Independence Elementary School
Student Handbook
2026-2027

Independence Elementary School
4800 Meadows Parkway
St. Charles, MO 63304
Phone: 636-851-5900
Fax: 636-851-6149

School Website:

independence.fhsdschools.org

District Website:

fhsdschools.org

School Hours:

9:05 a.m. - 4:05 p.m.
Students can begin arriving at 8:55 a.m**.**

Office Hours:

8:00 am- 4:30 pm Monday - Friday

Francis Howell School District Administration Office:

636-851-4000

Transportation:

636-851-6220

Please Note: Student Handbooks are published annually in August. Any staff changes that occur after publication will be updated in the Independence Elementary Staff Directory.

Independence Elementary School Administration

Mrs. Jana Schultz, Principal, jana.schultz@fhsdschools.org
Mrs. Sara Ostmann, Assistant Principal, sara.ostmann@fhsdschools.org
Dr. Connie Buckman, Assistant Principal, connie.buckman@fhsdschools.org

Office Staff

Administrative Assistant: Jean Wootten, jean.wootten@fhsdschools.org, 636-851-5820
Building Information Specialist: Lisa Flanders, lisa.flanders@fhsdschools.org, 636-851-5810
Site Secretary: Katie Wood, katie.wood@fhsdschools.org, 636-851-6281
Site Secretary: Rebecca Sorensen, rebecca.sorensen@fhsdschools.org, 636-851-5816

School Counselors

Shannon Adam, shannon.adam@fhsdschools.org, 636-3851-5754
Olivia Cadwell, Olivia.cadwell@fhsdschools.org, 636-851-6191
Dana McKelvey, dana.mckelvey@fhsdschools.org, 636-851-5921

Nurse's Office

Amy Corey, amy.corey@fhsdschools.org, 636-851-6155
Casey Sullivan, casey.sullivan@fhsdschools.org, 636-851-4315

Welcome to Independence Elementary!

In 1885, a one room schoolhouse called Independent School opened its doors and ran continuously until May 1941. After that time, Independent School voted to join Consolidated School District No. 2 of St. Charles County. Through the years, the name changed to Independence Elementary School. Many former students are still members of the Francis Howell community. The original brick schoolhouse remains on Independence Road today.

Independence Elementary opened March 18, 1999. At 9:02 PM, the Francis Howell Board of Education approved the name Independence for its ninth elementary school. Independence Elementary is the home of the Eagles.

Our Mission:

Where We Learn and Grow Together

Our Vision:

Independence Elementary is a ***child-centered*** school of ***distinction*** in ***academics*** and ***character.*** The partnership among the community will ensure that all individuals will achieve ***academically***, grow ***emotionally***, and succeed ***socially*** for a ***lifetime*** of learning.

For the third time, Independence Elementary was named a National School of Character (NSOC) by the Character Education Partnership (CEP) for its commitment to character education and for fostering a positive environment for social and academic learning. Independence Elementary was recognized beginning in 2013 and has held the distinction every five years since. **The Independence Core Values are: Kindness, Responsibility, Cooperation and Perseverance.**

School Mascot and Colors:

Independence Elementary is the home of the Eagles; our colors are red, white and blue.

School Policies & Conduct

Independence Elementary Arrival / Dismissal Procedures

Parent Drop-off Guidelines

The goal of the Parent Drop-off is to alleviate congestion at the front of the school and to provide a safe, convenient arrival of students. Drop-off will begin at 8:55 a.m. in the back parking lot.

Please follow the procedure for dropping off your child(ren):

A double line will form and cars should pull all the way forward to the white line. Cars should stay parked until directed by a staff member. Students should have their jackets & backpacks on when they exit the car and drivers should remain in their cars. Students will enter the building at the nearest entrance from where their car is parked.

Dismissal of Students

The school day ends at 4:05pm. If your child needs to leave school during the school day for any reason, please send an email to the student's teacher and katie.wood@fhsdschools.org. Report to the office when you arrive on campus and the student will be called down for dismissal. You will be required to show a valid State ID when checking your student out in the office. We do request that, if you will be signing your child out early towards the end of the day, this be done before 3:30 p.m. Any office pick-ups after 3:30 p.m. will be redirected to the parent pick-up parking lot in the back of the building.

Office pickups and dismissal changes need to be sent in through written notice, through the parent communication link or email to the office (katie.wood@fhsdschools.org) and the student's teacher before 3:00 p.m. We must have written email communication to process any dismissal changes. Please do not call the office to make these changes unless an emergency arises.

Students are prohibited from riding any bus home other than the one assigned to them. Requests for students to ride a different bus home will be considered on a case by case basis. The transportation department (636-851-6220) requires a written alternate

transportation request from the guardian a **minimum of 2 days prior** to the need. Approval or denial will be determined by the transportation department.

Daily Schedule:

Full Day Schedule:

Grade	Lunch	Recess
Kindergarten	10:45-11:10 AM	11:10-11:30 AM
First Grade	11:45-12:10 PM	12:10-12:30 PM
Second Grade	12:15-112:40 PM	12:40-1:00 PM
Third Grade	12:45-1:10 PM	1:10-1:30 PM
Fourth Grade	1:15-1:40 PM	1:40-2:00 PM
Fifth Grade	11:15-11:40 AM	11:40-12:00 PM

Early Release Schedule:

Grade	Lunch	Recess
Kindergarten	10:05-10:30 AM	10:30-10:50 AM
First Grade	10:55-11:20 AM	11:20-11:40 AM
Second Grade	11:20-11:45 AM	11:45-12:05 PM
Third Grade	11:45-12:10 PM	12:10-12:30 PM
Fourth Grade	12:10-12:35 PM	12:35-12:55 PM
Fifth Grade	10:30-10:55 AM	10:55-11:15 AM

Transportation

Please call the FHSD Transportation Department at 636-851-6220 with any questions.

Character Education

Character education is a comprehensive school-based approach that includes an intentional focus on promoting character. Independence utilizes the 11 Principles of Character Education as the framework to help guide lessons and activities to help foster character growth.

Student Leadership

Students have several different building and classroom leadership opportunities. Students serving on building leadership teams have various opportunities to lead and support initiatives both inside and outside of our school community. Information about these

opportunities is shared with students and families by classroom teachers and in the school eNews at the start of the year.

Spectra

Spectra is the Francis Howell School District's program for students identified as gifted. The program is an educational intervention for qualifying students, which provides a differentiated, rigorous, cognitive curriculum. Spectra students can interact with intellectual peers in a supportive environment that meets their social and emotional needs. The Spectra program begins in first grade and continues through 8th grade. The program provides a significant, meaningful, and engaging curriculum that is challenging and rigorous for the student.

Voice Level Expectations

See below for the expectations for the volume of voices in all school settings.

Voice Levels

- 3 - Outside Voice
    - What does it sound like? Yelling
    - Where is it used? Playground
- 2 – Talking Voice
    - What does it sound like? Classroom Conversation
    - Where is it used? Classroom (includes gym, music, art); indoor recess & cafeteria; bus
- 1 – Whisper Voice
    - What does it sound like? Only one person can hear you
    - Where is it used? Classroom (group work, partner work); restroom
- 0 – Silent
    - What does it sound like? Voices / sounds off
    - Where is it used? Hallway; classroom (tests, independent work time); assemblies / presentations; safety drills

Positive Incentive: Eagle Eye Program

The Eagle Eye program is a behavior incentive program to recognize and reinforce classes for meeting or exceeding behavior expectations. All classes can earn Eagle Eyes from classroom teachers, guest teachers, and other staff members for…

- Following the Eagle Expectations inside or outside the classroom (up to 2)
- Monthly attendance of 98% or above (5)
- Walking with a Voice Level 0 in the hallway (1)
- Maintaining character in the cafeteria and at recess (up to 2)

Lunch Visitor Procedures

To ensure the safety of our students, all visitors must sign in and out of the main office with a driver's license, state ID or passport in our Raptor System. At that time, you will be given a visitor's badge to wear throughout your time in the building. All visitors who are not listed on the students Infinite Campus portal will be required to have written permission by the guardians. Please send these notes to the office.

