

# 2024-2025 Custer Elementary School



7660 Custer School Road  
Custer, WA 98240  
Phone: 360-383-9500  
Ferndale School District

## **Custer Elementary School**

Kim Hawes, Principal

Carol Taxdahl, Administrative Assistant

September 2024

Dear Custer Families,

Welcome! The staff at Custer is excited to welcome both returning and new students and families. We are committed to providing a safe, nurturing, and academically stimulating environment for your child(ren). We believe in the importance of a strong partnership between the school and families to ensure the success and well-being of each student.

The Family Handbook is designed to provide you with important information and resources to help you navigate your child's journey at Custer Elementary School. Please take time to review this handbook with your child. It is important for both you and your child to be aware of the policies and procedures to ensure a successful year.

If you have any questions or need further clarification on any topic covered in this handbook, please do not hesitate to reach out to our school office or to me.

Custer has always had great parent/family involvement. We truly value your partnership and love to see parents/family here at Custer because your student's success is directly related to your participation both at home and at school. We can't do it without you. Take time to become familiar with the contents of this handbook, keep it handy, and use it often. Please join us in making this our best year ever! We are looking forward to a fun and successful school year.

Sincerely,

Kim Hawes, Principal

**PTO MEETINGS**  
**CUSTER LIBRARY @ 6:30 PM**

Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month

The Custer PTO would like to take this opportunity to welcome you all back to school and invite everyone to participate and have fun with our PTO. We have a lot planned this year with the emphasis on family fun, education and community involvement.

By definition, the PTO consists of all students at Custer, their families, and all of the staff. The PTO is here to support and enhance the educational experiences with funds and volunteers.

The PTO is a place for not only students and staff, but for the whole family to interact and be informed on available enrichment classes, activities and programs.

These are tender years for our elementary children and we try to enhance them every way we can. We would appreciate your attendance at our monthly meetings to help them flourish. The PTO meets on the first Tuesday of each month in the Custer library. The meetings are from 6:30 – 8:00 pm.

**2024-205 PTO OFFICERS**

Co-President – Tanya Johnson  
Vice President – Dani Woodley  
Treasurer – Nicole Verduin  
Enrichment Coordinator - Julia Talamantes  
Social Media Coordinator – Ashley Espinoza  
Volunteer Coordinator – Kaila Martinez  
Secretary – Erica McWilliams

**CUSTER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AND THE FERNDAL SCHOOL**  
**DISTRICT WORKING TOGETHER FOR STUDENTS**

Custer Elementary School is a part of the larger Ferndale School District. We are provided invaluable support and leadership for the student's educational programs from a variety of district staff and

programs. Our district belief is that students come first. Working together, Custer and our district work to:

- Create an atmosphere of Belonging, where everyone feels connected and has the opportunity to thrive
- Achieve academic success
- Ensure safety
- Teach and value hard work and effort
- Improve core instruction
- Improve climate, culture and communication

### **FERNDALE SCHOOL DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT**

Ferndale School District is developing our mission based on feedback from students, families and staff. The statement will be published later this year.

### **OUR CORE BELIEFS**

- All students can learn.
- Instruction and curriculum will be consistent with the Washington State Standards.
- Clearly communicated high expectations are essential for students to learn.
- Our methods of instruction will strive to recognize and respond to individual styles.
- Both children and adults need an environment that is safe, physically and emotionally, to be able to learn and work.
- We provide an environment for all staff that encourages growth and professional responsibility.
- The values that we live and teach include caring for others, honesty, fairness, responsibility, value of work and respect for self and others.
- We value our diverse community as we work together toward common goals.

### **ATTENDANCE MATTERS!**

Attending school regularly helps children feel better about school—and themselves. Your student can start building this habit in preschool, so they learn right away that going to school on time, every day is important.

Consistent attendance will help children do well in high school, college, and/or work.

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

- Starting in kindergarten, too many absences (excused and unexcused) can cause children to fall behind in school.
- Missing 10 percent (or about 18 days) increases the chance that your student will not read or master math at the same level as their peers.
- Students can still fall behind if they miss just a day or two days every few weeks.
- Being late to school may lead to poor attendance.
- Absences can affect the whole classroom if the teacher has to slow down learning to help children catch up.
- By 6th grade, absenteeism is one of three signs that a student may drop out of high school.
- By being present at school, your child learns valuable social skills and has the opportunity to develop meaningful relationships with other students and school staff.
- Absences can be a sign that a student is losing interest in school, struggling with school work, dealing with a bully or facing some other potentially serious difficulty.
- By 9th grade, regular and high attendance is a better predictor of graduation rates than 8th grade test scores.

