus stop.

Students and parents should not attempt to discuss bus rule violations or suspension matters with the bus driver at a bus stop. Rather than trying to solve disagreements with drivers or students or at school bus stops, parents should contact the Dutch Fork Area Transportation Supervisor at 476-4990. Do not approach the bus driver, stop the bus or interfere with the operation of the school bus in any way at any time. South Carolina state law states that "no person shall willfully and wrongfully interfere with the operation of a school bus by boarding, restricting movement, using threats, either physical or verbal, to the driver or any passenger while the bus is engaged in the transportation of pupils; nor shall any person willfully fail or refuse to obey a lawful order of a school bus driver relating to the occupancy of a school bus".

Students may not load or unload at school other than their assigned bus. To ride a different bus or get off the bus at a different stop or to have a friend ride your bus requests must be given to the Transportation Department.

If a student damages a school bus, the student will be charged the assessed repair rate set by the State Department of Education. The student responsible for the damage will be suspended from riding the bus until restitution is made.

## **Student Behavior**

The school bus is an extension of school activity. Therefore, students must conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with the established standards for safety and classroom behavior. The bus driver has the responsibility for supervision of students on the bus and may report students who create a disturbance on school buses. The Transportation Supervisor will review these reports and may suspend bus transportation to a student whose conduct is persistently and/or flagrantly detrimental to safety and good order on the bus. All school bus safety rules and student behavior code applies equally to the school bus and activity buses. Students suspended from the school bus are also suspended from riding any activity bus for the length of the suspension. When necessary a student may be removed from the school bus pending investigation to determine inappropriate behavior. Bus suspensions do not run concurrently with out of school suspensions nor do they include weekends or holidays.

## **School Bus Safety Rule**

- No spitting, eating, or drinking on the bus
- No profanity, verbal abuse, harassment of any kind, obscene or sexual gestures.
- No standing while the bus is in motion.
- Keep your feet, body, and bags out of the aisle – it serves as an emergency exit.
- Do not ride any bus during a suspension of bus privileges.
- No hanging any part(s) of your anatomy out a window.
- No throwing or shooting any type of object.
- No play fighting or horse playing.
- Do not vandalize the bus or ignite any flammable object.
- Do not hold onto the bus from the outside.
- Do not possess weapons, explosives, laser pens, or laser pointers.
- Do not tamper with any bus equipment or controls.
- Students must obey and respect the directions of the driver.
- Students must not exhibit behavior that could disturb the other students or the driver.
- Spraying of cologne, deodorant, body spray, aerosols or lotion while on the bus
- Students must never tamper with the emergency exits or any other part of the bus equipment.
- Do not make excessive noise or engage in disruptive behavior. Students may talk quietly, but avoid loud, boisterous behavior, including singing, clapping, stomping, yelling or anything that distracts the driver.

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken for any incident that endangers the safety of the driver and other students, or damage to the bus. Such action could involve a longer suspension from the bus or other sanction.

Cameras, iPads, tablets, cell phones or any other electronic device that can take pictures or capture video may not be used in any area in which an individual has a reasonable expectation for privacy including, but not limited to, the school bus.

## **Transporting Large Items on School Buses**

For the safety of your children, State and Federal laws prohibit transporting items on school buses that obstruct access to all exits by an occupant or would cause injury as a result of falling or displacement. Athletic equipment, musical instruments and other objects larger than 36 inches (length) by 12 inches (width) by eight inches (depth) will not be transported on school buses. This includes skateboards, golf clubs, fishing poles, hockey sticks, lacrosse sticks, baseball bats, balloons or large school projects.

No animals, insects, weapons, balloons, glass or pressurized containers (e.g. hair spray), or class projects that are large, wooden, etc. are to be carried on buses. Items on the seats, floor, obstructing the aisles or on the engine compartment cover impair the vision of the driver and endanger all passengers on the bus. Book bags with handles that extend must have the handle fully retracted. Students may not sit on any item nor place any item behind them in the seat.

Items that will not fit comfortably on a student's lap or between their legs will not be transported on district buses and must be transported to/from school via private vehicle. Objects that obstruct the aisle, emergency exit or impair the vision of the driver are prohibited. Please make these alternative transportation arrangements ahead of time.

## Band Instruments

The following list of instruments are considered to be too large to be transported on a school bus: French Horn, Drums, Baritone Sax, Tenor Sax, Baritone, Euphonium, Tuba, and Cello.

## Medical Concerns

Medical information or concerns that are shared with a school may not necessarily be available to the Transportation Department or bus driver. In order for the Transportation Department to be better prepared to handle an emergency, please forward any information or concerns relating to medical conditions for your student. This information will be kept confidential at all times. Contact the Dutch Fork Transportation Supervisor at 476-4990.

## CAFETERIA POLICY

School District Five offers a student nutrition program that meets USDA Meal Pattern standards. This means your child will receive a breakfast that provides one-fourth of the Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) and a lunch that provides one-third of the Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) as set forth by the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

**We request that you DO NOT send or bring carbonated beverages, food from fast-food restaurants, cookies, candy, etc. to school.**

Meal pricing for the 2024-2025 school year is as follows:

- Student Meals: **FREE** Breakfast and **FREE** Lunch

Adult Meal Pricing: Breakfast **\$3.50** Lunch **\$5.50**. Parents also can continue to load money to their student's online account to pay for ala carte items, beyond the free meal. To make a payment online, register your student(s) at <http://www.linqconnect.com> or call the Department of Student Nutrition with any questions or concerns at 803-476-8153 or 803-476-8154.



Although breakfast and lunch are free, families are encouraged to complete the online meal application for other benefits, including P-EBT funding, scholarships, reduction in school fees, camp fees waived or reduced, ACT/SAT fees waived or reduced, etc. Families may begin the online meal applications at <http://www.linqconnect.com>.

### Breakfast

1. Breakfast serving hours are 7:45 a.m. – 8:10 a.m.
2. Students wishing to eat breakfast need to report to the cafeteria through the gym.
3. Breakfast is a quiet time (no loud talking).

### Lunch

1. The system only allows one meal each day.
2. Only one trip is allowed into the serving area.
3. No eating in the serving area is allowed. This is a DHEC violation.
4. No cutting in line will be tolerated.
5. Stealing is not tolerated. Proper disciplinary action will be taken.
6. No food should leave the cafeteria.

## School Wellness Policy - Policy ADF

Purpose: To establish the board's vision for nutrition, physical education, and physical activity in the schools.

## **Local Wellness**

School District Five of Lexington and Richland Counties is committed to providing a school environment that enhances learning and development of lifelong wellness practices.

- To accomplish these goals the district will assure the following:
- child nutrition programs comply with federal, state, and local requirements; child nutrition programs are accessible to all children
- sequential and interdisciplinary nutrition education is provided and promoted
- patterns of meaningful physical activity will be incorporated into the school day as much as possible
- all foods provided through School District Five food services adhere to food safety and security guidelines
- the school environment is safe, comfortable, and pleasing and allows ample time and space for eating meals;
- food and/or physical activity are not used as a reward or punishment

## **Wellness Promotion and Marketing**

Local wellness policy goals will be considered in planning all school-based activities such as school events, field trips, dances, and assemblies.

Principals will encourage staff to model healthy behaviors including healthy eating and physical activity. To the extent feasible, staff will model healthy behaviors for students, including healthy eating/drinking and physical activity.

Schools will not use foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior. Schools will not withhold food or beverages as punishment. Teachers are provided with a list of alternative ideas. Using physical activity as a reward when feasible is highly recommended.

Schools will not deny a student participation in recess or other physical activities as a form of discipline or for classroom make up time. Schools will not use physical activity (e.g., running laps, pushups) as a form of punishment.

