

STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK

2025 – 2026

Ferndale Area Junior-Senior High School

600 Harlan Avenue
Johnstown, PA



ALMA MATER

When twilight shades invite
Mem'ries to call our own
Then it is that our thoughts
Turn to that friend
Others fade from my sight
Years have passed by
Pal of mine Ferndale High
I'll ne'er forget.

Through these short high school years
We've known both joys and fears
You shared with me my joys
Lightened my grief
Each year knits close the tie
Of friendships met
Pal of mine Ferndale High
I'll ne'er forget

Now though our paths divide
Our hearts are still as one
Old joys bring rapture still
Enchant our thoughts
If we ne'er meet again
In years to come
Pal of mine Ferndale High
I'll ne'er forget.

SCHOOL COLORS – BLACK AND GOLD

SCHOOL MASCOT – YELLOW JACKET

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August 22, 2025

Dear Students, Parents, and Families,

Welcome to the **2025–2026 school year** at Ferndale Area Junior-Senior High School! On behalf of the entire staff, I hope you've had a restful and enjoyable summer and are feeling energized for the year ahead. A new school year brings with it fresh opportunities, new goals, and the excitement of growth and achievement — and we're ready to support you every step of the way.

The **Student-Parent Handbook** has been created as a helpful guide for navigating grades 7 through 12. It outlines the key procedures, policies, and expectations that help keep our school running smoothly. We encourage both students and families to read it carefully and refer back to it throughout the year — it's designed to help every student succeed.

At Ferndale, we believe in the power of education to shape not only futures but also the world we live in. In today's ever-changing, interconnected world, achieving academic excellence is more important than ever. High school is a critical time — accomplishments here can influence lifelong goals and open doors to new possibilities. So take charge, aim high, and make this year count.

Beyond the classroom, we also encourage students to get involved in the many **extracurricular opportunities** offered at Ferndale. Whether it's sports, music, clubs, or student leadership, there is something for everyone. These activities are a valuable part of the high school experience, helping students build confidence, friendships, and a strong sense of community.

If you have questions at any time, please don't hesitate to reach out to a teacher, counselor, administrator, or staff member — we're here to help.

After reviewing the Student-Parent Handbook, please sign and return the **acknowledgment page**, along with the **Internet Agreement Form, Medical Forms, and Student Emergency Card**. Once these documents are submitted, your student will receive their school-issued iPad for use during the school year.

If you have any questions or need assistance, feel free to contact us at **(814) 288-5757**.

Let's work together to make this an outstanding year.

Be involved. Stay focused. And as always — Go Yellow Jackets!

Sincerely,



Dr. William J. Brotz
Assistant Superintendent/Jr.Sr. High School Principal

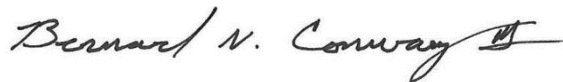
Dear Ferndale Families,

I look forward to working with the staff of Ferndale Area, Dr. Brotz, students, and parents to build a strong learning community at Ferndale Area based on sound educational and emotional practices. I intend to continue to do my best to maintain the standards set forth by the district.

My wife and I have 4 children ages 19 to 8 all of whom have graduated or are attending Ferndale Area. I understand all the challenges facing today's children and the daily ups and downs that occur. We at Ferndale Area will work diligently to address children's issues as if they are our own children. This is going to be an ongoing adventure that I look forward to with great excitement.

I am very eager to have the students back in the building and begin the 2025-2026 school year. I plan on being visible and talking to students as much as possible throughout the course of the day. My door is always open, and I look very much forward to getting reacquainted with the old students of Ferndale Area JH/SH and of course meeting all of our new students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bernard V. Conway III". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Bernard V. Conway III
Junior/Senior High School Assistant Principal

SCHOOL DIRECTORY

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Susan Boyle, President
Richard Pavic, Vice President
Barry Himes, Secretary
Jason Moschgat, Treasurer
Kimberly Kinsey, Dr. James McKendree, John Rutledge, Stephen Thompson, Patricia Wilson

ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Jeffrey Boyer, Superintendent	814-535-1507 jboyer@fasdk12.org
Dr. William Brotz, Assistant Superintendent	814-288-5757 wbrotz@fasdk12.org
Mr. David Gates, Business Manager	814-535-1507 dgates@fasdk12.org
Mr. Bernard Conway, JSHS Asst. Principal	814-288-5757 bconway@fasdk12.org
Amy Mykut, Elementary Principal	814-535-6724 amykut@fasdk12.org

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Mrs. Sutton Barron, Director of Special Education	814-539-6168 sbarron@fasdk12.org
Mr. Adam Barbe, School Psychologist	814-539-6168 abarbe@fasdk12.org
Ms. Molly Steiner, School Counselor for Grades 7-12	814-288-5757 msteiner@fasdk12.org

DISTRICT OPERATIONS

Mr. Steve Clawson, Athletic Director	814-288-5757 sclawson@fasdk12.org
Mrs. Lori McGough, Food Service Director	814-288-5757 lmcgough@fasdk12.org
Mrs. Judy Virgin, School Nurse	814-288-5757 jvirgin@fasdk12.org
Ms. Dawn Wolfe, District Technology Coordinator	814-288-5757 dwolfe@fasdk12.org
Mr. Damian Buksa, Maintenance Supervisor	814-288-5757 dbuksa@fasdk12.org
Mr. Shawn Szarka, Maintenance	814-535-6724 sszarka@fasdk12.org

TO ALL STUDENTS AND FAMILIES...

We welcome you to the Ferndale Area Junior-Senior High School and the Ferndale Area School District. As a citizen of this school, you are expected to follow the regulations that are established for the welfare of the entire school community. Following our procedures gives all students the opportunity to earn respect as citizens of our school community.

Be proud of your school. Take good care of it and feel free to make suggestions for improving it. As a school citizen, you are expected to act and conduct yourself properly. You will learn necessary and useful skills for the future. As a student you may find some things unfamiliar at first, but you will soon become accustomed to our school.

Pride In Our Schools: Conduct and Courtesy. School spirit means loyalty to all functions of the school. A loyal student supports his/her school and does his/her utmost to keep his/her scholastic and activity standards at the highest possible level. School pride is divided into four focus areas:

Honor Others: Our school is an environment of mutual respect toward teachers, fellow students, administrators, guests, and the officials of school athletic activities.

Integrity of Self: It is important to always tell the truth, even when the news is not good. Do the right thing!

Vision: Build excitement and support for our school, through planning accomplishments, and legacy. Stand out in the crowd with your *positive* energy and support for others!

Excellence: Demonstrate your best effort in everything you do!

Ferndale Area Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

Mission Statement: Partnering with students, families, and the community in order to provide an exceptional education within a safe and inclusive environment that empowers our learners to achieve individual aspirations resulting in meaningful contributions to society.

**Regular Bell Schedule
Lunch A**

7:30	Teachers Report	
7:32 - 7:37	Students released from auditorium and cafeteria	
7:37 - 7:47	Homeroom Period	10 minutes
7:50 - 8:34	Period 1	44
8:37 - 9:21	Period 2	44
9:24 - 10:08	Period 3	44
10:11 - 10:55	Period 4	44
10:58 - 11:28	Lunch A	30
	GJCTC Students report to the bus at 11:25	
11:31 -12:15	Period 5A	44
12:18 - 1:02	Period 6A	44
1:05 - 1:49	Period 7	44
1:52 - 2:36	Period 8	44

**Regular Bell Schedule
Lunch B**

7:30	Teachers Report	
7:32 - 7:37	Students released from auditorium and cafeteria	
7:37 - 7:47	Homeroom Period	10 minutes
7:50 - 8:34	Period 1	44
8:37 - 9:21	Period 2	44
9:24 - 10:08	Period 3	44
10:11 - 10:55	Period 4	44
10:58 -11:42	Period 5B	44
11:45 -12:15	Lunch B	30
12:18 - 1:02	Period 6A	44
1:05 - 1:49	Period 7	44
1:52 - 2:36	Period 8	44

**Assembly Bell Schedule
Lunch A**

7:30	Teachers Report	
7:32 - 7:35	Students released from auditorium and cafeteria	
7:35 - 8:18	Homeroom Period	43 minutes
8:22 - 9:02	Period 1	40
9:05 - 9:45	Period 2	40
9:48 - 10:28	Period 3	40
10:31 - 11:11	Period 4	40
11:14 - 11:44	Lunch A	30
	GJCTC Students report to the bus at 11:40	
11:47 -12:27	Period 5A	40
12:30 - 1:10	Period 6	40
1:13 - 1:53	Period 7	40
1:56 - 2:36	Period 8	40

**Assembly Bell Schedule
Lunch B**

7:30	Teachers Report	
7:32 - 7:35	Students released from auditorium and cafeteria	
7:35 - 8:18	Homeroom Period	43 minutes
8:22 - 9:02	Period 1	40
9:05 - 9:45	Period 2	40
9:48 - 10:28	Period 3	40
10:31 - 11:11	Period 4	40
11:14 - 11:54	Period 5B	30
11:57 -12:27	Lunch B	40
12:30 - 1:10	Period 6	40
1:13 - 1:53	Period 7	40
1:56 - 2:36	Period 8	40

**2-Hour Delay Bell Schedule
Lunch A**

9:30	Teachers Report	
9:37 - 9:47	Homeroom Period	10 minutes
9:50 -10:20	Period 1	30
10:22 - 10:52	Period 2	30
10:54 - 11:24	Period 3 and GJCTC Student Lunch	30
11:26 – 11:56	Period 4 GJCTC Students report to the bus at 11:25	30
11:58 - 12:28	Lunch A	30
12:30 - 1:00	Period 5A	30
1:02 - 1:32	Period 6	30
1:34 - 2:04	Period 7	30
2:06 - 2:36	Period 8	30

**2-Hour Delay Bell Schedule
Lunch B**

9:30	Teachers Report	
9:37 - 9:47	Homeroom Period	10 minutes
9:50 -10:20	Period 1	30
10:22 - 10:52	Period 2	30
10:54 - 11:24	Period 3 and GJCTC Student Lunch	30
11:26 – 11:56	Period 4 GJCTC Students report to the bus at 11:25	30
11:58 - 12:28	Period 5B	30
12:30 - 1:00	Lunch B	30
1:02 - 1:32	Period 6	30
1:34 - 2:04	Period 7	30
2:06 - 2:36	Period 8	30

**2-Hour Early Dismissal Bell Schedule
Lunch A**

7:30	Teachers Report	
7:30 - 7:33	Students released from auditorium and cafeteria	
7:33 - 7:39	Homeroom Period	6 minutes
7:42 - 8:12	Period 7 GJCTC Students report to the Library	30
8:15 - 8:45	Period 8 GJCTC Students report to the Library	30
8:48 - 9:18	Period 1	30
9:21 - 9:51	Period 2	30
9:54 - 10:24	Period 3	30
10:27 -10:57	Period 4	30
11:00- 11:30	Lunch A GJCTC Students report to the bus at 11:20	30
11:33 - 12:03	Period 5A	30
12:06 - 12:36	Period 6	30

**2-Hour Early Dismissal Bell Schedule
Lunch B**

7:30	Teachers Report	
7:30 - 7:33	Students released from auditorium and cafeteria	
7:33 - 7:39	Homeroom Period	6 minutes
7:42 - 8:12	Period 7	30
8:15 - 8:45	Period 8	30
8:48 - 9:18	Period 1	30
9:21 - 9:51	Period 2	30
9:54 - 10:24	Period 3	30
10:27 -10:57	Period 4	30
11:00 - 11:30	Period 5B	30
11:33 - 12:03	Lunch B	30
12:06 - 12:36	Period 6	30

Ferndale Area Junior-Senior High School General Information

Attendance

Student attendance in school is required by state law (Chapter 11, Sect. 11.13) and is monitored daily by the administration. If a student is to be absent from school, parents are asked to contact the Main Office before 7:35 A.M. to report the reason for the absence. Otherwise, the school, to verify the absence, may call parents. If a parent cannot be reached, one of the persons listed on the Emergency Card may be contacted.

For Grade 12, students may not exceed twenty-five (25) days absent AND/OR fifteen (15) tardies during their graduating year in order to participate in the graduation ceremony. For more information, see Policy 204 Attendance.

1. **Excused Absences:** Absence from school due to personal illness, serious illness, or death in the family, emergency medical/dental attention, field trips, and absences pre-approved by the administration are excused absences. Students with excused absences are permitted to make up work and receive credit for missed work and tests equal to the number of days that are missed during an excused absence.
2. **Unexcused/Unlawful Absences:** Any absence from school that does not meet the criteria of an excused absence is considered an unexcused/unlawful absence. Students receiving an unexcused/unlawful absence may not receive credit on any work missed during the unexcused/unlawful absence at the teacher's discretion. When a student has accumulated three (3) unlawful absences, Act 138 of 2016 (Act 138), relating to truancy and habitual truancy, allows that citations may be filed with the District Magistrate and/or the Juvenile Probation Office, and will continue to be filed if truancy continues (in accordance with PA School Code Chapter 11, Sect. 11.24), requires notification of the parents, and may include an attendance conference to address individualized attendance concerns. See page 44-45 for detailed information regarding the updated Attendance laws.
3. Upon returning to school from an absence, all students are required to submit a written excuse to the attendance/office immediately. The note should be dated, signed by the parent (or Doctor) and include a specific reason(s) for the absence. Failure to bring in an excuse within 3 days of the absence will result in the absence being coded as unexcused/unlawful.
4. Students not admitted to school within 30 minutes of the start of the school day (8:07 am) may not participate in any after-school activities or events unless a physician's excuse indicating an appointment, or administrative approval.
5. If a student is absent for several days (3 or more), parents may request and pick up assignments in the office. When the absence is planned and pre-approved by administration, arrangements for assignments are to be made prior to the absence. Parents and students are urged to check the student's teacher's

Schoology page on their iPads and/or individual teacher web pages (from the district website at www.fasdk12.org) for missed work when absent.

