FALMOUTH MIDDLE SCHOOL

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STUDENT & FAMILY HANDBOOK

2026-2027

Navigating Creative Pathways to Courageous, Compassionate, and Fulfilling Lives

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GENERAL INFORMATION

FALMOUTH LEARNING OUTCOMES

Clear and effective communicators - Understand the attributes and

techniques that positively impact constructing and conveying meaning for a variety of purposes and through a variety of modes.

Self-directed and lifelong learners - Understand the importance of embracing and nurturing a growth mindset.

Creative and practical problem solvers - Are skilled at selecting and applying a process of problem-solving to deepen understanding and determine whether redefining the goal is a better way of addressing a problem situation and continuing to consider other alternative solutions until one resonates as the best one.

Responsible and involved citizens - Understand the interdependence within and across systems and brings to each situation the appropriate actions.

Integrative and informed thinkers - Are skilled at using complex reasoning processes to make meaning.

FALMOUTH'S BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

- Student learning and growth is our common goal.
- Students learn best when they are engaged.
- Students learn in a variety of ways and at different rates.
- Students need practice and feedback before being expected to demonstrate learning.
- Students need to develop habits of work.
- Professionals use evidence from student work, behavior, and feedback to inform decisions.

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

The Falmouth School Department is committed to providing equal educational opportunities as required by federal and state laws for all students, regardless of race, color, sex, or national origin. Students or parents/caregivers should direct any questions or concerns to the building principal.

Discrimination and harassment are not tolerated by Falmouth Public Schools. Students, Staff, and Families are encouraged to report policy violations to the officers below, or any administrator in the district:

Affirmative Action / Title IX Coordinator: Jaime Maltese, Human Resources Manager
ADA/504 compliance coordinator: Brian Cavanaugh, Director of Special Education

FREQUENTLY USED CONTACTS

FMS Main Office: 207-781-3740
FMS Attendance: fmsattendance@falmouthschools.org
FMS Student Services: 207-781-9886, Julie Mercer, jmercer@falmouthschools.org
FMS School Nurse: 207-781-1020, Molly Gove, molly.gove@falmoutschools.org
Transportation: 207-321-0030,Luigi Lubrano, luigi.lubrano@falmouthschools.org
Athletics: athletics.falmouthschools.org

CALENDARS & SCHEDULES

2026-2027 Falmouth Schools District Calendar - Year At A Glance

School & District Monthly Events Calendar

FMS 2026-27 General Schedule

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

School Bus
Buses pick up and drop off students at the back entrance of the school. **For safety reasons, only buses and staff vehicles are permitted to drive around the back of the building.**

Student Drop Off and Pick Up
Students who are driven to school must be dropped off at one of the front entrances of the building. **Please do not use the staff parking lot or drive around back, as this has caused several close calls in the past.** During school hours, parents/caregivers picking up their child for appointments, early dismissal,

etc. must sign them in and out in the front office. Please send a note with your child to school that morning with the dismissal time. Your child will keep the note until time for dismissal, show the note to the teacher at the designated time, and come to the office. That way, we are not interrupting instruction calling to classrooms for your children.

Walkers and Bicyclists
All students walking to school or home must enter and exit through the main entrance at the front of the building. Students who ride bicycles to school must secure them to the bicycle rack in front of the building. Students are **required** to wear helmets. The school does not assume any liability for damage or theft of bicycles on school property.

Early Dismissal from School
If your child needs to leave school early for a doctor's appointment or other reason, please send a note to school that day notifying us of the time and reason you will be picking up your child early. Students will be expected to have the note signed by the teacher of the class they are leaving before class and leave class on their own at the expected time. Our goal is to minimize the number of times that class instruction is interrupted by the office to dismiss a student.

Bus Passes
In order for your child to ride a bus that is not their own, they will need written permission from a parent/caregiver. The student will be responsible for bringing the permission slip to the office to get a signed bus pass. The student will give the bus pass to the bus driver when they board the bus in the afternoon. A student may not ride another bus without a bus pass.

