

# COMBS INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL FAMILY HANDBOOK



**Combs Intermediate School  
Ferguson-Florissant School District  
300 Rue St. Jean  
Florissant, MO 63031**

**314-831-0411**

**Derek R. Bridges**

PRINCIPAL

**Dr. Renetta Batteast**

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

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August, 2023

Dear Combs Intermediate School Families,

On behalf of the Combs Intermediate School staff, I would like to welcome you to the new school year! You are an important component in the success of our students. I know you will find Combs School a wonderful place to learn and grow!

This handbook was prepared to assist you in your role as a school parent and supporter of quality education. Please take some time to read this handbook as it contains valuable information you will need throughout the year. If you have questions concerning any of the information, please feel free to ask your child's teacher or call the school office.

Combs School staff is dedicated to ensuring that all children have a safe and successful school year. I look forward to working with you and your student(s) during another wonderful year at Combs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Bridges'.

Derek R. Bridges  
Principal

## SCHOOL CONTACTS

Derek Bridges (Principal)  
dbridges@fergflor.org  
(314) 831-0411

Renetta Batteast (Assistant Principal)  
rbatteast@fergflor.org  
(314) 831-0411 (x)1303

Jessica Yancy (Office Manager)  
jyancy@fergflor.org  
(314) 831-0411

Kathy Torrey (School Nurse)  
(314) 831-0411 (x)1400

Mattalue Ellis (Counselor)  
mellis@fergflor.org  
(314) 831-0411

Madeline Frank (Counselor)  
mfrank@fergflor.org  
(314) 831-0411 (x)1500

Lisa Thomas (SSD Area Coordinator)  
lthomas@fergflor.org  
(314) 831-0411

## MISSION, VISION, & SPRCK TRAITS

### ***Mission***

*The Combs Intermediate School community is committed to challenging each learner to reach their full potential. We provide every student with the tools to:*

- *Set goals*
- *Persevere*
- *Problem-solve*
- *Take ownership of their actions*
- *Practice self-respect*

*All within a safe, supportive, and respectful environment.*

### ***Vision***

*We strive to meet the needs of all learners, preparing them to be college- and career-ready individuals who make a positive impact on society.*

### ***SPRCK Traits***

*At Combs, we SPRCK! We teach and reinforce five core character traits that guide all interactions and decisions:*

- *Safe*
- *Persevere*
- *Responsible*
- *Cooperative*
- *Kind*

### ***SPRCK Pledge***

*I believe I will achieve excellence today.*

*I will SPRCK in every way.*

*I will choose to be safe, responsible, cooperative, and kind.*

*I will persevere with positivity in mind.*

*At Combs, we SPRCK in every way.*

*At Combs, best effort is the only way.*

# FERGUSON-FLORISSANT SCHOOL DISTRICT: VISION, MISSION & CORE VALUES

## District Vision

All learners graduate believing that anything is possible and prepared to realize those possibilities.

## District Mission

We provide high-quality instruction to every student in every neighborhood while prioritizing equity and compassionate relationships.

## Core Values

- **Student-Centered:** We use an equity lens to focus our policies, actions, and resources on students' academic, social-emotional, and physical well-being.
  - **Excellence:** We set high expectations and are relentless in providing high-quality, culturally competent teaching and resources.
  - **Innovation:** We prepare students for a dynamic, ever-changing world by encouraging curiosity, critical thinking, and real-world problem solving.
  - **Relationships:** We build authentic relationships across schools and communities so that every person feels welcomed, heard, and empowered to be a positive force for change.
-

## PARENT COMMUNICATION

At Combs Intermediate School, we believe that consistent, two-way communication between home and school is essential for student success. We offer multiple platforms and tools to keep families informed, engaged, and involved in their child's education.

### **Parent Portal (Infinite Campus):**

Please ensure your contact information is always up to date in the Infinite Campus Parent Portal. You can view attendance, grades, report cards, and important district messages.



**<https://fergflormo.infinitecampus.org/campus/portal/parents/fergflor.jsp>**

### **ClassDojo:**

We are a ClassDojo school. All teachers will invite families to join their class. ClassDojo is used to share classroom announcements, behavior updates, photos, and quick messages. Parents/guardians are encouraged to download the ClassDojo app and check it daily with their student.

### **Email & Phone Calls:**

Teachers and staff may contact you by email or phone with important updates, academic concerns, or celebrations. If your contact information changes, notify the school office immediately.

### **Newsletters & Schoolwide Messages:**

The school sends regular newsletters and text/email updates to keep families informed about events, programs, and deadlines. Please opt in to school communication systems when prompted.

### **Conferences and Meetings:**

Formal family conferences are held twice per year, and additional meetings may be scheduled as needed to support student growth. You are always welcome to request a conference by contacting your child's teacher.

Let us know how we can support you best! Communication is a shared responsibility, and we value our partnership with you.

## ADMISSIONS & ENROLLMENT

### Returning Students or Adding a New Student to an Existing Household

Families of current students must complete annual online verification through the Infinite Campus Parent Portal. If you are adding a new student (e.g., a younger sibling), you will need to complete the new student registration process for that child.

