

Fort Ross School Parent Handbook

Mission Statement and District Goals:

The Fort Ross School District and the community that supports it shall educate, inspire and empower our students to become skilled individuals, responsible decision-makers, life-long learners, and creative members of this community and the world.

In addition, there are six fundamental goals:

- To adopt budgets that implement district goals, are fiscally sound, and allow appropriate reserves
- To maintain quality instruction that meets state standards, provides needed instructional materials for an articulated K-8 curriculum integrating technology and the arts
- To encourage students to pursue academic excellence, develop self esteem, become responsible individuals and have respect for the rights of others
- To have a safe, attractive facility that provides for maximum use by the school and the community and is consistently maintained
- To provide professional development opportunities to maximize the potential of staff, including instructional assistants, teachers, bus drivers, and administration
- To connect students with larger community resources in order to broaden educational exposure (learning opportunities).

Guiding Principles

Guiding principles are the common positive values that underlie the thinking and creativity of all persons involved with the school. The Guiding Principles shape the culture necessary to achieve the Mission and Goals of the school.

1. Provide a high quality balanced education focused on helping students maximize their potential and achieve life-long goals by providing skills, concepts, applications, and fostering creativity and learning opportunities.
2. Develop a positive self-image, sensitivity to and respect for the rights of others and the environment.
3. Provide a safe, supportive environment free from physical and psychological harm which enables students to accept responsibility for their choices.
4. Create an environment of mutual growth, support and understanding within the school and the greater community.

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Welcome

Fort Ross School takes great pride in helping all of our students grow academically, socially, physically and emotionally. We expect our students to put forth effort to learn and to get along with others.

This Handbook was prepared to acquaint you with our program, procedures and policies. Our expectations for the academic and behavioral standards are outlined in this guide. We acknowledge that the best climate for learning is one in which parents, children and staff work together.

Through great effort and commitment, the Fort Ross School continues to be one of the finest elementary schools in Sonoma County. We welcome your participation and will make every effort to provide an environment where children and adults can learn and grow together. We ask for your assistance and support in helping us make each year a successful year for your child.

Alcohol, Drugs and Tobacco Free School

The possession, sale or use of alcohol, drugs, or any other controlled substance on the school campus, buses or during a field trip is strictly forbidden. Violation of this rule will cause immediate suspension and will be reported to appropriate law enforcement agencies.

The use of tobacco products, alcohol and drugs are prohibited anywhere and anytime on school property, including the parking lot, playfield, and during field trips.

Allergic Reactions and Epi-Pen

It is known that each year thousands of children playing on school grounds are stung by stinging insects (honey bees, yellow jackets, wasps, etc.) Some of these students react to the stings with severe allergic symptoms. Over one half of the children who have life-threatening reactions to insect stings have never had a reaction before. A few of them die. These severe reactions occur within a few minutes of the sting and there often isn't time to wait for transportation to a hospital before acting to stop the reaction. The hives, wheezing, or vomiting may begin immediately.

Severe food allergies are rare, but can also cause a life-threatening reaction. If your child has any food or insect sting allergies, please notify the school.

Fort Ross School District is permitted, but not required, by law to provide specialized physical care for students who need services during the school year, or who may need special treatment for physical crisis such as systemic insect sting or food allergy reaction. Emergency treatment consists of an Epi-Pen, containing a one-time dose of .15 or .3mg epinephrine. In order to administer the Epi-Pen, school personnel have been adequately trained on at least an annual basis to give such treatment. Written authorization to administer the Epi-Pen is located on the reverse side of the Emergency Card.

Arrival and Dismissal

Students should not arrive at school before 8:45 am and should leave for home promptly, unless other arrangements have been made with school personnel.

Kindergarten students are dismissed at 12:30 but may stay until lunch is over at 1:10. All students are dismissed at 12:40 on minimum days. Students in grades 1-8 are

dismissed every Thursday at 2:35pm and at 3:15pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

Children riding buses are supervised from the time they board the bus until the time they leave the bus at their designated stop. Kindergarten students must be picked up by an adult from the school. Only on minimum days may Kindergarteners ride the bus home. All students on campus at bus time must ride the bus home.

Asbestos

In compliance with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) Fort Ross School District must apprise all persons arriving at the Fort Ross school site of the information contained in the school's Asbestos Management Plan. This plan contains all current inspections, assessments, and action details to this school site. As required by AHERA, a 3-year reinspection was recently completed. That report is in the school's Asbestos Management Plan and is available for anyone to review during normal school hours. Any further questions may be directed to Nancy Walton, the designated person responsible for AHERA compliance for the Fort Ross School District.

Assemblies

Assemblies are held for a variety of reasons – academic and school service awards, musicians, and presenters. We encourage parents to attend the assemblies.

Attendance

Regular attendance is essential to a student's success in school. Most subjects are taught in sequence, requiring the understanding of each concept in the order of its presentation. When your child misses a day of school, not only has s/he missed the direct instruction of the lesson, the program will lack continuity for the child.

If your child is absent from school you should notify the school by sending a note or calling (feel free to leave a message on the machine). If no notice is received the absence will be marked as unexcused. Three unexcused absences are considered to be truant.

The following circumstances are recognized as excuses for school absence:

1. personal illness
2. death in the immediate family
3. religious holiday
4. doctor or dentist appointment

Back-To-School Night

This happens each year in September and is a chance for parents and guardians to check in with their child's teacher/s and see what curriculum, projects, field trips and other activities are planned for the year. Please come and hear your child's teacher review the goals, expectations and course of study for the grade levels. Textbooks and supplementary materials used in the classroom are displayed.