### **WHAT WE NEED FROM YOU**

We miss your student(s) when they are gone, and we value their contributions to our school. We would like you to help ensure that your student attends regularly and is successful in school. If your student is going to be absent, please contact the school office at **360-383-9500**, leave a voicemail, parent square message, email or written note within 2 days of the absence stating the reason for the absence.

### **OUR PROMISE TO YOU**

We know that there are a wide variety of reasons that students are absent from school, from health concerns to transportation challenges. There are many people in our building prepared to help you if you or your student face challenges in getting to school regularly or on time.

- Kim Hawes, Principal, 360-383-9500
- Kim Bovenkamp, Dean of Students, 360-383-9508
- Caitlin Jacoby, School Counselor, 360-383-9523
- District Website with attendance information:  
<https://www.ferndalesd.org/families/attendance-matters>

We promise to track attendance daily, to notice when your student is missing from class, communicate with you to understand why they were absent, and to identify barriers and supports available to overcome challenges you may face in helping your student attend school.

### **SCHOOL BOARD POLICY 3122**

“Absences due to illness or a health condition, school-related activities, family emergencies and, as required by law, disciplinary actions or short-term suspensions shall be excused. In addition, the principal may, upon request by a parent, grant permission in advance for a student’s absence providing such absence does not adversely affect the student’s educational progress.”

### **STATE LAWS**

State law for mandatory attendance, called the Becca Bill, requires children from age 8 to 17 to attend a public school, private school, or a district-approved home school program. Children that are 6- or 7-years-old are not required to be enrolled in school. However, if parents enroll their 6- or 7-year-old, the student must attend full-time. Youth who are 16 or older may be excused from attending public school if they meet certain requirements. <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=28A.225>

- The school is required to take daily attendance and notify you when your student has an unexcused absence.
- Three unexcused absences in one month, state law (RCW 28A.225.020) requires we schedule a conference with you and your student to identify the barriers and supports available to ensure regular attendance.
- In elementary school after five excused absences in any month, or ten or more excused absences in the school year, the school district is required to contact you to schedule a conference to identify the barriers and supports available to you and your student. A conference

is not required if your student has provided a doctor's note, or pre-arranged the absence in writing, and the parent, student and school have made a plan, so your student does not fall behind academically. If your student has an Individualized Education Plan or a 504 Plan the team that created the plan needs to reconvene.

- With seven unexcused absences in any month or fifteen unexcused absences within the school year, we are required to file a petition with the Juvenile court, alleging a violation of RCW 28A.225.010, the mandatory attendance laws. The petition will be automatically stayed, and your student and family may be referred to a Community Truancy Board or other coordinated means of intervention. If your student continues to be truant, you may need to go to court.

### **WHAT YOU CAN DO**

- Set a regular bedtime and morning routine.
- Prepare for school the night before, finishing homework and getting a good night's sleep.
- Find out what day school starts and make sure your child has the required immunizations.
- Don't let your student stay home unless they are truly sick. Keep in mind complaints of a stomachache or headache can be a sign of anxiety and not a reason to stay home.
- Avoid appointments and extended trips when school is in session.
- Develop back-up plans for getting to school if something comes up. Call on a family member, a neighbor, or another parent.
- Keep track of your student's attendance. Missing more than 10 days could put your student at risk of falling behind.
- Talk to your student about the importance of attendance.
- Talk to your students' teachers if you notice sudden changes in behavior. These could be tied to something going on at school.
- Encourage meaningful afterschool activities, including sports and clubs.

### **OUR VISION**

Custer Elementary, in partnership with families and the larger community, will educate each student to develop the knowledge, skills and character necessary to become a self-reliant, socially responsible, lifelong learner. We are also committed to creating an environment where everyone feels like they belong.