School will promote healthy food items including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products. Promotions can include taste tests, posters, and signage highlighting healthy items on the menu during morning announcements, etc.

Schools will encourage participation in after-school projects, intramurals, and other non-competitive physical activity programs via in-school announcements, school newsletters, posters, etc.

Healthy nutrition and physical activity will be incorporated into family events provided throughout the school year.

Only foods and beverages that meet Smart Snacks in school nutrition standards can be marketed and advertised on school property.

It is recommended that schools avoid participation in fundraising or corporate incentive programs that promote a message inconsistent with the goals of the school district for a healthy school community.

## **Nutrition Education**

Students will receive nutrition education that fosters the adoption and maintenance of healthy eating behaviors such as acquiring skills for reading food labels and menu planning. Nutrition education will be offered weekly in grades K through five, annually in grades six through eight, and at least one time in the required health education instruction for high school graduation.

Nutrition education will be part of a sequential comprehensive standards based health education program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health. Nutrition education may also be integrated into other areas of the curriculum.

Nutrition education will be linked with the school food environment.

## **Nutritional Guidelines for Foods on School Campus**

During the instructional day, only allow food that comes from home with the purpose of sharing among the students to be store-bought, packaged foods.

## **Nutrition standards for competitive and other foods and beverages**

All foods and beverages sold on campus will comply with current USDA Smarts Snacks standards including vending machines, à la carte foods, beverage contracts, concession stands, classroom parties, and celebrations.

Fundraising activities with any food items must be sold 30 minutes after the school day ends. Students will be provided access to drinking water throughout the school day.

The district standard is that no competitive foods will be sold during the school day on school campuses.

- No outside commercial foods are to be brought in during the school day and sold to students (school day ends 30 minutes after the last scheduled bell).
- Food brought from home for the purpose of distribution must be store-bought and in the original package with nutritional label.
- Schools should limit celebrations that involve food during the school year

## **Smart Snacks**

The Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 directed the USDA to establish nutrition standards for all foods and beverages sold to students in school during the school day. The new Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards will help schools to make the healthy choice the easy choice by offering students more of the foods and beverages we should be encouraging - whole grains, fruits and vegetables, leaner protein, lower-fat dairy - while limiting foods with too much sugar, fat, and salt.

## **Standards for USDA school meals**

Child nutrition programs (e.g., school lunch, school breakfast, after school snacks, and summer food service) will comply with federal, state, and local requirements and will be accessible to all students.

The USDA Professional Standards for State and Local Nutrition Programs are followed to ensure professional development in the area of food and nutrition is provided for food service directors, managers, and staff.

Qualified child nutrition professionals will provide all students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students. The school nutrition environment will be safe, comfortable, and pleasing. The school nutrition environment will allow students with ample space and at least 20 minutes to consume their meal after obtaining food.

The nutritional content of meals will be shared and publicized with students and parents on the district website (<http://www.lexrich5.org>).

Applications for free and/or reduced priced meals are sent home to all families at the beginning of the school year. The application is also available on the district website.

Students will be made aware of the availability of water during meals and students will be allowed access to water throughout the meal period.

Students will not be allowed to leave the school campus.

## **CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY**

DFMS students should be proud of their school. Student concern for the facilities and equipment reflects pride. We ask student assistance in maintaining the lawn and landscaping by using the sidewalks and paved courtyards in helping to protect the grassy areas. Students marking or damaging school equipment or property in any way will be required to either clean the article, pay for damages, and/or receive applicable disciplinary action. Parents and students are responsible for materials loaned to the students.

# Cell Phones/Communication Devices (inclusive of Smart Watches)

## Policy [JICJ](#) Cell Phones/Communication Devices

### Student Expectations

Possession of a cell phone by a student is a privilege that may be forfeited by any student who fails to follow Board Policy.

Students MAY use cell phones...	Students MAY NOT use cell phones
before school begins at 8:15 am.	to view/access websites blocked at school or as a "hot spot" in order to access outside networks.
for educational purposes only and only when the teacher has received permission from the principal.	to capture, record, transmit audio/pictures/videos of a student, staff member, or other person.
after school ends at 3:30 pm.	to take pictures (video/audio) in locker rooms, bathrooms, or school buses.
on a school bus, if allowed by the bus driver, teacher, and/or coach.	to reasonably create in the mind of another person an impression of being threatened, humiliated, harassed, embarrassed, or intimidated.
	to capture and/or transmit/receive test information or any other information in manner constitution fraud, theft, cheating, or academic dishonesty.

### Student Procedures

Students should turn phones off or put on silent mode between the hours of 8:15 am and 3:30 pm.

- *Should a student need to contact a parent/guardian for an urgent issue, they may request permission from their teacher to use the classroom phone or to use the phone in the front office.*
- *Should a parent need to get a message to a student, they may call the front office at 476-4800 to relay a message, or text their student with the understanding that students will get a brief opportunity to check their phones during DEN (between 10:15 - 10:40: am) for any important messages.*

If a student violates [JICJ](#), the student should surrender their cell phone to the staff member that directs them to do so. It will be given to an administrator for safe keeping.

### Student Consequences

Cell phone violations may result in the following disciplinary actions and/or confiscation of the device.

- 1st Offense - warning/return cell phone to the parent/legal guardian
- 2nd Offense - lunch detention/return the phone to the parent/legal guardian
- 3rd Offense - after school detention/return the phone to the parent/legal guardian
- 4th Offense - confiscation of the phone through the end of the semester

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS

The school office must have a current address and telephone number. Periodically, newsletters, grade reports, and other notices are mailed home. Correct information is particularly important in cases of emergency.

Parents should notify the Registrar of a new address and/or phone numbers. Proof of residency will need to be submitted for the new address.

Changes can also be made through your FinalForms account. Parents are encouraged to use this page

to update demographic information for each student. This page allows parents to update their home address, email address, phone numbers, and emergency contact info. You will be able to see the information currently on file with the school and need only to make changes where needed. Be sure to hit **Submit** once all changes have been entered. If you need additional assistance, please contact the school's Registrar at 803-476-4840.

## CHANGING CLASSES

At the end of each class there will be a dismissal bell. Students should leave class and proceed directly to their next class. Students will be allotted 4 minutes during class change.

## CHILD ABUSE PROCEDURE

Any school professional that has reason to believe a child has been subjected to or adversely affected by physical, sexual, or emotional abuse/neglect **must** make a report to the County Department of Social Services in accordance with the S.C. Child Protection Act of 1977, and the appropriate school official.

## CLASSROOM VISITS

All parents/guardians are welcome to visit their child's class. Visitors must have a state-issued ID, are required to sign-in upon entry to the front office, and will go through routine safety protocols. In order to minimize classroom disruptions:

- Please do not bring younger siblings,
- Please do not use your cell phone while visiting the classroom.
- Please do not interact with any students, other than your own child.
- Please do not conference with the teacher during your visit.
- Should you want to visit another class, please return to the Front Office for assistance.

## COMMUNICATION

DFMS wants to keep you informed throughout the school year. In addition to the calendar printed in this handbook, monthly calendars of district activities are available online through the school and district websites. A weekly newsletter will be sent out on Friday evenings, and information can also be found on the school website. We also use teacher websites, emails, phone calls, and social media to communicate with parents.

In addition, teachers may send home papers, tests and notes through students. If you have any communication questions or concerns please contact your child's teacher.