Bell Schedule

<u>M, T, W, F Schedule:</u>	<u>Thursdays:</u>	<u>Minimum Day:</u>
9: 00 School begins – BELL	9: 00 School begins – BELL	9: 00 School begins – BELL
10:45 Recess begins	10:45 Recess begins	10:45 Recess begins
11:00 Recess ends – BELL	11:00 Recess ends – BELL	11:00 Recess ends – BELL
12:30 Lunch begins	12:30 Lunch begins	12:35 Bus warning – BELL
1:10 Lunch ends – BELL	1:10 Lunch ends – BELL	12:40 Dismissal
3:10 Bus warning – BELL	2:30 Bus warning – BELL	
3:15 Dismissal	2:35 Dismissal	

Behavior Expectations

See Attachment A.

Board Meetings

Regular monthly Board meetings are normally held one day a month, except July. Check the calendar and calendar updates for Board meeting dates. Agendas are posted in the window of the school office, on the door of the Red Shed Community Library and outside the Fort Ross Store. Agendas are sent home in the Friday notices with each child.

Bus Loading

Students should board the bus one-at-a-time, using the available hand rails, and move quickly to their assigned seat. If a student drops papers or other objects while boarding the bus, she/he should get the attention of the driver. **STUDENTS MUST NEVER GO UNDER OR BEHIND THE BUS AS THE DRIVER WILL NOT BE ABLE TO SEE THE STUDENT. STUDENTS MUST NEVER GO NEAR THE BUS TO RETRIEVE PAPERS OR OBJECTS** without the bus driver's permission.

Please be at the bus stop at least five minutes before your bus time. Students must wait a safe distance from the bus until it is completely stopped and the door is open before approaching to get on. Students need permission from the driver before getting out of their seat and can do so only when the bus is stopped.

For complete Bus Rules see Attachment A.

Bus Schedule

For a schedule of bus stops see attachment. If you would like the school to consider a new bus stop, please call or send a note to Superintendent Walton. Students will be taken to their regular bus stop unless the student has **written permission** to be left elsewhere. Verbal notification by the student is not acceptable.

Payment In Lieu of Transportation Policy: Families living within the district boundaries will be paid to defray costs incurred in transporting students to and from the regular bus stop. The residence of the student must be located three or more miles from the bus stop. Payment is computed on the basis of one student per family. For more information contact the business manager.

Bus/Transportation Safety Plan

The Transportation Safety Plan that ensures the safe transport of pupils and provides instruction in school bus emergency procedures to all pupils who are transported in our school buses is available for perusal in the school office. At the beginning of each year all students take part in an emergency bus evacuation drill. Bus drivers go over emergency procedures before every field trip.

Riding bicycles or walking to school is discouraged because of the dangerous conditions of Seaview Road. Parent Release forms are available at the school office if you find this a necessity.

Calendars

A monthly calendar update, which lists most of the school activities, will be sent home the last week of each month. An annual calendar is sent home in the Summer Mailer.

Cancellation of School

Cancellation of school takes place only during extraordinary circumstances such as extreme weather, power outage or public crisis. Every practical means is used to notify parents of an impending school cancellation. If possible, the phone tree is the preferred method. Listen to KTDE 100.5 for cancellation information. In the unusual circumstances when school must be cancelled during the school day, teachers will determine that all students have satisfactory transportation and supervision at home before releasing them from school or to their designated emergency guardians. Please be sure to include several people on your child's Emergency Card and inform them of their inclusion as emergency designees. Emergency Cards are sent out in the Summer Mailer and need to be updated every year.

Care of Books

The school needs your cooperation to insure that our quality books remain in good condition. Ziplock bags and backpacks are the best insurance for clean, dry books. In the case of lost or damaged books, students will be charged. Please take care of charges as soon as possible so that teachers and the librarian can make the appropriate replacement. If payment cannot be made, please contact the school so another arrangement can be made.

Change of Address or Telephone Number

It is very important for emergency reasons that every student maintains an up-to-date address and telephone number record at the school office. Notify the school immediately if you have a change during the school year.

Complaint Procedure

You have a right to file a written complaint in accordance with the provisions of Title 5 of the California Administrative Code, Section 4600 in the event you believe that the district is in violation of state or federal laws in that it unlawfully discriminates in the following programs: Consolidated Categorical Programs and Special Education programs, or in any other program receiving state or federal funding.

If you have a complaint or problem please first meet with your child's teacher to discuss the issue. If you do not feel the complaint is resolved or you are uncomfortable with discussing the issue with the teacher, then bring the complaint to the superintendent. If these two procedures fail for you, then address the issue to the school board of trustees.

Discipline Procedure

See Attachment A.

Dress Code

School is a place of work and students should dress so that they are not taking attention away from the learning. A copy of the Dress Code is in Attachment B.

Emergencies/Disasters

In case of an illness or injury the school staff will care for a child until a parent can come pick up the child. School personnel will render first aid treatment only. If emergency medical treatment is necessary the parent will be contacted. An emergency telephone number where parents can be reached and the name and telephone number of the student's doctor should be on file at the school on the Emergency Card. Copies of this card goes with teachers on field trips. Again, please be sure to include several people on your child's Emergency Card and inform them of their inclusion as emergency designees. Emergency Cards are sent out in the Summer Mailer and need to be updated every year.

Remember that the school is well constructed, has a comprehensive earthquake plan, and has staff that will care for your children until you can safely pick them up. Listen to KTDE 100.5 FM, and do not drive until you learn it is safe to do so. When you come to the school make sure you follow the school's procedure for picking up your children (sign them out at the designated sign-out station). Check to see if you can assist the school. Remember, you cannot help anyone if you are hurt, and you cannot be found if you are somewhere you are not expected to be, like stuck on the way to school.