### New Families to the District

If your child has never attended a Ferguson-Florissant school (including preschool or Parents as Teachers), visit the FFSD website and follow the link to Infinite Campus to register your household. You must complete the entire online registration. If you start and need to return later, use the activation link sent to your email.

### Required Documentation (for all new students):

- Student's official birth certificate (not hospital-issued)
- Immunization records and physical exam (completed within the past year)
- Parent/guardian valid photo ID (state-issued, unexpired)
- Proof of residency:
  - Current signed lease, mortgage, or deed (signature page included)
  - Utility bill (gas, water, or electric) dated within the past 30 days OR a pending service order. Cell phone bills are not accepted.
- Contact information: valid phone number and email
- Emergency contact must be someone **other than** the primary guardian; multiple preferred

### Important Notes:

- School staff cannot approve enrollment until all required documents are submitted.
- If placement documents (e.g., report card, IEP, grade-level proof) are missing, enrollment will be placed on hold.
- Staff will support families with literacy or access needs during this process. If additional support is needed, we may contact the district enrollment team.
- Do not verify the grade level until proper records are received.
- If withdrawing a student, we must wait for the new school's records request to finalize withdrawal.

Need help? Please contact our school office or the FFSD Office of Student Services.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular and punctual attendance is essential to student learning and success. Our goal is for every student to attend at least 92% of instructional minutes throughout the year. Please help us meet this goal by making sure your child attends school every day and arrives on time.

### School Hours

- Arrival begins: 8:35 AM (no supervision prior)
- Instruction starts: 8:50 AM
- Dismissal begins: 3:30 PM
- Students must be picked up by: 3:50 PM unless enrolled in an after-school program

### Late Pickup Policy

- The front office closes at 4:00 PM. No staff are available to supervise students after that time, as staff members also have families and responsibilities beyond the school day.
- If late pickups persist, the school may refer the case to the district social worker or additional student services to ensure child safety and family support.

### Important Attendance Information

- Students arriving after 8:50 AM are marked tardy.
- Students leaving before 3:30 PM lose instructional time, which is tracked by minutes, not just full days.
- To report an absence, please call the school office before 8:30 AM.
- Per Missouri law, students must attend school for at least six hours per day unless excused.

### Early Dismissal Procedures

- No early dismissals after 3:00 PM.
- A parent/guardian or verified emergency contact must sign out students in the front office with a valid photo ID.
- Any changes in transportation must be communicated to the teacher and office **before 3:00 PM**.

### Late Arrivals

- Students arriving late must be signed in by an adult at the front entrance.
- Do not drop students off alone after 8:50 AM.

### Excessive Absences & Tardies

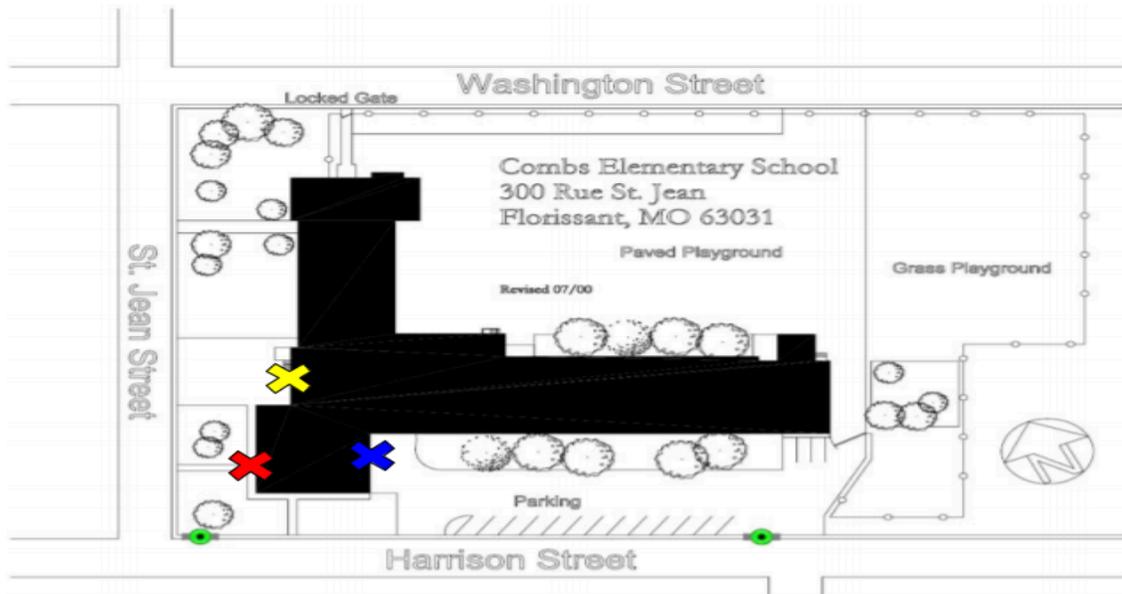
We are here to support families and remove attendance barriers. That said, patterns of absenteeism, tardiness, or early dismissal will prompt the following interventions:

1. Notification call or letter sent to parent/guardian
2. Conference with teacher and/or administrator
3. Referral to the school social worker, nurse, or support team
4. If attendance concerns persist, the case may be referred to district personnel or outside agencies, including the Missouri Children's Division

Families play a critical role in student attendance. Please avoid scheduling vacations or routine appointments during school hours whenever possible.

# ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

## ARRIVAL /DISMISSAL



At Combs Intermediate, arrival and dismissal procedures are designed to ensure student safety and efficient transitions. Your cooperation helps everything run smoothly and on time.

### Student Arrival

- **Earliest Arrival:** 8:35 AM — no supervision is available before this time.
- **Instruction Begins:** 8:50 AM

### Arrival by Mode of Transportation

- **Car Riders:** Enter through Door #10 on Harrison Street. For safety, all students must exit vehicles at the designated spot outside door 10. **Students may not be dropped off on the street on Harrison or St. Jean.**
- **Bus Riders:** Enter through Door #1 on Rue St. Jean.
- **Walkers & Daycare Vans:** Enter through Door #1.
- **Bicyclists:** Students must walk bikes on school property, park at the bike rack, and are encouraged to wear helmets. Bikes are the student's responsibility.

## Late Arrivals

- Students arriving after 8:50 AM must be signed in by an adult at the front office. Please do not drop off unaccompanied students.
  - Repeated or habitual tardiness not only causes students to miss instructional time but also disrupts the learning environment for the entire class. Tardiness delays the start of the school day, interrupts classroom routines, and makes it harder for students to transition smoothly into learning.
  - Families will be contacted if a pattern of tardiness emerges. Continued tardiness may result in a required conference with school administration and referral to the district's family support team to explore solutions.
- 

## Student Dismissal

- **Begins at 3:30 PM**
- **All students must be picked up by 3:50 PM** unless enrolled in after-school care

## Dismissal by Mode of Transportation

- **Car Riders:** Picked up from Door #10 on Harrison. Staff will call students by name to escort them to cars.
  - **Bus Riders:** Dismissed from Door #1. Students begin boarding buses at 3:35 PM.
  - **Walkers & Daycare Vans:** Dismissed through Door #12. Walkers are released after buses clear Rue St. Jean.
- 

## Important Safety Notes

- Walkers must leave school property immediately after dismissal. Students waiting for pickup will be sent to the car rider line.
- Do not park or pick up students at the front entrance, as this interferes with bus operations.

## Transportation Changes

- Any changes to transportation must be communicated to both the office and the student's teacher **before 3:00 PM.**

## CONDUCT & RESPONSIBILITY

At Combs Intermediate, we believe that clear expectations, strong relationships, and consistent support help every student succeed behaviorally and socially. We teach students to take ownership of their choices and contribute positively to their school community.

### Student Responsibilities

Students are expected to:

- Follow all classroom, school, and district rules
- Respect staff, peers, and school property
- Arrive on time and be prepared with materials
- Meet behavior and academic expectations
- Use safe, respectful, and kind behavior in all settings
- Follow bus and hallway procedures
- Demonstrate integrity, responsibility, and self-control

These expectations are explicitly taught and reinforced as part of our school-wide PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports) system. Students who meet expectations are acknowledged through daily, weekly, and quarterly incentives. See the PBIS section for more information.

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## DISCIPLINE & SUPPORT

We recognize that students are still developing social-emotional and behavioral skills. Our approach to discipline emphasizes teaching, support, and consistency rather than punishment. We work collaboratively with students and families to resolve behavioral challenges.

### Tiered Response to Behavior

Behavioral supports and consequences may include:

- Verbal reminders and redirection
- Time-out or cool-down break
- Classroom intervention or peer mediation
- Communication with families (phone call, note, or email)
- Loss of privilege (e.g., recess or choice time)
- Referral to a counselor, social worker, or support team
- Parent conference with teacher and/or administrator
- In-school suspension (ISS) or restorative re-entry planning
- Out-of-school suspension (OSS) in serious cases

All discipline decisions are guided by the Ferguson-Florissant School District's **Student Expectation Code**, which outlines behaviors, definitions, and corresponding actions. Each year, this code is reviewed with students, and families receive a copy.

### Referral Process

When a student is referred to the office for a significant behavior concern:

1. The incident is reviewed by the administrator.
2. The student and involved staff may be interviewed.
3. Families will be contacted.
4. A behavior response will be determined based on the student's needs and the nature of the incident.

Our goal is to maintain a safe, respectful, and supportive school culture where every child can thrive.

## UNIFORMS & DRESS CODE

# FFSD K-5 School Uniforms

### Required Pieces:



Polo Shirt & Navy/Khaki/Plaid Bottoms

### Required Shirt Color Options:



FFSD White



FFSD Blue



School Spirit Colors

**Optional School/District Logos. Families/Caregivers may purchase from our partner vendor or from any establishment carrying generic uniform pieces that meet requirements.**

### Examples of Possible Optional Pieces:



Sweater Vest



Quarter Zip



Cardigan



Blazer



Sweater



All Ferguson-Florissant School District students in grades K–12 are required to wear school uniforms each day unless otherwise indicated for spirit or incentive days. At Combs Intermediate, we believe uniforms foster pride, equity, and focus. We approach uniform compliance through support and celebration—not punishment.

