

# NICHOLAS A. FERRI MIDDLE SCHOOL

*Home of the Jaguars*

## Student Handbook 2019-2020



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## QR Code for the N. A. Ferri Website

Whether you are in a coffee shop, a retail store or reading a magazine, you probably can't help notice the black and white squares with funny patterns on products, billboards and ads. These little squares with funny patterns are called QR codes (Quick Response) codes. These are not new and they have been around for quite some time. But still, very few know how to use them and how they would benefit from doing so.

**How to scan a QR code:** You can scan a QR code using your mobile camera. In some cases you need to download an app to scan QR codes. Just do a search for "QR" in your mobile app store and you will find many apps for free that you can download. If you have a Windows Phone you don't need to download a separate app, you can scan QR codes directly using Bing. To scan a QR code, open up Bing, press the "Eye" icon and point your mobile phone camera to the QR code and hold still. The camera will identify the code and present the information in the code on the screen.

This QR code provides users with a direct link to the FMS website. Use a QR Scanner App to access this code.



Visit the FMS Website at <http://johnstonpsfms.ss10.sharpschool.com/>

**Important Dates and Information are available and updated regularly**

## **COMMUNICATION: A PARTNERSHIP**

Maintaining open lines of communication between home and school is vital to your child's success. This handbook reflects Ferri Middle School's goal of communicating the expectations and guidelines to ensure a safe and secure learning environment.

There are a number of school contacts who are available to address any questions that arise throughout the year. Bringing prompt attention to issues and questions affecting your child's education will allow the school to resolve them effectively, cooperatively, and immediately.

Students and parent/guardians should contact the teacher when there are specific questions, concerns that pertain to such things as assignments, special event, grades, tests, and classroom issues. Contact on this level is most effective for clarifying minor confusion about classroom expectations and requirements, as well as allowing teachers and parent/guardians to build a strong relationship for the benefit of the student. If the teacher is not readily available, a phone or email message should be left and the teacher will respond as soon as possible.

Questions regarding student programs, testing, social development, or personal issues should be directed to the Guidance Counselor assigned to your child.

Questions pertaining to broader issues of school policy or school-wide activities and events should be directed to the Assistant Principal or Principal.

In any event, when there is a question about who to contact, it is good practice to call your student's teacher(s) or Guidance Counselor. They will be able to counsel you as to which individual is best equipped to answer your questions or provide the information you seek.

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# I. WELCOME

## **PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE**

Welcome to Nicholas A. Ferri Middle School. It is with enthusiasm that I welcome each of you back to a new school year or perhaps to a brand new school. I urge you all to take complete advantage of the dedicated staff and the quality education you will be offered during your stay with us.

It is our collective goal to provide ALL students with the best education possible so you will be prepared as you begin high school. Your responsibility as a student is to come to school each day prepared and ready to learn. Complete all your school assignments with care and your best effort. Seek out help from the staff if you are having difficulties adjusting or completing assignments. We are all here to help you succeed.

Remember to respect your teachers, your peers and yourself. You will discover that respectful manners will take you much further than a poor attitude.

Reach for the stars. Don't give up your dreams of who you'd like to become. It is in your reach to excel in any area you desire. The ability to stay focused and persistent will enable you to accomplish anything.

Remember responsibility, respect, and goals. If you embrace these three ideas through your middle school years, you will be successful.

If you have specific questions regarding behavior, policies and procedures at FMS, please refer to our handbook. Once you and your parents/guardians have finished reading the handbook, please have them complete the parents/guardians "receipt of handbook form" provided by your homeroom teacher. This signed form should be returned to your homeroom teacher within three days after receiving the handbook.

Good luck and have a successful year!

Respectfully,

Matthew Tsonos  
Principal

## MISSION & VISION STATEMENTS

The mission of Nicholas A. Ferri is to foster the qualities of “Ferri Pride” in all students

**Forever**

**Educating**

**Respectful**

**Responsible**

**Individuals**



**Performance**

**Requires**

**Integrity**

**Dedication**

**Effort**

The vision of Nicholas A. Ferri is to engage students in authentic learning that prepares them to be lifelong learners. Toward this end students will become:

- **Global citizens** who transfer & apply their learning toward cultural understanding and global awareness
- **Effective communicators** who use varied means to communicate appropriately, effectively, & respectfully
- **Self-directed learners** who overcome obstacles, persevere, and reflect on their performance
- **Informed thinkers** who demonstrate academic accountability and responsibility
- **Healthy beings** who maintain physical, mental and social well-being as they work to achieve their full potential

## IMPORTANT DATES

### Open House

Monday, September 23, 2019 @ 6:00 pm

### Report Cards

Quarter	End Date	Report Cards Issued
First	11/1/19	11/18/19
Second	1/17/20	2/3/20
Third	4/3/20	4/27/20 (due to Spring Recess)
Fourth	6/15/20	6/15/20

### Parent/Guardian – Teacher Conferences:

Tuesday, November 26, 2019 from 2:15 - 4:15 and 5:15 - 7:15  
(Teachers will contact parents to set appointments)

## II. BUILDING INFORMATION

### **BUILDING SECURITY**

Our first concern is the health and safety of our students and staff. Therefore, we ask students to enter the building through the front doors or back doors (near band room) between 7:20 and 7:45 A.M. Students will not be allowed into the building before 7:20 A.M. Homeroom begins at 7:50 A.M. **Any student not seated in their homeroom at 7:50 A.M. is considered late to school. Students cannot leave the building without permission.**

### **VISITORS**

All visitors and parents/guardians with appointments are asked to enter the building through the front door with the security buzzer. All visitors must report to the front office for a visitor's ID. Parents/Guardians are asked to email teachers directly or contact the guidance counselor(s) to arrange appointments with faculty or staff. **Student visitors are not allowed without the principal's approval.** We appreciate everyone's cooperation as we continue to ensure that Ferri Middle School is a safe & orderly learning environment.