NO STUDENT WILL BE DISMISSED FROM SCHOOL UNLESS A PARENT OR INDIVIDUAL DESIGNATED BY A PARENT AND IS LISTED ON THE EMERGENCY CARD COMES FOR HIM OR HER. WE MUST HAVE WRITTEN PERMISSION TO RELEASE A STUDENT TO A DESIGNATED INDIVIDUAL. NO CHILD WILL BE ALLOWED TO WALK HOME ALONE.

Be sure to renew your arrangements with the designees on your Emergency Card each year. Inform them, that in the case of an emergency or disaster, they must come to school and pick up your child. Do not count on the school calling them – phone lines may not be operating. All parents or designed individuals will sign out the student on a list which will be posted. We are prepared to care for your children for a short time during critical situations. It is strongly urged that every family make emergency plans and preparations.

Remember to never block our parking lot driveway or the area near the office with your car. Please park in the parking lot, do not drive up the driveway to the school – this is our emergency access and needs to be kept free of obstacles for ambulances, fire trucks, emergency vehicles, etc.

Emergency Drills

Emergency drills for fire, earthquake, and bus emergencies are conducted during the year. Detailed escape plans are posted inside each classroom. For emergency drills each class has an escape route to an outside area a safe distance from the building. Students are escorted to this designated area in a safe, quiet and orderly manner.

Field Trips

Classroom teachers schedule field trips throughout the school year. These trips are designed to supplement different aspects of the classroom curriculum and to introduce students to the resources of the community. Parents will receive notice of field trips in advance of the scheduled trip date. Written permission from parents for students to attend the field trips is required.

Every year the following information and forms are sent home: Field Trips Guide for Chaperones, Field Trip Driver Registration Form and the policy regarding Student Transportation in Privately Owned Vehicles.

Food & Beverages

Use plastic containers for food; glass containers can break and be unsafe. If you pack microwaveable food, please ensure it takes only a **few** minutes to warm up. Other children may need to use the machine. Be sure the lunches you pack are easy for your child to prepare. Complicated written directions can eat up their lunch time.

Fort Ross School encourages students to eat nutritious lunches and healthy snacks. Students are encouraged not to bring sodas or “energy drinks” to school due to the added sugar and oftentimes absence of nutritional value. Beverages such as water, juice and milk are recommended. Sodas may be part of special events and school parties. The Parents’ Club sells orange juice and milk at lunchtime for your children’s convenience.

It is suggested that you pack eating utensils and napkins. There are a limited amount of paper dishes and plastic utensils provided at school for those in need. It is recommended that the child’s name be taped onto lunch boxes.

GATE (Gifted and Talented)

Students are eligible for GATE by meeting the following criteria:

- Achievement on the Structure of the Intellect Test per SOI requirements. Those who are close to meeting SOI standards are eligible if they meet the following:
- Superior achievement on the State normed achievement test in Reading, Language, and Math and/or scoring as “Advanced” on the California State Standards test in Language Arts and Math
- Superior performance in class, on district assessments, and teachers’ recommendations.

Our objective is to meet each child's unique needs within the regular classroom. Students do not have to be GATE-eligible to have their needs met through differentiated instruction. Projects have application and challenge for students with a wide range of abilities. All students are expected to work to their potential on class projects. A part time teacher instructs eligible students in Advanced Math (Algebra, Geometry) and Science.

Beginning in 2005/06 an optional after-school GATE enrichment is planned that will include robotics and fine arts.

Graduation

The Fort Ross School 8th grade graduation is a ceremony that celebrates the passage from childhood and elementary school to young adulthood and high school. It is a major event at Fort Ross School and everyone is invited to attend and congratulate the graduates. In order to qualify for graduation and a diploma from Fort Ross, the student must:

- **Attendance:** Maintain a regular attendance record throughout their eighth grade year. Regular attendance is defined as attending classes for ninety percent (90%) of the days each trimester. Unexcused absences in excess of six (6) days will result in the loss of qualification for graduation
- **Grades:** If a student receives a failing grade in any subject during a trimester, it will be expected that the grade will be raised to passing during the next two trimesters. (Fail: 50% and below, Pass: 60% and above). If a student fails a subject for two or more trimesters, the student must enroll in summer school and will not participate in the graduation ceremony. The student may receive a diploma after completing the summer course with a passing grade.
- **Projects:** Each student must successfully complete these projects to graduate:
 1. U.S. Constitution Test – 75% required to pass
 2. Term Paper Project – 75% required to pass
 3. Keyboarding/Typing Proficiency – 30 wpm with 80% accuracy
 4. Mathematics Proficiency Test – Students must demonstrate a 70% or greater proficiency on grade-level math standards test
 5. Reading Fluency – Students must demonstrate reading fluency at grade level, or no more than two grade levels below.
 6. Physical Fitness Test – Best effort must be demonstrated on the Mile Run, Sit-ups, and Push-ups. Mile Run must be completed in “Best Effort”.

If a student does not meet a requirement for graduation during any trimester of their eighth year, mandatory tutoring, twice a week, will be required. Parents may also request weekly progress reports to encourage the student to complete the requirements. Students enrolling during the second or third trimester, whose prior school grades, behavior, or academic progress fail to meet Fort Ross School standards shall not participate in the graduation ceremony. Non-graduating students may appeal their status to the Superintendent. If the appeal is unsuccessful, the student may appeal to the Board of Trustees. The decision of the Board is final.

Traditionally, eighth graders are excused at noon on graduation day after having practices for the ceremony. The Parents' Club, eighth grade parents, 7th and 8th graders and school staff contribute to graduation planning. Parents of the 8th grade students and

Parents' Club decorate, parents of the 7th grade contribute deserts and the Parents' Club provide drinks, fruit and a Big Cake.