6. The School District strongly discourages family vacations or vacations for students during the school year. Where such trips cannot be avoided, parents are required to fill out a Vacation Form in the high school office at least one week in advance. Upon receipt by the administration, the absence(s) will be coded as excused if the student's total absences are under ten (10) days, including the proposed vacation, or unexcused if the student's total absences are over ten (10) days total. Students are to make arrangements for assignments and tests/quizzes prior to leaving. Duration and frequency must not interfere with the student's education. Any family trips for which prior approval is not obtained will be considered unexcused/unlawful and if more than three days, a warning notice may be sent. Approved student absences for vacations may not exceed five (5) school days within any school year. NOTE: Vacations are counted toward total number of absences (see #8 below).
7. Routine medical/dental appointments should be scheduled outside of the school day. If such appointments occur during school hours, please obtain a note from the doctor/dentist office, with the appointment date and time, so the absence may be properly coded. Student absences for driving tests, photo sessions, and hairdressing appointments will be coded as unexcused/unlawful.
8. Students will have access to classroom work, assignments, and tests missed during unexcused absences; however, credit for such will may not be given.
9. Repeated absences, tardiness, and early dismissals from school would seem to indicate a medical condition requiring medical care and attention. Therefore, once a student has accumulated ten (10) combined absences, tardiness, and/or early dismissals, a doctor's note will be required for all future absences, tardies, and/or early dismissals from school; otherwise, the absences, tardiness, and/or early dismissals will be considered unexcused/unlawful. Parents will be informed by mail when this becomes necessary. It is the responsibility of the student and his/her parent to provide the school with a note from the doctor.
10. All absences, tardiness to school, and early dismissals, both excused and unexcused, are noted on the student's official school records.
11. Students arriving after 7:37 a.m. will be considered tardy until 9:32 a.m. (excused or unexcused). Students arriving after 9:33 a.m. (after period 2) will be considered half-day absent (excused or unexcused). Appropriate protocols will be followed for unexcused absences and/or tardies.
12. Students leaving early from school for any reason must have written parental permission; verbal permission **will not** be honored. This applies to GJCTC students as well. Any student not wishing to attend the scheduled GJCTC session, or to leave FAJSHS due to a scheduled early dismissal or non-student day at GJCTC must have a signed note from their parent/guardian; no phone calls will be allowed to be made to obtain permission for GJCTC non-attendance.

13. Students absent for any part of the school day are not permitted to attend after school or school sponsored events unless a doctor or agency excuse is received and administration gives permission prior to the event, including dances.

Accidents

Students must report any accidents that may occur, not only in school, but on their way to and from school, to the teacher, nurse, or administrator as soon as possible. The school district is not responsible for payment of doctor or hospital bills you might incur for injuries that happen in or around the school. This includes physical education classes, cafeteria, and recess. We urge all students to carry the pupil's accident insurance that is available through the school. Medical and hospital coverages are explained in the policy you receive when you purchase the insurance. This coverage is available only at the beginning of the school year. Insurance forms will be sent home with all students. Call the school if your child does not bring a form home. School accident insurance only covers interscholastic injuries after the primary insurer has been billed.

Affection

Visible and open displays of affection between students **will not be permitted**:

1. On the school premises during and immediately before or after school hours.
2. On the school premises at any time when a school-sponsored group is using the school.
3. Off school premises at any school activity, function or event.

Examples of visible or open displays of affection that will not be permitted include but are not limited to, kissing, petting, holding hands, caressing, embracing, hugging and/or any other bodily contact that represents a visible or open display of affection.

Athletic Equipment Obligation

It is the responsibility of each student to properly care for and return all athletic uniforms and equipment. All equipment is to be returned to the head coach of the sport in which the student-athlete participated within two (2) weeks of the season's completion. Failure on the student's part to return equipment or satisfy other athletic obligations will prohibit the student's participation in any other sport season. If the student-athlete is a senior, participation in the commencement ceremony will be jeopardized until obligation is fulfilled. In addition, the student-athlete will be ineligible for an athletic letter until all obligations are satisfied.

Arrival / Departure

1. Upon arrival to school, students must report to the Auditorium or Cafeteria
2. Any student wishing to eat breakfast should report to the Cafeteria
3. Students must remain in the Auditorium or Cafeteria until the dismissal at 7:32am
4. All students, parents, teachers, and visitors must enter at the main entrance.
5. All students are expected to be in the building no later than 7:32 a.m.
6. Parents are required to sign their child out of school at the time of an early dismissal.
7. Written parental permission is required for any student to walk home or drive when leaving for a planned early dismissal.

Authority of Faculty and Staff

Faculty and Staff are authorized to reprimand or correct misbehaving students at any time or any place during the school day and at any school function and/or activity.

The School Code and Criminal Code of Pennsylvania give Faculty and Staff the same authority as parents while students are involved in school and school activities.

Book Bags and Purses

Students will not be permitted to carry backpacks to and from their classes.

The purpose of students not carrying these bags is to promote school safety and security by eliminating the possibility of inappropriate or illegal items being brought into the school by students.

Students are permitted to bring a bag with them to transport and store their physical education clothes, but all bags must remain in their school-issued locker until such time when the clothing is required for their class.

When reasonable suspicion has been determined by administration, a search of the student's personal belongings may be conducted. Refer to Searches for procedure.

Book bags, backpacks, purses and other large carrying containers are not permitted to be carried to classes. Students may bring them to school but must keep them in their lockers or until the last period of the school day (teacher's discretion). First Offense- verbal warning, Second Offense- lunch detention, Third Offense- after school 1-3 HR detention, Fourth Offense- Behavior Improvement Room assignment.

Bullying/Cyberbullying

The Board is committed to providing a safe, positive learning environment for district students. The Board recognizes that bullying creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, detracts from the safe environment necessary for student learning, and may lead to more serious violence. Therefore, the Board prohibits bullying by district students. Bullying, as defined in district policy, includes cyberbullying. (Policy #249)

Bullying means an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act or series of acts directed at another student or students, which occurs in a school setting, that is severe, persistent or pervasive and has the effect of doing any of the following:

1. Material interference with a student's education.
2. Creation of a threatening environment.
3. Material disruption of the orderly operation of the school.

Enrollment

The Board shall enroll school age students eligible to attend district schools, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. School age shall be defined as the period from the earliest admission age for the district's kindergarten program until graduation from high school or the end of the school term in which a student reaches the age of twenty-one (21) years, whichever occurs first. District of residence shall be defined as the school district in which a student's parents/guardians reside. (Policy #200)

Food Services

The food service program shall be operated in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations, as well as federal guidelines established by the Child Nutrition Division of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The district shall ensure that, in the operation of the food service program, no student, staff member, or other individual shall be discriminated against on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex or disability.

Ferndale Area Junior-Senior High School operates a closed lunch period. No students are permitted to leave the building during lunch, nor are deliveries allowed from outside food vendors. For more information, reference Policies 808 Food Services and 808.1 Lunch Accounts.

1. The Ferndale Area Junior Senior High School has been approved for our entire district to receive free breakfast and lunch meals. The program is called C.E.P.; "Community Eligibility Program." This program is funded entirely through state and federal grant monies. No cost will be incurred by the Ferndale Area School District. For the 2025-2026 School Year, all enrolled students at the Ferndale Area Junior / Senior High School will receive a FREE breakfast and lunch daily. There will no longer be applications to qualify for free or reduced meal prices. Any student that had a previous balance on their account will be expected to pay that debt (it will roll over year to year). This debt will be an obligation that will need to be settled prior to students being cleared for extracurricular activities, such as the Senior Trip and finally the Graduation Ceremony. For the Junior / Senior High school students, if students would like to purchase A La Carte items or snacks, they will need to have money in their account to make these purchases. For more information, please visit the District website and see the Food Service link.

2. The lunch period is part of the regular schedule for the day. Students must report on time to the cafeteria during their lunch period. Students will remain in the cafeteria until the lunch period has ended. Students must secure permission from cafeteria monitors in order to leave the cafeteria prior to the end of the lunch period (e-Hallpass).
3. Rules and regulations of conduct are enforced by Cafeteria Monitors.

Cell Phones, Pagers, Communication Devices, or Electronic Equipment

Students are permitted to carry and/or use cell phones, earbuds, pagers, communication devices, or electronic equipment (Smart watches, MP3 players, cameras, iPods) during school hours at the following times if not causing a disruption to the educational environment:

- Between Class Periods
- During Assigned Lunch Period

With the exception of “Between Class Periods” and “During Lunch”, student cell phones/earbuds should not be seen or visible by any staff member. Such items are to remain on “silent” at all times and are not to be used during instructional times and settings, including study halls and in-class silent individual work times, or during times when faculty or staff direct students not to use their cell phones. Additionally, no photographs of the school, the staff, or the students are to be taken without prior permission.

Consequences for Cell Phone Violations

1st Offense

- Warning and the student must comply with the directive to put the cell phone away.

2nd Offense

- Immediate confiscation of the device and sent to the office for safekeeping by the student. The student may have it back at the end of the day.
- Automatic 3 hour detention

3rd Offense and Beyond

- Immediate confiscation of the device and sent to the office for safekeeping. The parent/guardian of the student must pick it up for the student.
- Automatic 1 Day of ISS

4th Offense and Beyond

- Immediate confiscation of the device and sent to the office for safekeeping. The parent/guardian of the student must pick it up for the student.
- Automatic 1 Day of OSS

Any student who refuses to turn over their cell phone or similar electronic device upon the request of a staff member will be charged with disorderly conduct and the police will be called. This will result in an automatic 3 Day Out of School Suspension

(OSS) and the student must be accompanied by a parent/guardian upon his/her return to school to meet with the principal or his/her designee.

Consequences for Electronic Devices other than Cell Phones

- Anyone carrying or using laser pointers or noise making devices during any class, homeroom, activity period, club period, or at any time throughout the school day will have the device confiscated and will face disciplinary action of a mandatory Three (3) Hour detention for the first offense.
- Devices will be returned to the student at the end of the day on the first offense. For second and subsequent offenses, the device will not be returned to the student, but rather, a parent/guardian must come to the school to remove it from the building.

For more information, see Acceptable Use Agreement, as well as Policy 237 Electronic Devices.

Change of Important Information

A parent or guardian should immediately notify the school in writing of any changes in address, home or work telephone number(s), emergency contact, or bus stop.

Cheating/Plagiarism

Cheating in any form will not be condoned at Ferndale Area Junior-Senior High School. Plagiarism is considered a form of cheating. Assistance to provide proper citations and instruction on the avoidance of plagiarism will be addressed by individual teachers.

For a first offense within a school year, a student will receive a 0% for the work on which the cheating occurred, possibly causing failure of the entire grading period based upon the achievement level of other grades. For a second offense within a school year, cheating will result in withdrawal from the class with failure (WF).

Child Abuse and Sex Abuse

Under the Child Protective Service Act of 1975, all school district personnel (administrators, teachers, nurses, etc.) are **MANDATED BY LAW** to report suspected child abuse. Reports of suspected abuse will be made immediately by telephone and a written report will follow within 48 hours. Concerned citizens may also make a report of suspected child abuse if he/she has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is an abused child by calling ChildLine at 1-800-932-0313. All reports made are strictly confidential and you may remain anonymous. Parents may use the line directly without notifying the school, especially in cases of pre-school children. (Policy #806)

Co-Curricular Activities

It is a **privilege** to participate in co-curricular activities, such as, but not limited to, interscholastic sports, the school band, cheerleading, chorus, forensics, intramurals, school clubs, field trips, etc. Since student participation in those activities represents the school, students are expected to follow school rules. Students must not be failing two (2) or more classes, must be passing four (4) full credit courses, and may not be failing any courses with less than 50%, must not have any outstanding discipline obligations, such as detention or suspension, and an attendance requirement of not having more than fifteen (15) tardies or fifteen (15) unexcused absences. Unacceptable student behavior may result in students being removed from the team/squad/club and may result in disciplinary action. Suspensions (in school, out of school, and extracurricular suspension) prevent students from participating in practices/competitions those days.

Commencement Requirements

Students **MUST** have completed all academic requirements, including taking required exams for graduation, served all assigned suspensions/detentions, satisfied all outstanding obligations (returned all school-issued materials, fundraising monies, etc.), return of iPad, case, and charger, have no more than 25 days absent during the school year **and** no more than 15 days tardy to school during the senior year to participate in the commencement exercises with his/her class. Students will not be permitted to participate in the graduation ceremony unless dressed appropriately.