### Required Uniform Guidelines

#### Shirts:

- White or navy blue polo, oxford, or dress shirt (no logos required)
- Optional: solid white or navy FFSD cardigans, vests, fleeces, or blazers

#### Bottoms:

- Navy blue, black, or khaki pants, skirts, skorts, jumpers, or FFSD plaid options

#### Outerwear (in the classroom):

- Must be solid white or blue with no logos larger than a half-dollar
- Must be worn over a uniform shirt

#### Shoes:

- Closed-toe, secure shoes appropriate for recess and physical education

### **Personalization (allowed and encouraged):**

- Accessories such as bows, ties, jewelry, socks, and pins—must be school appropriate

### **Spirit & Dress Down Days**

Administrators may schedule days where the dress code is adjusted:

- **Spirit Days:** Students may wear Combs or FFSD-branded shirts or solid white/navy/royal/powder blue shirts.
- **Dress Down Days:** Broader attire is permitted within school and district guidelines.

Participation in these events may require:

- No uniform infractions, tardies, or early dismissals during a designated period
- Additional eligibility requirements communicated by school staff

### **Uniform Incentives & Support**

Students earn points and recognition for consistent uniform compliance. Our school celebrates this effort through:

- Spirit day participation
- Dress down opportunities
- Prize drawings and school events

We support students and families in meeting uniform expectations through direct assistance, conversations, and referrals to community partners.

**Uniform Fidelity Interventions** 1st & 2nd: Conference with student, support provided, call/email home  
3rd: Continued support, conference, and family contact  
4th and beyond: Tiered intervention plan, daily check-ins, and family meeting  
If uniform concerns persist, additional support from the school counselor or district services may be offered.

### **Uniform Vendors**

Uniform pieces may be purchased from any major retailer (e.g., Target, Walmart, Kohl's, French Toast) as long as they meet color and style guidelines. Our partner vendor, **TrayJay's**, provides district-aligned uniform options online and locally.

### **Community Resource Highlight**

The Laundry Basket (702 S. Florissant Rd.) provides free laundry nights on the 4th Monday of each month from 6–8 PM. No sign-up required. Uniforms and school clothes may be cleaned during this time. Detergent and supplies provided.

We are committed to supporting every child in feeling confident and prepared for school each day.

## CLEAR BACKPACK POLICY

### Examples of PERMITTED Bookbags



### Examples of UNPERMITTED Bookbags



To support a safe and secure learning environment, Ferguson-Florissant School District requires all K–12 students to use clear backpacks. This policy applies to all students at Combs Intermediate.

#### Backpack Requirements

- **Material:** Completely transparent (clear plastic); tinted or mesh backpacks are not permitted
- **Size:** Minimum of 16 inches tall × 12 inches wide × 6 inches deep
- **Straps, zippers, and small manufacturer logos** are allowed
- **No obstructions:** Stickers, paint, or attachments that block the view inside are not allowed
- **Side mesh pouches** are acceptable for water bottles only (not for covering the bag)

#### Optional Additions

- Students may bring a small non-clear pouch/wristlet (up to 5.5" × 4") for personal hygiene or medical items. These do not need to be clear.

#### Important Reminders

- Backpacks may not be worn under coats or jackets
- Students are responsible for maintaining a compliant backpack throughout the year
- If a family needs support obtaining a clear backpack, please contact the school counselor or office

Our goal is to maintain safety while minimizing barriers. We appreciate your partnership in meeting this district-wide expectation.

## CELL PHONES & PERSONAL BELONGINGS

### STUDENT CELL PHONE USE NOT PERMITTED



Student Phones and  
Smart Watches Must Be  
Turned Off and Put  
Away Inside the Building  
at All Times

To maintain a focused and respectful learning environment, students are expected to keep personal electronics and valuables stored and turned off during the school day.

#### **State Law & District Policy**

In accordance with recently enacted Missouri state law, student use of cell phones is prohibited during the school day unless explicitly authorized for instructional or medical purposes. This law is designed to reduce distraction, protect student privacy, and promote academic success.

At Combs Intermediate, the following procedures are in place to meet this requirement:

- All cell phones and smart watches must be **powered off and turned in** to the classroom teacher upon arrival.
- Devices are stored in a **secure, locked container** during the school day and returned at dismissal.
- Devices may not be turned on or used until the student has exited school property.
- Students may not take photos, record audio or video, or post to social media while on campus or during transportation.
- Please note that **cell phones and other prohibited items may *not* be stored in backpacks, desks, pockets, or other areas accessible to students** and must be turned in each day.

Failure to comply with this policy will result in confiscation and may lead to disciplinary action in alignment with the Ferguson-Florissant Student Code of Conduct.

### **Other Restricted Items**

The following items are not permitted without prior approval from administration:

- Gaming devices, Bluetooth speakers, or tablets
- Toys, trading cards, or non-instructional materials
- Expensive jewelry, large purses or bags, or sports equipment

### **Family Communication During the Day**

To ensure minimal disruption to learning, all family communication should be routed through the school office. Call **314-831-0411** for any urgent needs, and we will relay messages to your child.

### **Loss & Liability Notice**

Students and families assume full responsibility for any personal items brought to school. By sending valuables or electronics to school, families acknowledge and accept that the school and its personnel are **not liable for loss, theft, or damage**.

Confiscated items may be held in the main office and released only to a parent or guardian.

## EXTRACURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES

Combs Intermediate encourages all students to participate in extracurricular activities that promote leadership, collaboration, and school pride. These opportunities provide meaningful ways to extend learning beyond the classroom.

Examples of programs may include:

- Safety Patrol
- Student Leadership Teams
- Band and Orchestra
- Academic Clubs
- Scouting
- School-based Sports
- After-school enrichment (when available)

### Eligibility Requirements

To participate in any extracurricular opportunities, students must:

- Maintain **90% attendance**, measured in total minutes as required by Missouri state regulations
- Maintain **80% positive points on ClassDojo**
- Have **no more than 2 behavior referrals per semester**

These expectations help ensure students are demonstrating the responsibility and readiness needed to represent Combs positively outside of the classroom. Eligibility is reviewed prior to each event or season, and families will be notified in advance if their student becomes ineligible.

Details about how to sign up for specific opportunities will be shared with students and families throughout the year. Participation may require parent permission and consistent demonstration of positive behavior and academic engagement.

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### COMBS PTG (Parent-Teacher Group)

Our PTG is a vital part of the Combs school community. We invite all families to participate, whether you can volunteer once or contribute throughout the year. The PTG supports:

- School events and student celebrations
- Fundraising to enhance classroom and campus experiences
- Staff appreciation activities
- Family engagement and communication

PTG is a great way to stay involved and make a difference in your child's school life. If you're interested in joining or learning more, please contact the school office.

Additional opportunities to support or attend specific events will be shared through ClassDojo, email, and newsletters.

## CAFETERIA, MEALS, SNACKS, & CELEBRATIONS

All students at Combs Intermediate are eligible to receive **free breakfast and lunch** each school day as part of the USDA's Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). No applications or income documentation are required.

### Meal Times & Options

- **Breakfast** is served beginning at 8:35 AM and ends promptly at **9:00 AM** so cafeteria staff can begin preparing for lunch. Students who arrive after 9:00 AM will not be served breakfast.
- **Lunch** is scheduled by grade level and served in the cafeteria.
- Menus are available online at [FFSD Nutrislice](#)
- Students may also bring lunch from home (please note that refrigeration and heating are **not available**)

### Nutrition Expectations

To support student wellness, we encourage:

- Balanced, healthy meals
- No soda or energy drinks
- No food sharing due to allergy and safety concerns
- **Outside food or beverages (e.g., Starbucks, fast food)** may not be brought in or consumed during school breakfast
- Families may not drop off outside food (e.g., fast food lunches) during the school day. All students are expected to eat school-provided meals or bring a packed lunch from home.

### Snacks & Birthday Treats

We love celebrating our students' special moments and creating joyful memories together. To keep our celebrations safe and healthy for all students, **district policy requires that all foods and beverages served or made available to students during the school day meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks nutrition standards.**

This applies to all celebrations, including birthdays, classroom parties, and holiday events—**regardless of where the food comes from.**

**A few important reminders:**

- **Plan Ahead:** All treats or celebrations must be prearranged with your child's teacher.
- **Healthy & Approved:**
  - You can view our [list of Smart Snack-compliant foods and beverages](#) for ideas.
  - We also have a [list of alternative celebration ideas](#) that don't involve food but are still fun and memorable.
  - If you'd like the district to deliver Smart Snack-compliant treats to the school for your child's birthday (for a small fee), you can place an order using the [Food Services Celebration Order Form](#).
- **Office Procedures:** The office cannot accept non-compliant treats for delivery to classrooms. Any non-compliant food items dropped off will be held in the office for 24 hours for pickup; after that, they will be disposed of.

More information about the Smart Snacks program can be found on the [Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education \(DESE\) website](#).

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION & PLAYGROUND SUPERVISION**

### **Physical Education (P.E.)**

Physical education is a required part of the school curriculum in Missouri and plays an important role in students' overall development. In accordance with Missouri state law (RSMo § 170.310), all elementary students are expected to participate in physical education as part of their academic schedule.

To ensure safety and active participation:

- Students must wear **tennis shoes** on P.E. days
- Comfortable clothing that allows for movement is encouraged
- Students may bring tennis shoes to change into if not worn to school

Unless excused by a doctor's note, all students are expected to participate in P.E. activities. A written medical note must specify the reason and duration of the excuse. Students excused from P.E. will also be excused from recess and other physically active school events during that period.

### **Playground Supervision & Recess Expectations**

Recess provides an important opportunity for students to move, play, and practice social skills. Our playground is supervised by trained staff to ensure safety at all times.

During recess:

- Students are expected to follow all playground rules and directions from staff
- Once outside, students may not reenter the building without staff permission
- Games and activities must be inclusive and non-aggressive
- Physical conflict, exclusion, and unsafe behaviors are not tolerated

Staff use positive reinforcement and reteaching to support safe play. Repeated unsafe behavior may result in a temporary loss of playground privileges and communication with families.

# CURRICULUM & GRADING

## Curriculum Overview

The elementary curriculum at Combs Intermediate is aligned to the **Missouri Learning Standards** and is designed to meet the academic, social-emotional, and developmental needs of students. Instruction is delivered through a combination of whole-group, small-group, and individualized learning experiences to ensure all students grow and achieve.