Late Bus
For students who stay after school for teacher help or clubs/activities, there is an after school “Late Bus” that drops students off near their home (this may not be the same bus stop as the regular bus run, but it will be close to home.) Students are supervised while they wait for the late bus in the FMS cafeteria immediately after their activities are concluded. The late buses depart FMS between 3:50-4:10.

MIDDLE SCHOOL SCHEDULE
School begins promptly at 7:50 am. Students should arrive no later than 7:45 and be in their classrooms by 7:50. Students should not arrive before 7:30 unless they are participating in a scheduled activity. The regular school day ends at 2:30 pm.

Students may stay after school if:

- They have a scheduled appointment or work session with a teacher or administrator.
- They are attending an activity, sports practice/game, or an event immediately after school.

Daily schedule: Here is the General Schedule for FMS.

ATTENDANCE

It is very important that each student makes a concerted effort to be in school. School attendance laws and policies make it necessary that we have accurate records for all absences or days tardy. For this reason, attendance is taken during advisory each morning. **Parents/Caregivers must notify the school, in the morning, of the day a student is absent. Absences will be considered unexcused unless the school receives notification from the parent/caregiver.** The following are reasons an absence is excusable: A) illness, B) appointments with health professionals, C) observance of religious holidays, D) family emergencies, E) school suspensions, F) special/planned absences for personal reasons approved in advance by the principal. All other absences are considered unexcused.

For all student attendance, appointment(s), upcoming travel, or dismissal-related communication, please use the email address **fmsattendance@falmouthschools.org** to inform our main office staff.

Students are expected to communicate with teachers about work missed during an absence. See **FMS Student Absence Flowchart** for guidelines.

Special/Planned Absences

On many occasions, due to vacation and special family considerations, we receive requests for students to be excused from school for periods ranging from a few days to a few weeks. Naturally, this presents a problem maintaining the continuity of instruction. It is essential that prior to any requests of this sort (except in emergency situations), a parent/caregiver communicates with the teachers and school counselor. Administration should be notified if the planned absence is more than three days. At that time, it should be mutually decided as to how disruptive the student's leave would be to their school program and to determine if there are appropriate activities and assignments that the student might complete outside the classroom. Please complete the **Planned Absence Form** at least one week before the start of the absence.

Early Dismissal
If your child needs to leave school early for a doctor's appointment or other reason, please send a note to school that day notifying us of the time and reason you will be picking up your child early. Students will be expected to have the note signed by the teacher of the class they are leaving before class and leave class on their own at the expected time. Our goal is to minimize the number of times that class instruction is interrupted by the office to dismiss a student.

Tardies
Transportation is provided for all students to and from school. Families that choose to provide their own transportation accept full responsibility for students arriving at school on time. Students should arrive by 7:45 AM. Being tardy, or late to school, falls under the same parameters as absences in regard to being considered excused or unexcused. Students may be required to stay after school if tardies become a habitual problem.

Truancy
Maine law defines truancy as the equivalent of 10 full days of unexcused absences or 7 consecutive school days of unexcused absences during a school year. The Falmouth Resource Officer is notified and assists the school with truant students. Any questions about truancy issues should be directed to the middle school assistant principal.

FIELD TRIPS
All field trips have educational objectives and receive prior approval from the school administration Students must have a signed permission form in order to participate in a school-sponsored field trip. Some opportunities may necessitate a small fee and the school will make every effort to keep costs minimal. Please contact the middle school assistant principal if assistance with any fee would be helpful. Your inquiry will be held in strict confidence.

CHILD FIND POLICY
The Falmouth School Department seeks to ensure that all students within its jurisdiction are identified, located and evaluated who are school age (5 through the school year in which they turn 20) and who are in need of special education and supportive services. Parents, relatives, physicians, and other persons who are aware of a child who may require special education and supportive services are asked to contact the Director of Special Services, Falmouth School Department, 51 Woodville Road, Falmouth, ME, 04105, telephone 781-2079. Please refer to Board

Policy IHBAC-Child Find for more information.