Student Care Team

The Student Care Team is designed to assist classroom teachers when students experience difficulty in the classroom of an academic, social, or behavioral nature. If a concern arises, a problem-solving meeting is scheduled with the necessary team members to discuss concerns and possible interventions. Parents will be notified about the meeting by the teacher.

Communication

- Like us on Facebook: facebook.com/IndependenceElementary
- Independence PTO website

All parents/guardians listed in Infinite Campus Parent Portal are automatically signed up to receive District and school eNews. Community members can sign up to receive eNews through the Get News & Updates page.

District Policies & Conduct

Attendance Policy

Board Policy and Regulation 2310 cover student attendance. All students will be required to follow the policy and will be subject to enforcement of its procedures and applications.

Research clearly indicates that students who attend school regularly have more success both academically and socially. If your child's attendance falls below 90%, the District will employ a variety of attendance interventions. The level of interventions the school uses will increase as student's attendance decreases, so we can help ensure that your child and family have the appropriate support.
Interventions may include: letters, student goal setting, phone calls home, lessons on attendance, home visits, meetings with your student's teacher, principal, counselor and/or nurse, development of a support plan, possible referral to the Juvenile Office of St. Charles County, or possible referral to the Missouri Children's Division. These interventions will become more intensive if your child shows a decrease in attendance. Our hope is that your child's attendance will increase as the year progresses with the continued support of home and school.

View the FHSD Attendance Pyramid of Interventions.

Birthday Treats

Due to the growing number of allergies and health concerns for our students, FHSD is making changes to Student Wellness Regulation 2750, which addresses food brought in for elementary classroom parties and birthday celebrations. Starting in the 2019-20 school year, outside treats are not allowed to be brought to school for class sharing. This change will help maintain the safety of all students with life-threatening food allergies or restrictions. Parents will still be able to bring in non-food items, such as stickers, pencils, etc. for birthday celebrations. The following guidelines and recommendations are presented to reduce the risk of transmission of Hepatitis A in Francis Howell School District schools:

The Sharing of lunches, snacks, or treats by students should be monitored and eliminated.

Check on snack nutrition value through the Smart Snacks Product Calculator.

Bullying

FHSD is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment free of any form of bullying or intimidation by students toward District personnel or students on school grounds, or school time, at a school sponsored activity or in a school related context as stated in Bullying Policy 2655 of the District Board Policy and Regulations document. The safety of students and staff in our schools and community is of primary importance. Policy 2655 states the following:

The District is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment free of any form of bullying or intimidation. Bullying is strictly prohibited on school grounds, on school-time, at a school sponsored activity or in a school-related context. Bullying is the intentional action by an individual or group of individuals to inflict intimidation, unwanted aggressive behavior, or harassment that is repetitive or is substantially likely to be repeated and causes a reasonable student to fear for his or her physical safety or property; substantially interferes with the educational performance, opportunities, or benefits of any student without exception; or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school. Bullying may consist of physical actions, including gestures, or oral, cyber bullying, electronic, or written communication, and any threat of retaliation for reporting acts of bullying.

Cyber bullying means bullying as defined above through the transmission of a communication including, but not limited to, a message, text, sound or image by means of an electronic device including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone or other wireless communication device, computer, or pager. The District may prohibit and discipline for cyber bullying that originates on any District campus or at a District activity if the electronic communication was made using the school's technological resources, if there is a sufficient nexus to the educational environment, or if the electronic communication was made on the District's campus or at a District activity using the student's own personal technological resources. Further, students who engage in significant acts of misconduct off campus which materially and adversely impact the education of District students will be subject to discipline.

Bullying, as defined in this Policy, is strictly prohibited. Students are encouraged to report any incident of bullying which they have witnessed or incurred, by contacting their principal/designee. District employees are required to report any instance of bullying which the employee has witnessed within two (2) school-days of the occurrence. Employees shall

report the occurrence to the principal/designee, who is the person the District designates to receive reports of incidents of bullying. A principal/designee who receives a report of an incident of bullying shall initiate an investigation into the allegations, as soon as possible but within two (2) school-days of receipt of the report. The principal/designee may assign other employees to assist in the investigation, or request that the superintendent/designee assign an outside investigator. The investigation shall be completed within ten school-days from the date of the written report of bullying unless good cause exists to extend the investigation. No employee or student who reports an act of bullying shall be subject to reprisal or retaliation for making such a report. Any person who engages in reprisal or retaliation against an employee or student who reports an act of bullying shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Students who are found to have violated this Policy will be subject to consequences depending on factors such as: age of student(s), degree of harm, severity of behavior, number of incidences, etc. Possible consequences for a student for a violation of this policy include: loss of privileges, classroom detention, conference with teacher, parent contact, conference with teacher/principal/designee, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, expulsion and law enforcement contacted.

The District shall give annual notice of the policy to students, parents/guardians and staff. This policy shall be included in all student handbooks. This policy shall also be posted on the District's website (as a Board policy) and a copy shall be placed in the District Administrative Office.

The District shall provide information and appropriate training to District staff who have significant contact with students regarding this policy. All staff with significant student contact shall be trained on the requirements of this policy on an annual basis.

The District shall provide education and information to students regarding bullying, including information regarding this Policy prohibiting bullying, the harmful effects of bullying, and other applicable initiatives to address bullying, including student peer-to-peer initiatives to provide accountability and policy enforcement for those found to have engaged in bullying, reprisal, or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying. The District shall instruct its school counselors, school social workers, licensed social workers, mental health professionals, and school psychologists to educate students who are victims of bullying on techniques to overcome bullying's negative effects. Such techniques include but are not limited to, cultivating the student's self-worth and self-

esteem; teaching the student to defend himself or herself assertively and effectively; helping the student develop social skills or encouraging the student to develop an internal locus of control. District administrators will implement programs and other initiatives to address bullying, to respond to such conduct in a manner that does not stigmatize the victim, and to make resources or referrals available to victims of bullying.

If you suspect that a student is being bullied please contact your school's principal. Visit the District website to view Bullying Resources.

Buses

The Francis Howell School District assigns each student living within the district's boundary a bus which will be available to transport the student to and from school each academic day. This assignment is based on the student's primary address listed in Infinite Campus. If a parent requires their student to be transported to and/or from a secondary or alternate address the parent/guardian must contact the school and speak with the administrative assistant who handles transportation. Students purchasing a parking permit are choosing to opt out of ridership. Allow forty-eight (48) hours for processing any change requests in transportation. The Francis Howell School District does not allow students to ride a friend's bus.

Cell Phone/Smart Watches

Cell Phones and smart watches can create problems at school and we highly discourage students from bringing cell phones/smart watches to school for fear of them being lost or misused. If your child does need to bring a phone or smart watch to school, it will need to be stored in a backpack and turned off upon entering the building and during school hours. Phones and smart watches that are out during the day will be confiscated and the parent will need to pick the phone or watch up from the office.
Consistent with state law, students at all grade levels are prohibited from using cell phones and other personal electronic devices during the school day, including lunch and passing periods. Individual schools within the Francis Howell School District have the authority to enact additional restrictions on cell phone use beyond what is required by statute. Students may use their cell phone or personal devices during the school day in limited circumstances, including when such use is required by a student's IEP or 504 Plan, when authorized by a teacher or administrator for an approved educational purpose, and during school emergencies. Students who do not comply with the new state law and district policy will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the FHSD Code of Student Conduct. Depending on the severity and frequency of the violation, a student may

have their device confiscated by a school administrator. If this occurs, the student may pick it up at the end of the school day and/or the parent may be contacted to pick it up.