Students receive instruction in:

- English Language Arts (reading, writing, speaking, listening)
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies
- Physical Education
- Music and Visual Arts
- Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

Digital learning platforms and hands-on materials are used to engage students and reinforce critical thinking skills.

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## Assessment & Progress Monitoring

Students participate in both classroom-based and district-wide assessments to monitor their progress toward grade-level standards. These assessments help teachers:

- Personalize instruction
- Identify learning strengths and needs
- Track growth over time

Progress is reviewed regularly, and families will receive updates through report cards, conferences, and ongoing communication from teachers. Teacher comments and regular communication will help provide additional context about each student's development and learning goals.

## Standards-Based Grading (SBG)

FFSD uses **standards-based grading** in grades 1–5 to more accurately communicate student progress on learning goals.

### How SBG Works:

- Each subject area is broken into specific learning standards
- Students are evaluated on their progress toward **mastery** of each standard
- Recent and consistent performance is prioritized over averages
- Academic achievement is reported **separately** from behavior or effort

### SBG Scale:

- **4 – Exceeds the standard**
- **3 – Meets the standard**
- **2 – Approaching the standard** (may indicate that the standard is still being introduced or reinforced and the student has not yet had multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery)
- **1 – Limited understanding of the standard**
- **0 – No evidence demonstrated**

**Note:** A score of 2 does not necessarily mean the student is struggling. It may reflect that a concept was only partially taught or assessed during the grading period. As instruction continues and additional opportunities are provided, a student’s score can change to reflect new evidence of learning.

### Benefits of SBG:

- Clear communication about specific skills and concepts
- Focus on growth and mastery over time
- Support for students at all levels of understanding

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### Special Education & Accommodations

Students receiving services through an IEP or 504 Plan will be assessed according to their individualized learning goals. General and special education teachers collaborate to ensure accommodations are in place and progress is monitored closely.

## CLASSROOM PLACEMENT

Creating balanced and effective classroom communities is an important part of preparing for a successful school year. At Combs Intermediate, our staff invests significant time and professional insight into placing students thoughtfully and equitably.

Placement decisions are made by a team of teachers and administrators who consider:

- Academic performance and learning styles
- Social-emotional needs and peer relationships
- Behavioral and support service needs
- Gender and cultural balance
- Teacher input and student data
- Overall classroom dynamics and size

This collaborative process occurs each spring based on the best available information. Because staffing assignments may shift during the summer, we cannot accommodate requests for specific teachers. Instead, we encourage families to share insights about **learning needs, social-emotional factors, or important considerations** that may help the placement team support your child.

### Classroom Changes

Building classroom community begins before the first day of school and continues throughout the year. For this reason:

- Requests for classroom changes based on preference will not be considered
- Reassignments may only be made by administration and will only occur after all other support options have been explored
- Families are always welcome to collaborate with teachers and administrators to address concerns constructively

During the first few weeks of school, staff and administration will observe and assess the effectiveness of classroom placements and groupings. Adjustments may be made if a change is deemed to be in the best interest of students or the learning environment.

Our goal is to create a positive, inclusive, and academically rich environment where all students can thrive.

## POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS & SUPPORTS (PBIS)

At Combs Intermediate, we believe in teaching and reinforcing positive behavior through a school-wide approach called **PBIS** (Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports). This proactive system helps create a culture of respect, responsibility, and readiness to learn.

### Core Expectations: SPRCK

Students are explicitly taught to demonstrate the SPRCK traits:

- Safe
- Persevere
- Responsible
- Cooperative
- Kind

These expectations are modeled, practiced, and reinforced in all school settings—including classrooms, hallways, the cafeteria, playground, and buses.

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## PBIS RECOGNITION & SUPPORT

### Daily, Weekly, and Monthly Acknowledgements

- Teachers recognize positive behaviors through **Dojo points** and classroom celebrations
- Students can earn rewards such as: extra recess, game time, spirit days, and special privileges

### Paw Print Store

- Students earn **Paw Prints** for being “caught being good”
- Paw Prints can be redeemed for school supplies, small toys, privileges, and incentives from the school store

### Quarterly & Semester Incentives

- Students with consistent positive behavior (based on Dojo, attendance, and referral data) may earn larger rewards, including:
  - Field trips
  - Assemblies
  - Carnival or celebration events

To qualify, students must:

- Have **80% or higher** positive behavior on ClassDojo
- Maintain **90% or higher** attendance (tracked by minutes)
- Have **no more than 2 referrals per semester**

Participation criteria will be clearly communicated to students and families ahead of time.

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## **PBIS INTERVENTIONS**

Students who need additional support in meeting behavior expectations may receive:

- Reteaching of expectations (PBIS refresher lessons)
- Individual or small group check-ins with counselors or behavior specialists
- Social skills groups
- Behavior monitoring plans
- Check-In/Check-Out systems
- Functional Behavior Assessments and individualized behavior support plans

The PBIS Team meets regularly to analyze school-wide behavior trends, plan incentives, and identify needed supports. Families are key partners in helping reinforce positive behavior at home and school.