**Parents/Guardians are asked to limit personal visits during class time. Not only is this disruptive to your student but to the teacher and the class as a whole. Thank you in advance for your understanding.**

### **VOLUNTEERS/CHAPERONES**

Any parent/guardian who would like to volunteer their time/services at Ferri Middle School must complete an Information and Disclosure Statement, and provide a current and approved BCI Check no later than October 1st of each academic year. Volunteers must comply with any and all requirements set forth in the "Johnston Public Schools Volunteers in Schools Policy." An electronic copy of this policy is available online at: [www.johnstonschools.org](http://www.johnstonschools.org) and a hard copy of this policy may be made available by request to the Principal.

### **PHONE CALLS**

Ferri Middle School recognizes that at any point throughout the school day it may be necessary to reach your student to communicate important information. **In case of emergency, we urge you to contact the main office and request to speak to the principal or assistant principal.** Telephone messages will not be delivered to students during the school day, **EXCEPT** in the event of an emergency. Students will be allowed to use the office telephone during the school day, only with the permission of the principal, assistant principal, or office personnel. Contacting students via cellphone during the school day causes a disruption to the learning environment and may constitute a violation of the school's electronic devices policy (see pg. 25).

### **EMERGENCY DRILL CODE**

Fire, evacuation, and lockdown drills at regular intervals are required by law (RIGL 16-21-4) and are an important safety precaution. It is essential that when the first signal is given everyone obey promptly and follow established protocols. Students are not permitted to talk during drills and are to remain with their teacher until a signal is given to return to regular activities. Evacuation plans are posted in each classroom. Students will be informed of fire drill and evacuation procedures and are to follow these procedures should a drill or real fire occur. Elevators are not to be used. **Students are prohibited from tampering with fire alarms, fire extinguishers or any other electronic equipment.**

### **III. STUDENT ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES**

The following procedures and practices are to be utilized in implementing the Attendance Policy adopted by the Johnston School Committee.

#### **ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL POLICY**

Students are expected to be in school for the duration of the No student should arrive to school prior to 7:20 am or be at school after 2:03, unless involved in a school related activity. Supervision is not available outside of these times. Any student being dismissed early from school must have a note from a parent/guardian and **must submit the note to the Ferri Middle School Main Office in the morning.**

**SCHOOL PERSONNEL CANNOT RELEASE YOUR CHILD TO UNAUTHORIZED PERSONS WITHOUT A PARENT/GUARDIAN'S CONSENT.**

#### **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

In the event of absence or tardiness, parents/guardians are asked to notify the school by 8:30 AM (233-1930 ext: 2703). If notification is not received, the school/district will make contact to verify parental/guardian knowledge of the absence.

**If contact is not made, a note from the parent/guardian is to be presented to the Ferri Middle School Main Office upon the student's return to school.** This note must include the date(s) of and reason for the absence(s).

**ALL ABSENCES ARE DEEMED UNEXCUSED UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED.** Parental permission alone does not excuse an absence.

**With appropriate written notification, School Administration will grant an excused absence for the following reasons:**

- Medical - a doctor's note is required to excuse illness or appointments
- Death in the family
- School related function/activity (with verification)
- Required court appearance - legal documentation is required
- Religious holidays

Students who are absent from school for any reason may not participate in any school activity during the afternoon or evening of the day(s) of their absence.

Excessive absences will result in a referral to Truancy Court.

## TARDINESS

Any student entering school after 7:50 AM is considered tardy. While the school recognizes tardiness may happen due to unforeseen circumstances, being on time is vital to being a respectful & responsible student; therefore, **students will receive a 2-hour detention for having 3 tardies in a given quarter.**

- Subsequent tardies during the quarter will result in a 2-hour detention and placement on behavior probation
- **Tardy detention will be scheduled after school from 2-4p.** Students will be provided with 24-hour written notice. This notice must be returned to the office with a parent/guardian signature the next school day.
- **Note:** Excessive tardies throughout the school year without proper documentation will result in a Truancy Court warning letter to parent/guardian. Students, along with their parent/guardian, will be summoned to Truancy Court if tardiness persists.

## TRUANCY

Truancy, as defined in this policy is “absence from school without an excuse acceptable to the administration.”

Excessive absences, tardies and early dismissals throughout the school year without official medical documentation will result in a Truancy Court warning letter to the parent/guardian. Students, along with their parent/guardian will be summoned to Truancy Court if truancy persists.