1. Young men should wear dress pants, a collared shirt and dress shoes. Jeans, shorts, sneakers and flip-flops are not permitted.
2. Young women should wear a dress or skirt/top combination and dress shoes. Jeans, shorts, sneakers and flip-flops are not permitted.

Confidentiality of Student Records

A permanent record file containing grades, biographical data, health records and standardized test scores is kept in the high school office for each student. These records are considered confidential information and will not be released to any agency outside the school, with the exception of another public school district, without written permission from the student or his/her parents (if the student is under the age of 18).

If a parent or guardian wishes to examine their child's records at any time, they may do so by contacting the high school office. Convenient arrangements will be made for the parent or guardian to meet with the counselor to explain the contents of the individual file.

The parent, or eligible student, has the right to refuse to permit the release of directory-type information to military recruiters, newspapers, and outside agencies which is personally identifiable; i.e., student name and address, honor roll, athletic rosters, homeroom rolls, etc. If the parent or eligible student wishes to exercise this right, the school administration shall be informed in writing by Sept 12, 2025.

The Ferndale Area High School shall be responsible for assuring that confidentiality policies and procedures are precisely enforced and administered. Upon the request of the parents, information no longer relevant to and necessary for the provision of educational services to the student must be destroyed by the School District and Intermediate Unit; however, a separate written record of student's name, address, phone number, grades, attendance records, classes attended, grade level complete, and year completed must be maintained for at least 100 years beyond the date the student attains age 21.

For more information, reference Policy 207 Confidential Communication of Students and Policy 216 Student Records.

Controlled Substances/Paraphernalia

The Board prohibits students from using, possessing, distributing, and being under the influence of any controlled substances during school hours, at any time while on school property, at any school-sponsored activity, and during the time spent traveling to and from school and school-sponsored activities.

If, based on the student's behavior, medical symptoms, vital signs or other observable factors, a building principal has reasonable suspicion that the student is under the influence of a controlled substance, and the student denies such, the student's parent/guardian will be notified, and the student will be required to submit to drug/alcohol testing. The testing may include, but is not limited to the analysis of blood, urine, saliva, or the administration of a Breathalyzer test. The student will report directly to the designated testing facility. (Policy #227)

Course Failures

Students in grades 7 & 8 are generally enrolled in six core content areas (Algebraic Math, Geometrical Math, English, Science, Social Studies, and Reading). Students in grades 9-12 are generally enrolled in four core content areas (Math, English, Science, and Social Studies). Failure of 2 or more core subjects may result in retention in the grade. Students who opt out of summer school or who do not pass credit-recovery courses through summer school will be scheduled for course recovery during the following school year. Course recovery classes will replace the student's electives.

Curriculum Review by Parents/Guardians and Students

Upon request by a parent/guardian or student, the district will make available existing information about the curriculum, including academic standards to be achieved, instructional materials and assessment techniques. (Policy #105.1)

Curriculum – Graduation Requirements

Traditional Students (25 credits)

- 4.0 credits in English
- 7.0 credits in Math and Science with no more than 4.0 credits in either area **(all students must take a math course in their junior year)
- 4.0 credits in Social Studies
- 2.0 credits in World Language
- 2.5 credits in Health and Physical Education (2.0 credits in PE and 0.5 credit in Health)
- 0.5 credit in Personal Finance
- 0.5 credit in Independent Living
- 4.5 credits in Electives (student selects additional courses from among those approved for credit toward graduation by the school district, including approved career and technology center courses)

Greater Johnstown Career & Technology Students (25 credits)

- 4.0 credits in English
- 3.0 credits in Social Studies
- 3.0 credits in Math (all students must take a math course in their junior year)
- 3.0 credits in Science
- 1.0 credit in Health and Physical Education (0.5 credit in each)
- 0.5 credit in Personal Finance
- 0.5 credit in Independent Living
- 10 credits in Electives (student selects additional courses from among those approved for credit toward graduation by the school district, including approved Career and Technology Center courses).

Keystone Exam Proficiency

Students will demonstrate proficiency on each of the Algebra I, Biology, and Literature Keystone exams. Students may take any exam more than once, up to and including the annual Spring Keystone exam window administered in May of the Grade 11 year.

Community Service

Students will complete ten (10) hours of community service each year in grades 9-12. The following total service requirements are listed for graduating classes as follows:

Class of 2026	40 Hours by May 1 of Graduating Year
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Community service hours can be completed throughout the school year and throughout the summertime.

Debts/Unpaid Bills/Obligations

Students are responsible to pay for all damage to iPads/associated equipment, educational materials and any other school equipment prior to the close of school. Any materials purchased for various classes must be paid in full. Failure to comply may result in formal action being taken. Students and/or parents may be referred to the Magisterial Judge or the district-approved collection agency for collection. Students will not be permitted to participate in extracurricular activities, athletic activities, Prom, field trips, and/or graduation ceremony until all debts are cleared.

Delinquent Lunch Account

All students are required to have enough money in their school lunch accounts to pay for the ala carte items and any extras they may want to purchase. If a student account continues to be overdrawn from previous years, significantly more stringent consequences will be enacted, including additional letters sent home, restriction from activities, and the services of a collection agency may also be contracted to obtain money due to the district cafeteria. (Policy 808 and 808.1)

Students' lunch accounts and balances can be accessed through PowerSchool.

Student Code of Conduct

Inappropriate student behavior is that which interferes with the learning environment, safety of others, and the orderly functioning of the school. Any employee has the right to correct and/or write a referral on any student who is not exhibiting proper behavior in school.

Students should be aware that substitute teachers and instructional aides have the same responsibility for control, or referral to administration, as regular teaching faculty members. The same level of respect and cooperation is expected toward substitute teachers and instructional aides as is expected toward the regular classroom teacher. Discipline referrals made by substitute teachers or instructional aides will carry the same disciplinary consequences as those made by the regular teaching staff.

All of the potential violations apply to any time that school is in session and pertain to incidents occurring in school or on school grounds. Additionally, the same rules apply at any activity after school or away from school under the sponsorship of the school district.

Student Responsibilities (PA School Code)

1. No student has the right to interfere with the education of his fellow students. It is the responsibility of each student to respect the rights of teachers, administrators, and all others who are involved in the educational process.
2. Students have a responsibility to attend school regularly.
3. It is the responsibility of students to be aware of all rules and regulations for student behavior and conduct themselves in accord with them.

4. Students have a responsibility to express their ideas and opinions in a respectful manner so as not to offend or slander others.
5. Students have a responsibility to volunteer information in matters relating to the health, safety, and welfare of the school community and the protection of school property.
6. Students have a responsibility to dress and groom themselves so as to meet fair standards of safety and health and so as not to cause substantial disruption to the educational process.
7. Until a rule is waived, altered, or repealed, students are responsible for assuming the rule is in full effect.
8. Students are responsible for assisting the school staff in operating a safe school for all students enrolled in the school.
9. It is the responsibility of the student to be aware of and comply with state and local laws.
10. Using public facilities and equipment with proper care is a student responsibility.
11. Submitting a proper excuse for absence from school is a student responsibility.
12. Students are responsible for being on time to all classes and other school functions.
13. Making all necessary arrangements for making up work when absent from school is a student responsibility.
14. It is a student responsibility to pursue and attempt to satisfactorily complete the courses of study prescribed by state and local authorities.
15. Students are responsible for avoiding inaccuracies in student newspapers or publications and indecent or obscene language.

Student Rights (22PaCode 12.3-12.8)

1. Suspension from School

- a. Students suspended from school will be removed from the regularly scheduled instructional program.
- b. Suspension is exclusion from school for a period of from one to ten consecutive school days. Students suspended will be removed from the regular school program and assigned to a designated location in school: In-School Suspension or assigned to a designated location out of school during the term of the suspension.
- c. The principal or designee in charge of the school may issue suspension.
- d. No student shall be suspended until the student has been informed of the reasons for the suspension and given an opportunity to respond.
- e. Prior notice of the intended suspension need not be given when it is clear that the health, safety, or welfare of the school community is threatened.

- f. After giving the student notice of the intended suspension, the school will immediately attempt contact of the parent/guardian to notify the parent of the suspension, its cause, its duration, and the expected restrictions on the student during the suspension. A written confirmation will be mailed to the home.
- g. In those cases where the parent/guardian cannot be reached, every effort should be made to keep the child in school until the end of the school day unless the nature of the offense is so severe that other arrangements are necessary. Written notice will be provided to the student. The student will be expected to deliver the written notice to the parent. Written notice will also be mailed to the parent within a reasonable time period following the assigned suspension.
- h. When a student is suspended beyond three days, the student and parent/guardian have the right to attend an informal hearing, which will be held within the first five days of the suspension. The purpose of the informal hearing is to enable the student and parent to meet with the appropriate school official to explain the circumstances surrounding the incident for which the student is being suspended and for the parent/guardian or the student to show why the student should not be suspended. The informal hearing is meant to encourage the student's parents/guardians to meet with the administrator to discuss ways by which future offenses can be avoided.

The informal hearing includes the following due process requirements:

- 1) Notification of the reasons for the suspension shall be given in writing to the parent/guardian and to the student.
- 2) Sufficient notice of the time and place of the informal hearing shall be given.
- 3) A student has the right to question any witnesses present at the hearing.
- 4) A student has the right to speak and produce witnesses on his own behalf.
- 5) The district shall offer to hold the informal hearing within the first five days of suspension.
- i. Students shall have the right without penalty to make up any work or exams missed while suspended. It is the responsibility of the student to discover what work was missed and complete it in a reasonable time.
- j. When an exceptional student is suspended the process will be in accordance with requirements as defined by state and federal laws and regulations.

2. Expulsion from School

- a. Expulsion is removal of a student from the regular school program for a period of time exceeding ten school days up to, and including, permanent removal from school up to one school term (one year).
- b. All expulsions require an opportunity for the student and parent/guardian to request a formal hearing. The hearing may be held before the board of school directors, a duly authorized committee of the board, or a qualified hearing examiner appointed by the school board. The formal hearing includes the following due process requirements:

- 1) Notification of the charges shall be sent to the student's parent/guardian by certified mail.
 - 2) Sufficient notice of the time and place of the hearing must be given.
 - 3) The hearing shall be held in private unless the student or parent requests a public hearing.
 - 4) The student has the right to be represented by counsel.
 - 5) The student has the right to be presented with the names of witnesses against the student, and copies of the statements and affidavits of those witnesses.
 - 6) The student has the right to request that any such witnesses appear in person and answer questions or be cross-examined.
 - 7) The student has the right to testify and present witnesses on his/her own behalf.
 - 8) A record must be kept of the hearing, either by a stenographer or by tape recorder. The student is entitled, at the student's expense, to a copy of the transcript.
 - 9) The hearing must be held in the time required by law.
- c. During the period prior to the hearing and prior to the decision of the board, the student shall be placed in his/her normal class unless it is determined, after an informal hearing, that a student's presence in his/her normal class would constitute a threat to the health, safety, morals, or welfare of others. If it is not possible to hold a formal hearing within the period of a suspension, the student may be excluded from school for more than ten days, if the formal hearing is not unreasonably delayed. Any student so excluded shall be provided with alternative education, which may include home study.
- d. Where a student disagrees with the results of a hearing, an appeal may be taken to the Court of Common Pleas, or any other appropriate court.
- e. Students who have been expelled who are less than 17 years of age are still subject to the compulsory school attendance law, and they must be provided an education. (See Pennsylvania Act 26 for exceptions)
- 1) The initial responsibility for providing the required education rests with the student's parent/guardian through placement in another school, through tutorial or correspondence study, or through another educational program approved by the superintendent.
 - 2) If the parent/guardian is unable to provide for the required education, they must within 30 days, submit to the school district written evidence so stating. The District then has the responsibility to make some provision for the student's education. If 30 days pass without the district receiving satisfactory evidence that the required education is being provided to the student, it must again contact the parent/guardian and pending the parent's/guardian's

provision of such education, the District must make some provision for the student's education.

- f. Expulsion of any exceptional student will be processed in accordance with all relevant state and federal laws and regulations.

Detention

1. After school detention is held every day from 2:45 p.m. to 3:45 p.m. and on Wednesdays and Fridays from 2:45 p.m. to 5:45 p.m. All settings are managed by a Detention Monitor and students must take work and may be required to summarize in writing what they did while in detention. No talking or sleeping is permitted.
2. Students must fulfill assigned discipline before participation or attendance at school-sponsored events or practices. A student assigned detention may report to practice/ game after detention is served at the discretion of the coach or their parents.
3. Students receiving detention are assigned the next scheduled detention session and are expected to report on the assigned date. Extracurricular participation is not permitted until detention is served. Additional discipline will be assigned to a student that does not report on the assigned date. Failure to serve an assigned detention will result in additional discipline until the original detention is served.

Suspension

1. Students who have in-school or out-of-school suspension are not permitted to participate in or attend school-sponsored activities either at the school or away from the school during the period of suspension. For more information, refer to Policy 233 Suspension and Expulsion.
2. When students are suspended, class assignments must be made up as directed by the teachers. Suspension for 5 days or more may result in placement at an alternative or transitional setting to ensure academic instruction is being conducted.
3. Being on school property without permission while on in-school or out-of-school suspension and the period of extra-curricular suspension will result in additional suspension time assigned to the offending student.
4. Upon return from an out-of-school suspension, an informal meeting may be set up with an administrator. Both the student and his/her parent/guardian may be required to attend the meeting before the student is re-admitted to class.