Learn more: Policy 2656: Student Cell Phone Usage

Student Discipline

The District has the authority to investigate and discipline for student conduct which is prejudicial to good order and discipline in the schools as provided by state and federal law. District staff may interview students, search students and their property, as well as seize any inappropriate items, upon reasonable suspicion of a code of student conduct violation, without parental notification. School officials are authorized to hold students accountable for misconduct in school, on school property, and during school-sponsored activities. Students who engage in significant acts of misconduct off campus which materially and adversely impact the education of District students will be subject to discipline up to and including expulsion. However, no student will be confined in an unattended locked space except for emergency situations while awaiting the arrival of law enforcement officials. Students forfeit their right to a public school education by engaging in conduct prohibited in Regulation 2610, the "Code of Student Conduct", and/or state or federal law. Disciplinary consequences include, but are not limited to, withdrawal of school privileges (athletics, intramurals, student clubs and activities and school social events), the reassignment of the student to another school, removal for up to ten (10) school days by the principal(s)/designee(s), extension of suspensions for a total of one hundred eighty (180) days by the superintendent/designee, and longer term suspension and expulsion from school by the Board of Education. See Policy 2610 and the "Code of Student Conduct."

Computer and Related Technology Use by Students

Students will be expected to use all technologies in a proper and correct manner. Such technologies include, but are not limited to, school/district computers, Chromebooks, iPads, software, internet use, peripheral hardware, file servers, email, Google Suite (Gmail, Docs, Drive, etc.), and audio-visual equipment.

Students who improperly utilize or damage technologies will be subject to the loss of technological privileges and/or other disciplinary actions. If any parent does not wish the school to allow his/her son or daughter to have technology-based privileges (i.e., use of computers, access to the internet, etc.), the parent should contact the student's assistant principal each school year. The administrator will inform the student's teachers. Parents should also inform their student that they are not to utilize specific technologies.

Early Dismissal

View the Early Release Days on the FHSD Calendar.

Emergency Drills/Procedures

Fire drills

Fire drills are held each year. It is important that students and staff know procedures in case of a real emergency. During fire drills, students and staff evacuate the building through the nearest doorways to the outside areas and move away from the building as far as possible.

Tornado drills

Tornado drills are also held to instruct the children of the procedures in place in case of a real tornado. If a tornado “warning” is in effect at the close of school, buses will wait until the “all clear” before departure. This procedure does not apply when there is a tornado or severe weather “watch.” Parents should use their own judgment concerning picking up their children under these circumstances. Children and teachers at school will follow tornado emergency procedures.
During severe weather, school personnel will be alert for dangerous conditions. Each school is equipped with radios for scanning the National Weather Service .It is important to have a family plan in the event that a tornado warning is issued before school. All schools conduct tornado drills with students twice a year to ensure they are aware of procedures.

Tornado Alerts / Tornado Watch

- Tornado Watch: During a tornado watch, or other threatening weather, school officials are alert for developing and dangerous conditions, and actions deemed necessary for safety will be taken per building procedures. Phones will be in operation for emergency calls and for preparedness. Outside calls may not get through during a weather event.
- Tornado Warning: During a tornado warning, when sirens have sounded, seek shelter. Do not attempt to pick up students at schools. Disaster experts advise that automobiles are among the most dangerous places to be in a storm. If you are in the parent pickup line, please go to the school to seek shelter. Communication will be limited during the tornado due to the supervision of students and limitations the weather may present.
- All Clear: FHSD consults the weather channel for the tornado warning expiration and all clear notice. The siren silencing does not mean the warning has ended. After

the all clear is given, students may be picked up by parents. Depending on the time of day the all-clear is announced, buses may run later than normal. Any special announcements to parents will be made via the School Messenger notification system and District website.

Before School:

- Keep children at home or in a safe location until tornado warning is lifted. We want to ensure students are not waiting at bus stops during this critical time.
- School buses will be held at the bus garage. The start of school days will be delayed until the tornado warning is lifted and the all clear is given.

If buses are en route, they will proceed to the nearest school or other predetermined location, and remain there until the warning has been lifted and the all clear is given. During School Hours

- Students and staff will move to designated safe places and proceed into the precautionary duck and cover position.
- Please refrain from coming to school to pick up your child during a tornado warning.
- Parents who arrive at school during a warning will be asked to wait inside until the warning is lifted and personnel are available to assist parents.

At Dismissal

- Students will not be dismissed from school while the area is under a tornado warning.
- Students will be held at school and buses will not be allowed to transport students until the tornado warning has been lifted and the all clear is given.
- Please refrain from coming to school to pick up your child during a tornado warning.
- Parents who arrive at school during a warning will be asked to wait inside until the warning is lifted and the all clear is given, and personnel are available to assist parents.

Buses en Route

- Buses will proceed to the nearest school or other predetermined location.
- Drivers and students will remain at that location until the warning has been lifted and the all clear is given.

Communication Procedures

- Phones may not be answered during a tornado warning, as students and staff will be in the precautionary duck and cover position. To the extent possible, the outgoing message will be changed to let parents know we are under a tornado warning.
- Parents will be notified via the School Messenger Notification System of any changes in transportation, as well as school delays associated with a tornado warning.
- FHSD will share updates via the District website as soon as information becomes available.

Earthquake

Earthquake drills are held twice a year.

Shelter in place

Shelter in place procedures for safety during hazardous material incidents are reviewed annually.

Intruder

Intruder Drills are also held during the school year. The school will be locked down and all students will be moved to a safe location.

Visit the District website to view the weather guidelines.

Field Trips

All students planning to take part in a school sponsored field trip must submit a field trip form to the sponsoring teacher three days prior to the field trip. The form must be signed by the student, parent and teachers. Teachers' signatures indicate they have been informed of the trip and that students have agreed to make up any work missed due to the absence caused by the field trip. ***School approved and sponsored field trips do not count as student absences; given this, students must turn in assigned work prior to or immediately following the field trip in all their classes to avoid late penalties. Field Trip Forms should be provided to participating students by the teacher sponsoring the activity. The supervising teacher will collect all completed forms before students will be allowed to take part in the trip.*

Health/Nurse/Medication Information

Illnesses

Children with any of the following symptoms should be kept home from school: diarrhea or vomiting, unexplained rashes, red or discharging eyes, acute cold, signs of weakness, drowsiness, temperature of 100 degrees or higher, persistent cough or untreated head lice. Please notify the school nurse if your child has a special health condition such as epilepsy, allergies, hemophilia, diabetes, heart condition, HIV positive, hearing or vision problems or physical limitations.
The school nurse will contact you should your child become ill.

PLEASE MAKE ARRANGEMENT FOR TRANSPORTATION TO BE AVAILABLE SHOULD YOUR CHILD NEED TO LEAVE SCHOOL EARLY.

- The school cannot transport ill children.
- If your child is sent home with a fever of 100 degrees or above, the student should not attend school until he/she has been fever free for 24 hours without the use of Tylenol or ibuprofen.
- Please do not send your child back the next day for the protection of your child as well as other students.
- Parents are requested to send a note each day that a student is to be excused from outdoor recess stating the reason. If a child is to be excused for more than three consecutive days, a doctor's excuse is required to stay indoors for recess.

Medication Procedures for Prescription and Nonprescription Medicines

Pursuant to Francis Howell School District policy, the giving of prescription and non-prescription medicine by the nurse, principal, or designee, shall be restricted to necessary medication that cannot be given on an alternative schedule. Your physician may fax a medication order to school or you may bring in the order with the medication. Please ask your pharmacist for a "school bottle" with dosages to be given at school.
When medications need to be given at school, they should be brought by the parent to the nurse or by the student directly to the nurse when arriving at school and before going to the classroom.

Prescription medicine

1. Must be accompanied by a label affixed by a pharmacy or physician showing:
    a. Name of student

    b. Total daily dosage and schedule of administration
    c. Date purchased
    d. Physician's name
    e. Name of medication
2. MUST have a written physician's order
3. A parent/guardian must request in writing that the District comply with the authorized prescriber's request to give medication. (The District will not administer the initial dose of any new prescription except in an emergency).
4. Any changes to a medication dosage must be accompanied by an updated Rx prescription label. No outdated medication prescription label will be accepted. Each new prescription must have a new label and vial.
5. This authorization is effective for the school year for which it is granted and must be reviewed annually.