Head Lice

The school checks for head lice at the beginning of the school year. You can help by periodically examining your child's head and letting us know immediately if head lice are discovered. We will then check all of the children to try to stop them from spreading further. Anyone discovered with head lice will be sent home with a list of instructions for treatment. Children will not be allowed back into school until they are "nit free". We will check each child upon returning to school.

If your child is sent home with head lice, please don't panic. Head lice are pests but are not harmful and anyone can get them. The old belief that only dirty people get lice does not apply to head lice. They actually seem to like clean hair! Millions of people in the United States get them each year and the numbers have been increasing.

Homework

Homework is an extension of the learning that takes place in school. Homework can provide reinforcement of classroom learning and provide opportunities for independent study, research, and creative thinking. Parents can help their children by arranging a quiet, comfortable place for work and by seeing that assignments are completed. If your child has not been given a formal homework assignment, read with him/her, play math games in the car or while cooking, encourage them to verbalize their thoughts. Be creative. Parents are their children's first and most influential teachers.

Immunizations and Vaccinations

State law requires that every child who is admitted to public school must have evidence of successful vaccinations for diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, polio, measles, mumps, rubella, hepatitis B and varicella (chicken pox). Also required are a tuberculin skin test and a physical exam by a doctor.

Independent Study

Independent Study consists of at least five days leave from school. Your child's classroom teacher provides assignments. A contract for independent study should be requested at least one week in advance to allow time for the teacher to gather materials for assignments. Parent, student and teacher must sign the contract before the independent study leave of absence.

Injury/Sickness

In the event that your child becomes ill or has an accident at school, you will be called. If the school cannot reach you, one of the adults you have designated on your emergency card will be notified. Be sure your emergency card is up to date at all times.

Your child will need to be sent home if they have any of the following:

- a fever of 100 or more
- are coughing and hacking
- have a sore throat
- are nauseous, or vomiting.

We will call you also if your child has a severe headache.

It is very important that children who have been sick take enough time to rest and recover before returning to school. Students will not be allowed back until all symptoms of illness are gone. It is strongly suggested that working parents have a contingency plan if the children are ill.

Please keep your children home if they have any of the following:

- had a fever the night before
- vomited the night before
- are coughing
- have a sore throat

All of these symptoms suggest your child needs to rest, but not at school.

Please call the school if your child is absent due to a communicable disease. Precautions may be able to be taken to protect other students.

Internet and Computer Lab

Instruction in the computer lab is once a week for all students. Copies of the school Internet Policy are sent home to parents every year. An Internet Use Agreement must be read and signed by student and parent before a student is permitted access to the internet on the school's computers.

Kindergarten

Children entering kindergarten must be five years of age on or before December 5 of the year they enter. Registration may happen any time. In the spring before the student enters, there is a preregistration and orientation day. Parents should bring a birth certificate or other written documentation of birth, immunization records and a completed physician's report (form available from school office) in order to complete the enrollment.

The Kindergarten day starts at 9:00am Instruction ends at 12:30, but Kindergarten students are welcome to stay through lunch and be picked up before 1:10pm. They can ride the bus to school in the morning but there is no bus at 12:30. The exception is on minimum days when school is out for all students at 12:40 and Kindergartners may ride the bus home.

The Kindergarten program offers a balance of experiential and academic activities. Children are given the opportunity to work and play individually, in small groups and with the class as a whole. Goals and tasks are planned according to the child's interests, developmental level and academic achievement.

Leaving Campus

Students are not allowed to leave the school campus during school hours for any reason without the knowledge and consent of their teacher. Permission to leave the school campus will only be granted upon written or verbal request from the student's parent or guardian. Students leaving campus during school hours must be signed out in the school office by the responsible party.

Library

The library is open for students on a regularly scheduled basis and is supervised by our librarian or another adult. Library times are held for grades K-8. They are held for the purpose of library instruction as well as for the enjoyment of materials and books available. Students are allowed to use the library during the library half hour or with the permission of their classroom teacher. They can use the library to read, check-out books, return books, check-out audio visual materials, do reference work or work on special projects. Each student may check out two or three books, depending on grade level. Lost or damaged books must be paid for.

Lost and Found

All clothing found on campus, regardless of its value, is placed in the lost and found box outside the office. Money, jewelry and other articles of value are kept in the secretary's safekeeping. Students may claim articles after proper identification. At the end of the year, the lost and found items are taken to a nonprofit organization. Marking the label of jackets, sweatshirts and lunch boxes is very helpful in identifying items.

Maps

A map of the school site and a map of our district can be found in Attachment C.

Medications

If your child brings medication to school, the following requirements must be met:

Prescription Medicine

1. A signed statement from the child's physician including the date, child's name, name and dosage of medication, time of administration and possible side effects. (A form is available for this statement).
2. A note dated and signed by the parent must accompany the medication. The note should include the child's name, type of medication and stated permission to administer the medication, and other instructions if necessary (ex. if refrigeration is necessary).
3. Medication must be brought to school in original container properly labeled with child's name and date.
4. Medication must be given by school personnel.

Non-Prescription Medicine

1. A note dated and signed by the parent must accompany the medication, giving the child's name, type of medication, dates to administer, dosage amounts, specific dosage times, stated permission to administer the medication and other instructions if necessary (ex. if refrigeration is necessary).
2. Medication must be brought to school in original container.
3. Medication must be given by school personnel.

Minimum Days

There are several minimum days each year. Usually there is one near Halloween, three during Parent-Teacher Conferences in November and March, the day before Winter and Spring Breaks, and the last day of instruction. All classes are dismissed at 12:40.

Kindergarteners are allowed to ride the bus home. Look on your bus schedule for bus stop information and times.