## Compliance with the Telephone Consumer Protection Act (TCPA) – Use of Automated Telephone Notifications

Under a federal consumer protection law, schools need parent/guardian permission to receive automated or prerecorded calls to a cell number. At the beginning of the year, you provided contact information, including the number to which these automated calls should be directed, that the District will use to keep you informed. Should you choose to revoke consent to receive automated calls/texts on your cell phone, you may do so by notifying the District of your revocation. Please contact the Registrar at your child's school for that purpose. If you revoke consent for automated and prerecorded calls to your cell number, you may not receive time-sensitive information / emergency.



The District requires that you provide notice of any changes in contact information (physical address and telephone numbers) to the District within ten days. This includes any change in the cell number you provided to the District. Correct contact information is needed so that the District may provide you with information regarding school operations and any specific concerns related to your student. Should you fail to provide the District updated contact information, including notification that a cell phone number you have given the District has been disconnected or reassigned, please be aware that the District disclaims liability for any alleged damages resulting from your failure to do so.

## CONFERENCES

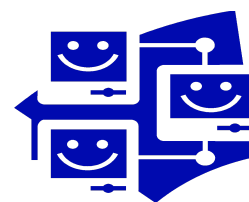
Parents are encouraged to meet with a teacher or several teachers for the purpose of discussing their child's work. These conferences may be scheduled by calling the appropriate teacher(s). A time will be selected which will not conflict with teachers' instructional responsibilities. Conferences may take place in person or virtually via Google Meet. Classroom concerns should be directed to the teacher first.



## COMPUTER NETWORK POLICY

The DFMS computer network system is designed to accommodate computer-based curriculum and student educational needs. The system serves all school-issued devices and devices on school property.

Students, under no condition, are to access the system without permission, tamper with the system and/or use memory devices containing non-authorized or personal programs, or abuse the system in any manner. The use of the system for obscene, profane, or vulgar purposes is strictly prohibited. Intolerable abuses of the system will result in immediate major disciplinary actions.



Students violating the school computer network system policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

## COURSE CHANGE POLICY

Since the registration process is comprehensive and stresses communication with parents, the school has adopted a set of procedures regarding schedule changes. Course changes are considered on a case-by-case basis, and schedule changes are strongly discouraged.

Schedule changes will not be made the first week of school except for the following reasons:

- course completion during the summer
- failure of a prerequisite course
- computer error

Requests for other changes require that a conference be held with the student, parent, administrator and teacher. A request form is available in the School Counseling Office. It must be completed and submitted to the School Counseling Office. Many factors must be considered before a change is made: class size, teacher availability, and the student's schedule. It is important to know that requests for level changes will not be honored after the 51st day of school.

High school credit courses offered at DFMS include: Honors Algebra 1, Honors Geometry, Honors English I, Spanish I, and Fundamentals of Computing I and II. Middle school students taking high school credit classes will be held to the following expectations:

- A “WF” or a “WP” (Withdrawal due to Failing or Withdrawal due to Passing) will be assigned to any student who decides to drop a high school credit-bearing class after the 10th day of school for a year-long class or after the 5th day of school for a semester-long class.
- These classes will affect your student’s Grade Point Average (GPA). If a student makes a grade that is failing or has a final grade that is lower than he/she desires, the student has the ability to retake this class. However, students **MUST** retake the class at the same level AND both attempts/grades of taking the class will be recorded on the student’s high school transcript. The benefit of retaking a class is that the higher of the two grades will be averaged into a student’s GPA.
- Students must obtain required “seat time” to receive high school credit. Students should not miss more than ten days of school.

## **DELIVERY OF ITEMS TO STUDENTS**

Flowers, balloons, and other similar items cannot be accepted by the school for delivery to students. Notice of this decision has been given to local florists and other businesses that offer delivery of products to students.

Parents are discouraged from bringing lunches from outside restaurants for delivery to students. The cafeteria offers a variety of menu items for students. Please refer to our district wellness policy for acceptable foods to be shared with others.

The front office is unable to accept money being dropped off for a student.

If you are bringing personal items or items of clothing for a student, please have items clearly labeled with the student’s name.

## **DEN**

At Dutch Fork Middle School every student has a teacher mentor to help them navigate through middle school and prepare them for success in high school. During this daily session, teachers will focus on providing the Life and Career Characteristics found in the [Profile of the South Carolina Graduate](#) by focusing on opportunities such as, but not limited to:

- Time management, study, and test-taking skills
- SMART goals, progress monitoring, and career exploration
- Academic reinforcement with independent study
- Team building and intramurals
- Digital citizenship

## **DISCIPLINE/BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS**

School District Five of Lexington and Richland Counties Student’s Behavior Code (Board Policy JCDA-R), adopted by the Board of Trustees is located in the Behavior/Discipline handbook. This handbook is made available on the district website and is also linked here.

Copies of this handbook are also available upon request. It is imperative that students, along with their parents, become very familiar with this code.

Since the Student Behavior Code is designed to protect all members of the educational community in the exercise of their rights and responsibilities and in order to maintain an appropriate educational climate at Dutch Fork Middle School, the entire staff is dedicated to enforcing every aspect of this policy. Therefore, it is imperative and our sincere wish that all of our students will read and heed this policy code so that the consequences as a result of an infraction will be few.

## **Disciplinary Philosophy**

All schools in District Five utilize PBIS (Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports) to address behavior management. PBIS is a universal program that includes all students and values positive behavioral supports using evidence-based behavioral interventions. This program maximizes the success of all students leading to school discipline that is based on prevention and effective class management. The behavioral interventions implemented in the program lead to improved academic and social outcomes for students. Please encourage your child to support PBIS at DFMS and its core values. Parents will be expected to participate in school conferences to discuss their child's behavior at school if behavior issues become excessive. In addition, students have the opportunity to earn rewards/privileges for exhibiting positive behaviors at school and following school-wide expectations.

If a student violates expectations, the student may receive either an MBI (Minor Behavior Infraction) or a Discipline Referral.

## **Levels of Consequences**

### **Lunch Detention**

Lunch detention is held during the lunch period. Teachers may assign lunch detentions for minor infractions.

**Any student failing to attend lunch detention will automatically be given a disciplinary referral.** Lunch detention will be assigned for the day following the discipline when possible. Lunch detention students report directly to the lunch detention area of the cafeteria at the beginning of their lunch period. Being late will result in an additional lunch detention day being assigned. Students may bring lunch or get a regular lunch in the cafeteria line. If a student does not serve his/her lunch detention satisfactorily, he or she will be instructed to return for an additional day.

### **Lunch/Refocus Detention**

This 50 minute detention is held during the school day. Students will eat lunch in a supervised area and remain there until academic class time begins again.

### **After-School Detention Hall (ASD)**

A detention hall will be held after school approximately 2X per week. ASD begins at 3:45 PM promptly and ends at 4:45 PM. Students who are late will not be allowed to serve their ASD and will be subject to further disciplinary consequences.

Parents will be notified prior to the day that students are assigned to serve. Detention hall will be assigned at the discretion of faculty and administration for violation of school rules and policies. Parents are responsible for providing prompt transportation home following detention.

### **Saturday Detention Hall (SDH)**

A Saturday detention hall will be held periodically throughout the year. SDH begins at 8:30 AM and may last until 11:30 AM. Students who are late will not be allowed to serve their SDH and will be subject to further disciplinary consequences. Parents are responsible for providing prompt transportation home following detention.

Failure to serve an assigned detention will result in additional consequences being assigned, not limited to, but including loss of privileges.

### **In-School Suspension (ISS)**

Students assigned to in-school suspension will report to the ISS room immediately after dismissal from the gym/cafeteria. Students will bring school materials with them. Students will remain in the ISS facility throughout the school day. Students are expected to obey all rules and regulations while assigned to in-school suspension. Those who fail to do so will be subject to additional disciplinary action including suspension from school. Students with IEPs will receive all Special Ed services.