Non-prescription medicine

1. Must be in the original container.
2. MUST have a written order, signed by the physician or advance practice nurse, stating the name of the medication, the name of the child, dosage and schedule of administration, and reason for giving the medication. When possible, the prescriber should state potential adverse effects and applicable emergency instructions.
3. A parent/guardian must provide a written request that the district comply with the authorized prescriber's request to give medication.
4. This authorization is effective for the school year for which it is granted and must be renewed annually.

Emergency Medication

Written standing orders will be obtained annually for the administration of emergency medication.

Parent/Guardian Administration

In situations where the parent/guardian chooses, the parent/guardian may come to school to administer the medication to his/her child.

Security

All medication shall be kept in a locked cabinet in the nurse's office or the principal's office.

Medications on Field Trips

1. Medications that must be given during the time a student is off campus (seizure meds, inhalers, and allergy meds) may only be given by a responsible adult employed by the district and trained by the nurse on the “5 R’s” of medication administration or the child’s parent. The Right Medication, The Right Patient, The Right Dosage, The Right Time, The Right Route.
2. All medications must be in the prescription bottle or box with the pharmacy label attached. Only inhalers may be self-administered. All other medications must be carried and administered by the delegated, trained adult or the child’s parent.
3. Any student found to be carrying his/her medication on his/her person while on a school sponsored trip off campus, without the knowledge of the nurse, may be subject to disciplinary action.
4. If the student has severe allergies an EpiPen auto injector will be carried by a trained staff member and used as needed.
5. If the adult in charge of the off-campus trip refuses to take responsibility for the giving of medications, the parent will be asked to accompany his/her student on the trip. If the parent is unable to accompany the student, the District will provide an appropriately trained person to administer the medication as needed.

A physician’s statement regarding the limitations and duration of their use is required before a student is allowed to use crutches on school district property during school hours. Another student will be assigned to assist carrying the student's books. Both students will be dismissed five minutes early to facilitate getting to the bus on time at the end of the day. The school district will not be responsible for any injury that occurs as a result of the use of crutches without a physician's written order on file.

Inclement Weather

Visit the District website to view FHSD Weather Guidelines.

Nutrition

Parent Portal

Campus Portal is our tool for parents to access instant, online, timely and secure student information. For elementary parents, attendance is visible through parent portal, report cards and bus routes. Middle and high school parents can access class schedules, assignments, attendance, discipline, course registrations for next year, report cards and transcripts. Parents can view student lunch balance and add funds. Campus Portal is a

means to further promote educational excellence by enhancing our program of communication with parents and students.

Meal Prices/Free & Reduced Forms

Please access this link for Nutrition Services and Forms. Visit the District website to view information about Nutrition Services

Visit the District website to view the Nutrition Services information and forms.

Free and Reduced Lunch Eligibility

The District participates in the national school lunch program. Eligible students will be identified for participation in the free and reduced-price lunch program based upon federal and state guidelines. Information concerning the eligibility standards will be distributed annually within the District. The identification of student participants in the program will be confidential with such information disclosed to staff members on a strict need-to-know basis.

FHSD Student Meal Charges **UPDATED**

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy 5550 is to maintain consistent meal account procedures throughout the District. Unpaid charges place a financial strain on District finances. The District's contracted food service vendor is responsible for maintaining food charge records and for notifying the District's accounting department of outstanding balances.

Administration

- Student Groups:
    - All students will be allowed to accrue a negative balance of twenty-five ($25.00) dollars.
        - This accrual will include only the menu items of the reimbursable meal and not à la carte items.
        - After the balance exceeds twenty-five ($25.00) dollars, the student may be given a designated menu alternate (DMA) and the cost of the DMA will be added to the student's balance.
    - Various methods of communication may be used to notify parent(s)/guardian(s) of students with negative balances, including electronic communication, written correspondence, or phone call by the appropriate party.

- On May 15 annually, all charging will be cut off.
    - Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be sent a written request for "payment in full."
    - All charges not paid before the end of the school year will be carried forward into the next school year.
  - If a financial hardship is suspected, families will be encouraged to apply for free/reduced meals at any time during the school year. Building leaders may also establish special funds to assist students with meal purchases.
  - Each building principal will send a letter to all parent(s)/guardian(s) on or before the first day of school notifying them of the requirements of this Policy. This Policy will also be published on the District's website.

Parent Portal

Campus Portal is our tool for parents to access instant, online, timely and secure student information. For elementary parents, attendance is visible through parent portal, report cards and bus routes. Middle and high school parents can access class schedules, assignments, attendance, discipline, course registrations for next year, report cards and transcripts. Campus Portal is a means to further promote educational excellence by enhancing our program of communication with parents and students.

Visit the District website to view the Parent Portal and Log-in directions.

Report Card Dates/Access

There will be four formal reporting times (report cards) during the school year. Each report card will note progress in all subjects being studied. One formal parent-teacher conference will be scheduled. Additional conferences may be scheduled at any time during the year upon request by the parent, teacher, or building administrators.

Campus Portal is our tool for parents to access instant, online, timely and secure student information. For elementary parents, attendance is visible through parent portal, report cards and bus routes. Middle and high school parents can access class schedules, assignments, attendance, discipline, course registrations for next year, report cards and transcripts. Campus Portal is a means to further promote educational excellence by enhancing our program of communication with parents and students.

Visit the District website to view the Parent Portal and Log-in directions.

Online Registration Annual Verification (ORAV)

All families enrolling students from 1st through 12th grade in the Francis Howell School District (FHSD) will be required to complete the Online Registration Annual Verification (ORAV) and is mandatory for families.

The registration window is set to open on July 1, providing families with ample time to complete the process. Completing the ORAV typically takes 15-20 minutes, with the option to save applications for later completion. Unfinished applications will display incomplete information in yellow upon reopening.

Failure to complete ORAV will result in students being unenrolled from the District, except for McKinney-Vento and Foster families, early childhood and Kindergarten, and students qualifying for the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program. Furthermore, middle and high school students will face restrictions, including the inability to change schedules, participate in activities, or purchase parking passes until ORAV is complete.

The ORAV process will include acknowledgment of annual FERPA notification, alongside other standard acknowledgments such as the COC Handbook. Additionally, families in transition years, including kindergarten, 6th, and 9th grades, must provide proof of residency when completing the ORAV process. To assist families with completing the forms, each school building will host two in-person assistance days in July.

For questions regarding the ORAV process, families are encouraged to visit the FHSD website to locate their child's school and then call that school directly.

Snow Days/AMI Plan

Visit the District website to view FHSD AMI Information

Volunteer/Visitor Process

Become an approved volunteer in 3 easy steps: Become an approved volunteer in 3 easy steps:

- **Watch the Mandatory Training Videos and complete the FHSD Volunteer Application.**
    - Sign and initial the form where indicated (digital signatures are not accepted), then scan and email the completed application to the FHSD Volunteer Email or drop off in-person at the District Administration Building (801 Corporate Centre Drive, O'Fallon, Missouri).