IEPs (Individual Education Plans)

An Individual Education Plan process has been established for the purpose of making evaluative studies of children with special learning needs. All children are screened and some are given extensive diagnosis. Recommendations from the I.E.P. are developed with parent and classroom teacher participation. If you believe your child has a disability and is in need of a special educational service you should contact the Director of Special Services at 207-781-2079.

504 PLANS

Students with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity may be eligible for Section 504 accommodations or services. If you have questions about whether your child may be eligible for such services, please contact Student Services at 207-781-9886.

RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RTI)

Response to Intervention is a fundamental process inherent in the six tenets of Falmouth's Beliefs and Practices:

- Student learning and growth is our common goal.
- Students learn best when they are engaged.
- Students learn in a variety of ways and at different rates.
- Students need practice and feedback before being expected to demonstrate learning.
- Students need to develop habits of work.
- Professionals use evidence from student work, behavior, and feedback to inform decisions.

Response to Intervention includes all students in general education. As soon as students demonstrate the need, general education teachers provide targeted academic and/or behavioral/social emotional interventions to support student growth. If a student does not respond to best practice core instruction with differentiation, a teacher will engage in problem-solving discussions with other

professionals and/or initiate a referral to the Student Centered Team to better support student needs.

FERPA

Parents and guardians of students, and students 18 years or older or those attending an institution of postsecondary education, have the right to: 1. Inspect and review the student's educational records by appointment, 2. Request the amendment of the student's educational records to ensure that they are not inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights; 3. Consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's educational records, except to the extent that the federal law authorizes disclosure without consent; 4. File with the U. S. Department of Education a complaint under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C.A. 1232 (g), concerning alleged failures by the Falmouth School Department to comply with the requirements of this law; and 5. Obtain a copy of the institution's educational policy located at the Superintendent's Office.

STUDENT RECORDS

The Falmouth School Department complies with all federal and state laws concerning confidentiality of student records. A notice is sent home at the beginning of the school year about parent and student rights concerning student records. Parents wishing to review their child's records may make an appointment by calling the school counselor or principal. Please refer to Board Policy IHBAB for more information. All permanent student records are maintained at the Falmouth Middle School offices.

STUDENT INFORMATION/EMERGENCY FORMS

Parents/Caregivers will complete a student information/emergency form in PowerSchool each year. If any contact information changes during the year, it is important that you let us know as soon as possible so that we have accurate contact information.

INCLEMENT WEATHER REMOTE LEARNING PLAN

The first 3 days schools are closed due to adverse weather conditions will be traditional no-school or 'snow' days. After the 3rd day of schools being closed, we plan to implement Remote Learning Days when adverse weather conditions require schools to be closed. All remote learning will be asynchronous (meaning, students

will not be required to login or take part in virtual meetings at a specific time). Should there be widespread power outages, we will not have remote learning. Our schools understand that access to remote learning is not guaranteed and we will do our best to meet individual family and staff needs as they arise.

Information for each school's plan can be found in the District Remote Learning Plan. Review the full District Remote Learning Plan.

STUDENT SERVICES

SCHOOL COUNSELING SERVICES

The Falmouth Middle School school counseling program consists of three school counselors and a social worker who work collaboratively with school staff, parents/caregivers, and the community to support the academic, career, and personal/social development of young adolescents. Through classroom, small group, and individual counseling services, the school counseling program provides both a preventive and responsive approach to student issues at developmentally appropriate levels. Consultation and referral services are available in helping students achieve their goals. School counselors may be reached at 207-781-9886.