## **CUSTER COUGAR CODE OF SUCCESS**

- **BE RESPECTFUL**
- **BE RESPONSIBLE**
- **BE SAFE**

### **“WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER”**

Here at Custer we want to foster a culture of belonging and growth. As part of this growth, we will focus on the following character traits throughout the year and celebrate our growth in these areas at our monthly spirit assemblies.

<b><i>Month</i></b>	<b><i>Character Trait</i></b>
<i>October</i>	<i>Perseverance</i>
<i>November</i>	<i>Kindness</i>
<i>December</i>	<i>Safe</i>
<i>January</i>	<i>Growth/Improvement</i>
<i>February</i>	<i>Positive Attitude</i>
<i>March</i>	<i>Cooperation</i>
<i>April</i>	<i>Responsible</i>
<i>May</i>	<i>Growth/Improvement</i>
<i>June</i>	<i>Respect</i>



## **CUSTER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STAFF**

Principal	Kim Hawes
Dean of Students	Kim Bovenkamp
Administrative Assistant I	Carol Taxdahl
Administrative Assistant II	Jessica Markowicz
Transitional Kindergarten	Jennifer Petersen
Kindergarten	Lindsey Beach
Kindergarten	Tessa Briggs
Kindergarten	Sharye Cornmesser
Kindergarten	Alex Pederson
First Grade	Brooke Sherry
First Grade	Stephanie Welch
First Grade	Kersten Fairbairn
First Grade	Kaela Ruble
Second Grade	Faith Bogle
Second Grade	Sandra Lee
Second Grade	Marcus Nicholes
Third Grade	Katie Candanoza
Third Grade	Lindsay McDougal
Third Grade	Marcus Nicholes
Fourth Grade	Brandi Capdeville
Fourth Grade	Jocelyn Moran
Fifth Grade	Erick Adams
Fifth Grade	Karen Pankratz
MLL	Meghan Taylor
Music	Deborah Ogle
PE	Heather Longwell
Reading Specialist	Carly Nicholes
Reading Specialist	Stefani Erickson

Special Education	Janis Hawkins
STARS	Stephanie Butenschoen
Structured Learning Environment	Stephanie Lehman

Counselor	Caitlin Jacoby
Mental Health Specialist	Kaatri Jones
Nurse	Rachel Zender
OT	Mary Elliott
Psychologist	Karly Iversen
Speech	Janelle Savage
Speech	Stephanie Perez

Custodian	Brian DeVries
Custodian	Mayrbek Butayev

Kitchen Staff	LuAnn DeBoer
Kitchen Staff	Kristy Meck

Paraeducator	Amy Anderson
Paraeducator	Polly Barnreiter
Paraeducator	Traci Bauthues
Paraeducator	Nikki Casteel
Paraeducator	Bob Fitzsimmons
Paraeducator	Mariah Hayes
Paraeducator	Taiann Rice
Paraeducator	Cara Stuit
Paraeducator	Crystal Talbert
Paraeducator	Jenny Whitaker
Paraeducator	Maya Willem
Paraeducator	Sam Willis

## **CUSTER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DAILY SCHEDULE**

8:00 am            Main office opens

9:05 am            Students eating breakfast may enter

**9:15 am            First Bell**, students may enter building

**9:20 am            Second Bell**, (5 minute warning bell)

**9:25 am            Bell for school to begin** (students tardy if not in classroom)

11:25 – 11:45    TK - K **Recess**

11:45 – 12:05    TK - K **Lunch**

11:40 – 12:00    1<sup>st</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> **Recess**

12:00 – 12:20    1<sup>st</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> **Lunch**

11:55 – 12:15    3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> **Recess**

12:15 – 12:35    3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> **Lunch**

1:45 – **2:00**        1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> **Recess**

2:00 – **2:15**        TK – K **Recess**

**3:27 pm**            Dismissal Bell for TK-2<sup>nd</sup> grade

**3:30 pm**            Dismissal Bell for 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade

## **A MESSAGE FROM OUR SCHOOL NURSE**

Parents and guardians, keep your child home from school if they:

- Are too sick to participate comfortably in normal activities
- Need a level of care or observation not manageable at school
- Create an unhealthy or unsafe environment for others

In addition to the above, you should keep your child home with the following symptoms or conditions:

**Diarrhea**: Keep your child home until diarrhea can be contained or stool frequency does not exceed 3 or more loose or watery in 24 hours and they can participate in normal activities. Keep your child home if there is blood or mucus in the stool.