    - Please note:
        - If you watched the mandatory training in previous years, you will need to create a new username in order to view the videos.
        - To ensure a smooth training experience, we recommend watching all three required training videos in one continuous session to avoid potential login issues. Starting and stopping between videos can sometimes result in logging you out of the training platform.
- Register online with the **Missouri Family Care Safety Registry** and pay applicable fees (approximately $15) to the state.
    - If you previously joined the Registry, you do not need to join again. This is a one-time process. You can check the Registry for your social security number prior to submitting another registration. Please note, the wait time for the FCSR registration to be processed and for the District to be notified can be up to two weeks. We recommend completing this process as early as possible.
- Schedule your **Digital Fingerprinting Appointment with MACHS**.
    - This can be scheduled online through the Missouri Automated Criminal History System (MACHS) or by calling (844) 543-9712. When prompted for a 4-digit code, use 8403 so the Francis Howell School District can view the fingerprint report when it is complete. Please note that 8403 is a code specific to FHSD volunteers and should not be used when requesting fingerprints for other purposes.
    - The cost for fingerprinting is approximately $40, paid by the applicant; you have the option of paying online or at the fingerprinting facility. Facility locations are subject to change without notice, so please check the list toward the end of the registration process for locations and appointments currently available. Bring your online confirmation page and a photo ID to the facility. Please note: Those who have been fingerprinted previously for past employment or volunteer positions must go through the process again using our school district code (8403). Without this specific code, FHSD cannot see your results and therefore cannot process your volunteer application. Ink fingerprints taken at your local police department are not valid.

After you've completed these three steps, look for email confirmation from the FHSD Human Resources Department that your application has been approved. Confirmation emails received from the Family Care Safety Registry or the MACHS/IdentoGo fingerprinting facility are not sufficient for your volunteer approval with the District. Due to a high volume of volunteer applications, it could take up to six weeks for your application to be approved.

Visit the District website to view information about volunteering at FHSD

Visitor Management System

The Francis Howell School District has implemented the Raptor Visitor Management System at all campuses as part of ongoing security improvement efforts.
Raptor screens visitors, volunteers and contractors who enter school buildings. The system checks government-issued identification against a national database of registered sex offenders, including individuals with custody restrictions or other safety-related alerts.

How the system works

Visitors will check in at a designated kiosk and scan a driver's license, state ID or passport. Approved visitors will receive a printed badge with their photo, name and reason for the visit. Badges must be worn while on campus. If the system identifies a concern, school administrators and school resource officers will be alerted and respond accordingly.

Who must check in?

The system applies to visitors entering nonpublic areas, including classrooms, libraries and other secured spaces. This includes parents attending meetings, volunteers, contractors and guest speakers. It does not apply to brief office visits, such as student check-in or check-out, or material drop-offs, which is handled by office staff.

Privacy and data use

Visitor information is stored securely and used only for security purposes. The system complies with federal and state privacy requirements. Data is not shared outside the system.
Raptor supports the District's strategic plan, which focuses on safety and security. The plan includes regular safety audits, staff training, emergency response coordination, and partnerships with first responders. It also emphasizes data protection through system testing, secure device access and staff training on privacy and technology use.

Early Childhood Program Supplement

This section only pertains to tuition-based early childhood programs that are housed in select elementary schools.

Section 1: About Our Early Childhood Program

Our Learning Philosophy

Francis Howell Early Childhood operates under the philosophy that children of all abilities can learn. Together they will develop a strong educational foundation built on good character that promotes independence, appreciation for diversity, a healthy self-concept, and positive socialization skills. All learning is child-centered, process-oriented, and choice-driven. Learning is guided by setting clear limits, redirecting, modeling, providing positive praise, and encouragement.

Our Curriculum

Francis Howell Early Childhood is guided by the Missouri Early Learning Standards in conjunction with research and best practices on a child's ability to learn. Our Early Childhood programming is aligned with the elementary level and follows a curriculum that is tailored to meet the needs of each child.

The Francis Howell Early Childhood staff provides instruction and assessment of a child's growth in the following learning domains:

- Personal-Social Development
- Language and Literacy
- Mathematical Thinking
- Scientific Thinking
- Social Studies
- The Arts
- Physical Health and Development

We utilize the following core curriculums:

- Early Childhood English Language Arts Curriculum
- Bridges Math
- Second Step Social Emotional
- Handwriting

All lessons and activities are crafted into theme-based units that encompass all aspects of learning to best ensure success for each child at their appropriate level of development.

Our Assessment

All students participate in a district-written assessment in order to monitor student learning. Guardians receive a written report of student progress at regularly scheduled intervals during the school year.
The Early Childhood Assessment addresses:

- Early Literacy
- Math
- Language
- Social Skills

Section 2: Program Offerings & Operations

Classroom Models

- **Multi-Age Classroom:** This class is designed for 3-year-old and young 4-year-old students. Learning and instruction is individualized as children progress at their own rate and experience success. Children engage in real, meaningful activities at their own level of development. Research shows that when the classroom is composed of a community of learners with a range of abilities and gifts, there are measurable gains in socialization, independence, and interaction with peers. Younger children will be nurtured by older children and benefit from collaborative learning. Older children will show increased levels of competence and leadership. This class is designed for students not eligible for the O2K class.
- **Off to Kindergarten (O2K):** Off to Kindergarten is an age-specific classroom designed for the student who will be going to kindergarten the following school year. This class is available to children who are 4 years old before August 1st. This classroom has a more comprehensive literacy component that provides greater depth in pre-reading and pre-math skills. The 'O2K' class will include: Bridges Mathematics, Handwriting, and Early Childhood English Language Arts. *Please note: If your child is kindergarten age eligible, they will be placed in an O2K class after July 1st, only if space is available.*

Extended Care & Weather Programs

- **Non-School Day Care:** This program is managed by the FHSD Vacation Station (VS) program and is available to full-day students only during school calendar breaks, certain holidays, and Teacher Professional Development Days. It is held at designated elementary sites. Non-School Day Care is designed to provide care for our students on the days that fall outside of the school calendar. Facilitators design

learning activities which enrich the early childhood curriculum. This is a separate enrollment from the early childhood program. Please contact the VS business office for more information.

- **Snow Day Program:** On snow days, programming will be offered at select sites which may not necessarily be your Full Day Early Childhood site. If weather is significantly severe and the administration building is closed, all snow day sites will be closed. Participation in the Snow Day program is optional. You will receive information in the fall to register.

Section 3: Daily Classroom Life & Expectations

Classroom Activities

Each classroom has planned activities throughout the school day to keep your child engaged and learning. Teachers will provide a daily schedule specific to their classroom. Examples of daily activities include:

- **Math:** Pre-math skills including sorting, categorizing, shapes, and numbers.
- **Language & Literacy:** Letters, sounds, phonemic awareness, and pre-reading skills.
- **Writing:** Letter formation (uppercase and lowercase) and simple sentences.
- **Learning Centers:** Opportunities for children to make choices involving writing, blocks, dramatic play, manipulatives, listening centers, computers, etc.
- **Group Activities:** Teachers relate a story or topic to "hands-on" activities to develop relationships between what students already know and what they have just learned.
- **Music and Movement:** Children express themselves through theme-related finger plays and music.
- **Snack:** An opportunity for children to socialize with one another that encourages social skills such as independence and manners.
- **Recess:** Children safely enjoy sliding, climbing, riding tricycles, and participating in large group games.

Dress Code

Children should wear comfortable play clothes for safety when running and playing. Messy activities are part of the early childhood curriculum. **WARNING: We will have fun. We will get dirty!** Shoes and clothing must meet reasonable safety guidelines for physical play; tennis shoes are most appropriate. We play outdoors almost every day, so remember to send appropriate outerwear with your child. Please be sure to label ALL articles of clothing with your child's first and last name.

Snacks & Lunches

- **Snacks:** Caregivers are to provide two, individual snacks each day for their child. Healthy choices are encouraged.
- **Lunches:** Children are to bring their own healthy lunch each day. Water will be provided in the classroom. We cannot microwave any lunches. You may provide an insulated container for foods that need to be kept warm. Depending upon individual elementary school schedules, students may be able to purchase lunch in the cafeteria on the days school is in session.
- **Allergy Awareness:** We ask that all families are Allergy Aware when packing lunches. There are a growing number of allergy concerns among our students. It is important to instruct your child not to share lunch items with friends. Children who bring items for lunch that may cause an allergy risk for a peer (such as peanuts or peanut butter) will be provided a placemat and seated away from the peer with the allergy risk.

School Supplies Needed

Please label all items with your child's first and last name (backpacks, jackets, coats, hats, gloves, etc.). We ask that no other toys be brought from home. The Early Childhood program is not responsible for non-essential items brought from home.