### **Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)**

A student may be suspended out-of-school up to ten days per offense. The parents are notified by telephone and in writing the reason for the suspension. The parents are also advised of their right to appeal. During the time of the suspension, the student will be prohibited from attending any day or night school event or being on school grounds, except for a pre-arranged conference with an administrator. Repeated out-of-school suspensions may lead to an expulsion hearing.

### **Expulsion**

The Board of Trustees may expel a student for commission of any crime, gross immorality, gross misbehavior, persistent disobedience, or for violation of written rules and regulations established by the District Board of Trustees, County Board or the State Board of Education, or when the presence of the student is detrimental to the best interests of the school. Every expelled student has the right to petition the Board for re-admission for the succeeding school year.

## **District Dress Code**

The dress code for Dutch Fork Middle School is determined largely by school district policy. The school may modify the dress code as long as the changes stay within the district guidelines. Clothes may also be provided for a student to change into to meet dress code expectations. Zip ties may also be provided to make sure pants are worn at the natural waistline. There will be consequences for consistently failing to follow the dress code expectations. Consequences may range from warnings to detentions.

### **Student Procedures**

- Clothing should meet the [district dress code](#).
- Hoodies should be removed when in the common areas of the school.

### **School Adult Expectations**

- School adults are expected to remind students to remove hoodies in the common areas.
- School adults are expected to address students not meeting district dress code by following the assigned procedures.

### **Consequences**

- Administration will address consistent dress code violations.

## **Earbuds / Headphones Expectations, Procedures, Consequences**

### Student Expectations

Possession of earbuds/headphones by a student is a privilege that may be forfeited by any student who fails to follow Board Policy or School Expectations listed below.

Students MAY use earbuds/headphones...	Students MAY NOT use earbuds/headphones...
before school begins at 8:15 am.	in the hallways at any time
for educational purposes only and only when the teacher has received permission from the principal.	to capture, record, or transmit audio of a student, staff member, or other person.
after school ends at 3:30 pm.	to capture and/or transmit/receive test information or any other information in manner constitution fraud, theft, cheating, or academic dishonesty.
on a school bus, if allowed by the bus driver, teacher, and/or coach.	to share with others

### Student Procedures

- Students should remove earbuds/headphones and store them out of sight upon arrival to 1st period until the school dismisses at 3:30 pm.
- When allowed to use earbuds for educational purposes in a particular class, the student should make sure that they remove earbuds/headphones and store them out of sight before they leave the classroom.
- If a student violates the earbud/headphones expectations, the student should surrender their earbuds/headphones to the staff member that directs them to do so.

### Student Consequences

Earbud/Headphone violations may result in the following disciplinary actions and/or confiscation of the device.

- 1st Offense - warning/return earbuds/headphones to the parent/legal guardian
- 2nd Offense - lunch detention/return the earbuds/headphones to the parent/legal guardian
- 3rd Offense - after school detention/return the earbuds/headphones to the parent/legal guardian
- 4th Offense - confiscation of the earbuds/headphones through the end of the semester

## EARLY DISMISSAL

In order to reduce class interruptions, parents are requested to notify the school of an early dismissal of students prior to their being picked up. Parents are also required to sign out their students at the attendance office. In case of emergency or a need to leave campus before the end of the school day, students should follow the procedures as described.

1. An early dismissal note should be given to the attendance office before school starts or between classes.
2. Each note should include the student's full name, parent's signature, and a phone number where parents can be reached for verification of early dismissal.
3. Students should show this pass to the teacher and report to the attendance office at the time indicated. Do not wait to be called from class.
4. Dismissal notes for **the end of regular class periods** are preferred to minimize class disruption.
5. Parents must sign their students out at the attendance office when leaving school grounds and sign in when returning.
6. Dismissals will not be allowed after 3:10 PM. *Emergencies are an exception.*

## EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING

When inclement weather occurs or other emergencies occur, district administrators will decide if there will be any change to the regular school schedule. The decision will be broadcast on local radio, television stations, websites, social media, and/or phone blast.

## FEES

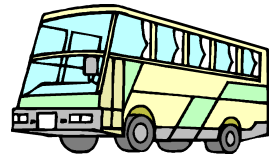
All students pay Exploratory fees. Students taking exploratory courses that require supplementary materials pay additional special fees.

Any adjustment in fee assessment needed due to dropping or adding courses or through error may not be made until after the first month of school is completed.

Students who are on free and reduced lunch will have fees adjusted accordingly.

## FIELD TRIPS

Throughout the school year, students may have the opportunity to participate in various field trips to supplement instructional programs. Good behavior and cooperation on field trips is essential to the safety and welfare of all students.



Student medication will be administered in keeping with Health Room Protocol and District Policy. Please contact the nurse with any field trip related medication concerns.

## GIFTED PROGRAM APPEALS PROCESS

The District Appeals Committee will hear appeals by parents of any student not qualifying under the district entry criteria (92 points on the Weighted Profile). In addition, parents of all students with 90 or 91 points will be notified.

The first step in any appeal must be a written request from the parent to the principal. The appeal letter should state the reason for the appeal in writing, and a copy should be forwarded to the Supervisor of Gifted Programs at the District Office. The principal will notify the AGP Coordinator of that school, who will gather pertinent information. The Committee will meet to review the written request, the pattern of previous test scores, grades, and classroom performance, and any other data that is relevant to the identification criteria. The Committee will recommend one of the following:

- A. Administration of an individual intelligence test: If re-testing is recommended, a WISC-R will be administered by a District Psychologist or any certified school psychologist. Only one WISC-R will be reviewed by the committee in any school year.
- B. No re-testing.
- C. Program entry (only if the student meets the state guidelines of 90 or more points.)
- D. Entry denial into the program for the current year.

Parents will be notified of the committee recommendation in writing. If the decision is challenged, the data will be reviewed by the committee again only if the information relevant to the decision is available. The committee consists of the following personnel: Supervisor of Gifted Programs, school psychologist, school administrator, the school's AGP Coordinator, and a teacher who is familiar with the student.

## GIFT GIVING

On occasions which involve the giving and sharing of gifts, such as during the winter holiday season, many students have had their feelings hurt when they were not included in the exchange of gifts. We have also experienced problems when gifts were lost or broken.

With this in mind, we would encourage that personal gifts be exchanged away from school. We appreciate your cooperation and support in this matter.



## GRADING

### Process for Posting Grades

- 5 school days for minor assignments
- 10 school days for major or extended assignments

*\*Please note: Principals reserve the right to extend the number of days within the Process for Posting Grades due to circumstances that may arise. Parents will be notified in a timely manner of any changes that may occur.*

## GUM & SNACKS

Student possession and consumption of gum and snacks will be determined at the discretion of the individual classroom teacher.

## HEALTH ROOM

The Health Room is operated daily under the supervision of a registered nurse. The school nurse is responsible for maintaining a health record on all students.

The Health Room is designed to be an emergency station to care for minor illnesses or injuries that occur at school. Injuries or health concerns that occur outside of school should be treated at home or by your healthcare provider. The school nurse cannot diagnose or prescribe treatment. This is the responsibility of your family physician or healthcare provider.

There are times when a student should remain at home for his/her own welfare and for the protection of others. Students with a temperature of 101 or greater must remain home until their temperature has been under 101 for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication. Students with vomiting or diarrhea must remain at home until they have been symptom free for 12 hours and been able to tolerate a meal. For other conditions that would require your student to remain at home please see DHEC's "School Exclusion List"

Students who have had a dental procedure requiring sedation and/or anesthetic should not return to school until the anesthetic has worn off and the student has full feeling returned to their mouth and tongue. Students are at a higher risk for injuring their mouth while it is numb and their pain level cannot be adequately gauged.