MENU OF CONSEQUENCES (in order of progression, left to right) Discipline responses to certain or repeated offenses do not need to follow the progression; some consequences may be skipped due to the severity, or the repetition of discipline infractions enacted by students and will be determined by Administration.

A-Verbal or Written Warning B- Notify Principal C-One-Hour Detention
D-Three-Hour Detention E-Friday Detention F-In-School Suspension
G-Out-of-School Suspension H-Alternative Education (A.E.D.Y.) Referral
I-Expulsion Referral J- Alternative/Transitional Setting K-Charges filed with Magistrate

MENU OF OFFENSES (Mandatory Minimum Discipline Response)

1. Cheating/Plagiarism (See page 14 for consequences) **(A/B)**
2. Defiance of authority **(A/B/C/D/E/F/G/H)**
3. Disruption on school buses or at a school activity **(A/B/C)**
4. Dress Code Violation **(A/B/C/D/E; must spend remainder of the day in the Behavior Improvement Room if appropriate clothing cannot or will not be worn.)**
5. Engaging in any conduct or activity contrary to, or in violation of, the Pennsylvania Controlled Substance, Drug, Device, and Cosmetic Act including without limitation the possession, sale, or use of drugs, narcotics, or alcohol on school property or at school- sponsored functions.* **(F/G/H/I/J/K)**
6. Engaging in any conduct or activity contrary to, or in violation of the Pennsylvania Crimes Code, ordinance of any municipality within the school district, or published regulations of the school district.* **(F/G/H/I/J/K)**
7. Failure to comply with assigned disciplinary consequence (including Extracurricular Suspension- (mandatory minimum of **E**) **(E/F/G/H)**
8. Failure to comply with a reasonable request.**(A/B/C)**
9. Fighting* **(G/H/I/J/K)**
10. Failure to report to assigned classes or study halls as scheduled. **(A/B/C)**
11. Hazing **(E/F/G/J)**
12. Insubordination and/or incorrigibility **(A/B/C)**
13. Participating in a food fight or throwing food in the cafeteria or in any other location on school grounds* **(E/F/G/H)**
14. Jeopardizing the health or safety of school personnel or members of the student body* **(E/F/G/H/I/J/K)**
15. Performing an act of violence against school personnel or members of the student body* **(E/F/G/H/I/J/K)**
16. Unauthorized use of electronic device; confiscation of device **(B/D)**
17. Possession of a dangerous weapon* **(G/H/I/J/K)**
18. Possession, use or sale of tobacco/vape materials* **(B/F/G)**
19. Possession of items prohibited on school property* **(F/G/H/J)**
20. Profanity directed at a school employee **(D/E/F)**
21. Public display of affection **(B/C/D)**
22. Serious or persistent disruption of classes **(D/E/F)**
23. Truancy **(K, Ref. to Juv. Prob.)** / Tardy to Class **(Lunch Det. day of Tardy)**
24. Theft* **(F/G/H/I/J/K)**

25. Threat of physical harm **(D/E/F/G/J)**
26. Leaving class / school property during school hours without authorization**(D/E/F)**
27. Unauthorized possession and/or use of school property **(F/G/H/I/J/K)**
28. Unlawful Harassment/Sexual Harassment* **(F/G/H/I/J)**
29. Use of obscene or vulgar language; profanity **(C/D/E/F)**
30. Use of technology for purposes without teacher permission **(See Acceptable Use Policy & C/D/E/F)**
31. Vandalism/Destruction of school property* **(F/G/H/I/J/K & Costs)**
32. Violation of the rights of others **(F/G/H)**
- 33.** Expression Violation conversely affecting others **(A/B/C/D/E/F)**
34. Other **(Discretion of the Administration)**

Consequences are subject to the discretion of the school administrator handling the infraction. Offenses marked with an asterisk () are considered serious and may be referred for adjudication pursuant to Act 26 (24 P.S. §13- 1317.2) of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Any Act 26 offense may also result in an investigation by local police authorities, which may result in criminal charges, or a summary offense levied against the student.*

STUDENT ACTIVITIES EXCLUSION FOR SUSPENSIONS

If a student receives an in-school or out-of-school suspension, the following activities exclusion will immediately apply:

NUMBER OF SUSPENSION DAYS	MULTIPLIER	PERIOD OF ACTIVITIES EXCLUSION
1 to 3 days suspension	3	1-3 school days
4 to 6 days suspension	3	5 school days
7 to 10 days suspension	4	10 school days

A student activities exclusion applies to the following events, as a participant and/or spectator in our school:

- An athletic event (home or away), inclusive of an athletic contest, scrimmage, or practice. Students are also not permitted to attend these events as a spectator.
- Any club or co-curricular activity sponsored in part or full by the school district.
- The usage of any district athletic facilities
- An after-school or weekend activity affiliated with the school district
- A field trip or scheduled event affiliated with the school district

In situations where participation fees are paid in advance of the event or activity, Ferndale Area Junior-Senior High School is not responsible for any reimbursement as a result of a disciplinary consequence.

Discrimination Policy

The Ferndale Area School District will not discriminate in its educational programs, activities, or employment practices, based on race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, ancestry, union membership, or any other legally protected classification. Announcement of this policy is in accordance with state and federal laws, including Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

The Ferndale Area School District employees and participants who have an inquiry or complaint of harassment or discrimination or who need information about accommodations for persons with disabilities should contact the District Title IX Coordinator through mail at: Administrative Office, 100 Dartmouth Avenue, Johnstown, PA 15905, or via telephone at: telephone: (814) 535-1507. (See Policy #103)

Dress Code

Student clothing must be neat and clean with no depictions promoting drugs, alcohol, tobacco, sex, racism, violence, weapons, obscene language, inappropriate messages, vulgarity, double meaning, or anything that would be inconsistent with acceptable public behavior or disruptive to the learning environment.

Short shorts and short skirts are prohibited. Shorts and skirts are to be no shorter than the "Fingertip Rule" (tip of their fingers while their hands are at their sides, fully extended. (If it's close, an administrator will make the final decision.)

The following are not permitted: pajamas, exposed midriff, low-cut/plunging neckline shirts, open shirts showing inappropriate bare skin or undergarments (including sport bras), and visible undergarments (including underwear). Tops must provide appropriate coverage. Sagging pants that expose shorts/undergarments are not permitted.

Any clothing above the "Fingertip Rule" that has holes, rips, tears or is transparent / translucent are prohibited.

Excessively shredded and/or ripped jeans/pants/shorts/shirts and any other excessively shredded/ripped article of clothing are prohibited.

Hats and other head coverings, including bandanas, sweatbands, "do-rags", wave caps, and hoodie hoods will not be worn in the building at any time.

Bandanas are not to be worn or visible on a student at any time.

Jewelry should not be disruptive to the learning environment or pose a safety concern:

- No large, sharp, dangling necklaces or bracelets
- No chains hanging from belts, purses, pockets or wallets
- No animal collars or excessive necklaces or bracelets

- No pendants that represent a weapon, promotes drug/alcohol use, or contains any liquid substance.

Make-up and hairstyles must be consistent with the stated dress and appearance philosophy:

Hairstyles and makeup that interferes with or disrupts the classroom-learning environment are prohibited.

Footwear must be worn at all times. Any footwear that poses a safety hazard is not permitted. Shoelaces should be tied.

Outerwear, such as jackets and sunglasses, may not be worn in the classroom. Dress code also applies to dress during Physical Education (especially shorts length and footwear; tennis shoes).

Dress code also applies to dress during Physical Education (especially shorts length and footwear; tennis shoes). Students who refuse to modify their attire may be sent home, parents may be contacted to bring appropriate clothing or may remain in the “Behavior Intervention Room” until appropriate clothing is obtained. Repeated lack of cooperation will result in additional or more substantial disciplinary action, including in-school suspension.

Consequences for Dress Code Violations

Dress Code Violation (A/B/C/D/E; must spend remainder of the day in the Behavior Improvement Room if appropriate clothing cannot or will not be worn.)

Drills

Periodic emergency drills are a necessary part of the school safety routine. The object of these drills is to clear the building as quickly as possible with no disorder.

When the fire alarm is sounded, all classroom windows and doors are to be closed; lights are to be turned off. Students are to go swiftly and quietly to the exit designated for each room. Go directly to the areas designated for your safety.

These drills are for the safety of students and are extremely important. For this reason, running, shoving, pushing, or any other kind of thoughtless behavior will not be tolerated. Other drills will be conducted for bomb threats, severe weather alerts, and/or other catastrophic possibilities. Teachers will provide specific directions prior to these drills.

Drug-Free Schools

The Drug Free Schools Policy is established by the Ferndale Area School District pursuant to the Drug Free Act of 1988. It shall be unlawful to manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, or use any controlled substance within the meaning of Section 202 of the Controlled Substance Act. All students shall abide by this policy. Those who violate this policy shall receive consequences in accordance with disciplinary procedures outlined in this handbook. In addition, the District will file charges with the

law enforcement on each case. For more information, reference Policy 227 Controlled Substance/Paraphernalia.

Weapons Policy

For the safety of all, the federal and state governments have enacted laws and the Ferndale Area School Board has adopted a policy that bans weapons of any kind in the school or on school property. **Failure to comply with this policy will result in suspension and may result in expulsion from school regardless of age.**

It is very important for parents to be aware of and carefully monitor the items (toys and weapon replicas) that children possess and pack in their book bags and pockets. **The only way to prevent a serious incident is to prohibit dangerous objects and weapons on school property.** Parents/guardians and students will be asked to sign a form confirming their awareness of the Ferndale Area School District policy and consequences regarding weapons on school property. Your cooperation is extremely important in this matter. (Policy #218.1)

Drug/Weapon Detection

In order to better ensure the safety and well-being of the school community, drug-sniffing dogs, weapon-sniffing dogs, and hand-held metal detectors will be periodically used to conduct searches of the school grounds and student lockers. For more information, reference Policy 218.1 Weapons.

Dual Enrollment

Ferndale Area High School has partnered with local colleges to offer college-level Dual Enrollment courses during the regular school year. Taking advantage of this post-secondary experience may jumpstart a student's college career by giving him/her the opportunity to earn college credits while still in high school. In order to enroll in dual enrollment courses students should:

1. Acquire the Dual Enrollment Application from the School Counseling office
2. Designate the Dual Enrollment courses in which they wish to enroll
3. Return the completed application with the payment to the college associated with the credit of interest
4. Upon completion of the course and after the grades are reported to the college, a grade report will be mailed to the student from the college

Final Examinations

A Final Examination **should not** be administered in any courses.

Flag Salute

Every student and citizen has the responsibility to show respect for his/her country and its flag. However, students do not have to join in the pledge of allegiance or salute the flag if they choose not to on the basis of personal beliefs or religious convictions. Students who do not want to participate in the ceremony must respect the rights of others.

Gifted Services

Ferndale Area School District provides a systematic screening and evaluation to determine the needs of gifted students as required by Chapter 16 of the Pennsylvania School Code. The screening process may result in a gifted evaluation and a Gifted Individual Education Plan (GIEP) for students who meet state requirements. For further information contact the School Counselor. For more information reference Policy 114, Gifted Services.

Grading

It is necessary for a student to be in regular attendance in order to grasp the important aspects of every course. Failure to do so will result in losing information and inter-related experiences with teachers and peers essential to the fulfillment of the criteria established for each course. **Illegal absences (Unexcused), may result in students receiving a failing grade for work assigned that day, including quizzes, tests, labs, homework, etc. assigned and/or scheduled for that day.**

End of marking period grades are based on each grading period and are not cumulative. It is necessary to obtain a passing grade each report period to be guaranteed a passing final grade for the subject. Simply accumulating grades during the first semester or first few grading periods in order to expect a passing grade on the basis of final grade average is not a proper approach to an education.

Incomplete grades must be made up within ten (10) school days after the current grading period (no Incompletes will be issued for the 4th Marking Period). Exceptions will be approved by administration. If incomplete work is not completed within the designated time, a "failing grade" will be assigned to the incomplete assignments and the final grade will be averaged. It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements with the teacher and to see that his/her work is made up to comply with the above requirements.

Percentages of 0.5 or greater will be rounded up to the next whole number. Percentages of 0.4 or less will remain the same. Class rank for students in grade nine through twelve is determined using percentages. Using a weighted ranking system, greater emphasis is placed upon more challenging courses. Courses in this advanced category require study that goes beyond the classroom explanations. Most work is challenging at the higher level of cognition. These courses are accelerated, demand higher than average reading skills, and provide enrichment opportunities for able students. The Advanced Placement courses are examples, and they follow the College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB) syllabus to prepare the students for the advanced

placement tests in particular subject areas. The following courses are considered advanced work and their percentages are weighted:

English 9 Honors	Algebra II Honors
English 10 Honors	Trigonometry
English 11 Honors	Calculus
English 12 Honors	Geometry Honors
AP English Lit (1.2 credits)	Anatomy and Physiology/lab (1.4 credits)
AP English Language (1.2 credits)	Advanced Chemistry/lab (1.4 credits)
French 4 (5 if available)	Physics
Spanish 4 (5 if available)	AP United States History (1.2 credits)
AP US Govt. & Politics (1.2 credits)	

This weighted system is used for the college admissions process. The procedure for weighting is used for calculations for determining honor roll, class rank, and eligibility for other honor programs such as the annual Academic Awards Ceremony.