## FAMILY CONFERENCES & CONCERNS

### Family Conferences

We believe that strong home-school communication is essential to student success. Combs Intermediate hosts formal family conferences during the school year to provide a dedicated opportunity for families and teachers to:

- Discuss academic progress
- Review assessment results
- Share goals and areas for growth
- Celebrate student successes

Additional conferences may be scheduled at any time by the teacher or upon family request. Teachers will also provide regular communication through ClassDojo, email, or phone to keep families informed throughout the year.

### Problem Solving & Family Concerns

If a concern arises, we encourage families to follow this process to ensure quick resolution and clear communication:

1. **Contact the classroom teacher** first to clarify any questions or issues.
2. If further support is needed, families may reach out to:
  - School counselor
  - Special education case manager
  - School nurse (if health-related)
3. If the concern is not resolved at the classroom level, contact an administrator to set up a meeting.

To support a safe and respectful environment, *those wishing to meet with school personnel—including (but not limited to) teachers, administrators, counselors, or office staff—must **make an appointment in advance**. Drop-in visitors will not be admitted to the building and will be asked to schedule an appropriate time to meet.* Office personnel are authorized to discontinue any conversation demanding immediate access. If a visitor continues to demand access after being asked to stop, this behavior will be considered harassment and addressed as a disruption to the school's orderly operation.

We are committed to supporting every student and family with transparency, care, and collaboration. Please also let us know about any changes in your child's life that may impact behavior or academic performance (e.g., family changes, medical needs, stressors).

## SCHOOL VISITOR PROCEDURES

The safety of our students and staff is a top priority. To maintain a secure and welcoming environment, Combs Intermediate has the following visitor protocols in place:

- All visitors must enter through the **main entrance (Door #1)**.
- Upon entry, visitors must **report directly to the main office**, present a **valid photo ID**, and sign in to receive a **visitor badge**.
- Only individuals with a clear school-related purpose will be allowed inside the building.
- Visitors may be asked to wait outside or in the entry vestibule until a staff member is available to assist.
- Students and staff are instructed not to open doors for anyone. All visitors must enter through the main office.

Examples of acceptable reasons for a visit:

- Scheduled conference or meeting
- Volunteering with prior approval
- Pre-arranged classroom visit
- School event attendance

### **Public Events**

Visitors attending open-to-the-public school events (e.g., PTO meetings, concerts, or family nights) are not required to sign in at the main office but must follow staff instructions and all school policies.

### **Disruptions and Safety Concerns**

Any unauthorized or disruptive individual on school property will be reported to administration. Individuals who use vulgar, threatening, or harassing language or behavior will be asked to leave immediately. If necessary, school security or local law enforcement will be contacted.

Thank you for helping us keep Combs a safe, respectful, and orderly environment for learning.

## BUS CONDUCT

The safety of all students riding the bus is a shared responsibility between families, school staff, and transportation personnel. All riders are expected to follow behavior guidelines that ensure a calm, respectful, and secure ride to and from school.

Riding a school bus is not like riding in a car—it involves a professional driver operating **multiple tons of steel at speeds up to 60 miles per hour**. Even small misbehaviors—such as standing, shouting, or horseplay—can distract the driver and place everyone at risk, including:

- The student involved
- Other passengers
- The bus driver
- Nearby vehicles and pedestrians

Maintaining a safe, quiet, and orderly bus environment is critical to ensuring everyone's safety.

### Bus Expectations

Students are expected to:

- Follow directions from the bus driver at all times
- Remain seated and facing forward while the bus is in motion
- Speak in quiet voices
- Keep hands, feet, and belongings to themselves and inside the bus
- Use respectful language and behavior
- Refrain from eating, drinking, or using electronics

The bus driver may assign seats or make changes to seating arrangements for safety or behavior reasons. Students may only ride their assigned bus and get on or off at their designated stop unless approved in advance by the school office.

### Disciplinary Action

If a student does not follow bus expectations, the following steps may occur:

1. Verbal reminder and redirection from the driver
2. Report submitted to school administration
3. Conference with student and communication with parent/guardian
4. Temporary or permanent suspension of bus privileges, depending on severity and frequency

Riding the bus is a privilege—not a right—and appropriate behavior is expected to maintain that privilege.

## SCHOOL CLOSINGS

In the event of inclement weather, extreme temperatures, or other emergencies, Ferguson-Florissant School District may close school for the safety of students and staff. This includes conditions such as:

- Snow and ice
- Excessive heat or power outages
- Widespread illness or other emergency situations

### Notification Process

Families will be notified of school closings through multiple channels:

- District website: [www.fergflor.org](http://www.fergflor.org)
- Automated phone, email, and text messages via Infinite Campus
- Local news stations and weather alerts
- FFSD social media channels

Whenever possible, announcements will be made in time for the **6:00 AM news cycle**.

### Virtual Learning Days

In some cases, the district may implement a **virtual learning day** instead of a traditional closure. In that case, students will:

- Access lessons via their district-issued device
- Follow a modified schedule communicated by their teacher or school
- Be expected to complete assignments for attendance credit

Please make sure your contact information is current in the **Infinite Campus Parent Portal** to receive timely notifications.

## STUDENT HEALTH & SAFETY

Ensuring the health and safety of every child is a top priority at Combs Intermediate. We ask for your partnership in keeping students well and ready to learn.