HEALTH SERVICES

There is a full-time registered nurse at FMS. The nurse sees all injured and ill students and makes decisions concerning treatment and parent/caregiver notification. If a student is too ill to be in class, the nurse will assess the student and provide a quiet place to rest if necessary. If the student needs to leave school, the student and nurse will call the parent/caregiver or other adult authorized by the parent/caregiver. The student will be dismissed only after the responsible adult speaks to the nurse and signs the student out. The nurse is available to speak to parents/caregivers during the school day and encourages them to call with questions and/or concerns. The school nurse can be reached at 207-781-1020.

Medications

With the appropriate parent/caregiver and medical permission, the nurse may administer medication that is absolutely necessary during the school day. All medications are kept by and dispensed by the school nurse. Students may not carry any medication, prescription or over-the-counter, and teachers do not administer medication. Students may be allowed to

carry and self-administer inhalers and epi-pen medications for severe allergies with proper permission from the student's parent(s)/caregiver(s), physician and the school nurse. Please refer to Board Policy JLCD Administering Medications to Students for more information.

Health Screening
All students in grade-7 will be screened for near and distance vision. Hearing screening for middle school students is available upon request to the school nurse. Parents/caregivers will not be notified unless there is an issue that requires follow-up.

Immunizations -
Maine School Immunization Laws require that all students produce an acceptable record/certificate of immunization or provide a written medical exemption. Please refer to the following site for the current Maine Immunization Requirements for school entry.

Maine Immunization Requirements 9/25/21

Physical Exams
A physical examination is required prior to a student's participation in any of the sports programs. The student may enter these programs in the sixth, seventh or eighth grade. The examination must be current, within the last year, and be performed by a medical doctor, doctor of osteopathy, nurse practitioner, or a physician's assistant. At the start of each sports season, an interim health history will be submitted by the parents/caregivers for review by the coach and referred to the school nurse if indicated.

SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAM
Student breakfast and lunch will again be complimentary/free for the coming school year. Anything sold ala carte will have a cost to it and be charged to student accounts. View the FMS breakfast and lunch menus.

For adults and guests, Breakfast is $2.75 and Lunch is $6.00.

STUDENT INFORMATION

DOCK (ADVISORY)

The purpose of Dock (the FMS name for our advisory program) is to connect students to one another and with adults. These relationships build a stronger, more effective community. Dock is a time for us to learn social emotional skills, skills that allow us to manage our feelings and emotions, communicate better with one another, and navigate the world around us. Dock groups are approximately 10-11 students. Students meet with their Dock groups each morning for about 15 minutes.

HEALTHY SNACKS

In order to promote student wellness, we encourage healthy snacks. Students will have a snack break at 9:40 am daily. Examples of healthy snacks can be found at: https://www.fna.usda.gov/school-meals/nutrition-standards/smartsnacks

FMS does not permit snacks for classroom birthday celebrations.

LOCKERS

Student use of school lockers and other storage facilities such as desks are a privilege granted by the school. All lockers and other storage facilities are school property and remain under the control, custody and supervision of the school. Students have no expectation of privacy in school storage facilities or any items placed in them. School officials have the authority to inspect and search storage facilities and their contents on a random basis, with or without reasonable suspicion, and with or without notice or consent. Please refer to Board Policy JIH Questioning and Searches of Students for more information. The school is not responsible for loss, theft or damage to personal property stored in lockers. Students should safeguard their possessions and not bring valuable items or large amounts of cash to school.

Backpacks should be stored in lockers during the school day.

SCHOOL TELEPHONES

A phone is available in the main office for students to use for emergencies or if they need to contact a parent or caregiver. If a parent or caregiver needs to get a message to a student, please call the school office and we will help get the message to the student.