**Examples of unacceptable absences include, but are not limited to the following:**

- Babysitting
- Hair care/nail care
- Transportation issues, including suspended bus privileges
- Completion of schoolwork
- Unsanctioned field trips or outings
- Vacations

## VACATION

N.A. Ferri recognizes families schedule vacations for various reasons throughout the year. Conversely, time lost from class is irretrievable; therefore, any vacations that would require students to be absent from school are strongly discouraged. The following procedures address vacations taken during the school year:

- Vacations, other than regularly scheduled school vacations, will be considered unexcused absences from school
- If a student is taken out of school for a vacation, the school must be notified in writing 2-3 days before the vacation
- All work must be handed in within 5 days after the student's return in order to receive full credit

## **MAKE-UP WORK**

Make-up work is the responsibility of the student. Upon returning to school, the student will report to each subject teacher to request his/her work. The make-up work policy is as follows:

- For each day of absence, the student will have that number of days to return make-up work (with the exception of an extended vacation where only five days will be granted.)
- After five (5) days of absence, students must see their team teachers in order to make up missed work.
- Parent/guardian may request work for their child who is absent due to illness three (3) or more consecutive days. Requested work will be provided within twenty-four (24) hours. Make-up work will be picked up in the office. **All make-up work must be requested through the student's team of teachers.**
- For more immediate access to missing work, students/parents should email the teacher. Also, many teachers maintain websites and Google classrooms. Assignments may be found there.

## **CANCELLATION OF SCHOOL**

When weather conditions or other emergency events cause school to be cancelled the district will issue notification through an automated phone call. A public service announcement will be made via the major local radio and television stations. Information will be disseminated online through news-related websites such as [https://www.ribroadcasters.com/news\\_and\\_events/closings\\_delays/](https://www.ribroadcasters.com/news_and_events/closings_delays/)

## **IV. TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION**

### **BUS TRANSPORTATION**

Bus transportation is available for any student who lives outside of a 1-mile radius from the middle school. Information is published in the local newspaper prior to the start of school, and by calling 553-5880. School buses will pick up students at stated times and locations.

School bus transportation should be treated as a privilege, not a right. It is an extension of the school system. Proper conduct on buses is vital to ensuring the health and safety of all students. **Any student engaging in misconduct at a bus stop or on a bus will be subject to disciplinary action and may lose his/her bus privileges.** Parents/Guardians and students are encouraged to inform Ferri Middle School administration of any dangerous or hazardous situations, which they may observe at the bus stop or on the bus

**NOTE:** Students shall ride their regularly assigned bus at all times. Any student going home from a different bus stop or on another bus must submit a note from a parent/guardian the morning of the change. Once the change has been approved, students may pick up passes in the Ferri Middle School Main Office. If there is no room on the bus, the student will not be allowed to take that bus.

**To ensure the safety of all students, the following rules apply:**

#### **Entering/Exiting the Bus**

- The driver/monitor is in full charge of the bus and students. students must obey the driver/monitor promptly, willfully, and respectfully.
- Students should leave home early enough to arrive at the bus stop before the bus is due.
- Students must not stand or play in the roadway while waiting for the bus.

- Students arriving by bus shall report directly into school upon arrival.
- Students must enter/leave the bus in an orderly manner.
- When entering or exiting the bus, students should be in view of the driver at all times.
- Students must cross the road at least 10 feet in front of the school bus and never behind it. Students shall not cross without the consent of the school bus driver.
- Where practical, students who have to walk some distance along the road to or from the bus-loading zone must walk on the left-hand side facing oncoming traffic.

### **General Bus Conduct**

- Each student may be assigned a seat, in which he/she will be seated at all times, unless permission to change is given by the school administration and/or the driver.
- Students are to remain seated while the bus is in motion, and they are not to get off the bus until it has come to a complete stop.
- Outside of ordinary conversation, classroom conduct must be observed. Behavior that distracts and/or endangers the driver will **NOT** be tolerated (yelling, inappropriate language/gestures, physical altercations, etc).
- Students are to assist in keeping the bus clean by keeping paper, food, and other waste off the floor.
- No student will smoke or light matches on a school bus.
- All body parts and items shall remain inside the bus at all times. No student shall open a window on the school bus without first obtaining permission from the driver.
- students must be certain to keep harmful objects that may cause injury to another off the bus (sticks, rocks, breakable containers, any type of firearms, straps or pins extending from their clothing, etc.)
- Care must be taken to ensure that the student does not vandalize or damage any part of the bus. Restitution for damages will be sought from the student and/or parents/guardians.
- Each student must ensure that his/her books and personal belongings are kept out of the aisle. Special permission must be granted by school authorities to transport any large item.
- students should refrain from pushing and shoving other students.

FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH BUS REGULATIONS AS LAID OUT ABOVE MAY RESULT IN THE LOSS OF BUSSING PRIVILEGES.

## **V.HEALTH & SAFETY**

### **HEALTH RECORDS**

A complete, cumulative health record shall be maintained for each student. At times, medical information may be requested from the parent/guardian to update these records. Whenever a student transfers to another school building or school system, the school health record shall be transferred to the health personnel of the “new” school building or school system.

### **PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS**

A physical examination is required of all students upon initial school entry, upon entering grade 7, and for participation in any school sports program. Please have your family health care provider complete the physical exam form and return it to the school nurse-teacher. The examination must be within the past 12 months to be valid.

## **IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS**

The immunization regulations of the Rhode Island Department of Health *Rules and Regulations Pertaining to Immunization and Testing for Communicable Diseases* (R23-1-IMM) shall prevail.

### **ALL STUDENTS ENTERING GRADE 7 MUST OBTAIN THE FOLLOWING IMMUNIZATIONS:**

Booster dose of Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis) vaccine, if it has been 5 years or more since the last dose of diphtheria-tetanus containing vaccine.

One dose of meningococcal conjugate vaccine.

One dose of human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine

### **ALL STUDENTS ENTERING GRADE 7 MUST OBTAIN THE FOLLOWING IMMUNIZATIONS:**

All the seventh grade requirements and the two additional doses of HPV Vaccine

In cases of non-compliance, parents/guardians will be notified in writing that their child will be excluded from school until they provide proof of appropriate immunization.