**Fever**: Keep your child home until their temperature is below 100.4° F for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications.

**Skin Infections**: Keep your child home if they have:

- Draining open wounds that you can't cover with a waterproof dressing
- Mouth sores with drooling

May return after symptoms resolve or a healthcare provider evaluates and treats them.

**Vomiting**: Keep your child home until they have not vomited for 24 hours and they can participate in normal activities.

### **Specific Conditions**

**Chickenpox (varicella) or Shingles**: Keep your child home until all blisters have scabs and no new blisters have appeared for at least 24 hours

**COVID-19**: Keep your child home for 5 days, then wear a mask on days 6-10.

**Flu (influenza)**: Keep your child home until they are fever-free for 24 hours.

**Measles**: Keep your child home until 5 days after rash appeared

**Mumps**: Keep your child home until 5 days after swelling began.

**Ringworm**: Keep your child home until treatment is started.

**Scabies**: Keep your child home until the day after treatment is started

**Scarlet Fever:** Keep your child home until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has been started, draining sores should be kept covered.

**Impetigo:** Keep your child home until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has been started, draining sores should be kept covered.

**Strep Throat:** Keep your child home until they have taken antibiotics for 24 hours and are fever-free.

**Whooping cough (pertussis):** Keep your child home until they have taken antibiotics for 5 full days.

**Other contagious condition:** Check with your child's school or healthcare provider.

If you have any questions, please contact the office at 360-383-9500. Additionally, please call the office every day your child is out, excusing their absence.

### **ILLNESS AT SCHOOL**

If a student becomes ill at school, the office will notify you to arrange for your student to go home. We need an emergency contact for all students in the event that no one is at your home during the day.

### **MEDICATIONS AT SCHOOL**

Please observe the following guidelines for students requiring medication while at school:

1. Have the prescribing physician fill out the Ferndale School District medication form.
2. Bring the medication to school in the original container.
3. Container label must have the student's name, the dosage amount, how often the dosage should be given, the name of the drug and the name of the prescribing physician.

Law prohibits school staff from dispensing any medications unless all of the requirements listed above are met.

Thank you so much and feel free to contact the school and ask to speak to me if you have any questions or concerns.

Rachel Zender, RN  
School Nurse at Custer Elementary  
[Rachel.Zender@ferndalesd.org](mailto:Rachel.Zender@ferndalesd.org)

## **RIDING THE BUS**

Most Custer students ride the bus to and from school. We want the ride to be safe and pleasant for them.

Bus drivers and teachers review the bus rules with children. It is important that parents follow this up by also reviewing them at home. Bus rules are sent home with all children at the beginning of every year. If there are behavioral problems on the bus, the drivers will first give the child or children a verbal reminder, then a verbal warning about the rule. If the problem persists, the driver will issue a written warning and finally a written conduct report indicating a suspension from the bus for a specified number of days. The principal becomes involved in the disciplinary process after a written warning is given.

Food and drink, glass items, pets and band instruments larger than lap size are not allowed on school buses for safety reasons.

Safety at the bus stops is also an important concern. Children must not engage in pushing, showing or other kinds of physical contact. They must take extreme care when crossing streets and roads.

## **RIDING A DIFFERENT BUS**

If you want your child to ride a different bus on special occasions, it can be arranged. We will need a note requesting this, dated and signed by you for each day the bus will be changed. **The note should contain the first and last name of the child or adult's home to which your child will be going and their address and the bus number.** The student needs to bring the note to their teacher who will then send it to the office. A pass will be handed out before the end of the day. **Please call before 3:00 pm** if you have last minute changes. We cannot guarantee that your child will receive his/her message if received after 3:00 pm. A flurry of last minute calls for bus pass requests at the end of the day causes confusion and diverts attention of staff from important end of day routines.

## **BUS SCHEDULES AND SEVERE WEATHER**

**Operation of buses during severe weather or power failure conditions:**

Parents should listen to the following local radio stations on snow, icy, other severe weather or power failures days to determine if school buses will operate on a regular or delayed schedule. The school district will inform these stations by 6:00 am of any delay in bus schedules, cancellations of transportation for the day, or cancellation of school. You may also call **383-9888** for school closures.