Off-Limit Areas

Our school is maintained and operated for the benefit of our students. However, there are a few off-limit areas where students are not allowed, unless with teacher permission. These include the storage rooms, staff lounge, parking lot, old portable, coaches' shed and maintenance shed. Areas on the playfield that are behind trees are also off-limits.

Parent Annual Notice

All schools are mandated to provide parents with certain information each year. We will send you this at the beginning of each school year using the Summer Mailer and the first few Friday Notices. The information is also available at the school.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Back-To-School Night in September is the first report to parents. Please come to this orientation program.

Parent-Teacher Conferences are held in November and March to coincide with report cards and the end of the first two trimesters. Teachers will arrange appointments to meet with every parent. These conference times can be very valuable to the overall education program. It is not necessary to wait for these conferences if a parent has a special concern. Parent conferences are encouraged and can be arranged at any time during the school year. Report cards are issued in November, March and June, to correspond with the trimester system.

Please take time to review work sent home with your child. Having your child explain work to you gives them an opportunity to review and clarify their learning and provides an opportunity for you to enjoy their progress.

Parent Volunteers

We consider our parent volunteers as a very special resource. Parents are encouraged to help in all classrooms, programs, and extracurricular activities. Please contact the school office or your child's teacher if you have time or skills that you can donate.

We hope that you will become an active participant in our school program. We welcome you to join us. Whatever time or talents you have to share would be appreciated. Students benefit greatly from parent participation in school activities and the expertise you give in developing and caring for the school facility. If you have a special project in mind or would like to volunteer, please contact your child's teacher.

The **Parents' Club** is an active group of parents who meet monthly and put forth great effort to enrich the school program and environment. They sponsor school events such as holiday celebrations, the Swim Party, Graduation, Hot Lunches and other events. The club provides two parent volunteers to each classroom as class representatives who assist the teacher.

Pets

Teachers may give special permission for pets to be brought to school as part of an activity. However, under no circumstances is a potentially dangerous pet to be brought to school.

Playground Supervision

School staff will supervise the playground beginning at 8:45am. Other supervised play times are the morning and lunch recesses. At least two adults are on the playground during the scheduled recesses. The playground is not supervised after school and students are expected to leave for home immediately following dismissal.

Promotions and Retentions

Promotions and retentions are based on an evaluation of academic, physical, social and emotional growth. The primary reasons for considering retention are academic performance and understanding of concepts, physical or social immaturity, and frequent or long absences.

Report Cards

Report cards are issued following the completion of each trimester grading period. Please carefully review your child's progress and contact your child's teacher if you have questions regarding grades. Parent conferences can be scheduled at any time during the school year.

Rules

The students at Fort Ross are expected to do their best in all areas of school life. The basic school rules are **BE SAFE, BE RESPECTFUL, BE RESPONSIBLE**. Fort Ross is a Bully-Free Area. Every student has the right to an education in an orderly, safe atmosphere and is expected to contribute to this learning environment by acting in the following manner:

- Responding promptly and respectfully to directions from staff members
- Working cooperatively with fellow students and school staff
- Being punctual and regular in school attendance
- Refraining from the use of profanity and vulgarity
- Refraining from misuse or damage of school or other's property

Parents are responsible for students during meetings, on program nights and at special events outside of the school hours. During this time it is expected that school rules will be observed.

See Attachment A.

Safety

Fort Ross School has an updated Safety Plan that is reviewed annually by the Site Council. To ensure the safety of all children, we ask that you observe the following:

- Children should not bring Items such as knives, matches or lighters, toy guns, any weapons or sharp, dangerous objects to school
- Toys, Gameboys, CD or DVD players, headsets, laser pointers, skateboards, and skates are not allowed on school grounds or on the bus.
- Dogs are not permitted on school grounds.

You may peruse the Safety Plan at school at any time.

School Records

The school keeps a variety of administrative and student records. There are different records which parents may need to refer to at some time during the year. Parents should call the school and request the information or ask for an appointment with the office person. The records include the student's permanent academic record, grade report cards and a daily attendance record.

Site Council

The School Site Council is made up of the superintendent, two teachers, and three parent/community members. The Council works on curriculum, the Single Plan for Student Achievement, the Safety Plan, the Local Educational Plan, and other projects as needed. The Council also recommends how monies from the government are spent on instruction for the Gifted and Talented Education program and Title 1.

Participating on the Council is a way to be proactive about your child's education as well as a way to help the school as a whole. The meetings are after school once a month. Please contact Superintendent Walton if you would like to volunteer.

Spirit Leaders

Spirit Leaders are recognized at school assemblies as those who put an extraordinary effort in achievement and school service. Those students who have earned the most "Caught Ya" cards in each class are recognized and rewarded with a prize.

Supervision After School

School is out at 3:15 every day except Thursday when the children are released at 2:35. There is no yard supervision after school. Unless the children are being tutored they are expected to go directly home. Teachers and staff value the time after school to finish the day's work and to prepare for the next day. Therefore, the playground is closed until 4:30 pm. The exception is if there is an organized after school sports activity and all the children are under the supervision of responsible adults who will enforce the regular school rules. Children cannot stay after school unless there is a parent or other adult actively supervising them. They are welcome to come back to school and play on the yard after 4:30 pm.

Support Staff

The Counselor is available to assist students with questions regarding social and crisis situations. Students must have a permission form from their parent before speaking with the counselor.

The School Nurse is responsible for routine health checks, parental contact concerning health problems, assistance in health teaching, sight and hearing tests. She also provides in-service training to our staff. Scoliosis screening of grades 5-8 takes place in the spring. The nurse visits the school on a scheduled basis and you are welcome to contact her between those times. Please be sure to contact the nurse if your child has any health problems.