**\*\*\*NO CHILD WILL BE REGISTERED WITHOUT PROOF OF IMMUNIZATION PRIOR TO THEIR FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL.**

## **HEALTH SCREENINGS**

Rhode Island School Health Regulations require a vision screening be performed for all students in Grade 7 and scoliosis screening in Grades 6, 7 and 8. Vision screening will be conducted in the fall and scoliosis screening in the spring. All screenings are conducted by school nurse-teachers and medical personnel.

To avoid duplicating services, if your child has had any of these screenings completed by his/her primary healthcare provider, please send documentation and results of such screenings to the school. **If we do not have this information for your child, we will include him/her in the screenings.**

## **HEALTH ISSUES**

It is expected that parents/guardians will notify the school nurse-teacher of any significant health problem or chronic condition that a student may have, such as diabetes, food allergies, seizure disorder, etc.. Students with specific allergies and food reactions (i.e. bee stings; peanuts, nuts and other foods; and latex) should have their medication, if necessary, available at school. Students requiring other medical equipment or snacks are responsible for providing the school with said equipment and snacks. The school nurse-teacher will collaborate with the parent/guardian, the student's healthcare provider, and if appropriate, the student, to develop an Individual Health Care Plan and/or and Emergency Health Care Plan as appropriate. **Classroom and cafeteria accommodations for students with food allergies will be made in accordance with RI legislation related to peanut/tree nut allergies in school.**

## **Illness at School**

Students with fever, diarrhea, or vomiting should remain at home. Temperatures should be normal for 24 hours after a fever before a student returns to school. In cases of communicable illnesses such as conjunctivitis (pink eye), strep throat, or pediculosis (head lice) the student may not return to school until treatment has been initiated and the student has been on medication to control the health problem. Students who are prescribed antibiotics for infectious illness may not return to school until they have been treated for at least 24 hours. Students who are ill at school will be sent home if they are not able to return to class after resting in the health office for one class level.

**School health personnel are not able to treat skin rashes that have not been previously identified by a licensed healthcare provider.**

**PLEASE NOTE: The guidelines set forth by the RI Department of Health for exclusion and readmission will be enforced to reduce the spread of influenza-like illness amongst students and staff. Students with fever and influenza-like illness must be kept home. Parents will be contacted to pick up students who are sent to school ill.**

## **GUIDELINES FOR JUDGING ILLNESS AT HOME**

Students with the following symptoms should not be sent to school:

- Fever greater than 100.5 degrees within the past 24 hours
- Vomiting or diarrhea within the past 24 hours
- Significant pain that prevents students from focusing in class
- Infectious illness that has not been treated for at least 24 hours
- Unidentified, untreated rash
- Viral illness with excessive coughing and sneezing
- Pediculosis (head lice)
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)

## **EMERGENCY CARDS**

Emergency cards will be sent home to parents during the first two weeks of the school year. Please fill out and return them to school with accurate information to allow us to contact a responsible person (parent/guardian, relative or friend) when your child is ill or there is an emergency at school. When changes in these emergency contact numbers occur, please notify the school immediately.

**SCHOOL PERSONNEL CANNOT RELEASE YOUR CHILD TO UNAUTHORIZED PERSONS WITHOUT A PARENT/GUARDIAN'S CONSENT.**

## **MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION**

Except for emergency medication, only school nurse-teachers may administer medication in school. Medication will be administered in compliance with the Johnston Public Schools Health Services Policy and Procedure for Medication Administration. Before medication may be given to a student in school, the following criteria must be met:

- The licensed health care provider must complete the Medication Consent Form or submit a written request with the same information. Both prescription and non-prescription medication to be given in school must be ordered by a health care provider.
- Parent/guardian must sign a medication consent form.

- Medication must be in the original labeled container. Prescription labels must include the patient's name, prescription number; name of medication, dosage, doctor's name and date.
- Except for emergency medication, medication shall be stored in a locked area.
- Standing orders written by the School Physician allow for Acetaminophen (Tylenol) Ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil), or Tums to be administered to students. These medications will be administered with the written consent of a parent/guardian and at the discretion of the school nurse-teacher. A parent or guardian will be contacted by the school nurse-teacher if students request excessive amounts of these medications.
- Students may self-carry and self-administer medication only with the written order of the prescribing physician, written parent consent, and notification of the school nurse-teacher.

## **VI. ACADEMICS**

### **HOMEWORK**

Homework is to be viewed as an extension of class activities and must be completed in accordance with the requirements established by the teacher. By definition, homework encompasses those tasks to be accomplished by the student outside of regular instructional time, including, but not limited to, written assignments, study reviews, research, and project preparation. Issuing homework as an extension of classroom instruction is meaningful for the following reasons:

- To ensure adequate mastery of concepts and skills through repetition, reinforcement, and/or enrichment and independent learning activities.
- To more fully engage the student individually as an active learner responsible for his/her academic achievement.
- To teach the importance of self-discipline, to build self-confidence, mastery of time management skills, and to promote self-reliance and independent learning.

The cooperation of parent/guardian(s) is needed to reinforce the importance of homework, and is essential to the success of this policy and your student's overall education in Johnston. While it is important that parents/guardians assist students, it is equally important that their efforts not be substituted for those required of the students.