For more information, reference Policy 214 Class Rank.

Note: Class rank will only be run at the end of the school year when Q4/Sem 2/Y1 grades are finalized.

Greater Johnstown Career and Technical Center (GJCTC)

The Guidance Counselor will make announcements regarding class meetings concerning the availability of CTC applications. It is the student's responsibility of initiating their request to the school counselor, who will inform the principal. Application packets for GJCTC will be reviewed by the guidance counselor, building, and district administration who will offer their approval or denial.

Students who are currently enrolled in the Ferndale Area Junior-Senior High School and who are interested in the Career and Technical Center program should complete and submit an application form to the School Counseling office prior to the first of March for admission to the Greater Johnstown Career and Technical Center (GJCTC) for the next term beginning in September. Students must be at least a sophomore and in good academic standing (grades and attendance) to attend GJCTC.

Students are to return the completed application to the school counselor with student and parent/guardian signatures. Students will be notified of acceptance or rejection by the district and GJCTC. Students scheduled for GJCTC must satisfy all outstanding obligations and complete graduation requirements of Ferndale Area Junior-Senior High School.

Students are required to ride the bus to and from the Greater Johnstown Career and Technology Center unless prior approval from FAJSHS administration and GJCTC is obtained. A signed note excusing attendance from GJCTC or the bus to and/or from the GJCTC MUST be provided prior to administrative approval; no phone calls will be made or received to excuse attendance from GJCTC or the bus ride. For more information reference Policy 115 Career and Technical Education.

It is expected that every GJCTC student attends the GJCTC every day it is in session (unless approved by administration), this includes days that Ferndale Area has an early dismissal - FASD does provide transportation on these days. Additionally, students will no longer be excused from GJCTC to stay at the High School for make-up academic work as tutoring is available after school as needed. For the 2025-2026 academic year and beyond, if a student accumulates 10 unexcused days during the academic year they will be removed from the GJCTC and be required to meet non-GJCTC graduation requirements. Additionally, if a student accumulates 3 unexcused absences, driving privileges to the GJCTC will be revoked. Academics at Ferndale Area High School are also important and failure of courses may also result in removal from GJCTC programming.

Guidelines Regarding the Legal Name of a Student

Each student has one and only one legal name. This name will be the **only one** used by the Ferndale Area School District in **any OFFICIAL** communications and dealings with the student, including official records. Preferred names may be used on report cards, homework papers, class lists, and verbal communications. In accordance with the Pennsylvania School Law, Volume 1, Chapter 95, and Section 95.06:

*“the name of a child may be legally changed in only **TWO** ways: through court adoption proceedings or name change by order of the court.”*

Upon receipt of **AN OFFICIAL DOCUMENT FROM THE COURT** indicating adoption or name change, the school district will **IMMEDIATELY** change all records to comply with such change. Any questions should be directed to the Superintendent at 814-535-1507.

Hall Passes

Students are not permitted to travel from one area of the school to another without having an authorized pass through e-Hallpass. **Students traveling without authorization will be disciplined according to the discipline code.** Teachers will not admit a student into their classroom without proper authorization.

HALT! Bullying Prevention Program

If a child believes that he/she is being harassed, bullied, or mistreated by another student, he/she should first contact a teacher or school counselor. The teacher or counselor will attempt to resolve the problem. If the problem continues, the child should then contact the administration. In all cases the child should tell an adult at school and then an adult at home.

There is a stark difference between bullying and normal personal conflicts in adolescents. By definition, bullying is when someone is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, and he/she has difficulty defending himself/herself. The junior and senior high school has implemented the HALT! Bullying Prevention Program (Olweus) and adopted the slogan H.I.V.E. = “Honor & Integrity with a Vision of Excellence”

Ferndale Area Junior/Senior High School's Anti-Bullying Rules:

1. We will not bully others.
2. We will try to help others who are bullied.
3. We will try to include students who are left out.
4. If we know someone who is being bullied, we will tell an adult at school and an adult at home.

For more information contact our school counselor and reference Policy 249 Bullying/Cyberbullying.

Harassment

FASD is committed to the maintenance of a safe, positive learning environment for all students that is free from discrimination, by providing all students course offerings, counseling, assistance, services, employment, athletics, and extracurricular activities without any form of discrimination, including Title 9 sexual harassment. Discrimination is inconsistent with the rights of students and the educational and programmatic goals of the district and is prohibited at, or in the course of, district-sponsored programs or activities, including transportation to or from school or school-sponsored activities.

Violations of this policy, including acts of retaliation as described in this policy, or knowingly providing false information, may result in disciplinary consequences under applicable Board policy and procedures.

See the full policy #103 on the district website (under district, board, board policies)

Hazing

The Ferndale Area School District does not condone any form of initiation or harassment, known as hazing, as part of any school-sponsored student activity. No student, coach, sponsor, volunteer, or district employee shall plan, direct, encourage, assist, or engage in any hazing activity. The school encourages students who have been subjected to hazing to promptly report such incidents to the building principal. District administrators shall promptly investigate all complaints of hazing and administer appropriate discipline to any individual who violates this policy. For more information reference Policy 247 Hazing.

High School Course Completion by 7th & 8th Grade Students

In exceptional situations, students are capable of advanced academic work. Students who complete high school courses during their 7th & 8th grade years will have the option of having the credits and their grades factored into their high school grade point average (GPA) for those courses. Decisions made toward course inclusion on high school transcripts will be required to be made at the conclusion of the student's 8th grade year. Courses completed, but not included on the high school transcript, will require students to complete all graduation requirements during grades 9-12. For more information, reference Policy 215 Promotion and Retention.

High School Course Completion by 9th through 12th Grade Students

Students in grades 9th through 12th are expected to meet or exceed grade level expectations in order to meet graduation requirements. In the event that a student has not met grade level expectations, Summer School will provide an opportunity for credit recovery. If a student or his/her parent(s) chooses not to take advantage of Summer School, they do so with the knowledge that the student will not remain on track to graduate with his/her class. For more information, reference Policy 215 Promotion and Retention.

<u>Status</u>	<u>Minimum Credits Earned</u>
Grade 9 – Freshman	Less than 6.0
Grade 10 – Sophomore	6.0
Grade 11 – Junior	12.0
Grade 12 – Senior	18.0
Graduation Eligible	25.0

Homebound Instruction

Homebound instruction is available to students who, with a physician and/or psychiatrist's excuse, are unable to physically attend school for an extended period of time, **due to hospitalization or home confinement**. Homebound instruction may be provided when an approved, temporary absence extends beyond two weeks. Students who are excused from school for less than two weeks can obtain their daily homework and assignments by contacting the high school office "Application-for Temporary Extended Absences" must be completed and submitted to the School's Administration for approval before Homebound will be considered.

Homebound instruction may be provided for a maximum of three months. If the physician/psychiatrist determines there is a need beyond three months, then another Application for Temporary Extended Absences must be submitted. Homebound instruction can be provided for a maximum of five hours per week.

To secure homebound instruction, a request form from the high school office must be signed by the physician to indicate the nature of the disability and the length of absence. The form should be returned to the high school office and necessary arrangements to have a certified instructor sent to the home will be made, providing a mutual time can be arranged. These services are provided at no cost to the parent. For more information, reference Policy 117 Homebound Instruction.

Honor Roll

Highest Honors	95.0000% and greater
High Honors	90.0000% to 94.9999%
Honors	85.0000% to 89.9999%

Percentages are an average of all marking period grades. Any grade earned which is lower than an 80% makes the student ineligible for the honor roll.

Inclement Weather

In the event that it is necessary to close or delay the opening of schools because of hazardous weather conditions or for any other school emergencies, the district utilizes the One Call Now automated system to notify parents and students by phone. The following radio and television stations will also be notified:

WJAC-TV	Channel 6
WTAJ-TV	Channel 10
WGLU	92.1 FM
WKYE	96.5 FM
WYSN	101.7 FM
WJAC	850 AM
WADJ	1330 AM
WMTZ	1490 AM

Before your child leaves for the bus stop, he/she should check for such announcements. Because media systems sometimes break down, it is advisable to check two or three different locations to verify the school closing or delay. Notice will also be provided through the aforementioned systems in the event of a non-scheduled early dismissal from school.

Independent Study

Independent study is available to students who would like to maximize their course enrollment. Students interested in independent study must be a motivated self-starter and be able to work independently. All independent studies must be channeled through one period of a student's school day. One or more courses may be taken during that period, but the student will be responsible for all course requirements. Courses available at FAHS must be taken with a FAHS teacher, unless there is a scheduling conflict. Students will receive credit for the number of independent study classes completed. Students cannot take an Independent Study without approval of the parent(s)/guardian(s), school counselor, Independent Study teacher, administration, and the FASD Board of Education. For more information, reference Policy 118 Independent Study. **Independent Study** courses will not be factored into GPA or class rank.

Literature, Leaflets, and Newspapers Distribution

The administration may prohibit the distribution or dissemination of student-originated material on school grounds when such material would, in her/his judgment, materially and substantially interrupt the educational process or intrude upon the rights of others. The distribution of leaflets, newspapers, petitions and other electronic or printed materials on school district properties by a student, parent, or community group is permitted only with the approval of the building principal. For more information, refer to Policy 220 Student Expression/Distribution and Posting of Materials.

Searches

All lockers are and shall remain the property of the Ferndale Area School District. **Students shall only have limited expectations concerning privacy in their use of school lockers.** Under no circumstances should students share lockers with other students. The contents of a locker have been determined by the courts to be in the possession and property of the student assigned to that locker. Locker searches will be conducted by the administration when reasonable suspicion exists. The student assigned to the locker being searched may be present when the search takes place, when the circumstance allows. In the event of a locker search producing contraband, the student will face disciplinary action in accordance with the Discipline Code. If said contraband is an illegal substance or material that poses a threat to the school community, parents and Local Law Enforcement officials will be contacted and action in accordance with the Discipline Code will be taken. For more information, reference Policy 226 Searches.

Medication Administration during School Hours

The school district will cooperate with parents and their medical practitioners in distributing prescribed medications when it must be taken during school hours. For more information, reference Policy 210 Use of Medication. Ideally, all medication should be given at home. It is also recognized that at the present time many students are able to attend regular school because of the effectiveness of medication in the treatment of chronic disabilities and illnesses. However, any student who is required to take medication during the regular school day must comply with school regulations.

Therefore, prescription medication will be administered by the school nurse under the following conditions:

1. Upon written request from the physician and parent/guardian to the school officials that medication must be administered to the student during school hours. Included in the request must be the name of the student, name of medication, dosage, frequency and route of administration, and physician's signature.
2. All medication must be in the original protective container and properly labeled by the physician or pharmacy.

The administration of non-prescription medication is discouraged and can usually be avoided by adjusting the time schedule around school hours. If it is absolutely necessary for a child to receive nonprescription medication during school hours, it will be administered by the school nurse under the following conditions:

1. Receipt of written request or authorization from parent or guardian and a physician's signature.
2. Included within the request must be the name of the student, name of medication, dosage, frequency of administration, and route of administration.
3. All medication must remain in its original unopened container that is properly labeled.

All medications (prescription and non-prescription) must be transported to and from school by a parent or guardian for the safety of all students. No student will be permitted to carry any medication at any time. Any medications not picked up by a parent at the end of the school year will be discarded.

A student may carry inhalers and epinephrine auto-injectors only after written consent by a physician is provided to verify student knowledge of the use and administration of the medication. For more information, reference Policy 210.1 Possession/Use of Asthma Inhalers. Neither the school nurse nor authorized staff will dispense medications of any kind without written permission from the parent/guardian and a physician.

National Honor Society

Membership

1. Membership in local chapters is an honor, not a right, bestowed upon a student. Selection for membership is by a faculty council and is based on outstanding scholarship, character, leadership, and service. Once selected, members have the responsibility to continue to demonstrate these qualities.
2. Candidates become members when inducted at a special ceremony. Participation in the Induction Ceremony is mandatory for membership.
3. A National Honor Society member who transfers to another school and brings a letter from the former principal or chapter advisor to the new school advisor shall be accepted automatically as a member in the new school's chapter. Transfer members must meet the new chapter's standards within one semester in order to retain membership.
4. Members who resign or are dismissed are never again eligible for membership or its benefits.
5. Each year one or more service projects shall be completed by the members of the National Honor Society. All members are required to participate in these projects.

Selection of Members

1. To be eligible for membership, the candidate must have spent at least one semester in this school and be a member of the sophomore, junior or senior class.
2. Candidates must have a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 91.0000%, A, or 3.50 (on a 4.00 scale) or its equivalent standard of excellence. Candidates shall then be evaluated on the basis of service, leadership, and character.
3. A completed application / Student Activity Form is necessary for students interested in membership into the National Honor Society.