### **Operation of buses during a thaw and county imposed road restrictions:**

Buses will run only on all-weather roads during a thaw following a long and/or severe freeze. The school district will be notified by the county commissioners, usually a day in advance, so notices can be sent home with students.

Parents are expected to get their student(s) to all-weather roads and home again in the afternoon from the all-weather road drop-off points.

In the event of weather related incidents, district personnel and the superintendent survey various roads in the district early in the morning and decide whether students can safely reach school in cases of snow, ice and other events.

If it is determined that closure or a delay in start time becomes necessary, announcements will be placed on the closure/delay line, district website and the district will send out an all call/text message to each household.

### **PICKING UP YOUR CHILD**

When picking up your child during the school day, before the regular school day ends, please come to the office and sign him/her out. We will call your child to the office to meet you. Please make every effort to arrange appointments outside of school hours.

**For school safety reasons, we ask that any person picking up a child at school during the day, check in at the office.**

When picking up your child after school, please arrange to meet on school grounds. For safety reasons, we do not allow children to cross the school or parking lot to a waiting parent and vehicle until the buses have departed.

## **GETTING MESSAGES TO STUDENTS**

We are happy to assist in any family emergency situation. However, we do ask that parents make every reasonable effort to avoid calling the school to leave messages for children. Delivering a message to the classroom is an interruption that disrupts the learning environment. Last minute messages at the end of the school day place undue stress on secretarial staff, diverting attention from necessary school routines. Unless it's an emergency, messages received are delivered to the students at the end of the day.

## **STUDENT PHONE USE**

Phones are available in all classrooms and in the office. Students may, with prior permission, use the phone for situations that are deemed to be emergencies. School staff reserves the right to determine whether or not the situation is an emergency.

## **CELL PHONE AND PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

*While cell phones can be useful for a variety of purposes, when used during the school day, they can be detrimental to a focused learning environment. Students who bring a cell phone or earbuds to school are expected to observe the following expectations:*

1. **During the school day, 9:05-3:40 pm, students are expected to store cell phones, smart watches that have the ability to call or text, and earbuds in their backpack; devices should be turned off.** We ask that parents contact the main office at **360-383-9500** if they need to get a message to their student.
2. Students **may not wear earbuds** during the school day, 9:05-3:40 pm with the exception of teacher directed instructional purposes.
3. Personal electronic devices not intended for school learning, such as **gaming devices, are not permitted** at Custer Elementary School.
4. Students are solely responsible for the personal devices they bring to school. **Ferndale School District will not be responsible for loss, theft, or destruction of devices** brought onto school property or to school sponsored events.
5. **Students are prohibited from videotaping, recording, or taking pictures of any student or staff member without teacher permission and for academic purposes only.** If consent is not given, students will be in violation of RCW 9.73.030 intercepting, recording, or divulging private



communication and RCW 9.73.060 violating right of privacy. Content or images that violate state or federal laws will be referred to law enforcement.

### **CELL PHONE AND PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICE VIOLATIONS**

**Level 1:** A student who violates our cell phone, earbud or electronic device expectations must surrender their phone, smart watch, earbuds or other device to administration. Parents will receive a phone call from administration to determine a plan for pick up.

**Level 2:** If a student violates the cell phone, earbud or electronic device rule multiple times, a parent/guardian meeting will be scheduled to determine a plan for moving forward.

### **WHAT TO DO IF YOU MOVE OR CHANGE PHONE NUMBERS**

For safety and emergency situations, **remember to let us know immediately if your phone number, address, or emergency information changes.** You may send a note with the new information, make a change on Skyward or call us at 383-9500.

### **VISITORS TO SCHOOL**

Parents are always welcome to visit or volunteer at Custer. We make two requests prior to your classroom visit: 1) Please contact the teacher before you come and 2) when you arrive at school, please stop by the office to pick up a Visitor or Volunteer pass.

**Student visitors are discouraged** at Custer Elementary. These visits often prove disruptive to the classroom environment because the visiting student has not been involved in the ongoing work of the classroom and therefore has no class work to do. Thank you for your understanding.