The School Psychologist visits the school when needed. The psychologist is available as a special counselor to students and also provides the teaching staff with different kinds of evaluation tools. The psychologist is also available to parents who have special concerns about their child.

The Speech Therapist visits the school on a regular basis. Students who are referred by their teachers and parental permission may work with the therapist. If any parent feels their child may need help in the area of speech development they should contact the school to obtain an evaluation.

The Technology Consultant visits the school one day a week and instructs students in the computer lab.

One day a week, our three classroom teachers rotate to all the classes and lead instruction on music, art, and physical education.

Tardy

Prompt arrival at school is expected of all students. Late arrival disrupts class and causes loss of instructional time. Any student who arrives after 9:00am must come to the office before going to class.

Telephone

The school telephones are for business uses only. Children are not allowed to use the telephone unless an emergency exists. We ask that you call the school only in case of emergencies. Social arrangements should be made outside of school. Students are not allowed to use the telephone to make personal arrangements, such as requesting permission to go to another student's home after school (arrangements should be made prior to coming to school). If a child forgets what their after school plans are, we will contact their parent and let them know.

Testing

Standardized tests and California Standards testing (STAR) are administered to the students in grades 2-8 in the spring of each year. These tests are designed to identify student strengths and weaknesses in the areas of Math, Reading, and English Language Arts. Some of the grades are also tested in Writing, Social Science and Science. They also indicate your child's test-taking skills.

Textbooks, Desks, Chairs

The school furnishes textbooks, workbooks, desks and chairs to the students. If a book is lost, or the desk and/or chair is misused or damaged beyond reasonable wear, the parent is responsible for the replacement. Caring for the school and for the school property is an important part of school spirit and individual responsibility. Every effort is made to maintain a safe and cheerful environment for your child.

Toys and Valuables

The school cannot be responsible for valuables that students bring to school. Common sense and consideration is the best guide in determining whether or not to bring personal possessions to school. In general, students should not bring toys or unusual items to school unless they have teacher permission. If special circumstances make it

necessary for a student to bring substantial cash or other important possessions to school, these items can be safeguarded by arranging to leave them at the office with either the school secretary or the superintendent.

Vandalism

Our school and school equipment is public property. Willfully damaging or destroying this property is cause for immediate action. The school requires that vandal damage be paid for. If a student accidentally causes damage they should report it to their teacher immediately, so that the damage is not misconstrued as vandalism.

Visitors

We invite and encourage you to visit our school and classrooms when advance arrangements are made. Visitors are required to register first at the school office.

Withdrawals/Transfers

Students transferring during the school year or at the end of a school year should let the school secretary know as soon as possible so that the necessary records can be provided to the new school.

Where To Go With A Problem

It is important for the whole of the school community to work together cooperatively. The basic procedure in order to resolve a problem begins by addressing the person or persons involved. If you have a classroom concern, approach your child's teacher. If the problem is not resolved, speak with the superintendent. If neither of these approaches satisfies you, then lastly speak with a Board of Trustees member. The board meeting is not the place to discuss problems that have not been addressed through the appropriate channels.

Attachment A

Fort Ross School Behavior/Discipline Plan Rules & Behavioral Expectations

Based on the following assumptions:

- All staff is involved
- Rules and guidelines based on overarching principles of respect, responsibility and safety
- Teach and re-teach the subtleties of what it means to be respectful, responsible, and safe.
- Academic and behavioral learning are integral, i.e. essential to completeness.
- Praise, promote and reward behavior we want repeated.

School Goal : To encourage students to pursue academic excellence, develop self-esteem, become responsible individuals, and have respect for the rights of other.

The behavioral expectations of being safe, respectful and responsible are school-wide. These rules are taught, practices and reviewed regularly. Students who are recognized following the rules are rewarded with Caught Ya cards and prizes are given at monthly assemblies.

In classrooms the teachers have established predictable and orderly routines. In order for teachers to be effective, they need to be able to get help with chronically disruptive students quickly. Disruptive students are sent out from the class to the office to cool down and the referral process is used to alert parents of problem behavior.

For 2004/05 a school-wide anti-bullying campaign is promoted and a student mediation team is in place on campus. Teachers and superintendent meet monthly, instructional assistants and superintendent meet monthly to discuss discipline issues. A preschool planned for 2005/06 will enable a program that teaches social-behavioral skills beginning early in childhood.

Academic failure is a major predictor of problem behavior and other adjustment problems and needs to be explicitly and consistently addressed as part of an effective and comprehensive school program. Training and support will ensure that staff receive regular support, training and recognition regarding classroom management and academic support, requests for behavior management assistance in the classroom receive timely and effective response, and students are ensured successful learning experiences with highly structures teaching and practice opportunities and curriculum adaptation. Academic success requires student engagement. Increased academic support includes tutoring.

Establishing, teaching and enforcing positive school behavior expectations are essential to an orderly and safe school. Important “higher order” skills including: a. impulse control, b. anger management, c. conflict resolution, and d. empathy.

At-risk children need additional supports such as a) self-management programs, b) positive reinforcement, c) school-based mentors, d) increased social skills training, e) extra academic support, f) family support and involvement in intervention, g) personal issues counseling and h) alternatives to out of school suspension and expulsion.

Children and youth behavior is influenced by factors in the school and by powerful family and community influences. Ongoing efforts to build a collaborative school community will include regular opportunities to gather for social and informational events. School personnel need to work with families to design supports that are sensitive to the daily stresses and routines that affect success.

BE SAFE, BE RESPECTFUL, BE RESPONSIBLE AT ALL TIMES in your actions and your speech. These rules and expectations apply at all times while on school grounds.