Students have the responsibility to complete their own homework. In order to be successful, it is important for all students to write assignments down, establish regular study routines, and to study/prepare for tests. Homework assignments missed for valid reasons such as illness shall be made up in accordance with the currently established policies regarding makeup work.

### **REPORT CARDS**

Report cards are issued four times per year at the end of each quarter. Selected comments regarding student behavior and class participation will be included on the report cards. All subjects will be listed on the report card.

Progress should be monitored regularly by accessing the Aspen Portal for Johnston Public Schools at <https://ri-johnston.myfollett.com/aspen/logon.do>.

Aspen login information can be obtained from the Ferri Middle School Main Office.

## **HONOR ROLL**

In order for students to be eligible for the honor roll, he/she must achieve **grades of 80% (B-) or above in ALL subjects.**

## **PROMOTION/ RETENTION POLICY**

It is the goal of Ferri Middle School to promote high expectations for learning. As such, the promotion/retention policy is outlined below:

- Passing is defined as receiving a cumulative grade of 65 or above in a particular class
- Any student who fails three core subjects may repeat the grade.
- Any student who fails any two core subjects may not be promoted unless both subjects are passed in summer school.
- Any student who fails any one core subject may not be promoted unless that subject is passed in summer school.
- Students will not qualify for summer school if they receive a cumulative grade of **58** or below in any core subject and/or if they exceed 40 absences in an academic year.

**NOTE: Core subjects include English, Mathematics, Science, Literacy, and Social Studies.**

**If there are circumstances that warrant additional consideration, the principal shall make the final decision about placement, after consulting with the student's teacher(s) and guidance counselor.**

## **ACADEMIC PROBATION**

Academic Probation is defined as the removal of a student from participation in any sport or extra-curricular activity for each quarter until a passing grade of **65** is achieved in each class. Academic Probation will be assigned to students failing 2 or more classes in a given quarter.

- Academic progress is monitored throughout the year. Students not meeting the academic requirements for all classes as mentioned above will be placed on academic probation.
- The student will be placed on Academic Probation until receipt of the next quarter's report card
- To be removed from Academic Probation prior to the issuance of report cards, a student who improves his/her progress may request a Petition of Academic Review from his/her teachers.
- Coaches/Advisors will be notified of a student's ineligibility and can request student grades at any time.
- Any student who violates the Academic Probation policy by participating in sporting events or extra-curricular activities will be ineligible to participate for the remainder of the school year.
- Administration/Guidance will maintain a list of students who are placed on Academic Probation.

# PHYSICAL EDUCATION POLICIES

## Dress Policy

Due to the nature of Physical Education class in consideration for the safety of the students, street clothes and street shoes are not permitted during class activity.

## Clothing

- **Students must change for Physical Education, into appropriate PE attire. NO EXCEPTIONS.**
- Students may not wear cutoffs, jeans, pajamas, sweatpants with the legs cut off or baggy pants that hang below the knee.
- No jewelry.
- Clothing must be free of zippers, buttons and belt loops.
- Sneakers are required with athletic socks at all times. Sneakers having high heels or thick soles are not permitted.
- For outdoor activities, when the weather is cool, sweatpants and sweatshirts or a lightweight jacket may be worn.
- **FMS Dress Code Policy** will apply to physical education attire.

## Medical/Illness/Injury

- Medical notes from a physician to excuse a student from physical education because of an injury or illness must be brought to the main office. An official medical excuse will not affect a student's quarter grade.
- A parent/guardian note to excuse a student will be accepted for a maximum of two (2) days per quarter. The note should be presented to the main office. A note to excuse earns no participation credit for the day, and therefore the student is required to do an alternative activity or sports packet.

## Lockers and Locks (girls/boys locker rooms)

Students are not assigned permanent lockers, therefore it is necessary that each student bring a lock to secure his/her personal items. If a student uses a lock during his/her physical education class, the lock must be removed at the end of class. If the student forgets to remove the lock, it will be removed at the end of the day and all items within that locker will be placed in the lost and found.

- **The school is not responsible for the loss of personal items from these lockers, especially if the lockers are not locked.**
- **Students are encouraged to leave all valuable items at home or in their main lockers.**
- **The school is not responsible for valuables brought into the activity area.**

## **GUIDANCE**

The guidance counselor's role at Ferri Middle School is to promote and enhance student learning through the three broad and interrelated areas of student development; Academic Development, Career Development, and Personal/Social Development. Each of these areas encompasses a variety of student learning competencies, which in turn are comprised of specific knowledge, attitudes, and skills that form the foundation of the developmental school counseling program.

Our school sets high standards for academic performance and personal behavior. The counseling staff, recognizing individual differences, interests, and abilities, utilizes programs that encourage independent and creative responses to the challenges of a changing world. The school counselors employ a variety of strategies, activities, and resources to promote student development. The school counselors nurture in our students both the ability and the desire to become productive workers and lifelong learners.

### ***Counselors are available to:***

- Orient new students to the school.
- Interpret standardized test data for students and parent/guardian.
- Assist parent/guardian in understanding their child's learning cycle.
- Assist students, parent/guardian and teachers in retrieving make-up work.
- Assist parent/guardian and students in dealing with neighborhood, bus, or school problems.
- Provide students with career information.
- Provide students with vocational and technical school information.
- Work with groups of students.
- Assist individual students with personal problems.
- Schedule new students.