### **ABUSING OR INSULTING TEACHERS/STAFF**

According to RCW 28A.635.010, any person who shall insult or abuse a teacher/staff anywhere on the school premises while such teacher is carrying out his or her official duties shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Please clearly label any clothing, lunch containers, or other items your child wears or brings to school. Custer's Lost and Found box is located in the foyer in front of the gym. Unlabeled, found items will be placed in this box. The box is emptied during winter and spring vacations and unclaimed items are donated to charity. The school cannot accept responsibility for lost or stolen property.

## **TOYS AND MONEY FROM HOME**

Students are not to bring cell phones, radios, tape players, electronic games, toys, etc. from home. Toys, money and electronic items are easily lost, broken, stolen or used inappropriately during instructional times. The school cannot accept responsibility for lost or stolen property. These items will be confiscated by a staff member and left in the office. Cell phones are not permitted.

1. First Time: The student may pick up the item after school.
2. Second Time: A parent must pick up the item in the office.
3. Third Time: The item is confiscated until the end of the school year.

Money for book orders should be sent in a sealed envelope. Students should not bring other money to school.

## **ANIMALS ON CAMPUS**

No animals are allowed on campus per Board Policy #9322. The Policy reads as follows:

Unless Specific permission is given by the principal of the school building, animals are not permitted either in the school buildings or on the school grounds.

If an unauthorized animal is on the school premises, the principal shall endeavor to locate the owner and request that the animal be removed. If the owners cannot be located or the owner refuses to cooperate, the principal is authorized to secure assistance from other public authorities to have the animal removed.

All costs of animal removal and all damages caused by animals on the grounds shall be paid by the owner.

### **BICYCLES**

Please review the following with your student on bike riding rules:

- Safety helmets are required equipment for students riding bikes to school.
- Bikes are to be walked on the sidewalks.
- **Students must fill out a bicycle safety form signed by their parents** before they can ride to school.
- Students must park their bicycles in the bike rack immediately upon arriving at school and may not ride on school grounds during the regular school day (8:30 am to 4:00 pm).
- For protection of property, bikes should have chains or locks and be locked during school hours.
- Bike riders are to wait until the buses have left the campus before leaving the campus.

Students in violation of bicycle guidelines will lose the privilege of riding a bike to school. **Please note:** There are very few safe riding routes to Custer. Please check the route carefully before allowing your child to ride to school.

### **BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PRICES**

The USDA is providing **free meals** to all students for the 2024-2025 school year.

### **SCHOOL SUPPLIES**

The Ferndale School District will provide all school supplies for grades K-5 for the 2024-2025 school year.

At times, you will be asked to send items that are used for student special projects.

### **REPORT CARDS AND CONFERENCES WITH TEACHERS**

Progress reports are sent home in November. Full report cards will be sent home in January and June.

We have one opportunity each year for formal parent/teacher conferences. Conferences are extremely important as a time for parents and teachers to exchange information and concerns, then form effective partnerships that support each child's learning needs. If you have difficulties with transportation for your child's conference, please call the school so that we may assist you.

We are also happy to conference informally, by phone or in person, at the request of the parent or teacher. Please be aware that in the morning, before classes begin, our teachers are preparing for their day. This is not the best time to receive the teacher's undivided attention. The office is happy to assist you in scheduling an informal conference with your child's teacher at any time. Progress reports are available upon request and may be obtained by contacting the office, the counselor, or your child's teacher.

### **PLAYGROUND SUPERVISION**

Three adults are on duty during scheduled recesses. We have one additional staff member on duty during the longer noon recess.

Since there is no adult supervision before 9:10 am, we ask that students who walk or come to school by car arrive no earlier than 9:10 am.

After school, students who walk or go home by car may wait at the flagpole benches until the buses exit the parking lot unless accompanied by an adult.

### **DRESS CODE**

1. Students should dress casually and comfortably for school, while wearing clothing that is well-suited for a school environment.
2. Clothing needs to cover from shoulders to mid thigh; undergarments should not be visible at any time. A one inch width tank top is okay.
3. Clothing, drawings, and accessories which carry a vulgar or offensive message, are not permitted. **These include references of hate, violence, drugs, alcohol or tobacco-related information, gangs, weapons, or sexual innuendo. Clothing with mottos or sayings that represent or symbolize exclusion of others is not allowed.**
4. **Hoods, hats and sunglasses are not allowed at Custer Elementary School.** Students should remove their hats and hoods upon entering the building.