School and the bus are not the place for toy (or real) guns, knives, hard balls, head phones or Gameboys

Bus

Stay seated upright, facing forward and wearing the seat belt
Use quiet voice and school-appropriate language
Save food and drink for off-bus
Keep body and objects inside bus
School rules apply when waiting at bus stops
Have a note when taking a bus to another student's house and give it to the bus driver.

Hallways

Use halls to go somewhere, socialize outside
From outside enter through front school doors
Enter halls through library doors with adults only
Walk in the halls and use quiet voices

Library

Use quiet voices
Use library with permission from the yard duty before, after school and during lunch
Use book placeholders
Keep food and drink out of library
Use library for study, research and quiet reading
Use Internet with adult supervision
Only check out books on the shelves
Fill out checkout cards
Return books on time
Keep the library clean
Ask the librarian for help

Lunch Room

Should be a comfortable place, where students can enjoy their meals in a clean, calm atmosphere. In order to maintain an appropriate atmosphere in the lunchroom, students are asked to follow these standards:

Throw litter in trashcans and clean up what you drop or spill
Remember to recycle
Use quiet voices
Keep all food to yourself
Sit with feet on floor, bottom on chair and facing table
Allow anyone to sit next to you
Wait your turn for the microwave and ask for help from lunch duty adults
Stay seated until released by lunchroom supervisors.
Clean up your area and push your chair in when you are done.
Use good manners

Playground

Stay within school boundaries, stay in front of big redwood trees – you must be able to see the yard person, students may only cross the road or go down to the parking lot with permission from the yard duty.

After rain get permission to be on the field

Play chase games on the field

Make agreements on safe game rules

Be courteous and wait your turn without pushing or shoving or cutting in line

Follow adult directions

Head up to class when bell rings

Show respect for skill levels when making teams

Use kind words and actions

Be honest and fair

Respect others' space and privacy

Return balls to classrooms and use equipment appropriately

- Merry-go-round: bouncing not allowed, keep heads and feet from dangling, jump off when merry-go-round comes to a complete stop
- Tire Swing: for grades K-6, two K-4 children can sit on it at the same time, otherwise only one at a time.
- Slide: two people can be on the stairs at a time, one person at a time goes down the slide, go down feet first and always go down (not up) the slide.
- Swings: the only people within the box around the swings are people swinging, about to get on or off the swings or pushing someone on the swings.
- Monkey Bars: During recess grades 1-4 will have priority. At lunch, grades 5-8 have priority. One person at a time on the bars or on the pole. When someone is half way across, the next person may start. The bars are to exercise your muscles, not for sitting or waiting on top of the ladder or bars. If you cannot reach the bars, do not use them.
- Overhead Slide: for 5-12 year olds.
- Tether Ball: follow your classroom's rules on this game. Use good sportsmanship.

The following behaviors are prohibited: pushing, shoving, tripping, hitting, grabbing someone by their clothing, wrestling, play-fighting, tackle football or tackling games, spitting, splashing water, name-calling, teasing, insulting, swearing or inappropriate gestures.

Bathrooms

Use quiet voices
Knock on stall doors
Give people privacy
Flush toilets
Wash hands
Keep water in the sink
Put towels in garbage
Return to classroom promptly
Inform adults of vandalism

Assemblies and Special Events

Sit quietly and listen responsibly
Keep hands and feet to yourself
Show appreciation through applause at appropriate times
Wait until dismissed

Intervention Strategies / Consequences

Age appropriate
Goal is for students to internalize self-discipline

Teach, re-teach, model, test understanding of rule

Exclusion from play area – i.e. benching, jobs such as sweeping, trash pick-up

Exclusion from classroom – send to Office or another classroom. Used for disruptive, defiant, oppositional behavior, exhibiting emotional or physical lack of control

Referral sent home – purpose is to set up record keeping and since parent signature required, involves parent in correcting behavior. Also can pinpoint problem areas (looks at time, location, behavior, student).

Meeting with Superintendent – Student is taken to superintendent's office. Supt. gives due process and talks to student about behavior expectations and consequences.

Detention – a) 3 referrals
b) repetitive behavior

Procedure: Referral goes home to parent. 3:15 –4:00 requires specific writing as to what happened, what rule or behavior expectation was broken, how student's behavior will change.

Suspension – Ed Code section 48900 lists acts that permit suspension/expulsion. These include: physical injury, weapons, drugs/alcohol, look-alike drugs/alcohol, robbery or extortion, damage to school property or private property, steal or attempt to steal school property or private property, tobacco, obscene acts, habitual profanity, drug paraphernalia, disrupted school activities or otherwise defied the valid authority of school

personnel, received stolen property, possess imitation firearms, sexual assault or battery, harassed, threatened or intimidated a pupil or school district personnel, hazing, sexual harassment, hate violence, terrorist threats.

Consequences for breaking bus rules:

1. Verbal warning from the driver
2. Written bus referral goes home for parent signature
3. Parents and students will be warned that the second offense may result in losing bus privileges for 1 to 5 days.
4. Bus suspensions will get longer if the student continues to be a problem
5. In the case of serious offenses such as fighting, insubordination, putting part of the body out of the bus, moving out of the seat while the bus is in motion, or throwing dangerous objects in the bus, the driver may suspend the student immediately.

Fort Ross School Bus Rules

The California Vehicle Code, as well as the Fort Ross School Board Policy, requires the driver of a school bus to maintain discipline and control of children while loading, riding and unloading the school bus. In the interest of safety and courtesy, please familiarize your child/children with the following rules:

1. Passengers should stand back in an orderly line at pick up points until the bus comes to a complete stop. Passengers shall enter the bus in an orderly fashion and go directly to a seat.
2. Students will be left at their regular bus stop unless the student has written permission to be left elsewhere. Verbal notification by the student is not acceptable. If the student has more than one drop-off stop during the week, a note stating the child's schedule must be on file.
3. Students should not interfere with the operation of the bus nor interfere with the bus driver.