## **VII. STUDENT INFORMATION**

### **HOMEROOM**

Homeroom period activities will consist of the following:

- Daily attendance
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Student notices/announcements
- Office appointments, guidance appointments, report cards, or other pertinent information may be distributed to students

Students are responsible for reporting directly to homeroom **on time** each morning. Any student that enters homeroom after **7:50 A.M. is considered "late to school" and will be sent to the office to sign in "late."**

## STUDENT LOCKERS

Each student will be assigned an individual locker and issued a combination lock from the office. A five (5) dollar deposit will be required and refunded upon the return of the undamaged lock at the close of the school year. No student will be allowed to use a personal lock. Students should write the combination down and keep it in a safe place.

- Students must secure and lock their lockers at all times.
- Students should not give out their combination to others.
- Students should not store anything which might be considered contraband in the assigned locker.
- Students are advised to bring the appropriate materials to their scheduled classes. **STUDENTS WILL BE PERMITTED TO GO TO THEIR LOCKERS BEFORE HOMEROOM, AT DISMISSAL, AND AT TIMES DESIGNATED BY EACH TEAM.**
- Students may not leave their lockers **unlocked** which would permit items to be taken at will.
- The student lockers or other in-school storage space shall be secured against incursion by other students only by a lock or other device that is provided by the school and secured by a returnable rental fee. The school shall retain a key and/or combination. Students may not secure lockers or any other in-school storage space with personal locks or other devices.
- The school administration retains the right to search by any means the student locker or other in-school storage space provided to the student for their convenience. Administration may enter a student's locker or any other in-school storage space to repair it or for routine sanitation inspection. They may also enter a student's locker or any other in-school storage space for other administrative reasons, including retrieving books and/or other materials when students are absent.
- The administration will conduct unannounced general inspections of student's lockers or other in-school storage space with or without articulable suspicion. Such searches may be conducted by any means including searches conducted with the assistance of police-trained dogs.

## LIBRARY/ MEDIA CENTER

- The middle school library/media center serves to support, supplement and expand curriculum. Its mission is to encourage life-long learning so that all students may achieve their full potential as literate, productive, ethical and responsible community members.
- Students may borrow materials from the library for a limited number of days. Students are responsible for the care and safety of each library book. Library books must be returned to the library on or before the due date.
- Any student who does not return an overdue library book will not be able to participate in any sporting/extracurricular activity.
- Students must pay for lost books. If the book is then found, students may donate it to the library.
- Students can borrow electronic devices (computers, Ipads, Kindles, chargers) from the library but need to return it at the end of the school day. Students cannot take items home. If the borrowed item is lost/broken, student will be responsible to replace/repair.
- Students may come to library/media center to print projects (recycled paper is used). However, if student requires non-recycled paper they must provide their own.

## **TEXTBOOKS**

- Students are responsible for the care and safety of books loaned to them during the academic year. Each textbook or paperback book assigned to a student must be returned to the teacher in the condition that it was issued.
- If an assigned textbook or paperback has been lost, stolen, or damaged, the student is responsible for the full replacement cost. The student will receive a receipt for payment made.
- Students are not allowed to be refunded if the book is later found and returned to the main office. It is the responsibility of the student to keep their textbooks covered at all times. The textbook or paperback must be returned in proper condition.

## **AGENDAS**

- Student agendas are school property. It is an official advisor/advisee textbook, weekly homework calendar and hall pass for each individual student. Each student is issued an agenda during the first week of school and needs to carry it throughout the day to every class.
- Agendas are not to be bent, folded or mutilated. Replacement of the agenda is mandatory at current replacement cost.

## **LOST AND FOUND ARTICLES/TEXTS**

- All objects either lost or found should be reported to the Ferri Middle School Main Office.
- Students should check with the main office periodically for lost items.
- Although every attempt will be made to assist students, the school cannot be responsible for articles lost/stolen when left in unlocked areas.

## **VIII. EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

### **ATHLETIC AND INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS**

The interscholastic athletic activities at Ferri Middle School include, but are not limited to:

Basketball	Soccer
Baseball	Softball
Cheerleading	Track
Cross Country	Unified Sports
Wrestling	

*Students who participate in interscholastic athletic activities will adhere to the rules/regulations of the Rhode Island Interscholastic League. In addition to the eligibility requirements above, students participating in interscholastic athletics are subject to all eligibility requirements of the Principals' Committee on Middle School Athletics. These requirements are available in the principal's office or online at <http://ripcoa.com/>.*

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips are a valuable extension of any school program. A field trip is a privilege, not a right. No student will be allowed to participate in a non-academic field trip if he/she has been placed on either Academic or Behavior Probation for the set probation period.

All students attending field trips are required to have **written** permission on file.

## **DANCES**

Dances may be scheduled throughout the year for grades six, seven and eight as part of Ferri Middle School's commitment to building a cohesive school community. Typically, dances will be from 6:30 P.M. – 8:30 P.M. for Ferri students only. Students who do attend, must remain for the entire duration of the dance. They may not arrive late or leave early unless otherwise arranged with administration. Parents are asked to pick up students **promptly** at the end of the dance. Students are not allowed to walk home. Additional guidelines are listed below:

- **In order to attend a dance, a student may not receive any disciplinary referrals against him/her during the week of a scheduled dance**
- **A student who is absent or suspended from school on the day of a dance may not attend**
- **The policies for Academic and Behavior Probation apply to dances.**

## **POLICY OF ELIGIBILITY FOR EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

All student athletes and student leaders represent Ferri Middle School and are expected to conduct themselves with respect and pride. Students who participate in extracurricular activities are subject to certain requirements set forth by the administration of Ferri Middle School. Examples of extracurricular activities include the following: sports, tryouts, sporting events, school dances, hot shot basketball, newspaper, student council, non-academic field trips, etc. Participation in athletic and extracurricular activities is a privilege, not a right. The right to participate, therefore, may be revoked by the administration for reasons including but not limited to the following:

- Absence from school on the day of a scheduled activity
- Placement on Academic Probation (pg. 16) and/or Behavior Probation (pg. 30) according to the guidelines of those policies.