- A complete change of clothes, including socks and shoes (labeled)
- Two snacks each day for your child
- Age-appropriate water bottle with lid
- Diapering supplies as necessary
- $5 cash for celebrations
- A packed lunch
- A kindergarten mat – please no cloth or oversized mats
- A small cover/blanket for quiet time
- A small pillow
- One small stuffed animal

Note: Quiet time items should be small enough to fit in a small cubby bin

---

Section 4: Behavior Guidance & Expectations

In the Pre-K Tuition-Based Program, we view discipline as a way to teach and guide young children—not to punish them. Young children are still learning how to manage emotions, build friendships, and solve problems. Our goal is to help them develop self-regulation, empathy, and responsible decision-making through consistent, supportive guidance.

Positive Behavior Approaches

We use developmentally appropriate practices to promote positive behavior and emotional growth, including:

- Engaging children in meaningful, interest-based activities that spark curiosity.
- Offering choices throughout the day to encourage independence.
- Building leadership by involving children in caring for materials and setting classroom rules.
- Creating a supportive environment where children work through challenges with adult guidance.
- Gently redirecting behavior to help children understand how actions affect others.
- Providing quiet spaces for children to calm their bodies and think through situations with support.
- Partnering with families to support social-emotional development.

Social-Emotional Curriculums

- **Second Step Early Learning Program:** A universal classroom-based program designed to increase children's readiness and social success by building social-emotional competence and self-regulation skills. It supports skill development in empathy, compassion, emotion management, friendship skills, problem-solving, and skills for learning across 28 weekly themes.

- **The Zones of Regulation:** A self-regulation tool to help children with self-control, self-management, and impulse control. It helps children identify what emotional "zone" they are in and provides strategies to return to the green zone. There are no "bad" zones, and we all rotate through them. Your support in using this language at home helps your child apply it throughout the day.

Blue Zone	Green Zone	Yellow Zone	Red Zone
Sad	Happy	Excited	Out of Control
Sick	Proud	Frustrated	Mad
Tired	Focused	Scared	
Hurt	Ready to Learn	Silly	

Unsafe Behavior Procedures

At times, student behaviors may become unsafe or highly disruptive to the school setting. Examples include physical aggression, destruction of property, inappropriate language, or excessive refusal to participate.

While the goal of our discipline approach is to teach and guide, students remain subject to the District's Code of Student Conduct and applicable Policies and Regulations. If challenging behavior continues or becomes a safety concern, the following progressive steps will be taken:

1. **Teacher/Family Discussion:** The teacher will discuss the behavior directly with the guardian(s). Communication between home and school is an important component of student success.
2. **Specialist Consultation:** The teacher will consult with the Educational Support Counselor and/or Behavior Specialist to develop strategies of support for the student.
3. **Team Conference:** A meeting and/or phone conference will be held with the guardian(s) to discuss strategy implementation and results.
4. **Immediate Pick-Up:** If a child's behavior causes physical harm, creates an immediate safety risk, or results in intentional property damage, the child will be removed from the group, and a parent/guardian will be contacted to pick them up immediately.
5. **Program Dismissal:** If interventions are not successful and appropriate supports are not available, suspension or dismissal from the program may be determined necessary.

Section 5: Fees, Tuition, and Financial Policies

Payment Policies & Methods

Account information is available through our online payment platform. Tuition is paid in advance.

- Full-Day Pre-K: Tuition is due by 4:00 PM every Monday.
- **Refund Policy:** Once paid, tuition fees and supply fees (due at enrollment to secure your placement) are **strictly non-refundable** after the start of the school year.
- **Co-Parenting Policy:** It is not the district's responsibility to determine which parent/guardian is responsible for fees. As a courtesy, invoices will be provided to both parents/guardians upon request, and notices of nonpayment or program removal will be sent to both parties.

Accepted Payment Methods:

- **Debit/Credit Card:** Paid directly through the online platform.
- **Check / Cashier's Check:** Must be delivered to the school's main office in an envelope labeled "Tuition". Checks must be made payable to *Francis Howell School District* or *FHSD*.
- **Electronic Bill Pay (via your bank):** Requests must be made far enough in advance to arrive by the tuition due date. Make payable to *Francis Howell School District* and ensure your child's name is included on the memo line.

Receipts can be accessed directly via the online platform or requested from your site's Administrative Assistant.

Incidental Fees & Penalties

Late Pick-Up Fees

Fees apply immediately following session end-times. Please note that 5 or more late pick-ups could result in dismissal from the program.

- **Fee:** $1.00 per minute, per child.
- Late Pick Up Cutoff: 6:00 PM

Late Payment Fees

Students may not return to programming if payments are not brought current within one week of the payment due date. Reinstatement may occur only if space remains available once all outstanding balances are collected.

- **Fee:** $5.00 per late payment.
- **Half Day Cutoff:** Applied the business day following your specific due date.

Returned Check Policy

If a check is returned by your bank, it is subject to a **$15.00 fee**. Future tuition payments must then be made via cashier's check or money order until the balance is resolved.

- The Administrative Assistant-Accounting will notify you by phone; you will have 2 days to submit a money order or cashier's check to the school.
- If unpaid after 2 days, a written notice is sent. You have 5 days from the notice date to pay your principal.
- On the 5th day, the FHSD Administration office begins collection procedures. Early childhood services will be suspended, and payments can no longer be accepted at the building level (they must be mailed/paid at the Central Administration Building).
- If deadlines continue to be missed, the account will be turned over to the Prosecuting Attorney's office for collection.

Elementary Meal Debt Policy

To maintain consistent procedures and avoid financial strain on the district, Full-Day Early Childhood students in elementary buildings must adhere to District Policy 5550:

- Students may charge a maximum of **$15.00** in meals (reimbursable menu items only).
- Once the $15.00 limit is exceeded, students may be given a designated menu alternative.
- Students may charge up to **$1.00** for à la carte foods and beverages.
- Parents/guardians will be notified of negative balances electronically, in writing, or verbally. If experiencing a financial hardship, families are encouraged to notify the school for support.

Income Tax Statements

All tax information is available through your online payment account. The Early Childhood office can also provide records of tuition payments upon request within 7 to 10 business days.

- FHSD Tax ID Number: 43-6004545

Section 6: Additional District Services

Parents as Teachers (PAT)

Our District Parents as Teachers program offers resources for families with children from prenatal stage through pre-kindergarten. PAT offers personal home visits to discuss child development and parenting issues, alongside family meetings addressing child development topics. For more information, please call **636-851-4045**.

3–5-Year Developmental Screenings

Free developmental screenings are available to all children prior to Kindergarten entry to provide insight into development according to standardized measures. Screenings are strongly recommended and are offered during the school day for children already enrolled in our early childhood programs. Screenings are also available to district residents by appointment. To schedule, contact the Family Education Center at **636-851-4045**.

Transportation

Transportation services are provided to and from the Early Childhood Center exclusively to students receiving special education services. Please call the Bus Garage directly at **636-851-6220** if your child rides the bus and will be absent/picked up early, or if you have questions regarding routing. *Please note: The individual school office is not responsible for student bus routes.*

District Notices

Notification of Rights under FERPA for Elementary and Secondary Schools

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the school receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students who wish to inspect their child's or their education records should submit to the school principal or appropriate school official a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for

access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

   Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the school to amend their child's or their education record should write to the school principal or appropriate school official, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. The criteria for determining who constitutes a school official and what constitutes a legitimate educational interest must be set forth in the school's or school district's annual notification for FERPA rights. A school official typically includes a person employed by the school or school district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official typically has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school or school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer. [NOTE:

FERPA requires a school or school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request or the disclosure is initiated by the parent or eligible student.]