If a student develops a communicable disease, the parent should notify the school nurse. This will allow the nurse to alert the teachers to observe other students for symptoms or to notify appropriate persons if needed. Parents should also notify the school nurse of any special health needs.



In the event that a student becomes ill or injured and needs to go home, the persons listed in the PowerSchool will be contacted and expected to come for the child immediately. For this reason, the school should be kept up-to-date on any changes in phone numbers of those persons to be contacted in an emergency.

**Medications to be taken during school hours must be brought to school and delivered to the school nurse or designated adult in the ORIGINAL container with all labels intact.** Over the counter medications should only be sent to school for a specific condition your child is known to experience. Whenever possible, medications should be given before or after school. **All medications must be accompanied by parental permission and prescription medications also require written authorization from the prescribing physician or health care provider.** Herbals, food supplements, alternative medicinal products, and other items that do not have FDA approval also require a written order from a prescribing health care provider in addition to a parent signature.

The permission for school administration of medication form is available at your child's school and through the district's website. A record of all medications administered at school will be kept for each student. Only those students who have met all of the requirements to self-medicate, will be allowed to keep medications on their person. All other medications will be kept at school and must be picked up by a responsible adult when the medication is discontinued, expired, or at the end of the school year. Medications are not sent home with students.

Most of the student visits to the health room each day do not require verbal notification of a parent or guardian. The nurse cannot accept a parent's request to call anytime the child is seen in the health room. However, if a child requests to call a parent the nurse will honor that request. Each child that is seen by the nurse will leave the health room with a copy of their nurse referral slip to take home to their parents. The nurse referral slip will show the time the child was in the health room, what the complaint was and what actions the nurse took to address the concern.

## HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT REQUIREMENTS



Up to 5.0 Carnegie units (high school credits) are awarded at the middle school based on a student's course selection, and course availability. High school regulations regarding attendance and withdrawal apply to these courses. These courses include Fundamentals of Computing I, Fundamentals of Computing II, Honors Algebra I, Honors English I, Honors Geometry, and Spanish I.

In each class where *high school* credit may be awarded, a student must attend at least 170 of 180 days for one unit of credit and 85 days of 90 days for ½ unit of credit. Although absences may be lawful and not relative to truancy charges, all absences out of school are counted days when considering the awarding of credit. Any student who is absent more than 10 days in a year-long course and 5 days in a semester-long course shall not be eligible to receive credit in class. Out of school suspension days are unexcused and count toward denial of credit.

Middle school students taking high school credit classes will be held to the following expectations:

- A “WF” or a “WP” (Withdrawal due to Failing or Withdrawal due to Passing) will be assigned to any student who decides to drop a high school credit-bearing class after the 10th day of school for a year-long class or after the 5th day of school for a semester-long class.



- These classes will affect your student's Grade Point Average (GPA). If a student makes a grade that is failing or has a final grade that is lower than he/she desires, the student has the ability to retake this class. However, students **MUST** retake the class at the same level AND both attempts/grades of taking the class will be recorded on the student's transcript. The benefit of retaking a class is that the higher of the two grades will be averaged into a student's GPA.
- Students must obtain required "seat time" to receive high school credit. Students should not miss more than ten days of school.

## HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION

Students who are unable to attend school for an extended time may qualify for homebound instruction. Parents should contact the Attendance Clerk to request information and applications for homebound instruction.

## IDENTIFICATION BADGES (IDs)

With the rise of safety concerns on school campuses, the use of student, staff, and teacher ID badges make it easy to identify and authorize anyone on school grounds. These badges are also used to check materials out from the library, print documents, and pay for food. All **High, Middle and Intermediate** students must wear a current picture ID badge when on District Five property.

### ID Policy:

- Students should arrive at school wearing an ID.
- Students that arrive at school without an ID should request a temporary ID from their 1st Period teacher at the beginning of the period.
- Students should wear their ID on a breakaway lanyard throughout the entire school day.
- Students wearing a temporary ID must wear their temporary ID on the upper portion of their shirt.
- IDs must be worn at all times.
- IDs must be visible and worn outside of clothing.
- IDs are property of DFMS and must not be defaced (or badge will be confiscated and student must purchase a new ID).
- Students must not wear an ID badge belonging to another student. ID will be confiscated.
- All students will be issued two free TEMPORARY IDs PER SEMESTER. After that they will be charged \$1 for every temporary issued.
- Replacement IDs may not be charged. Students must pay for replacement IDs at the time of purchase.
- Students will be required to purchase a new permanent ID Card for \$5 (Lanyard is \$1) if:
  - o ID has been lost
  - o ID has been defaced
  - o ID is damaged beyond repair
- Student Consequences
  - o Violation #1 - Warning; Temp ID issued at no cost
  - o Violation #2 - Warning; Temp ID issued at no cost
  - o Violation #3 - MBI (Minor Behavior Infraction) issued; \$1 charge
  - o Violation #4 - MBI issued; Lunch Detention; \$1 charge
  - o Violation #5 - MBI issued; Lunch Detention; \$1 charge
  - o Violation #6 - MBI issued; After-School Detention; \$1 charge
  - o Violation #7 - MBI issued; After-School Detention; \$1 charge

- o Violation #8 - Referral issued; Saturday Detention; Permanent ID issued if needed; \$5 charge
- o Violation #9+ - Referral issued; Saturday Detention

## IMMUNIZATION

All students must provide the school with a copy of the South Carolina Certificate of Immunization prior to admittance to class. A special Certificate of Special Exemption will be issued to transfer students who have 30 days to obtain proper immunization.

All 7th graders will be required to have the Tdap immunization and provide a copy of their immunization record to the school nurse in order to complete registration.

## INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDELINES

### Cheating

*Cheating* is defined as giving or receiving unauthorized assistance.

*Plagiarism* is defined as presenting as one's own words, phrases, and ideas of another, either on purpose or through carelessness. It also relates to borrowing the sequence of ideas, the arrangement of material, and the pattern of thought of someone else without proper acknowledgement.

#### 1<sup>st</sup> offense

- o Homework: 0 on assignment
- o Assessment: the average of 0 and the assessment retest grade
- o Teacher contacts parent via phone or conference (email is not sufficient)

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> offense

- o Homework: 0 on assignment
- o Assessment: the average of 0 and the assessment retest grade
- o Referral to guidance and administration
- o Student and parent sign contract outlining consequences of third cheating offense

#### 3<sup>rd</sup> offense

- o Homework: 0 on assignment
- o Assessment: 0 on assessment
- o Referral to administration

*All teachers will discuss cheating and plagiarism with their students at the beginning of the year. For semester courses, teachers will discuss with students at the beginning of the semester.*

### Homework

Homework is defined as any preparation for class to be written, read or reviewed outside of class. We recognize that homework is effective in improving student achievement when it is well designed and related directly to classroom instruction or when it extends a student's learning beyond the classroom. Homework is most useful when teachers carefully plan it, explain it, and give prompt response when it has been completed. We recognize that student achievement rises when teachers regularly assign homework and students conscientiously do it. It is the teacher's responsibility to see that expectations for homework are clearly spelled out in a homework policy and that homework assignments are appropriate for the level and nature of the course. It is the students' responsibility to see that their first priority is their daily preparation for each class. It is the parents' responsibility to recognize that students who do their homework will have a greater chance of academic success and to help students make school work a top priority. The amount and frequency of homework assigned

will vary among grade levels, subjects taught and course levels. You may view any teacher's website or google classroom page to check on homework assignments.

## **Grade Reports**

Interim and report cards are given to all students to communicate progress at the midpoint and end of the quarter grading period.