The following list of student actions constitute violations of safety:

- Standing behind or going under the bus
- Abrasive body contact (shoving, pulling hair, hitting, slapping)
- Abusive language
- Using profane language or obscene gestures
- Putting any part of the body out of the bus window at any time
- Any movements out of the seat while the bus is in motion
- Obstructing the aisle with legs, feet or objects
- Facing the rear when seated
- Creating excessive noise
- Any improper bus stop procedures (property damage, rock throwing, playing in the street, not lining up)
- Unauthorized opening, closing or tampering of any kind with bus doors, windows or emergency exits
- Damage to or defacement of the bus
- Any use of matches or lighters
- Throwing of an object while on the bus or at the bus stop
- Littering of any kind
- Transporting live animals
- Eating or drinking or chewing gum
- Disrespect or failure to obey the bus driver

Attachment B

Board Policy
Students
Dress and Grooming

5132

The Governing Board believes that appropriate dress and grooming contribute to a productive learning environment. The Board expects students to give proper attention to personal cleanliness and to wear clothes that are suitable for the school activities in which they participate. Students' clothing must not present a health or safety hazard or a distraction which would interfere with the educational process.

(cf. 4119.22 - Dress and Grooming)

(cf. 5145.2 - Freedom of Speech/Expression: Publications Code)

Students and parents/guardians shall be informed about dress and grooming standards at the beginning of the school year and whenever these standards are revised. A student who violates these standards shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

(cf. 5144 - Discipline)

Gang-Related Apparel

The principal, staff and parents/guardians at a school may establish a reasonable dress code that prohibits students from wearing gang-related apparel when there is evidence of a gang presence that disrupts or threatens to disrupt the school's activities. Such a dress code may be included as part of the school safety plan and must be presented to the Board for approval. The Board shall approve the plan upon determining that it is necessary to protect the health and safety of the school's students.

(cf. 0450 - Comprehensive Safety Plan)

(cf. 5136 - Gangs)

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

35183 School dress codes; uniforms

35294.1 School safety plans

48907 Student exercise of free expression

49066 Grades; effect of physical education class apparel

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

302 Pupils to be neat and clean on entering school

Hartzell v. Connell (1984) 35 Cal. 3d 899

Arcadia Unified School District v. California Department of Education, (1992) 2 Cal. 4th 251

Marvin H. Jeglin et al v. San Jacinto Unified School District et al 827 F.Supp. 1459 (C.D. Cal. 1993)

Adopted 2-12-2004

In cooperation with teachers, students and parents/guardians, the principal or designee shall establish school rules governing student dress and grooming which are consistent with district policy and regulations. These school dress codes shall be regularly reviewed.

The following guidelines shall apply to all regular school activities with the exceptions of P.E., Drama Program events, and selected field trips with the approval of the teacher:

1. Shoes must be worn at all times. Shoes that allow rigorous activity are appropriate attire. Due to safety concerns, shoes with heels of more than 1" or backless shoes may be worn only at school for special occasions. The teacher will define the special occasion.
2. Any article of clothing, jewelry, adornment or personal items, for example backpacks, fanny packs, toys, water bottles etc., which disturbs the educational process is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, items with pictures, insignias or words which are obscene, profane, pornographic, representative or threatening of illegal behavior, disparaging or demeaning to others such as racial, ethnic, or religious prejudice, or which bear drug, alcohol or tobacco company advertising, promotions and likenesses.
3. Clothes shall be sufficient to conceal undergarments at all times. See-through or fish-net fabrics, off-the-shoulder tops, halter tops, bare midriffs, low-cut tops are prohibited. Tank tops are allowed as long as the straps cover bra straps. Skirts or shorts shorter than mid-thigh (the end of the fingertips) are prohibited.
4. Pants cannot be worn below the hip line.

Coaches and teachers may impose more stringent dress requirements to accommodate the special needs of certain sports and/or classes.

No grade of a student participating in a physical education class shall be adversely affected if the student does not wear standardized physical education apparel because of circumstances beyond the student's control.

The superintendent, staff, students and parent/guardians may establish reasonable dress and grooming regulations for times when students are engaged in extracurricular or other special school activities.

Consequence: Student will be required to change into another outfit either provided by the school (with parents/guardians notified), or brought to school by the parents/guardians.

Adopted 2-12-2004

Attachment C

District Map

Site Map

Attachment D

Policies

Attachment E

Annual Pages

Fort Ross School District Personnel 2005-2006

Board of Trustees

Sharon Lynn	Board Member
Jerry Rudy	Board Member, President
William Seymour	Board Member

Administration

Ann Carlson	Administrative Assistant/Secretary
Marjorie Johnson	Lead Teacher
Nancy Walton	Superintendent/Business Manager

Teachers

Jill Macknicki	K,1,2,3
Marjorie Johnson	4,5,6
Sylvia Murphy	7,8

Instructional Assistants

Georgia Griffin	K,1,2,3
Shawn Harb	4,5,6 and help with K,1,2,3
Drucilla Hamilton	7,8

Support Staff

Sayeath Farmer	Bus Driver
Carol MacAvoy	Bus Driver
Sandra	Custodian
Miguel	Custodian
Drucilla Hamilton	Librarian
Tim Schmidt	Maintenance Consultant
Sarjan Holt	Technology Consultant/Computer Lab Coordinator
Jill Macknicki	Art Consultant
Marjorie Johnson	P.E. Consultant
Sylvia Murphy	Music Consultant
John Sperry	GATE Math & Science
Pending	Counselor
Jeff Harris	Speech Therapist
Priscilla Griffith	School Nurse
Jim Augsburger	School Psychologist