4. The selection of each member to the chapter shall be by a majority vote of the entire faculty based on Service, Leadership and Character.
5. The National Council and the NASSP shall not review the judgment of the faculty council regarding selection of individual members to local chapters.

Open Containers

Students are not permitted to bring into the school any containers that have been opened from their original seal. This can include soda bottles, pop cans, coffee mugs/cups, etc. If a student is witnessed drinking from an open container in their locker, the drink will be confiscated and discarded. If a closed bottle is brought into the school, the student is only permitted to open the container and drink the contents in the lunchroom or after school. Sealable water bottles will be permitted during the school day.

Parking and Student Vehicles

The Ferndale Area School District provides bus transportation for all students who do not reside in the Ferndale Borough. Student driving is not condoned and the FASD does not provide parking for students. For safety reasons students are requested to use the provided bus transportation. Parking on school property is limited to school personnel only. All others will be towed at the owner's expense.

Photographs/Website

A commercial photographer takes colored photographs of students annually. There is no obligation to purchase these photographs.

The Ferndale Area School District maintains a district website and district-maintained social media sites to inform parents of pertinent district information.

Throughout the year, pictures are taken to post on our web site and district-maintained social media sites and for use in classroom instruction. Parents or guardians of a student may deny this picture taking procedure to school administration by submitting a written letter each year prior to the beginning of school to the high school office specifically denying web site pictures.

Progress Monitoring

Parents and students have the ability to monitor current student grades at any time through accessing the PowerSchool Parent portal. However, in addition to the online access, progress reports **may be** mailed home at the midpoint of each marking period. Parents should regularly check grades in PowerSchool to monitor student achievement throughout the grading periods. If you do not have access to a computer to monitor your child's grades online, or if you do not know how to access the PowerSchool parent portal, please contact the FAJSHS Office by calling 814-288-5757.

Prom for Juniors and Seniors

The location of the Prom is determined each year by the Grade 11 officers. No less than four faculty supervisors plus one police officer are required to be in attendance. Students must remain inside the facility and at the dance for the duration of the event. If a student needs to leave the dance for an emergency, the parent/guardian must appear in person and meet with the administrators and/or faculty chaperones in supervision at the dance. After leaving, students may not return to the dance. All decorations are to be removed by the Prom Committee at the conclusion of the Prom. Any bag brought to the Prom must be checked in at the door, can be picked up when the student leaves, and is subject to search. The Prom is for juniors and seniors; however, the junior or senior student may invite a guest. Guests must be in at least Grade 9 and under 21 years of age in order to be permitted to attend the prom. Students must register guests from outside the school with the administration prior to purchasing tickets for the Prom. All attendees to the Prom must be a student in good academic standing with no outstanding obligations **no later than the Friday preceding the event.**

Homecoming

The location of the Homecoming is determined each year by the NHS officers. No less than four faculty supervisors plus one police officer are required to be in attendance. Students must remain inside the facility and at the dance for the duration of the event. If a student needs to leave the dance for an emergency, the parent/guardian must appear in person and meet with the administrators and/or faculty chaperones in supervision at the dance. After leaving, students may not return to the dance. All decorations are to be removed by the NHS Officers at the conclusion of Homecoming. Any bag brought to the Prom must be checked in at the door, can be picked up when the student leaves, and is subject to search. Homecoming is for grades 9-12 only. Students must register guests from outside the school with the administration prior to purchasing tickets. All attendees at Homecoming must be students in good academic standing with no outstanding obligations **no later than the Friday preceding the event.**

Public Attendance at School Events

The Ferndale Area School District encourages the public to attend activities and events sponsored by the district, but it also maintains that order and preservation of school facilities must be managed.

Any individual whose conduct may constitute a disruption can be prohibited from attendance at a school event or program. Illegal gambling and the possession and use of controlled substances, tobacco products, alcoholic beverages and weapons on school premises are strictly prohibited. (Policy #904)

Rehabilitation Act—Section 504 (Persons with a Disability)

The Ferndale Area School District, in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, provides that no otherwise qualified individual with a

disability shall, solely by reason of his/her disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any program sponsored by the Ferndale Area School District.

Also, the School District does not discriminate in hiring of the disabled, provided reasonable accommodations to an applicant's disability can be made. If a student believes that he/she has been discriminated against because of their disability, he/she should first discuss it with their administration. If the problem is not resolved at this level, the student should obtain a "Section 504" grievance form and submit it according to the directions provided with the form. Any questions concerning "504 plans" should be directed to the School Counseling Offices.

Safety and Security

To ensure continued safety within the school there have been cameras installed at various locations. Monitors for each camera are located in the office and viewed by school district employees and law enforcement personnel only. All visitors must be authenticated for entry into the high school as a first-level security measure. There is one main entrance open for public use and all visitors must report to the office upon entering the building to sign in and receive a visitor's pass. Anyone entering the school must use the front door. All other doors are locked. Students are not permitted to open doors for any reason; to allow anyone access to the building, to hang out the doorway, etc. Doors should not be propped open for any reason.

Scheduling

Each spring students must register for classes for the next school year through the School Counseling Office. Course registration information may be found on the school's website. Please review class selections very carefully. Students can only add or drop a course **with prior approval from the principal after need has been established**. The administration reserves the right to change schedules when it becomes necessary due to class size, student needs, etc.

School Counseling Services

A School Counselor is available to any student in order to assist with:

1. Adjusting to school
2. Improving their grades
3. Discussing and dealing with concerns
4. Working through problems
5. Exploring options and reaching decisions
6. Acquiring career and job-related information
7. Monitoring their progress towards reaching graduation requirements
8. Participation in career and post-secondary education exploration

Students also receive information from the school counselor through classroom visits, small group counseling sessions, individual conferences, school announcements, and bulletins. Important information alerting parents and students to special evening presentations, tests, and other programs will be sent home. Admission officers from college, trade, technical, and business schools, and the military will visit the School Counseling Office. Students may schedule appointments to meet with them.

Any student with an educational, vocational, or personal problem is encouraged to schedule an appointment to discuss the matter with his/her school counselor. Ferndale Area encourages students and parents to take advantage of the school counseling services provided. For more information, reference to Policy 112 Guidance Counseling.

School Dances

All dances are required to have four faculty supervisors plus one police officer to be in attendance. Students must remain inside the facility and at the dance for the duration of the event. If a student needs to leave the dance for an emergency, the parent/guardian must appear in person and meet with the administrators and/or faculty chaperones in supervision at the dance. After leaving, students may not return to the dance. Clubs and organizations are to remove all decorations at the conclusion of the dance and restore the gym for class usage.

Book bags, gym bags, etc., if brought to the dance must be checked in at the door and can be picked up when the student leaves. Any bags brought to the dance are subject to search. Students must be in at least Grade 7 and under 21 years of age in order to be permitted to attend the dance. Students must register guests from outside the school with the administration prior to the dance. All attendees to dances must be students in good academic standing with no outstanding obligations **no later than the Friday preceding the event.**

School Issued Materials Responsibility

All basic texts and related materials are provided to students for their use during the school year. Students are expected to take proper care of their textbooks. Students are responsible for their condition and return. If a student receives a damaged book, he or she must inform the teacher of its condition immediately. **Stolen books are the responsibility of the student to whom it was originally distributed.**

Students will be charged the prevailing textbook replacement cost. If the book is found, monies will be refunded. In the event that the textbooks are damaged beyond ordinary wear and tear, the student or his/her parents are required to pay for the damage. The same requirement applies in the event that textbooks or library books are lost or stolen. Students, who are issued any equipment or supplies, including athletic equipment, may be held responsible for its return in an acceptable condition.

In addition, Ferndale Area Jr. /Sr. High School students have an opportunity that most schools do not provide; each student in grades 7 - 12 receives an iPad to use throughout the school year. However, the students are ultimately responsible for the care and possession of the iPads. Lost, broken, or inoperable iPads must be replaced

through the district, as well as chargers and screens that are broken or scratched. Significantly lower prices for replacement parts and repairs are arranged through the district. Failure to replace or repair broken items will result in the delay or forfeiture of the reissuance of an iPad the following school year, and could also have repercussions in regards to graduation, extracurricular activities, and sports participation.

School Nurse

School nursing time is shared with the Elementary school. Schedule is dependent upon medications and students' needs at each school building. Students are not permitted to use the nursing station to rest unless authorized by the school nurse or administrative staff. Students too sick to attend class should have the nurse or administrator, in the absence of a nurse, contact the child's parent or guardian to pick them up.

There are certain instances when the school nurse is mandated by the PA Department of Health to exclude students from school. An example is when there is a question of a communicable disease (pink eye, lice, etc.). If excluded, the student will have to be seen and released by a physician prior to returning to school. Written notification from the releasing physician is required to return to school.

The PA School Code mandates that all children receive a physical assessment from a licensed professional at the following times:

- Upon entry/enrollment
- Grade 6
- Grade 11

It also requires that all students receive a dental screening conducted by a licensed professional at the following times

- Upon entry/enrollment
- Grade 3
- Grade 7

All physicals and dentals done by your family doctor must be turned into the school no later than October 31 of the current school year. It may be dated up to one year prior to this date. Any student who does not turn in a mandated physical or dental form will be scheduled to be seen by the school physician and/or the school dentist.

School Vaccination Requirements have been updated for the 2020 school year for attendance in Pennsylvania schools. Please see www.fasdk12.org/documents/NEW_IMMUNIZATION-2018-2019.pdf. (Policy #203)

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment means unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, and other inappropriate verbal, written, or physical conduct of a sexual nature that takes place under any of the following circumstances:

When submission to such conduct is made, explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of employment, instruction, or participation in school activities or programs; when submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used by the offender as the basis for making personal or academic decisions affecting the individual subjected to sexual advances; when such conduct has the effect of unreasonably interfering with the individual's work; or when such conduct has the effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or learning environment.

It is the policy of the Ferndale Area School District to provide learning and working atmosphere for students, employees, and visitors free from sexual harassment. It is a violation of this policy for any administrator, teacher, or other employee, or any student to engage in or condone sexual harassment. It is the responsibility **of every employee** to recognize acts of sexual harassment and take every action necessary to ensure that the applicable policies and procedures of this school district are implemented. Any student who believes that he or she has been subject to sexual harassment should bring the concern **to any school employee**, the School Counselor or Principal. The student may file a complaint in accordance with the district's prohibition of sexual harassment policy. For more information, reference Policy 103 Nondiscrimination/ Discriminatory Harassment - School and Classroom Practices.

Signs and Posters

Permission from the administration must be received to display signs and posters. Signs and posters must be taped to the tile walls and/or stapled on specified bulletin boards. Do not tape posters to plastered walls, windows or doors. For more information, reference Policy 220 Student Expression/Distribution and Posting of Materials.

Student Assistance Program – “BEES”- Because Everyone Experiences Stress

The Student Assistance Program (SAP) is a program in the Junior-Senior High School designed to identify and assist students who may have issues that pose as barriers to learning and school success (e.g., drugs, alcohol, emotional). The SAP faculty members are professionally trained to use a systematic process to identify problems and recommend resources to help students based upon observations.

Our Student Assistance Program is a voluntary and supportive program for students and their parents. Referrals should be made to the school counselor, administration, or faculty who will assist the student through this difficult situation. SAP is a system of tiered interventions, not a treatment program that requires parent permission for participation. SAP members include the administration, the School Counselor, the school nurse, the Social Worker, and trained teachers (see FASD website for a list of members' names). For more information, reference Policy 236 Student Assistance Program.

Student Records

A copy of the Student Records Policy 216 of the Ferndale Area School District is available for inspection in the High School Office at 600 Harlan Avenue Johnstown, PA 15905 by appointment only; please call the high school secretary to make an appointment.

Student Recruitment

In accordance with law, the Board shall permit disclosure of required student information about secondary students to representatives of postsecondary institutions and to representatives of the Armed Forces of the United States. Equitable access to secondary students shall be granted to postsecondary education representatives, military recruiters and prospective employers.

Postsecondary institutions and military recruiters shall have access to secondary students' names, addresses and telephone numbers, unless the student or parent/guardian requests that such information not be released without prior written parental consent. (Policy #250)

Student Searches

Searching students will only take place when reasonable suspicion, as determined by the administration, exists. Searches of students and student property may only be conducted by the administration. Searches will consist of the emptying of pockets, purses, book bags, and other personal articles including, but not limited to, shoes, socks and if deemed warranted, a "pat-down" of the student to detect hidden/concealed objects. For more information, reference Policy 226 Searches.

The following procedure will be followed in the searching of a student:

1. The student will be questioned by the administration about the incident/concern whenever possible. Reasonable suspicion will be determined at this time.
2. The student will have the opportunity to voluntarily produce the item(s) he/she is suspected of having in his/her possession. If the student produces the item(s) in question, parents will be contacted immediately. If deemed necessary, Local Law Enforcement officials will be contacted.
3. If a student voluntarily participates in the search, the search will be conducted by the administration. Upon the conclusion of the search, regardless of what, if any items are found, the parent/guardian will be contacted.
4. If a student refuses to be searched by school officials, parents and local law enforcement officials will be contacted and the student may face a search conducted by law enforcement officials, off school premises.
5. In the event of a weapon or a controlled or dangerous substance being confiscated as a result of a search, students will face disciplinary action according to the Discipline Code and criminal charges and proceedings through the local law enforcement agency.