The grading scale is as follows:

- 90 – 100      A
- 80 – 89       B
- 70 – 79       C
- 60 – 69       D
- Below 60      F

## **Retention/Promotion Guidelines**

In grades 7 and 8, promotion will be based on the student's performance in the core (four) academic subjects in which he/she is enrolled (English Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies) and attendance. Students who do not meet criteria for promotion may qualify to attend summer school. Failure to meet promotion criteria results in the student being retained at the current grade level.

## **Make-up Work**

A student will be permitted to make up work missed during an absence. Typically, students are allowed the number of days absent to complete assigned work (e.g., two days are allowed when the student misses two days of school).

Students whose absences result in missing a final test/examination in a semester or year course will be provided a scheduled opportunity to make up the test(s) missed. Make up tests/exams must be taken on the scheduled day(s).

## **INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE GUIDELINES**

School District Five of Lexington and Richland Counties is pleased to be able to offer Internet access for student use. Our goal in offering this access is to enhance the educational experience for our students. The Internet offers access to worldwide information in text and media form that, if properly used, will stimulate student learning. It can be a particularly powerful motivational tool for students because of the richness of the format and the depth of information resources not available through conventional means.

This Code of Conduct specifies guidelines for what is and is not permissible with technology. This agreement specifically addresses the privilege of using the Internet on district network systems.

**Internet Use:** The Internet is an electronic highway connecting millions of computers and people around the globe. Students and teachers will have access to: electronic mail communication with people all over the world; current news; research and information databases; downloadable software and discussion groups. The District's purpose for using the Internet is to support instruction by providing access to unique resources consistent with educational objectives and the opportunity for collaborative work.

Students agree to:

- be polite and use appropriate language (no swearing or use of vulgarities).

- practice proper system use and observe security restrictions.
- understand electronic mail (E-mail) is NOT guaranteed to be private.
- respect all electronic communications and information as private property.
- use technology resources for educational purposes as appropriate to instructional assignments.
- take good care of the computer (no objects on the computer or food or drink near the computer).

Students agree not to:

- reveal his/her personal address or phone number or those of others.
- use the network in ways that would cause disruption of the use of the network by other users.
- use the computer to create, use or download materials which would not be permissible in District Five classrooms in any other form, i.e., obscene, profane, or pornographic materials.
- use the computer, programs or files without permission.
- delete programs, systems or data files without permission.
- login to the computer or programs as any other person or allow anyone to login with your account.
- deliberately tamper with a computer system. Examples: switching cables, disabling fans, introducing a virus, removing or changing keys, putting magnets on the computer, etc.
- stealing or vandalizing any part of the computer or network.
- use the computer to tamper with, change or alter records or documents of the District.
- use public domain software and shareware beyond the provided evaluation period without properly registering and paying for the same.

## **Enforcement of Policy**

1. School District 5 of Lexington and Richland Counties uses technology protection measures that block or filter Internet access in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). This filtering device is not 100% accurate and can misclassify sites
2. School District 5 staff will monitor students' use of the Internet through software means and/or direct supervision.

## **Responsibility:**

District: School District Five of Lexington and Richland Counties makes no warranties of any kind for the technology resources it is providing. The District will not be responsible for any damages the student incurs including loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, mis-deliveries, or service interruption. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at the student's own risk. The District specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy, quality, or cost of information, goods, or services obtained through the Internet.

Student: Students may utilize technology resources for educational purposes as appropriate to instructional activities. Activities that are acceptable include classroom activities, career development, and high quality research. Students may not use the resources of School District 5 of Lexington and Richland Counties for entertainment purposes. Students should practice proper system use and observe security restrictions. Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when the system involves many users. If a student feels he/she can identify a security problem, he/she should notify a school administrator.

## **Examples of Improper Use:**

- Using a computer to create, use or download materials which would not be permissible in District Five classrooms in any other form (i.e. entertainment, obscene, profane, or pornographic materials.)
- Using chat rooms, instant messaging, and personal e-mail is prohibited except for designated classroom activities.
- Unauthorized accessing or duplication of computer programs, systems or data files.
- Unauthorized storage and/or loading of a computer program, system or data files. This may also be a copyright violation and as such is subject to federal copyright laws. Computer programs and manuals are copyrighted property and are not to be copied or altered in any form.
- Deliberately deleting/destruction of any computer programs, systems or data files.
- Using any computer access accounts other than those assigned to the individual. This includes misrepresenting self through the use of another person's ID or use of an anonymous ID.
- Providing system access to unauthorized individuals, especially non-employees of the district.
- Deliberately tampering with a computer system (examples: switching cables, disabling fans, deliberate virus introduction, etc.)
- Theft or vandalism of any computer, printer, port, file server or computer accessories.
- Using restricted computer equipment without authorization.
- Failing to care for computer equipment: Objects should not be placed on monitors, computers, or keyboards; **Food and beverage should never be used in the vicinity of computers.**
- Using computers which are school or district property for commercial or personal use or gain.
- Using computers which are school or district property for product advertisement or political lobbying.
- Using public domain software and shareware beyond the provided evaluation period without properly registering and paying for the same.
- Transmitting any material which is in violation of any federal or state regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, or material copyrighted by trade secret.

**NOTE:**

***During the online registration, parents were given an Internet Acceptance/Refusal form to sign electronically for this consent. Students will not be allowed to access use of the internet until this form is completed.***

## **JUNIOR BETA CLUB**

The Junior Beta Club is a service/leadership organization whose primary purpose is to encourage effort, reward merit among students, and promote those qualities of character which develop good citizenship. Students eligible for membership must maintain a 3.3 GPA or higher, attend monthly meetings, and complete three community service hours per semester.

## **LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS**

No student shall leave the school grounds at any time without permission, which can be granted only by the principal or assistant principal. Students may only walk to Dutch Fork High School after the announcement is made to dismiss those walking to DFHS for designated after school activities.



## LOCKERS

During the 2024-2025 school year lockers will be available upon request. Students are responsible for items that are stored in their lockers. Students should not share locker combinations with others. Please contact Mrs. LuAnn Gaul at [lgraul@lexrich5.org](mailto:lgraul@lexrich5.org) for a locker.

## LOST AND FOUND

The lost and found area for all lost items, except textbooks, is located in the cafeteria. Students should check this area periodically for misplaced items, during their lunch period. Parents are encouraged to label coats, sweaters and other items with their student's name. Each nine weeks, all unclaimed items will be given to a worthy organization or disposed of. Found items of value (such as phones and headphones) are turned into the Discipline Secretary. Please check in the Foxhole for missing items of value. All textbooks that are found will be returned to the student to whom the book was issued. If students find their lost textbooks after having paid for new ones, refund checks will be mailed to parents. Lost textbooks should be turned into the Discipline Secretary.

## LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER

The Library/Media Center serves the entire school with a multitude of reading materials, audiovisual materials, and informational resources.

Students are reminded of two basic guidelines when using the library:

1. Respect others who are using the library.
2. Respect all media materials as well as furniture and equipment.

## Library/Media Center Usage Procedures

Each student must have an individual library pass to enter the library at any time during the school day.

- Quiet and respectful behavior is expected.
- Reference books may only be checked out overnight.
- All books must be checked out before they are taken from the library and should be returned on time. If a book is lost or damaged, the student who checked it out must pay for it.
- Regular notices are sent reminding students of overdue materials. Refunds are given if a book is lost, payment is made and the book is later found.
- The media center is open for classroom visits throughout the school year.
- Food and drink are **NOT** allowed.