## **DISCIPLINE**

At Custer Elementary, discipline is viewed as an opportunity to learn new ways of behaving and interacting with others.

For the safety of all children and staff at Custer Elementary, we have a zero-tolerance policy for the following types of conduct:

- Bullying
- Harassment (repeated, unwelcome teasing)
- Sexual Harassment (harassment using sexual terminology, signs, gestures or physical contact)
- Fighting and physical assaults
- Use of weapons or using any implement as a weapon

Children who engage in these types of conduct can expect to see the counselor, dean or principal who will work with the student to assure that the student understands the meaning and consequences of the conduct specified above. The child and the child's parents may be asked to sign a document which specifies conduct from which the child is expected to refrain and potential consequences if the child does not refrain from the specified conduct.

## **SPECIAL SERVICES**

Custer has many services available to assist students who have special learning needs.

**TAG (Talented and Gifted)** is a district-wide program serving second to fifth grade students who qualify as "highly capable". Students may be recommended for testing for this program by parents or by their teachers. Some eligible students will attend a self-contained five day per week program (4th and 5th grade only) while others will attend a one day per week program. Both programs are located at other schools, Central and Cascadia, with the district providing transportation from Custer Elementary.

**ENRICHMENT CLUBS** are offered to students after school several times throughout the year by the school and by parent volunteers through the Parent Teacher Organization. Club topics are selected based on student

interest, staff and volunteer availability. Please let us know if you have an interest, talent or skill that you would like to share with students by teaching an after-school club.

**SPEECH AND LANGUAGE SERVICES** are available for students who qualify.

**LAP** is a remedial program available to students in grades K-5 who qualify. Students are pulled out of the regular classroom for intensive reading instruction with a reading or math specialist.

**THE LEARNING RESOURCE CENTER** serves students K-5 who have special learning needs. Students who are eligible for this program spend the majority of their day in a regular classroom and receive learning assistance either in that classroom or in an alternate small group setting, as appropriate. Students experiencing learning difficulties may be referred by teachers, parents or guardians for assessment by the Special Services Multidisciplinary Team.

**MULTI LANGUAGE LEARNERS (MLL)** is a program for students whose first language is not English. Custer provides on-site assistance for students who already speak some English though may not be proficient.

### **PUBLIC NOTICE**

Ferndale School District does not discriminate in any programs or activities on the basis of sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, veteran or military status, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following employees have been designated to handle questions and complaints of alleged discrimination:

#### **Civil Rights Compliance Coordinator**

Name and/or Title\*: Chris Cochran, Director of Mental and Behavioral Health

Address: 6041 Vista Drive Ferndale, WA 98248

Telephone Number: 360-383-9985

Email: [chris.cochran@ferndalesd.org](mailto:chris.cochran@ferndalesd.org)

#### **Section 504/ADA Coordinator**

Name and/or Title\*: Trina Hall, Executive Director of Teaching and Learning

Address: 6041 Vista Drive Ferndale, WA 98248  
Telephone Number: 360-383-9221  
Email: [trina.hall@ferndalesd.org](mailto:trina.hall@ferndalesd.org)

## **Title IX Coordinator**

Name and/or Title\*: Chris Cochran, Director of Mental and Behavioral Health  
Address: 6041 Vista Drive Ferndale, WA 98248  
Telephone Number: 360-383-9985  
Email: [chris.cochran@ferndalesd.org](mailto:chris.cochran@ferndalesd.org)

*Title IX inquiries may also be directed toward the [U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights \(OCR\)](#)(opens in a new window).*

## **Additional Information**

[3205 Sexual Harassment of Students Prohibited](#)

[3205 Procedure – Sexual Harassment of Students Prohibited](#)

[3207 Prohibition of Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying](#)

[3207 Procedure – Prohibition of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying](#)

[3208 Prevention and Response to Relationship Abuse and Sexual Violence](#)

[3210 Nondiscrimination](#)

[3210 Procedure – Nondiscrimination](#)

[3211 Gender-Inclusive Schools](#)

[3211 Procedure Gender-Inclusive Schools](#)

[5010 Nondiscrimination and Affirmative Action](#)

[5010 Procedure - Nondiscrimination and Affirmative Action](#)

[5011 Sexual Harassment](#)

[5011 Procedure – Sexual Harassment of District Staff Prohibited](#)

[5012 Domestic Violence](#)

## **VOLUNTEERING AND FAMILY INVOLVEMENT PROGRAMS**

We are building a school community in which every person feels they can have an impact on the education of their child(ren). We seek ways for each parent or guardian to increase their own level of involvement in the programs and activities of the school. We know that by working together we can accomplish great things for our students. All volunteers must fill an online volunteer application that is available on the FSD website.