6. Searches by the administration may include the use of hand wands or metal-detection units.

Study Hall (Academic Learning Center)

A Study Hall *may* be considered in a student's schedule, if necessary to promote academic support and excellence. In general, study halls are strongly discouraged. If a study hall is scheduled, any participating student will observe the following regulations:

1. Students should be on time. Assigned seats are to be taken quickly and quietly.
2. Attendance will be taken each period. The office will be notified of any missing student whose name does not appear on the Daily Bulletin.
3. An e-Hallpass appointment must be provided each period for students to sign out for activities, to attend classes in other rooms, to use the restroom, to go to their locker, etc. In all cases, a pass must be shown to the study hall teacher before the student may be permitted to leave.
4. Students must come to study hall prepared to use this time in an educationally constructive manner. This is the student's opportunity to review materials from previous classes, study for exams and complete assigned homework.
5. Students should always plan to have something constructive to do during study hall. They should bring necessary books and supplies with them. Students are permitted to read books, magazines and newspapers.
6. Under no circumstances will students be permitted to sleep or lay their heads on the desks. Study halls are to give the students an opportunity to use the time to his/her educational advantage and must be used for that intended purpose.
7. Study hall teachers *may* allow groups of 2 or more to study as a group as long as it does not disturb others in the room. This decision is up to the discretion of the teacher in charge.
8. Quiet will be observed at all times.
9. Only one student will be excused at a time for the purpose of using the restroom. Students are not to be excused from study hall to go to another teacher, room, gym, school counseling office, or office unless they have a pre-approved pass assigned by a staff member. Failure to report to study hall without following the proper e-Hallpass procedure may be considered a class cut or insubordination.
10. Students will sit in assigned seats and not move from that assigned seat unless permitted by the teacher in charge.
11. Teachers may establish additional regulations when supervising a study hall.
12. Teachers may withdraw e-Hallpass privileges from students based on behavior.

Summer School

Summer School may be offered to all students needing remediation. Students should check with their school counselor prior to scheduling summer courses to be sure Ferndale Area Junior-Senior High School will accept the transferring course.

Tardies

“To be early is to be on time!” The expectation of the administration and teachers is for students to assume personal responsibility in being prompt for their respective courses and activities. Therefore, the following guidelines will be followed to encourage

Tardies to School

Students are tardy if not present within their assigned classroom at 8:02AM. Students who find they are going to be late for school must make every effort to get to school anyway. It is better to be tardy than to miss an entire day of instruction. Students who miss an entire day because of a reluctance to have a “tardy” counted against them, will have the day recorded as an unexcused absence. Excessive tardiness, regardless of the reasons, becomes a concern. School personnel are hopeful that communication with a student and parent will quickly remedy the situation. There are no excused tardies to school without a medical excuse signed by a medical professional. This includes early morning doctor or dentist appointments, which are considered legitimate excusals from school.

The following are used as benchmarks in addressing concerns about tardiness to school:

First Offense:	6 Tardies	Lunch Detention every tardy; Administrative Letter Charges filed with Magistrate
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Tardies to Class

Students are provided with three (3) minutes in between periods to get to their next class. If a student is detained by a previous class, it is the student’s responsibility to acquire a signed planner from the current teacher so that the teacher of the next class is able to excuse the temporary absence. For situations in which a student is late to class without a signed planner, it will be assumed that the student was in an unassigned area of the building. Teachers will track any tardies to class and will submit a discipline log for every three (3) occurrences of tardies to class. The discipline log will itemize the specific dates that the student was tardy to class.

Telephone Use

A student telephone is available in the main office for purposes of student usage that are an emergency in nature and must be used by the student during non-instructional time only (lunch, between periods, etc.). Parents and friends are discouraged from calling students at school for non-emergency personal reasons during school hours.

Students are not called from classes to the telephone except in cases of illness or emergency. Such messages will be delivered to students when the message is sufficiently important.

Testing Schedule

Ferndale Area Junior-Senior High School will conduct various tests to determine abilities, interests, and educational needs. The results of these tests provide a continuing record of each child’s academic progress. The tests are also an invaluable tool for teachers and counselors in diagnosing individual strengths and weaknesses in order to provide more effective individualized instruction. During the school year, the following tests may be administered to your child as part of this program:

<i>Name of Test</i>	<i>Grade(s)</i>	<i>Objective</i>
Hearing Screening	11	Assesses existence of hearing
Local Assessments	11	Achievement (for Keystone non-prof.)
PSSA ELA & Math	7-8	PA Annual Achievement Measure
PSSA Science	8	PA Annual Achievement Measure
Keystone Exams	8-11	PA Achievement Measure for Grad. (Algebra 1, Biology, Literature)
Vision Screening	7-12	Assesses existence of vision
Classroom Diagnostic Tool	7-12	Content-Area Achievement & Growth
Study Island Benchmarks	7-12	Content-Area Achievement & Growth
ASVAB	11-12	Scores in aptitude; career interests
PSAT/NMSQT	10, 11	Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/National Merit Qualifying Test

Tobacco Use Policy

In accordance with Act 128 of 2000 and Title 22 of the School Law Code, the school district will initiate prosecution of a student who possesses and/or uses tobacco / vaping materials or look-alike products in any area of the school district’s buildings, buses, vans and vehicles that are owned, leased or controlled by the school district or on school grounds. Tobacco use shall be defined as use and/or possession of a lit or unlit cigarette, cigar or pipe; other lighted smoking product; and smokeless tobacco in any form, and any vaping / juling device or product. The district prohibits tobacco use and possession by students at school sponsored activities that are held off school property. Students convicted of possessing or using tobacco in violation of this policy may be fined, charged with court costs, or admitted to alternative adjudication in lieu of imposing a fine. Students who possess or use tobacco on grounds or within 1000 feet of school property will face action by the law enforcement and disciplinary action. For more information, reference Policy 222 Tobacco and Vaping Products.

Transfer Students

A student who transfers from another district should register as soon as possible. Proof of age, immunization records, parental registration statement, home language survey, and proof of residency must be presented at the time of the child's registration at the high school office for grades 7-12. Additionally, the school counselor may request transfer cards from his/her former district, disciplinary history, and attendance history.

Transportation

Recognizing that proper student discipline is necessary to the efficient and safe operation of any school bus line, the Ferndale Area Junior-Senior High School utilizes a system of bus discipline. The consequence for all offenses will be at the administration's discretion, according to the seriousness of the offense.

The following are prohibited on school buses-including buses taking students to co-curricular activities: smoking or chewing tobacco, fighting, profanity and abusive language, standing in the aisles, hands and arms out of the windows, initiation activities of any kind, food and drink, crowding at doorway to get on or off the bus, and heckling the bus driver.

Students are to follow the directions of bus drivers relative to opening and shutting windows. Nothing will be thrown out of the windows. In addition to school disciplinary action, violations for littering and vandalism may result in civil discipline. Students are required to ride the bus to and from all school sponsored activities unless prior approval from administration is obtained. For more information, reference Policy 810 Transportation.

Student Surveys

Surveys conducted by outside agencies, organizations and individuals shall be approved by the Board, based on the Superintendent's recommendation, prior to administration to students. (Policy #235.1 Surveys)

Similarity Detection Software

Ferndale Area Junior-Senior High School uses a Similarity Detection Software as a teaching and learning tool to aid our students with writing. Similarity Detection Software is a web-based program that allows students to submit their own written work in order to receive feedback in the form of an Originality Report. The submitted work is compared against the Internet, print sources, and other student papers to check for matching or similar text. The Originality Report allows students to check their rough draft for proper citations and/or potential plagiarism issues before handing in a final copy to the teacher. Similarity Detection Software helps students identify and properly cite quotations or use paraphrased material. In this way, the program helps safeguard academic integrity.

When a student submits his or her work to Similarity Detection Software, they will receive a "similarity index" that corresponds with the percentage of his or her text that matches sources found by Similarity Detection Software. If the written assignment calls

for completely original writing, then the similarity index should be 0% or close to it. When a student is doing a research paper, however, he or she is using the words and ideas of others to produce the finished paper, causing a higher similarity index. The student should be presenting those words or ideas in the form of quotations or paraphrased sentences in the paper, and properly citing that information. Since the student is using the words and ideas of others, his or her Similarity Detection Software matching percentage will be equivalent to the amount of source quotations or paraphrased material in the paper. An acceptable matching percentage depends on the specific teacher assignment, but in general, if the percentage is too high the student has used too many quotes or paraphrased sentences and needs to add more of his or her own analysis to the paper. If the student is unsure what an acceptable percentage for the assignment is, he or she should discuss it with the teacher.

Valuables

It is recommended that valuables and large amounts of money not be brought to school. Valuables or money should not be left in the student's desk or locker. If it is necessary for a student to have such articles with him/her, he/she should deposit them with the office for safekeeping. **In the event of a loss, the School District assumes no responsibility for the loss. Students have sole responsibility for their valuables.** It is strongly recommended that payment of large bills for candy, yearbook, class ring, lunch, etc., be paid by check.

Visitors

Parents and citizens are welcome to visit the high school. When a visit is desired, please contact the high school office to make appropriate arrangements. If you wish to have a formal conference with a teacher, please contact the high school office or school counseling office to make arrangements. All teacher conferences/meetings must be scheduled in advance. If a public group wishes to tour, please contact the high school administration to make necessary arrangements to visit at any time during the school year. Students are not permitted to bring guests to school without prior approval of the principal. At no time should parents/visitors go directly to a classroom, cafeteria, etc., without first reporting to the office. This procedure is required to assure the safety of your children. For more information, reference Policy 907 School Visitors.

Work or College Release

Students in grade 12 may carry a reduced load of classes and be excused for the purpose of reporting for work or enrolling in college courses. Graduation requirements must be met, and the student must take a minimum of 4 credits of coursework at FAHS.

A student's attendance must be regular and required work release and college admittance documentation must be submitted to the office (as per Policy 217). The building administration is responsible for determining the student's eligibility and must approve the request.

Working Paper Procedures

Students under 18 must obtain an employment certificate in order to get a job. The parent, guardian, or legal custodian of the minor for whom such employment certificate for Transferable Work Permit is requested must complete an application for an Employment Certificate. The parent or guardian must appear in person in the high school office with definite proof of age; birth certificate, baptismal certificate, passport, or other documentary evidence, of the minor.

Nondiscrimination In School And Classroom

The Ferndale Area School District provides an equal opportunity for all students to achieve their maximum potential through the programs offered in the schools regardless of race, color, age, creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin, marital status, pregnancy or handicap/disability. It is encouraged that students and third parties who have been subject to discrimination promptly report such incidents **to any employee**. (Policy # 103)

Nondiscrimination – Qualified Students with Disabilities

The district shall provide to each qualified student with a disability enrolled in the district, without cost to the student or parent/guardian, a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). This includes provision of education and related aids, services, or accommodations which are needed to afford each qualified student with a disability equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits from educational programs and extracurricular activities without discrimination, to the same extent as each student without a disability, consistent with federal and state laws and regulations. (Policy # 103.1)

Maintaining Professional Adult/Student Boundaries

The Ferndale Area School District ensures that all parties including employees, volunteers, student teachers and independent contractors and their employees who interact with students or are present on school grounds abide by the policy and are expected to maintain a professional, moral, legal and ethical relationship with district students that are conducive to an effective, safe learning environment. All adults are informed of conduct that is prohibited and the disciplinary actions that may be applied for violation of board policies, administrative regulations, rules and procedures. (Policy #824)

Annual Public Notice of Child Find and Special Education Services

Overview

School districts are required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 2004 (IDEA '04) to provide a free appropriate public education to children with disabilities who need special education and related services. (Note: The duty to identify, locate, evaluate and provide special education services to school-age individuals incarcerated in local correctional institutions rests with the school district

within whose boundaries such an institution is located.) School age children who need special education and related services are identified as children with disabilities. These students have been identified as being in need of specially designed instruction and have one or more of the following physical or intellectual disabilities under IDEA:

- Autism
- Emotional disturbance
- Deafness
- Hearing impairment
- Specific learning disability
- Intellectual disability
- Multiple disabilities
- Other health impairment
- Orthopedic impairment due to chronic or acute health problems
- Speech or language impairment
- Visual impairment including blindness
- Deaf-blindness
- Traumatic Brain Injury

Intermediate Unit 8 and each school district in Bedford, Blair, Cambria and Somerset counties has established and implemented procedures to locate, identify, and evaluate students and young children suspected of being exceptional. These procedures include screening activities which include but are not limited to: review of group-based data (cumulative records, enrollment records, health records, and report cards); hearing screening (at a minimum of kindergarten, special ungraded classes, first, second, third, seventh, and eleventh grades); vision screening (every grade level); motor screening; and speech and language screening. In schools which have a Pre-Referral, Child-Study, Early Intervening or Instructional Support Team, the above screening activities may lead to consideration by the teams to move to the next level of screening activities.

When screening indicates that a student may be a child with a disability, the school district will seek parental consent to conduct an evaluation. Evaluation means procedures used in the determination of whether a child has a disability and the nature and extent of the special education and related services that the child needs. The term means procedures used selectively with an individual child and does not mean basic tests administered to or procedures used with all children.