## MEDIA CONSENT

Throughout the year, School District Five of Lexington and Richland Counties receive requests from newspapers, television, and radio stations for stories concerning school-related activities. Often such requests include permission for students' names and/or pictures to be used as a part of a news account or a feature story. In addition, schools and the District may like to include students' names and/or their pictures in various school newsletters, brochures, videos, web sites, or other publications.

Parents have the option as to whether or not they wish to grant permission for the release of their child's name and/or picture for the purposes stated above. *During online registration, parents electronically sign for or against this consent.*

Please be aware that by indicating that you do not grant permission for your child's name and/or picture to be used for the purposes stated above, his/her name will not be included in Honor Roll lists,

reading club lists or lists of winners in other awards programs that are printed in school newsletters or local newspapers. **\*\*YOUR CHILD ALSO WILL NOT BE PICTURED IN THE SCHOOL YEARBOOK.**

## **PARENT PORTAL**

The Parent Portal is a powerful, easy-to-use, secure communication tool connecting teachers, parents and students through the District 5 website. Using Pearson's PowerSchool student information system, the Parent Portal allows collaboration to improve student achievement. Up-to-date, online access to grades, homework, attendance, and assignments makes it easier for parents, teachers and students to accurately monitor, identify and accelerate student progress. An account and password can be given to a parent or legal guardian by visiting the front office and presenting a valid identification.

## **PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)**

The PTO is a service organization composed of parents, students, and staff members who work actively and effectively to strengthen home-school communication and provide a framework for improving our program through volunteer efforts and use of funds for instructional improvement. The dates for the general PTO meetings will be announced one month in advance. PTO board meetings are generally held the second or third Tuesday of each month. These meetings are open for all parents interested in the work of the PTO board.

## **PASSES - 10-10 Rule**

**Students are to use restrooms between classes/during class change time, rather than taking time from academic tasks.** Students should be in class during the first and last ten minutes of class. If an emergency arises, a student must obtain a hall pass to leave class. If a student needs more time, the student should contact the teacher prior to class for a pass which will allow him/her to enter class late. In an effort to protect instructional time, teachers may reach out to parents when a student makes excessive requests for the restroom.

## **PBIS**

All District 5 schools utilize Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS). The purpose of PBIS is to recognize positive behavior and teach expected behavior. At DFMS we use the PRIDE acronym as part of our PBIS program.

**P=** Positivity

**R=** Respect

**I=** Integrity

**D=** Determination

**E=** Excellence

## **PBIS Rewards**

Rewards are used as part of the DFMS PBIS program. Students may redeem the awards for a privilege or incentive of their choosing. Faculty, staff and students determine rewards on a yearly basis.

## **PERSONAL PROPERTY**

Expensive items and large sums of money should be left at home to avoid potential loss, theft, or damage. The school cannot be responsible for lost, misplaced, or stolen items or valuables.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

### **Physical Education and Activity**

The district will comply with the requirements of the Comprehensive Health Education Act, the 2005 Student Health and Fitness Act, and the South Carolina Physical Education Standards regarding physical education and activity.

The physical education curriculum for grades K through 12 will be aligned with established South Carolina Academic Standards for Physical Education, the 2005 Student's Health and Fitness Act, and the defined minimum program.

The school district will provide opportunities for ongoing professional development for all teachers and volunteers on the importance of physical activity for students and the relationship of physical activity and good nutrition to academic performance and healthy lifestyles.

Students and staff will be given opportunities for physical activity during the school day, known as Comprehensive School Physical Activity through physical education (PE) classes, daily recess periods lasting at least 20 minutes for elementary school students, physical activity breaks, the integration of physical activity into the academic curriculum, and opportunities before and after school. This will not include transition times.

Schools will promote walking and biking to school.

Physical activity opportunities may be provided at the school for families and community members.

The school district will develop a joint use agreement with community partners or adopt the South Carolina model policy Open Community Use of School Recreational Areas (KFA) to provide expanded physical activity opportunities for all students, families, and community members.

### **Implementation, Evaluation, and Communication**

The district health advisory council will meet on a regular basis during the school year.

At a minimum, the district health advisory council will permit participation by the public and the school community including parents/legal guardians, students, and representatives of school food authority, teachers of physical education, community health professionals, the school board, and school administrators.

The school district has established a wellness policy leadership official(s) who have the authority and responsibility to ensure each school complies with the policy (e.g., superintendent, or designee at the school district and principal or designee at the school).

The school district will conduct an assessment of the wellness policy at least once every three years to determine compliance with the policy, to compare with model wellness policies, and to monitor progress. The triennial assessment including progress toward meeting the goals of the policy will be shared with the public.

## **SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAM**

The school counseling program is an integral part of the total educational process. Focusing on the needs of young adolescents, we





provide counseling services to include individual and small group counseling, classroom guidance, and crisis intervention.

Classroom guidance and small group topics may include:

1. Developing Healthy Relationships
2. Controlling Anger
3. Coping with Loss
4. Dealing with Divorce/Separation
5. Improving Study Skills
6. Surviving Middle School
7. Managing Time and Stress
8. Career Awareness
9. Coping with Peer Pressure
10. Conflict Management Skills

Parents may withdraw their child from group guidance activities by notifying the school counseling office in writing that they do not want their child to participate in classroom guidance or small groups. Alternative activities with adequate supervision will be provided for students who do not participate in classroom guidance activities.

Students must have a pass for a scheduled visit to the school counseling office. Students may get passes from any of their teachers or their school counselor.

The school counseling office opens at 8:00 a.m. and closes at 4:00 p.m. Throughout the year, the school counseling office receives information on enrichment opportunities. Parents and students are encouraged to contact the office or check our website for information about specific programs.

Dutch Fork Middle School counselors also coordinate awards programs, standardized testing programs, career activities, special school assemblies, referrals to community agencies, registration, character education, course scheduling, and peer mediation.

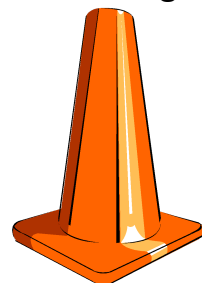
## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL (SIC)



The School Improvement Council, composed of parents elected by parents who have students enrolled, teachers elected by the faculty, appointed community residents, and students elected by the student body, meets regularly. Elections for parents, teachers, and students will be conducted in the summer of each year. The SIC meetings are held monthly. Dates and times will be decided and published yearly. These meetings are open for all parents interested in the actions of the school governance.

## SCHOOL TRAFFIC PROCEDURES

**Buses:** Students arriving on campus using bus transportation will report to gym or cafeteria. Students riding buses in the afternoon remain in classrooms until dismissed by bus groups to the bus loading area at the front of the building. A staff bus loading team will be on duty each day for student safety and bus loading assistance. Students encountering any problems during this time should immediately report to a bus loading team member.



### Car Riders:

Students may be dropped off in the rear car-rider area beginning at 7:45 am. Please do NOT drop off your student in the front of the building in the morning or pick up your student from the front of the building at dismissal time. Allow your student to exit/enter the car along the sidewalk area only. Pull up as far as possible to allow for the maximum number of students to be dropped off/picked up. Be considerate of other drivers by staying in line and/or not cutting in front of others who have been waiting. Park in the gym parking lot if your child or carpool will require additional time to unload.

Parking: Visitors and staff are requested to park in designated parking areas.

Bike Riders: Bike riders (upon entering the school property) will get off their bikes and walk them to a designated area.

Skateboards: Skateboards are **not** permitted at school.

## **SELLING**

Students are prohibited from selling any items not approved by the middle school principal. Selling will be strictly limited to fundraising efforts by school clubs/organizations and must meet the criteria in the school wellness policy.