<https://www.ferndalesd.org>

We recruit volunteers in two different ways at Custer. The first is through our Parent Teacher Organization. The PTO will seek volunteers at PTO meetings, at our school open house and through the newsletter. The

second recruitment effort is through teachers. Each classroom teacher will survey parents as to interests, talents and available time to work in the classroom, assist with field trips, help with bulletin boards or other special projects.

We urge you to think about the ways you can best support Custer Elementary. Last year, volunteers provided thousands of hours of wonderful energy to our school helping us deliver an excellent academic and extracurricular program to our students. There is strong research to indicate that children do better in school when they know their parents/guardians are interested and actively involved in their schooling. Please join us; we can't do it without you!

### **PARENTS' RIGHT TO ACCESS STUDENT RECORDS**

Parents have the right to inspect and review the educational records of their child(ren). Adult students (18 years of age and older) also have the right to inspect school records. Parents or adult students who wish to review student records should contact the building principal or designee for an appointment. School personnel will assist parents and/or students in the record review process. Copies of records are available for the cost of photocopying.

If parents or adult students believe information in the record is inaccurate or misleading, they may request that the information be corrected or comments be added to or deleted from the records. If the principal and the parent or adult student cannot agree on the content, correction, deletions, and/or additions to the student's records, the complainant may contact the superintendent or designee for an informal hearing which shall be held within ten (10) school days of the request. The superintendent or designee shall send his or her written decision to the parent or adult student within ten (10) school days of the hearing. Upon denial or corrections, deletions, or additions to the student's records by the superintendent or designee, the parent or adult student may request in writing a closed hearing before the Ferndale School Board of Directors. The board shall render its written decision within ten (10) school days of the hearing.

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### **TOBACCO PRODUCTS ILLEGAL**



Under current state law, it is illegal for any person under 18 years of age to possess tobacco products. If students possess or use tobacco at school, school activities or on school transportation, the student will face disciplinary sanctions and law enforcement officials may be notified.

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Ferndale School District is a **Tobacco Free Zone**. This means parents and visitors to our school must refrain from smoking or using tobacco products on our campus.

### **FOOD ALLERGY POLICY**

Recently our state enacted legislation to address the increasing number of students with severe food allergies that require measures to be taken to ensure a greater degree of safety while they are at school. In response to these new legislative requirements, the Ferndale School District is changing some procedures regarding food distribution at school. The changes will significantly reduce the distribution of food from staff to students and the sharing of food between students.

The largest change in procedure will be that staff will no longer distribute food to students during the school day except as follows. At the elementary level, we are attempting to eliminate times when the eating of snacks might put a student in a vulnerable situation. Elementary staff must obtain principal approval prior to distribution of food to students and food must also meet all of the following standards:

- Be in accordance with Individual Health Care/504/IEP/behavioral/or other health related plans
- Be educationally significant
- Be packaged commercially with listed ingredients
- Must fall with district's nutrition policy

These guidelines will also impact food that students wish to share with their class. We request that celebrations only include food that meets the criteria mentioned above and has principal approval prior to distribution. Following these nutrition guidelines will help teach our children the importance of making healthy food choices for life-long good health and have the added bonus of improving safety for those in our community with life threatening health conditions.

## **DANGEROUS WEAPONS AT SCHOOL**

It is a violation of district policy and state law for any person to carry or be in possession of a firearm or dangerous weapon or object on school premises, school-provided transportation or other facilities being used for school activities. Students who violate this policy are subject to district discipline policies and procedures, including the due process provisions regarding notification of parents.

**Students who violate the firearms provisions are subject to a minimum one calendar year mandatory expulsion**, subject to appeal with notification to parents and law enforcement. (RCW 28A.600.420) The district shall comply with protections for disabled students in the application of this policy.