### Illness at School

If your child becomes ill during the school day, the school nurse will assess their condition. You will be contacted if your child:

- Has a fever of 100°F or higher
- Is vomiting or has diarrhea
- Has symptoms of a communicable illness (e.g., rash, pinkeye, lice)

Children must be fever-free (without medication) and free of vomiting/diarrhea for **at least 24 hours** before returning to school.

### Immunizations & Physical Exams

All students must have current immunization records on file, in accordance with Missouri state law. Students without up-to-date immunizations may not attend school.

Students entering kindergarten and fourth grade must also have a recent physical exam (within one year of entry).

### Medication at School

If your child requires medication during the school day:

- A **signed note from a parent/guardian** and the **original medication container** are required
- Prescription medications must include the **pharmacy label and instructions**
- Over-the-counter medications require a **doctor's note**
- All medication must be stored in the nurse's office
- Students may not carry or self-administer medications unless documented and approved (e.g., inhalers, epinephrine)

### Health Screenings

The school nurse provides screenings for vision, hearing, and scoliosis at designated grade levels. Families will be notified if follow-up care is recommended.

### Communicable Illness & Conditions

Conditions such as pinkeye, head lice, or rashes will be handled according to public health guidelines. Students will be sent home and may return once cleared by the nurse or a medical provider.

### Physical Limitations & Excuse Notes

Students who need to be excused from recess or P.E. must submit a written **doctor's note** stating the reason and duration. A student excused from P.E. will not be allowed to participate in physical recess activities during that time.

## **Emergency Contacts**

It is essential that all emergency contact information is accurate and up-to-date. Please notify the office of any changes to phone numbers, emails, or emergency contacts immediately.

## SIX WAYS TO SUPPORT STUDENT SUCCESS

Families play a vital role in helping students thrive in school. Here are six practical ways you can support your child's learning at Combs Intermediate:

1. **Show interest in daily learning**  
Ask your child what they learned at school. Encourage them to explain new ideas or share a favorite activity from the day.
2. **Review homework together**  
Check that homework is complete, accurate, and neat. Provide a quiet place and time for homework each evening.
3. **Build a positive connection with school**  
Stay in regular contact with your child's teacher. Attend conferences and events. Address concerns privately and respectfully to model problem-solving.
4. **Read together**  
Read to your child and listen to them read aloud. Ask questions about the story to improve comprehension. Make reading a daily habit.
5. **Celebrate progress**  
Recognize small improvements and effort. Positive encouragement boosts confidence and motivation.
6. **Set high expectations**  
Let your child know you believe in their potential. Emphasize the importance of doing their best and finishing what they start.

Your partnership is key to your child's growth, learning, and success.

## ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS BY GRADE LEVEL

The following expectations reflect the academic foundation students should have as they begin each grade. These skills are built upon throughout the year and are supported through differentiated instruction to meet all learners' needs.

### 3rd Grade

Students entering 3rd grade should be able to:

- Read independently and decode unfamiliar words
- Use basic strategies to determine word meaning (prefixes, suffixes, root words)
- Write complete paragraphs with a topic sentence and supporting details
- Recall and apply addition and subtraction facts from memory
- Begin exploring fractions and place value concepts
- Regroup for addition and subtraction
- Understand letter-writing format and basic composition

### 4th Grade

Students entering 4th grade should be able to:

- Read with fluency and comprehension
- Identify main ideas, sequence events, and support responses with evidence
- Write organized paragraphs with correct punctuation and grammar
- Memorize addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division facts
- Use regrouping for multi-digit subtraction
- Identify and compare fractions
- Understand large place values and number patterns
- Write in cursive

### 5th Grade

Students entering 5th grade should be able to:

- Read and comprehend grade-level texts independently
- Identify main ideas and make inferences
- Write multi-paragraph responses with a clear beginning, middle, and end
- Use topic sentences, supporting evidence, and transitions
- Solve long division and multi-digit multiplication problems
- Add and subtract fractions with like denominators
- Identify geometric shapes and fractional parts of a whole
- Take notes and create simple outlines

These readiness skills provide a starting point for instruction, not a barrier. Teachers assess each student's needs early in the year and adjust teaching accordingly to ensure growth and success for all.

## STUDENT GRADING SUMMARY

At Combs Intermediate, grading is designed to reflect each student's progress toward mastering grade-level standards. Grades are used to:

- Identify strengths and areas for growth
- Inform instruction and intervention
- Communicate progress to families

### Report Cards & Progress Reports

- Report cards are issued **four times per year** (quarterly)
- Mid-quarter **progress reports** are provided to students who may need additional support or who are at risk of not meeting expectations

### Classroom Grades

Grades are based on:

- Student performance on assignments, projects, and assessments aligned to standards
- Evidence of learning gathered through formal and informal observations
- Student growth over time and demonstration of understanding

Grades reflect academic achievement only. Participation, work habits, and behavior are communicated through separate tools such as ClassDojo, narrative comments, or behavior reports.

### Family Access to Grades

Families can monitor student grades and attendance at any time through the **Infinite Campus Parent Portal**: <https://fergflormo.infinitecampus.org/campus/portal/parents/fergflor.jsp>

Teachers also use ClassDojo to provide ongoing feedback on classroom behavior and daily performance.

We encourage families to stay engaged, ask questions, and reach out to teachers if you have concerns about your child's progress.