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Unwelcome sexual advances, sexual gestures, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature where there is a pattern of harassing behavior or a single significant incident will not be allowed. Such conduct interferes with the student's education or creates an intimidating, hostile, offensive school environment. Sexual harassment may include but is not limited to: verbal harassment, including sexually offensive comments or slurs; physical harassment, physical interference with movement or work; or visual harassment such as sexually offensive cartoons, drawings, or posters. Sexual harassment is prohibited against members of the same sex as well as against members of the opposite sex.

- Gavin's Law ([H.3583](#)) is legislation that makes sexual extortion, the act of blackmailing someone using sexually explicit images or videos, a felony offense and an aggravated felony if the victim is a minor, vulnerable adult, or if the victim suffers bodily injury or death directly related to the crime. The bill reads in part, "Local school districts shall collaborate with the State Department of Education, the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division, and the Attorney General's office, as appropriate, to implement a policy to educate and notify students of the provisions of this act which includes adequate notice to students, parents or guardians, the public, and school personnel of the change in law. The State Department of Education must file a report as to the status of the adoption and implementation of the education policies under this act to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, annually by July first of each year." In November 2023, the School District Five of Lexington & Richland Counties Board of Trustees approved new Board Policy [JICFB](#), "Gavin's Law Implementation." Families may find additional information regarding Gavin's Law on School District Five's [website](#).

## **SOLICITATION AND ADVERTISING**

There should be no soliciting or advertising except for the school activities which have been approved by the principal. This policy includes any partisan political activities. Distribution of promotion materials is governed by Board Policy KHC (a copy is available upon request).

## **SPECIAL ACADEMIC PROGRAMS**

The Academically Gifted Program (AGP) seeks to meet the learning needs of identified seventh and eighth grade students through Honors level courses. A teacher is assigned to manage services to the students who are identified as academically gifted by the State Department of Education guidelines.

**PAGE FIVE** (Parents Active in Gifted Education in Lexington Five), a parent support group, meets regularly with programs of special interest to parents whose children are academically gifted.

## **Special Services**

Special education programs are provided for District Five students with mental, physical, speech and emotional disabilities. Placement follows regulations set by the S.C. Department of Education.

District psychologists, who are available for consultations with parents and students, provide diagnostic services to evaluate individual students and prescribe specific programs to meet their individual needs.

## **STUDENT OF THE MONTH**

Each month the school counseling office recognizes students of the month. Students are nominated by their team of teachers for exemplifying the character word of the month. These students will also have their photos taken to be displayed.

## **STUDENT COUNCIL**

Student Council is open to any student interested, however students must be in good academic standing and model positive behaviors. Student Council representatives will help plan school-wide events and participate in community and school service projects.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

Information in a student's permanent record is considered confidential in accordance with federal guidelines and school board policy. Parents may have access to a student's records as outlined in the School District Five policy entitled "Student Records". Call the School Counseling Office @ 476-4805 for additional information.

## **STUDENT SEARCHES - Policy JIH**

Students and their belongings are subject to reasonable searches and seizures when administrators have a belief considered to be reasonable under these circumstances:

- A student committed a crime or violation of a school rule.
- Such a search will reveal contraband or evidence of a violation of a school rule or criminal law.

Only the principal or his/her designee may conduct such searches within the constitutional parameters above unless exigent circumstances exist which require another staff member to take immediate action for safety reasons.

## **School Lockers & Desks**

All lockers are the property of the school district. School officials may conduct searches of lockers in accordance with publicized administrative rules.

## TARDY POLICY

Tardiness to class interrupts learning time for the entire class. Students should organize their materials and use their time wisely before school, during lunch and after school to keep trips to lockers and other stops to a minimum. At the end of each period, all students should move quietly to their next class and be ready for instruction as guided by the teacher. There will be consequences for excessive tardies. Consequences may range from lunch detentions to Saturday Detention Hall.

## TELEPHONE USAGE

Teachers allow students to use classroom phones for emergencies. Students must have a pass to use the phone in the school office. Cell phone use is not permitted during the school day.

## TEXTBOOKS

Most textbooks are available on-line. Hardcover textbooks are available upon parent request. Contact your child's teacher to request a textbook. Once books have been issued to students, they become their responsibility. Textbooks left in classrooms or other unsecured areas are done so at the student's own risk. South Carolina state law requires parents to pay for missing books before new books are issued. End of the year report cards will be held for textbook charges.

## TOBACCO USE AND POSSESSION

All District Five Schools are tobacco free. Students shall not be permitted to possess/use or transfer tobacco products, or tobacco paraphernalia while on school grounds (**this includes electronic cigarettes, vaping, juuling**), in the school buildings, or during any other time that the student is under the district administrative jurisdiction of the school whether on or off the school grounds.

## UNAUTHORIZED AREAS



As soon as students arrive at school (**no earlier than 7:45 a.m.**) they must report to their assigned area or to breakfast. Failure to follow this procedure will result in the students being charged with being in an unauthorized area.

During class time, students who are not in class must have a pass; if not, these students will be considered to be in an unauthorized area. For the safety of all students, the authorized area policy will be strictly enforced by the entire staff. Dutch Fork Middle

School's goal is to have all students in the areas where they are supposed to be and on time. The end result will lead to a safer school environment.

## VIDEO MONITORING WHILE ON SCHOOL GROUNDS

In order to promote the safety and welfare of students and staff members while they are on school grounds, video cameras have been placed throughout the school.

- ***Therefore, students and parents are hereby notified that students are subject to being videotaped on school grounds at any time and videotapes are reviewed as required to determine the safety of students and staff.***

## VISITORS

Parents/guardians are welcome to visit their child's classes without prior notice, but must sign-in and be verified through Centegix as well as PowerSchool. In order to



minimize classroom disruptions, we ask that visitors try to arrive at the beginning of the instructional period. Parents may be escorted to the location in which they are visiting. Included in this handbook is a copy of the bell schedule. Please refer to this when scheduling your visit. This is to help in disruptions and distractions to the educational process. *Students may not have friends or relatives attend classes with them at school without prior approval from the principal.* School age students are not allowed to visit if they are under *disciplinary* action from another school. Also, any students from another school are not allowed to visit unless they are accompanied by a parent/guardian of the DFMS student.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

Usually, parents and community residents will be asked to serve as volunteers at Dutch Fork Middle School. If you are interested in serving in a volunteer capacity and would like to be approved please contact the front office at 476-4800.

## **WITHDRAWALS FROM SCHOOL**

Students withdrawing from school are required to have their parents notify the School Counseling Office @ 476-4805 and sign a withdrawal form. The student should report to the School Counseling Office office at the beginning of the last full day he/she is in school to complete the withdrawal process. Fees and textbooks will be addressed during this process.

District Five of Lexington & Richland Counties  
Administrative Offices  
1020 Dutch Fork Road  
Irmo, South Carolina 29063  
803.476.8000

Individuals with disabilities who require assistance or special arrangements to participate in a program or activity sponsored by the school district should contact the Chief Human Resource Services Officer at 476-8000 at least 48 hours prior to the program or activity.

*"School District Five of Lexington and Richland Counties does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, creed, color, disability, spousal affiliation, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, pregnancy, service to the armed forces, or status with regard to admission to, treatment in, or employment in its programs and activities as required by Title II of ADA, Title VI, Title IX and Section 504, or any other protected characteristic, as may be required by law. Non-discrimination inquiries regarding students should be addressed to the Director of Special Services/504 & ADA Student Coordinator. Non-discrimination inquiries regarding employees and adults should be directed to the Chief Human Resources Officer/ Title IX & 504/ADA Employee Coordinator. Either can be contacted at 1020 Dutch Fork Road, Irmo, South Carolina 29063, [\(803\) 476-8000](tel:8034768000)."*