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue
SW Washington, DC 20202

Directory Information

The Francis Howell School District has designated the following information contained in the educational records of its students as directory information for purposes of FERPA: student's name, student's address, student's phone number(s), parent(s)/guardian(s) e-mail, grade level, grade point average, dates of attendance, grade level, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, degrees and awards received, most recent previous school attended, and photographs.

How to Opt Out

A parent or student refusing to have any or all of the designated directory information disclosed is required to complete FERPA Student Directory Information & Media Opt-Out Form and designate that you are refusing to disclose directory information or that disclosure of directory information should be limited to school affiliated organizations and activities as described in Regulation 2600. Return the form to the principal of the school which the student attends. The completed form must be returned by September 1 each year or within 10 days of new student enrollment, whichever is later. View the Spanish translation of the Opt-Out Form. Additional translations can be provided by contacting your child's school.

ESSA Complaint Procedures - Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA) Complaint Procedures

This guide explains how to file a complaint about any of the programs [1] that are administered by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (the Department) under the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA)[2].

Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Complaint Procedures for ESSA Programs Table of Contents

General Information

1. What is a complaint under ESSA?
2. Who may file a complaint?
3. How can a complaint be filed?

Complaints filed with LEA

4. How will a complaint filed with the LEA be investigated?
5. What happens if a complaint is not resolved at the local level (LEA)?

Complaints filed with the Department

6. How can a complaint be filed with the Department?
7. How will a complaint filed with the Department be investigated?
8. How are complaints related to equitable services to private school children handle differently?

Appeals

9. How will appeals to the Department be investigated?
10. What happens if the complaint is not resolved at the state level (the Department)?

---

1. What is a complaint?

For these purposes, a complaint is an allegation that a local education agency (LEA) or the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (the Department) has violated a federal statute or regulation that applies to a program under ESSA.

2. Who may file a complaint?

Any individual or organization may file a complaint.

3. How can a complaint be filed

Complaints can be filed with the LEA or with the Department.

4. How will a complaint filed with the LEA be investigated?

Complaints filed with the LEA are to be investigated and attempted to be resolved according to locally developed and adopted procedures.

5. **What happens if a complaint is not resolved at the local level (LEA)?**

A complaint not resolved at the local level may be appealed to the Department.

6. **How can a complaint be filed with the Department?**

A complaint filed with the Department must be a written, signed statement that includes:

a. A statement that a requirement that applies to an ESSA program has been violated by the LEA or the Department, and
b. The facts on which the statement is based and the specific requirements allegedly violated.

7. **How will a complaint filed with the Department be investigated?**

The investigation and complaint resolution proceedings will be completed within a time limit of fifty calendar days. That time limit can be extended by the agreement of all parties.

The following activities will occur investigation:

a. Record. A written record of the investigation will be kept.
b. Notification of LEA. The LEA will be notified of the complaint within five days of the complaint being filed.
c. Resolution at LEA. The LEA will then initiate its local complaint procedures in an effort to first resolve the complaint at the local level.
d. Report by LEA. Within forty-five days of the complaint being filed, the lEA will submit a written summary of the LEA investigation and complaint resolution. This report is considered public record and may be made available to parents, teachers, and other members of the general public.
e. Verification. Within ten days of receiving the written summary of a complaint resolution, the Department will verify the resolution of the complaint through an on-site visit, letter, and/or telephone call(s).
f. Appeal. The complainant or the LEA may appeal the decision of the Department to the U.S. Department of Education.

8. **How are the complaints related to equitable services to nonpublic school children handled differently?**

If the complaint is an LEA is not providing equitable services for private school children, in addition to the procedures listed in number 7 above, the complaint will also be filed with the U.S. Department of Education, and they will receive all information related to the investigation and resolution of the complaint. Also, appeals to the United States

Department of Education must be filed no longer than thirty days following the Departments' resolution of the complaint (or its failure to resolve the complaint).

9. **How will appeals to the Department be investigated?**

The Department will initiate an investigation within ten days, which will be concluded within thirty days from the day of the appeal. The investigation may be continued beyond the thirty-day limit at the discretion of the Department. At the conclusion of the investigation, the Department will communicate the decision and reasons for the decision to the complainant and the LEA. Recommendations and details of the decision are to be implemented within fifteen days of the decision being delivered to the LEA.

10. **What happens if the complaint is not resolved at the state level (the Department)?**

The complainant or LEA may appeal the decision of the Department to the United States Department of Education.

1 - Programs include Title I. A, B, C, D, Title II, Title III. A.
2 - Title IV.A, Title VI, Title VII. C Revised 7/15 2 In compliance with NCLB Title IX Part C. Sec. 9304(a)(3)(C)
Local Education agencies are required to disseminate, free of charge, this information regarding NCLB complaint procedures to parents of students and appropriate private school officials or representatives.

Revised 2017

FHSD Equal Opportunity Policy 1300

Book FHSD POLICIES
Section 1000 GENERAL ADMINISTRATION/ 1300 Equal Opportunity
Title Equal Opportunity
Code 1300
Status Active
Adopted April 1, 2007
Last Revised September 29, 2025

The District is committed to maintaining a workplace and educational environment that is free from discrimination, harassment, and retaliation in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs, services, activities and facilities. The District is

committed to providing equal opportunity in all areas of education, recruiting, hiring, retention, promotion and contracted service.

In its programs and activities, the District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, age, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by law and as required by Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and state law. In addition, the District provides equal access to the Boy Scouts of America and other designated youth groups. Further, no person shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subject to discrimination based on the above-listed characteristics under a school nutrition program for which the District receives federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service.

This Policy governs the District's compliance with the laws identified above, outside Title IX. The following person is designated and authorized as the District's Compliance Officer to coordinate compliance with the laws identified above (outside of Title IX), including to handle inquiries or complaints regarding the District's non-discrimination policies:

The following individuals have been designated as the District's non-discrimination compliance officers:

Lisa Simpkins
Chief Human Resources Officer
801 Corporate Centre Drive, O Fallon, MO 63368
636-851-4004

Dr. Suzanne Leake
Director of Human Resources
801 Corporate Centre Drive, O Fallon, MO 63368
636-851-4057

Dr. Dan Harmon
Director of Student Services
801 Corporate Centre Drive, O Fallon, MO 63368
635-851-5957

Dr. Will Vanderpool
Director of Alternative Learning
801 Corporate Centre Drive, O Fallon, MO 63368
636-851-4006

A complaint by students, employees, parents, and patrons of the District alleging harassment, discrimination, or related retaliation based on a protected classification under the laws identified above (outside of Title IX) should be filed in accordance with the procedures outlined in Regulation 1300. A complaint regarding sexual harassment or related retaliation of a student or employee under Title IX and that is alleged to have occurred on or after August 14, 2020, should be filed in accordance with the procedures outlined in Regulation 1301. A complaint regarding the identification, evaluation, educational program, or placement of a child with a disability under Section 504 should be filed in accordance with the procedures outlined in Regulation 2110.

Originally adopted April 2007
Revised March 2018
Revised December 2018
Revised May 2020
Revised January 2021
Revised September 2024

FHSD Policy 1301

Book: FHSD POLICIES
Section: 1000 GENERAL ADMINISTRATION/ 1300 Equal Opportunity
Title: Prohibition Against Sexual Harassment and Retaliation under Title IX
Code: 1301
Status: Active
Adopted: January 21, 2021
Last Revised: September 29, 2025
Last Reviewed: September 29, 2025

Prior Revised Dates: January 2024; September 2024

Prohibition Against Sexual Harassment and Retaliation under Title IX

Sexual harassment under Title IX is prohibited in the District. The District also prohibits retaliation against any person who files a complaint of sexual harassment under Title IX or who participates in an investigation of allegations of sexual harassment under Title IX.