STUDENT CELL PHONES & SMART WATCHES

Per school board policy JICJ - Cell Phones, Smart Watches, and Other Personal Electronic Devices in Schools, student cell phone, Smartwatch, and cordless earbud use is not allowed on field trips, or during school between 7:30AM-2:30PM. If students need to bring a cell phone, smartwatch, or earbuds for after school use,they must be turned off and kept in the student's backpack in their locker. If students are using these devices without permission during the school day,they will be taken and kept in the main office until the end of the school day. If this happens more than once, family/caregivers will be asked to pick up the device from the school. If students need to contact a parent/caregiver during the day there is a phone in the office for them to use. If a parent/caregiver needs to get a message to their child, they should call the main office at 207-781-3740 and we will make sure the student gets the message. Unauthorized digital photos from cell phones or any other devices are prohibited.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The personal use of electronic devices on school grounds (personal laptops, gaming devices, tablets, cordless earbuds or other handheld devices) is not allowed during the school hours and cannot be used in a way to disrupt the learning environment or process. They will be confiscated and parents/caregivers will be asked to retrieve the items from an administrator. FMS is not responsible for the loss or theft of personal property if your child chooses to bring them into school.

LOST AND FOUND

Lost clothing items are stored on the stage in the cafeteria. Lost electronics, books, and notebooks are usually kept in the office. It is strongly recommended that all items be marked with a student's name. Three times a year, before winter, spring, and summer break, unclaimed lost items are sent to charitable organizations.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY FOR SCHOOL-ISSUED ITEMS

One of the greatest expenses in running a school is the cost of the technology, books and materials. It is imperative that students treat all school property with care. At the end of the year, each student will be charged for any lost or damaged iPads (maintenance fee deductible), chargers, cases, books, uniforms, calculators, lab equipment or other school-issued materials.

Please see the Student iPad Rules and **Digital Operating Contract for Student iPads**

LIBRARY
The FMS Library is a place for learning and growth where students will find a wide range of print and digital resources to meet their personal interests and academic needs. Students can also receive technology support as well as research instruction from the school librarian/tech integrator and the technology specialist in the library.

Students are encouraged to use the FMS Library between 7:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Students who want to visit the library during class should obtain a pass from their teacher. Students may borrow library books and other material for four weeks and they may renew their books for an additional four weeks. There are no fines issued for overdue books or other library material. Students are expected to pay for any lost or damaged library books and material.

ACTIVITIES, CLUBS, & SPORTS

CLUBS/ACTIVITIES (Co-Curricular)
Clubs and activities take place before or after school. There is an after school "Late Bus" that drops students off near their home (this may not be the same bus stop as the regular bus run, but it will be close to home.) Offerings may include, but are not limited to: Math Counts, Math Team, Community Service Club, Debate Team, Spanish Club, STEM Club, Dungeons & Dragons, Student Council, Civil Rights Team, Ping Pong, and Best Buddies. These activities typically start during the 3rd week of September. Start dates for clubs and activities will be announced during morning announcements and in Principal Notes.

IEP/504 Accommodations: If your student has an IEP/504 with accommodations that may impact their co-curricular participation, and you would like the staff to be aware of them, please contact your child's case manager. This information will be shared only as needed to best support your student.

MIDDLE SCHOOL SPORTS
The Falmouth Middle School believes that athletics are an integral part of a public school education. Participation in athletics at all levels can provide the opportunity for students to develop strength of character and distinct qualities that will serve them throughout their lives.

Students enrolled in any Athletic activity are required to pay a $100 annual athletic activities fee. This annual $100 fee covers participation in all student athletics for the year. Registration is done through the Superintendent's Office via the following link: Athletics Registration.

Sports equipment should be stored in designated locations.

Season	Sport	Grades
Fall	Cross-Country	6-8
	Football	7/8
	Girls Field Hockey	7/8
	Boys' & Girls' Soccer	7/8
	Boys' & Girls' Tennis	7/8
	Girls' Volleyball	7/8
Winter Season 1	Boys' & Girls' Basketball	7/8
	Alpine Skiing	6-8
	Nordic Skiing	6-8
Winter Season 2	Indoor Track	6-8
	Swimming	6-8
Spring	Baseball	7/8
	Softball	7/8
	Boys' & Girls' Lacrosse	7/8
	Outdoor Track	6-8

Additional athletic offerings are available through Falmouth Community Programs

IEP/504 Accommodations: If your student has an IEP/504 with accommodations that may impact their athletic participation, and you would like the coaching staff to be aware of them, please contact the head coach or the Athletic Director. This information will be shared only as needed to best support your student-athlete.