This evaluation is conducted by a multidisciplinary team (MDT) that includes the parent and a group of qualified professionals. The process must be conducted in accordance with specific timelines and must include protection-in-evaluation procedures. For example, tests and procedures used as part of the evaluation may not be racially or culturally biased.

The IEP team develops a written education plan called an IEP. The IEP is based on the results of the evaluation. An IEP describes a student's current educational levels, goals, objectives (when required), and the individualized programs and services that the student will receive. IEPs are reviewed on an annual basis. For more information regarding the special education process, please contact Mrs. Sutton Barron, Coordinator of Special Education Services at 814-539-6168 or sbarron@fasdk12.org

Gaskin Settlement Agreement

The Gaskin Settlement Agreement is a formal resolution between the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) and a group of families and advocacy organizations who filed a class-action lawsuit against PDE on behalf of a group of children with disabilities in 1994. The goal of the settlement is to ensure that Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams determine whether the goals in a student's IEP can be implemented in the general education classroom with supplementary aids and services before considering a more restrictive placement. The activities agreed to in the Settlement Agreement are designed to increase the capacity of school districts to provide appropriate specially designed instruction, related services, supplementary aids and services, and support to students with disabilities placed in general education classrooms. The agreement does not change an individual student's program, placement, or IEP. Only the IEP team can make such modifications.

View the entire Settlement Agreement on the Ferndale Area School District website (www.fasdk12.org) by visiting the Special Education link.

SPECIAL NOTE

Full text of Ferndale Area School District policies are available on the District website for your inspection. If you are unable to access the website, please request paper copies of the policies from the High School Office by calling 814-288-5757.

Homeless Education

Pennsylvania's Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program was established to make sure homeless youth have access to a free and appropriate public education while removing barriers that homeless children face. Its goal is to have the educational process and student services continue as uninterrupted as possible while the children are in homeless situations. Some of the other main objectives of Pennsylvania's Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program are to increase awareness about the needs of homeless children, explain current laws and policies, and provide practical tips for working with homeless children. The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Improvement Act of 2001 requires all school districts to inform parents/guardians of their rights under this act. Specifically, it states that, pending any dispute resolution regarding school placement, a school district must immediately enroll a homeless student in the student's

school of origin or other school selected on the basis of the child's best interest and provide a written explanation of the rights of appeal to the parent/guardian of the student.

Additional information, Homeless Guides, Dispute Resolution Guidance and other valuable information for students and parents/guardians can be found on the District website www.fasdk12.org and you may reference District policy 251, Homeless Students.

Links:

[Education for Homeless Youth Basic Education Circular \(BEC\)](#)

[FASD Board Policy - Students Experiencing Homelessness, Foster Care and other Educational Instability](#)

McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001

On July 22, 1987, the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act became public law. This was the first comprehensive federal law dealing with the problems of homelessness in America. Recently included in the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act, it is now called the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001. The Education for Homeless Children and Youths (EHCY) program, authorized under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (McKinney-Vento Act), is designed to address the needs of homeless children and youths and ensure educational rights and protections for these children and youths. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) amended the McKinney-Vento Act, and changes made by the ESSA took effect on October 1, 2016.

Unaccompanied Youth

Under the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (MKV), youth who are not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian and are lacking a fixed, regular or adequate nighttime residence are considered displaced and eligible for rights under the homeless education law.

Homeless Liaison Contact:

Dr. William Brotz, Assistant Superintendent/Jr.Sr.HS Principal. wbrotz@fasdk12.org
phone 814-535-1507 x1005

Key duties of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison:

- Develop, modify and review LEA policies and procedures.
- Use housing questionnaires, (Intake Form) to document enrollment of homeless students. Develop a system of data records of homeless students, including monitoring academic records, attendance information, graduation rate, etc.
- Use the state system for data input.
- Be familiar with the privacy rights of homeless students and families, ensure FERPA rights of all.

- Develop, revise and distribute materials, hand-outs and other related documents for students, parents, staff and community.
- Coordinate McKinney-Vento issues and activities among LEA administrators.
- Implement dispute procedure, when necessary, assure issuance of letter of denial and inform student and parent of right to appeal and process.
- Construct and revise as needed, LEA website, handbook and other documents. Coordinate and manage Title I set aside funds with the business office.
- Coordinate immediate free lunch and breakfast for homeless students with food service staff. Communicate with other LEA's (liaisons) on issues involving homeless students. Specifically, transportation, academic records and student best interest determinations.
- Establish ongoing communication with parents and keep them informed of student progress and school activities. Encourage parental involvement.
- Engage in community activity to identify unenrolled youth. Perform outreach with local entities such as shelters and agencies.
- Coordinate, distribute and seek donations and support for homeless students and families. Coordinate and communicate with the regional PAECYEH office.
- Attend training and seminars on regional and state level.

Attendance Updates - Act 138 of 2016

The law expressly requires schools to *notify in writing* the person in parental relation with a child within ten (10) school days of the child's third unexcused absence that the child has been "truant." The new law explicitly defines "truant" as a child subject to compulsory school laws "having three (3) or more school days of unexcused absence during the *current* school year. This notice:

- a. Must include a description of the consequences that will follow if the child becomes habitually truant in the future;
- b. Must be in the mode and *language of communication preferred by the person in parental relation*; and
- c. May include the offer of an attendance improvement conference.

If the child continues to be truant and incurs additional absences after this notice has been issued, the school must offer the student and parent a student attendance improvement conference.

The new law defines "school attendance improvement conference" as a "conference where the child's absences and reasons for the absences are examined in an effort to improve attendance, with or without additional services." The law requires schools to invite the following individuals to the conference:

- a. The child.
- b. The person in parental relation to the child.

- c. Other individuals identified by the person in parental relation who may be a resource (e.g., a grandparent, sibling, family friend, advocate, community member, etc.).
- d. Appropriate school personnel.
- e. Recommended service providers (e.g., case managers, behavioral health providers, probation officers, children and youth practitioners, etc.).

The school must hold the conference even if the parent declines to participate or fails to attend after the school provides *advance written notice* and *makes attempts to communicate via telephone*. There is no legal requirement for either the child or parent to attend an attendance improvement conference. The school must document the outcome of any attendance improvement conference in a written attendance improvement plan. Schools may not take further legal action to address unexcused absences until after the date of the scheduled attendance improvement conference has passed.

Procedure when child is habitually truant (accumulates six unexcused absences).

Like the old law, the procedure schools must follow when a child is habitually truant depends on the age of the child.

Habitually truant children under fifteen years of age.

If a habitually truant child is under fifteen (15), the school must refer the child to either: (1) a school-based or community-based attendance improvement program or (2) the county children and youth agency (CYS) for services or possible disposition as a dependent child under the Juvenile Act. Additionally, the school *may* file a citation against the parent of a habitually truant child under fifteen (15) in a magisterial district court.

Habitually truant children fifteen years of age and older.

If a habitually truant child is fifteen (15) or older, the school must either: (1) refer the child to a school-based or community-based attendance improvement program or (2) file a citation against the student or parent in a magisterial district court. If a habitually truant child aged fifteen (15) or older incurs additional absences after a school refers that child to an attendance improvement program or the child refuses to participate in an attendance improvement program, the school may refer the child to the local CYS agency for possible disposition as a dependent child.

In all cases, regardless of age, where a school refers a habitually truant child to a magisterial district court or CYS, the school must provide verification that it convened and held a student attendance improvement conference.

Consequences, if convicted, of habitual truancy:

1. Increased fines up to \$750. The new law states that a person convicted of habitual truancy may be fined: (1) up to \$300 per offense, with court costs, for the first offense; (2) up to \$500 per offense, with court costs, for the second offense; and (3)

up to \$750 per offense, with court costs, for a third and any and all subsequent offenses.

2. Jail reduced to three days. The new law reduces jail time to three days, from five days.
3. Referral to CYS for second conviction in three years. Under the new law, if a parent or student is convicted a second time for habitual truancy within three years, the court must refer the child to CYS for services or possible disposition as a dependent child under the Juvenile Act.
4. Provides judges with discretion on whether to send the Department of Transportation a certified record of a student's conviction for license suspension. While the law still requires DOT to suspend a child's license, the discretion the new law affords to magistrates should limit the number of students whose licenses are suspended for truancy. Restoration of driving privileges is more fair to students.

Where a student's license has been suspended, he or she may seek to have his or her eligibility restored by providing DOT with a form that indicates that (1) the child has attended school for a period of at least two months after the first conviction or four months after the second conviction without an unexcused absence or tardy; or (2) is subject to exception to the compulsory school attendance law; or (3) has graduated from school.

1 or 2 days a week doesn't seem like much but...

If your child misses...	That equals...	Which is...	And over 13 years of schooling that's...
1 day every 2 weeks	20 days per year	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1 ½ years
1 day per week	40 days per year	8 weeks per year	Over 2 ½ years of school
2 days per week	80 days per year	16 weeks per year	Over 5 years
3 days per week	120 days per year	24 weeks per year	Nearly 8 years

How about 10 minutes late a day? Surely that won't affect my child?

He/she is only missing just...	That equals...	Which is...	And over 13 years of schooling that's...
10 mins per day	50 mins per week	Nearly 1 ½ weeks per year	Nearly ½ year
20 mins per day	1 hr. 40 mins per week	Over 2 ½ weeks per year	Nearly 1 year
30 mins per day	Half a day per week	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1 ½ years
1 hour per day	1 day per week	8 weeks per year	Over 2 ½ years

EVERY DAY COUNTS

If you want your child to be successful at school then, YES, attendance does matter!

Title IX Policies

<https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/fern/Board.nsf/Public?open&id=policies>

Title IX

Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 is a federal law that states: "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." Title IX applies to all educational institutions, both public and private, that receive federal funds. Athletics programs are considered educational programs and activities. There are three basic parts of Title IX as it applies to athletics:

1. Participation: Title IX requires that women and men be provided equitable opportunities to participate in sports. Title IX does not require institutions to offer identical sports but an equal opportunity to play.
2. Scholarships: Title IX requires that female and male student-athletes receive athletics scholarship dollars proportional to their participation; and
3. Other benefits: Title IX requires the equal treatment of female and male student-athletes in the provisions of: (a) equipment and supplies; (b) scheduling of games and practice times; (c) travel and daily allowance/per diem; (d) access to tutoring; (e) coaching, (f) locker rooms, practice and competitive facilities; (g) medical and training facilities and services; (h) housing and dining facilities and services; (i) publicity and promotions; (j) support services and (k) recruitment of student-athletes.

Although it is the application of Title IX to athletics that has gained the greatest public visibility, the law applies to every single aspect of education, including course offerings, counseling and counseling materials, financial assistance, student health and insurance benefits and/or other services, housing, marital and parental status of students, physical education and athletics, education programs and activities, and employment. Title IX benefits everyone -- girls and boys, women and men. The law requires educational institutions to maintain policies, practices and programs that do not discriminate against anyone on the basis of gender. Elimination of discrimination against women and girls has received more attention because females historically have faced greater gender restrictions and barriers in education. However, Title IX also has benefited men and boys. A continued effort to achieve educational equity has benefited all students by moving toward creation of school environments where all students may learn and achieve the highest standards.

Ferndale Area School District Title IX Statement

Ferndale Area School District affirms that no person shall, on the basis of sex, disability, race, color, age, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, ancestry, veteran's status or genetic information be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any educational program or activity. In addition, no person shall, on any of these bases, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in employment, or recruitment, or consideration, or selection, therefore, whether full-time or part-time, under any educational program or activity operated by the district. The District shall make reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities upon request.

Ferndale Area School District Anti-Harassment/Anti-Retaliation Statement

The District does not tolerate sexual harassment. Any individual who believes they have been subjected to sexual harassment is strongly encouraged to make a report which will be promptly and thoroughly investigated. Retaliation against individuals who file complaints about sexual harassment, or participate in the investigation of such complaints, is strictly prohibited.

Students, Faculty or staff found to have engaged in sexual harassment or retaliation will be promptly disciplined, and such discipline may include, if circumstances warrant, suspension, expulsion and/or termination. Students, parents and staff are encouraged to work together to prevent sexual harassment.

Notice of Non-Discrimination

Pursuant to Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1972, the District does not discriminate on the basis of sex in the education programs or activities that it operates. This requirement not to discriminate in the District's education programs and activities extends to employment with and admission to the District.

Ferndale Area School District Policy 103 - Nondiscrimination In School and Classroom Practices. This Policy Identifies the Compliance Officer, Reporting/Complaint Procedures, and Appeal Procedures.

PARENT/STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF STUDENT HANDBOOK

_____ Parent/Guardian Printed Name

_____ Student Printed Name

We have read and reviewed the 2025-2026 Ferndale Area Junior-Senior High School Student Handbook. We understand the rights and responsibilities of students and agree to support and abide by the rules, guidelines, procedures, and policies of Ferndale Area Junior-Senior High School.

This signature page should be returned to the student's Homeroom teacher on the first day of school. Students will NOT be issued their iPads until this signature page, Internet Agreement, Health Forms, iPad Issue Agreement, and Emergency Card are returned to the school.

_____ Parent/Guardian Signature

_____ Student Signature

_____ Date