This Policy governs the District's compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. The following person is designated and authorized as the District's Title IX Coordinator, with the responsibility to identify, prevent, and remedy unlawful harassment and retaliation under Title IX in the District:

Lisa Simpkins
Chief Human Resources Officer
801 Corporate Centre Drive, O'Fallon, MO 63368
Phone – (636) 851-4024
Email – lisa.simpkins@fhsdschools.org

A complaint regarding sexual harassment under Title IX or related retaliation of a student or employee under Title IX and that is alleged to have occurred on or after August 14, 2020, should be filed in accordance with the procedures outlined in Regulation 1301. A complaint by students, employees, parents, and patrons of the District alleging harassment, discrimination, or related retaliation based on a protected classification under the laws identified in Policy 1300 (outside of Title IX) should be filed in accordance with the procedures outlined in Regulation 1300. A complaint regarding the identification, evaluation, educational program, or placement of a child with a disability under Section 504 should be filed in accordance with the procedures outlined in Regulation 2110.

Previously revised dates: January 2024; September 2024Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

All responsible public agencies are required to locate, evaluate, and identify children with disabilities who are under the jurisdiction of the agency, regardless of the severity of the disability, including children attending private schools, children who live outside the district but are attending a private school within the district, highly mobile children, such as migrant and homeless children, children who are wards of the state, and children who are

suspected of having a disability and in need of special education even though they are advancing from grade to grade. The Francis Howell School District assures that it will provide a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) to all eligible children with disabilities between the ages of 3 and 21 under its jurisdiction. Disabilities include autism, deaf/blindness, emotional disorders, hearing impairment and deafness, intellectual disability, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairments, specific learning disabilities, speech or language impairment, traumatic brain injury, visual impairment/blindness and young child with a developmental delay.

The District assures that it will provide information and referral services necessary to assist the State in the implementation of early intervention services for infants and toddlers eligible for the Missouri First Steps program.

The Francis Howell School District assures that personally identifiable information collected, used, or maintained by the agency for the purposes of identification, evaluation, placement or provision of FAPE of children with disabilities may be inspected and/or reviewed by their parents/guardians. Parents/guardians may request amendment to the educational record if the parent/guardian believes the record is inaccurate, misleading, or violates the privacy or other rights of their child. Parents have the right to file complaints with the U.S. Department of Education or the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education concerning alleged failures by the district to meet the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

The Francis Howell School District has developed a Local Compliance Plan for the implementation of State Regulations for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This plan contains the agency's policies and procedures regarding storage, disclosure to third parties, retention and destruction of personally identifiable information and the agency's assurances that services are provided in compliance with the General Education Provision Act (GEPA). This plan may be reviewed at the Francis Howell School District Alternative Education Department from 8:00 – 4:30 p.m. each school day.

This notice will be provided in native languages as appropriate.
Director of Alternative Learning
Francis Howell School District
801 Corporate Centre Drive
O'Fallon, MO 63368
Phone: 636-851-4060 Fax: 636-851-4094

FHSD Public Notice – Section 504 and Title II

The District is required to undertake measures to identify and locate every qualified disabled student residing in the District who is not receiving a public education; and take appropriate steps to notify disabled students and their parents or guardians of the District's duty. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a federal law that prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities in any program or activity that receives federal financial assistance from the United States Department of Education. The Francis Howell School District is a recipient of federal financial assistance from the United States Department of Education and, therefore, is covered by Section 504. The District has developed 504 procedures for the implementation of federal regulations for Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Subpart D. These procedures may be reviewed at the Francis Howell School District Alternative Education Department from 8:00 – 4:30 p.m. each school day. Alternative times are available by request. This notice will be provided in native languages as appropriate.

Director of Alternative Learning
Francis Howell School District
801 Corporate Centre Drive
O'Fallon, MO 63368
Phone: 636-851-4060 Fax: 636-851-4094

Programs for Homeless, Migratory, and ESL Students

The District is committed to identifying and assessing the educational needs of homeless students, migrant students, and students whose native or home language is other than English ("ESL students"). Additional information about these programs can be found on the District's website, in Board Policies and Regulations, and through annual notices provided by the District. The District's Director of Student Services serves as the District's "Homeless Liaison" for homeless students and is responsible for implementation and maintenance of the District's program for migrant students. The District's Director of Alternative Learning serves as the District's "ESL Implementor."

Notification of Rights Under PPRA (Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment)

The PPRA affords parents/guardians and students who are 18 or emancipated minors ("eligible students") certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

- Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED)
    1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent(s)/guardian(s);
    2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
    3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
    4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
    5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
    6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors or ministers;
    7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parent(s)/guardian(s);
    8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

- Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of –
    1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
    2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
    3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.

- Inspect, upon request and before administration or use –
    1. Protected information surveys of students;
    2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
    3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

Francis Howell School District has adopted policies regarding these rights (see Policy and Regulation 1610) , as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. Francis Howell School District will directly

notify parents/guardians and eligible students of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. Francis Howell School District will also directly notify parents/guardians and eligible students at least annually at the start of each school year of the specific or approximate dates of the following activities and provide an opportunity to opt a student out of participating in:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution.
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

Parents/guardians or eligible students who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:
Family Policy Compliance Office
U. S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

Required State Assessment Participation

Francis Howell School District Board Policy 6440 states that all students will participate in statewide assessments or alternative assessments as determined by a students' Individualized Education Program (IEP) team. The District has developed a list of assessments to be administered annually, and the grade level of students that will be administered each test or assessment instrument. A copy of this policy and the assessment schedule will be available to the public on the District's website and in the District office during normal business hours.

Searches by School Personnel – Lockers and Desks

Reasonable suspicion must be based on facts known to the administrator, credible information provided to the administrator, or a reasonable inference drawn from such facts or information.

The school administration may, with or without prior specific notice, use the services of a trained dog and its handler, to assist in the detection of the presence of drugs, explosives, and other contraband in District buildings. Such searches may be conducted with or without individualized, reasonable suspicion. Law enforcement officials shall be contacted

if a search produces a controlled substance, drug paraphernalia, weapons, stolen goods or other evidence of a crime.

Law enforcement officials may also be contacted when a student refuses to allow a search, or where the search cannot safely be conducted. Parents will also be contacted when law enforcement officials are involved.
School lockers and desks are the property of the District and are provided for the convenience of students. As such, they are subject to periodic inspection without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant. The lockers and desks may be searched by school administrators or staff who have a reasonable suspicion that the lockers or desks contain drugs, alcohol, material of a disruptive nature, stolen property, weapons, items posing a danger to the health or safety of students and school employees, or evidence of a violation of school policy.

MOCAP

The Francis Howell School District participates in the Missouri Course Access and Virtual School Program (MOCAP). Because virtual instruction can be an effective education option for some students, there may be courses available either through a District-provided virtual option or through MOCAP. Students have a right to participate in MOCAP. Additional information about MOCAP can be found in Policy/Regulation 6190 and on the District's website.

Trauma-Informed School Initiative

When students endure chronic stress or traumatic incidents, it can have both physiological and emotional consequences, often impairing their ability to function effectively in a school setting. The Francis Howell Trauma-Informed School Initiative is dedicated to establishing safe and nurturing educational environments where students can learn and reach their full potential. This initiative achieves this by recognizing the indicators of chronic stress and trauma and implementing effective response strategies. For further information, visit the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's website for more information about the Trauma-Informed School Initiative.

Human Sexuality Instruction

The parents/guardians of each student will be advised of:

1. The content of the District's human sexuality instruction to be provided to their student.

2. Their right to remove their student from any part of the District's human sexuality instruction.

The District's human sexuality curriculum will be available for public examination prior to their use in actual instruction.Title I Program

The Board of Education recognizes the importance of parental involvement with the Title I program and will provide a variety of opportunities for parents to be involved in policy design and in the planning, implementation and review of Title I program. Title I teachers and paraprofessionals must meet the qualifications outlined in Regulation 1621. Pursuant to the provisions of the Every Student Succeeds Act, the District will submit its Federal Title 1 LEA Plan, describing the District's Title I services. Additional information about the Title I program, specific duties, and parental rights can be found in Policy/Regulation 1621. Additionally, at the beginning of each school year the District will provide required notices to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of each student attending any District school receiving Title I funds.