COMMUNICATION

PRINCIPAL'S NOTES and GRADE LEVEL WIP (Week In Preview)

In an effort to maintain home/school communication, important school information will be found in Principal's Notes. This document is emailed to families on Fridays and posted weekly on the Falmouth Middle School website (https://fms.falmouthschools.org/).

An important link in the Principal's Notes is the grade level **Week In Preview (WIP.)** This contains information about upcoming events and learning for each grade level.

GRADE REPORTING

Student progress is reported in PowerSchool. At FMS our focus is on learning, not on grades. Student learning is assessed according to learning standards in each subject area. Grades are reported twice per year (January and June.) For more information about grading and reporting, please see Instruction, Assessment, and Grading - Guide for Parents/Caregivers & Students and Middle School Grade Scale.

VISITORS

For the safety of our students and staff, all parents/caregivers, visitors, and volunteers must identify themselves at the main office before entering the building. Visitors will be issued a badge for the duration of their stay. Parents/Caregivers who wish to visit classrooms or meet with teachers or other staff members are requested to schedule such visits in advance so as not to disrupt the educational program.

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SCHOOL CULTURE

The Falmouth School Board has adopted a number of policies addressing student conduct expectations and discipline and we have included several of these important Board policies in this handbook. Please see the district website for more information.

It is essential for schools to maintain a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment, which supports student learning and achievement. Acceptable student behavior allows the schools to discharge their primary responsibilities to educate students and promote good citizenship. All students are expected to

conduct themselves with respect for others and in accordance with School Board policies, school rules, and applicable state and federal laws. Disciplinary action may be taken against students who violate policies, rules, or laws, and/or whose conduct directly interferes with the operations, or general welfare of the school.

Safety Drills
Evacuation drills and lockdown drills are conducted periodically throughout the school year. Students should be aware of the instructions posted in each classroom and the appropriate evacuation route. When departing the building, students should walk in an orderly fashion and stay with their class at all times. Once outside, students are to remain with their class in the designated area until notified to return to the building. For more information please refer to the Community Safety Information page.

Behavior Expectations
All students have the right to a safe, respectful, inclusive, and positive learning environment at Falmouth Middle School. Therefore, all students have the responsibility while participating in or attending school activities to demonstrate respectful behavior. Simply put, we operate under the belief that all people deserve to be treated with kindness and respect.

School Discipline
All students have the right to learn in an atmosphere of mutual respect and understanding. There is a responsibility to help oneself by being on time, being ready to learn, and being respectful at all times. The Discipline Matrix outlines potential interventions and consequences for student behavior that does not adhere to the code of conduct.

Teachers will review specific classroom rules at the beginning of the school year, and maintain their own system of classroom management, which can include communication with parents/caregivers and time after school. Teachers are free to assign detentions or other minor consequences as they deem fit. Consequences for student behavior are expected to be served before students join in after school activities.

The Assistant Principal responds to repeated violations, patterns of poor behavior, defiance, or higher-level behavior offenses. With the goal of promoting positive student behavior, the Assistant Principal will work with the student, teacher, and parent(s)/caregivers in order to provide learning opportunities as well as appropriate consequences for poor behavior. Examples of learning opportunities

include reflections, community service, genuine apologies, mediated discussions with peers, as well as support from school counselors, social workers, behavior specialists, or school psychologists.
Students may be suspended (in school or out of school) for serious violations of school rules and/or Board policies. Only the Principal and Assistant Principal issue suspensions.

The most serious or repeated violations of school rules and/or Board policies may result in a student being expelled from school. Only the Superintendent issues expulsions.

Dress Code
Students are expected to adhere to standards of dress that are compatible with a safe and respectful school learning environment. School administration has the authority to determine when clothing is a disruption to learning. FMS has established the following specific restrictions and requirements for student dress:

Earbuds: Headphones, earbuds, etc. are not to be worn inside school unless directed by a staff member.

Coats and Jackets: Coats and jackets intended for outdoor wear should not be brought to the classroom except by permission of the teacher. Please store them in your locker.

Clothing: Clothing should be appropriate for an educational setting. No references to drugs, alcohol, tobacco, sexual activity, or illegal acts are allowed. The school administration has the authority to prohibit other logos, pictures or messages which they determine to be in violation of the Board's non-discrimination or harassment policies, or disruptive to the school's learning environment.

Footwear: Footwear must be worn at all times in school and should be appropriate for an educational setting. Athletic shoes with cleats or spikes are not allowed in school buildings outside of locker rooms.

Students who come to school dressed inappropriately will be asked to meet with Administration, who will discuss with parents/caregivers how to appropriately remediate the situation and prevent it from occurring again.

Bus Behavior

When students ride the bus, they are expected to follow these expectations:

- The driver is in charge. Please obey the driver promptly and cheerfully.
- Students will treat others with respect. No teasing or harassment is allowed.
- No eating or drinking on bus without permission.
- Seats must be shared when buses are full.
- Be on time: the bus cannot wait for those who are tardy.
- Classroom-like conduct will be observed at all times.
- Students will not use offensive language.
- Assist in keeping the bus clean.
- Arms, hands, and heads are to be kept inside windows.
- Remain seated while the bus is in motion.
- Get on the bus only after it has come to a full stop.

All Board policies and school rules are in effect on school buses.
Students who violate the rules will receive a disciplinary form from the bus driver and the building administrator will be notified. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken by the administration that may include detentions, assigned seating, parent/caregiver conference and/or removal from the bus for a period of time.

Academic Integrity
FMS Student Guidelines

Falmouth Public School expects that all students will represent our school community with integrity and respect at all times. Student learning and growth are our common and primary goals. If student work does not represent academic integrity, then learning for both the individual student and their community members is compromised.

Academic integrity is an important part of Falmouth's Student Code of Conduct (Policy JIC). Students should ask for clarification if they have questions regarding assignments, exams, or projects.

Academic Dishonesty
The following are examples of academic dishonesty.

Cheating – Cheating is any act that involves dishonesty or deception with the purpose of gaining an unfair advantage over others.

Examples of cheating may include:

- Accessing assessment questions and/or answers in advance without the teacher's permission.
- Copying from others' tests, homework, or assignments, or allowing other students to copy your work.
- Working with another student on an assignment that was supposed to be completed independently.

Plagiarism – The presentation of ideas or work as your own without giving credit to the author or citing the source.

Examples of plagiarism:

- Copying from a print source and not providing proper citations.
- Copying and pasting from an online source and presenting it as your own work.
- Using information from a print or online source without proper citation or credit to the author.
- Turning in someone else's work as your own.

Teachers and the school librarian at Falmouth Middle School will teach students how to properly cite the works of others following MLA format.

Improper use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) - Using AI unethically or without expressed and clear permission from the teacher

Examples of improper use of AI may include:

- Using generative AI tools on assessments or to complete assignments without expressed and clear permission from the teacher.
- Copying AI-generated content and turning it in as your own work.
- Using AI to misrepresent your abilities or turning in AI-generated work without personal understanding of the assignment.

Consequences These are intended to be guidelines and may vary depending on the situation. It is important that the students have the opportunity to learn from their mistakes but also understand the severity of their actions.

- The teacher will collect & preserve the evidence when possible.
- The teacher will discuss the offense with the student privately.

- The teacher will contact an administrator to discuss the incident, develop an appropriate consequence, and determine who will communicate with the parent/caregiver.
- The teacher may allow the student to redo the assignment.
- Additional disciplinary consequences will be applied if there are multiple or repeated offenses.

iPad Use
All students will be issued iPads to use during the school year. These devices are part of the Maine Learning Technology Initiative. Students in 7th and 8th grades may bring home their devices to complete school assignments during the school year.

Students are expected to follow Falmouth Middle School's iPad Rules.

Parental Permission Required
Parents/caregivers are required to electronically sign the FMS iPad Use Agreement in PowerSchool. Parents/caregivers of 7th and 8th grade students will also be required to pay a maintenance fee of $50 if the iPad is going home. Scholarships are available.

Acceptable Use
Student access to the school's iPads, networks and Internet services are provided for educational purposes and research consistent with the school's educational mission, curriculum and instructional goals, and code of conduct. The same rules and expectations govern student use of computers as apply to other student conduct and communications. There is no social media use at school (i.e SnapChat, Instagram, TikTok, etc).

Prohibited Use
Students are responsible for their actions and activities involving school iPads, networks and Internet services and for their files, passwords, and accounts. Examples of unacceptable uses that are expressly prohibited include but are not limited to the following:

- **Accessing and/or Authoring Inappropriate Materials** - Accessing, submitting, posting, publishing, forwarding, downloading, scanning or displaying materials that are defamatory, abusive, obscene, vulgar, sexually explicit, sexually suggestive, threatening, discriminatory, harassing and/or illegal;

- **Illegal Activities** - Using the school's computers, networks and Internet services for any illegal activity or activity that violates other Board policies, procedures and/or school rules;
- **Violating Copyrights** - Copying or downloading copyrighted materials without the owner's permission;
- **Plagiarism** - Representing as one's own work any materials obtained on the Internet (such as term papers, articles, etc.). When Internet sources are used in student work, the author, publisher and web site must be identified;
- **Copying Software** - Copying or downloading software without the express authorization of the system administrator;
- **Non-School-Related Uses** - Using the school's computers, networks and Internet services for non-school-related purposes such as private financial gain, game playing, personal communication, or any other personal use;
- **Misuse of Passwords/Unauthorized Access** - Sharing passwords, using other users' passwords without permission and/or accessing other user's' accounts;
- **Malicious Use/Vandalism -** Any malicious use, disruption or harm to the school's computers, networks and Internet services, including but not limited to hacking activities and creation/uploading of computer viruses; and
- **Social Media Use**- No SnapChat, Instagram, TikTok, other social media or messaging apps.

No Expectation of Privacy
The school unit retains control, custody, and supervision of all iPads, networks, and internet services owned or leased by the school. The school reserves the right to monitor all iPad and Internet activity by students. **Students have no expectation of privacy in their use of school devices, including school e-mail and associated digital documents.**

Travel Outside of Maine
Students may not transport their school-issued iPads outside of the state of Maine.

School Vacations
Students will leave their iPads at school during school vacations.

Compensation for Losses, Costs and/or Damages

Students and their parents/caregivers are responsible for compensating the school for any losses, costs, or damages incurred by the school for violations of Board policies and school rules while the student is using school devices.

School Unit Assumes No Responsibility for Unauthorized Charges, Costs, or Illegal Use The school assumes no responsibility for any unauthorized charges made by students including but not limited to credit card charges, long distance telephone charges, equipment and line costs, or for any illegal use of its computers such as copyright violations.

Student Security
A student should not reveal their full name, address, telephone number, social security number or other personal information on the Internet. Students may never agree to meet people they have contacted through the Internet without parental/caregiver permission. Students should inform their teacher if they access information or messages that are dangerous, inappropriate, or make them uncomfortable in any way.

System Security
The security of the school's devices , networks, and Internet services is a high priority. Any user who identifies a security problem must notify the assistant principal or the school technology specialist. The user shall not demonstrate the problem to others. Any user who attempts or causes a breach of system security shall have his/her privileges revoked and may be subject to additional disciplinary and/or legal action.

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