## **IX. STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR & CONDUCT**

Students must accept the leadership of administrators, teachers, and all staff members.

The guidelines for student behavior and conduct have been put in place to ensure a safe and secure learning environment. The expectations and guidelines must be adhered to any time students are under the supervision of school personnel.

### **SCHOOLWIDE CONDUCT**

Ferri Middle School students are expected to act in ways that support their academic success. Students are expected to:

#### **SHOW RESPECT FOR...**

- YOURSELF
- STUDENTS & STAFF
- THE SCHOOL

#### **BE RESPONSIBLE FOR...**

- YOUR LEARNING
- YOUR BEHAVIOR
- YOUR ACTIONS/CHOICES

### **CLASSROOM CONDUCT**

For class, students are expected to:

- Report on time
- Be prepared to learn by having all necessary materials
- Avoid distracting and/or disruptive behaviors that impact their or other students' learning
- Leave the classroom ONLY with the teacher's permission and must carry a pass at all times
- Use respectful language toward staff and peers. Language is to be free of obscenities, vulgarities, and profanities
- Avoid eating or chewing gum during class

Each teacher establishes the rules of conduct and discipline for his/her class, which shall conform to the overall policy of the school. It is the student's responsibility to become aware of the particular requirements of each teacher.

### **HALLWAY CONDUCT**

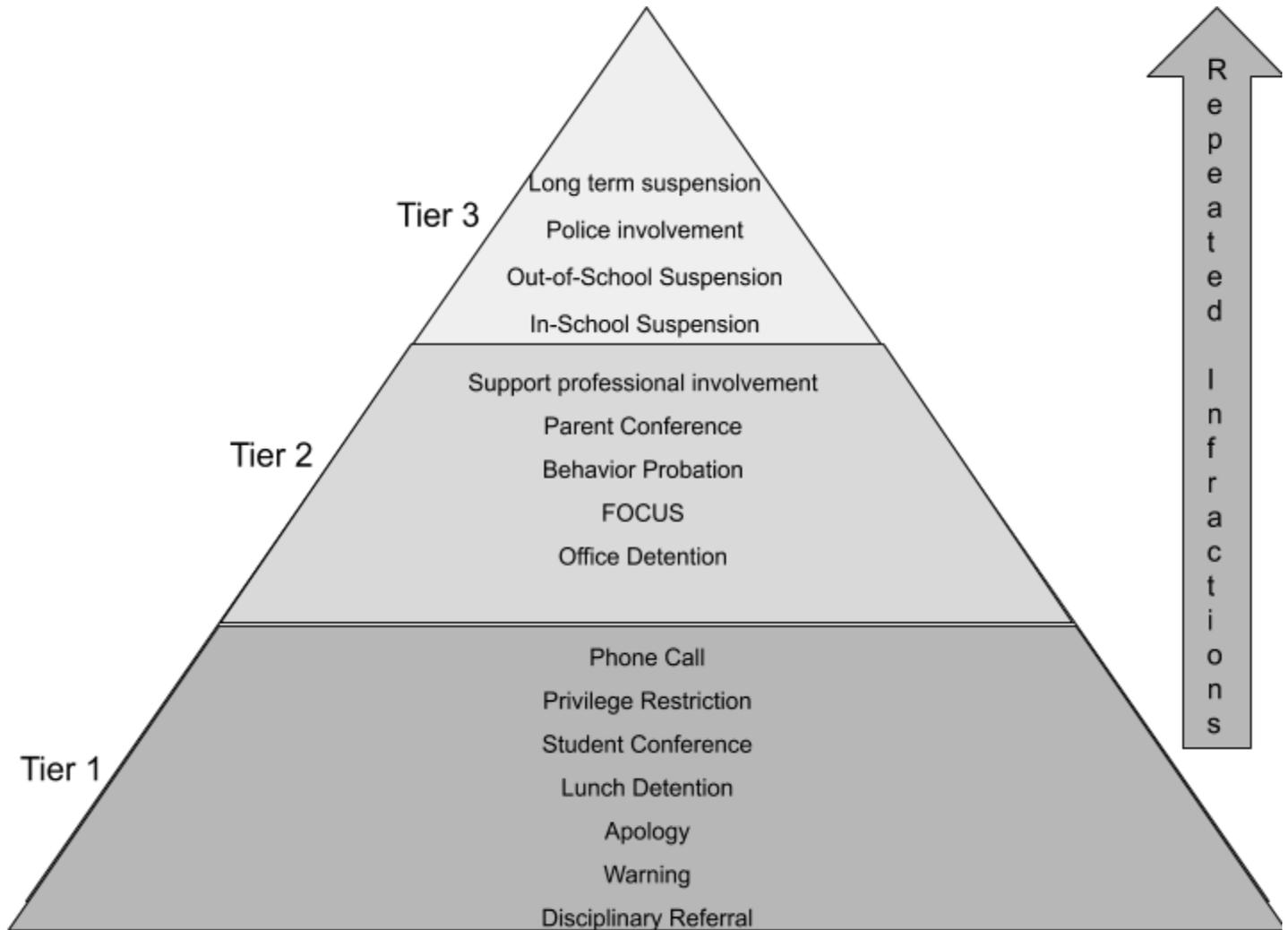
While in the halls, students are expected to:

- Travel appropriately from class to class (no yelling, running, jumping, horseplay, etc.)
- Have a pass
- Use respectful language toward staff and peers. Language is to be free of obscenities, vulgarities, and profanities
- Take the most direct route to their destination
- Avoid lingering at lockers, stairwells, bathrooms, and other locations outside of class
- Treat student, staff, and school property with respect
- Avoid eating or chewing gum
- Keep electronics & accessories (earbuds, headphones, air pods, etc.) out of sight

## X. DISCIPLINARY ACTION

### **ADMINISTRATIVE DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

The conduct expectations outlined in the previous section reflect Nicholas A. Ferri's commitment to creating a positive school culture. As part of its philosophy, the school has adopted a disciplinary approach that holds students accountable for their actions but also seeks to prevent behaviors from recurring. The school has developed a three-tiered approach to handle student misconduct. It is outlined in the diagram below.



#### **Scope of Disciplinary Action**

- Any or all Tier 1 actions will be utilized for initial offenses (NOTE: Based on the circumstances of each incident, initial offenses may warrant Tier 2 actions at the discretion of administration)
- Subsequent offenses will result in actions up to and including Tier 2
- Tier 3 actions will be applied to persistent issues of misconduct or serious matters of misconduct (see pg. 28)

Because every act of misbehavior cannot be anticipated, **certain acts of misconduct not covered in this handbook** will be handled at the Principal/Assistant Principal's discretion. Nicholas A. Ferri appreciates the cooperation of parents/guardians with disciplinary consequences since support from home guarantees the school's ability to maintain a proper learning environment.

## **CLASSROOM DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

Each teacher establishes the rules of conduct and discipline for his/her class, which conform to the overall policy of the school. Infractions will be enforced within each classroom and may include, but are not limited to, time out, reflective assignments, calls home, written referrals and detention.

### **Removal from Class**

After a teacher has exhausted all classroom disciplinary procedures, students who continuously disrupt the learning environment or demonstrate noncompliance will be sent to the office and the teacher will notify the office. Once a student is removed from a classroom, he/she will not be permitted to return to that class without express permission from the teacher.

### **Teacher Detention**

Teachers may assign lunch detention or after-school detention to address conduct that distracts from the learning environment. This is considered a Tier 1 disciplinary action.

- Teachers will provide students with a 24 hour written notice for after-school detention. This notice must be returned to the teacher with a parent/guardian signature the next school day.
- Students assigned teacher detention must report immediately to that teacher at the designated time. **Failure to report for teacher detention will result in a disciplinary referral and the assignment of a two-hour office detention.**

## **OFFICE DETENTION**

- Office detentions will be scheduled after school between the hours of 2:00-4:00 p.m. Students will be provided with a 24 hour written notice. This notice must be returned to the office with a parent/guardian signature the next school day.
- Students are expected to follow the guidelines for detention. Failure to do so will result in additional detention being assigned. In extreme cases, students may receive Tier 2/3 consequences. Parent/guardian(s) will be notified.
- Detention may only be rescheduled in case of emergency. Parent/guardians must contact an administrator prior to the detention in order to request a new date.
- When a student fails to report to detention, parent/guardians will be notified via phone or email and the student will be expected to report to the next detention session. **Failing to report to the next session, will result in Tier 2/3 consequences.**
- Please review the school's conduct guidelines (pg. 21) with your student to avoid receiving detention.

## **FOCUS**

The Focus Room provides a restorative setting for students who violate school rules/policy. Students are expected to follow the guidelines for Focus (see pg. 24, Office Detention).

## **XI. ADDITIONAL CONDUCT GUIDELINES**

### **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

**Under Rhode Island General Law 16-21.2-11, the wearing of or possession of any electronic devices is prohibited. Cell phones, walkie talkies, all types of handheld video games, radios, CD players, MP3 players and iPods, and iPads are not allowed during the school day. These items will be confiscated and must be picked up by a parent.**

**Additionally, pursuant to Rhode Island General Law 16-21.2-11, any student enrolled in any secondary or elementary school shall be prohibited from carrying, possessing, or using a paging device of any kind, or a laser pointer of any kind, while on school property, unless the student has the written consent of the principal.**

The Johnston School Department recognizes that cellular phones are part of students' daily lives but their use constitutes a disruption to the learning environment. As such, students are prohibited from operating electronic smart devices, including, but not limited to the use of text messaging, video recording, social media access and photographing functions on school property during school hours. Students must be aware that photographing or video recording others without their expressed written consent may result in legal action.

Further, violation of Rhode Island General Laws pertaining to criminal acts involving cellular phones or social media will be immediately referred to the Johnston Police Department for possible prosecution.

Cellular phones must be powered off completely and stored in a student's locker during school hours. If a student's phone is visible, the device will be confiscated. If necessary, communication between students and parents/ guardians must be facilitated through the main office.

The Johnston School Department is not responsible for theft, loss, or damage of any cellular telephone or paging device, nor will the Department be held responsible for the unauthorized use of any cellular phone.

**Policy Adopted: September 10, 2019 by the Johnston School Committee**

#### **Scope of Disciplinary Action**

1<sup>st</sup> offense – Tier 1: warning, phone is confiscated and returned at the end of the day

2<sup>ND</sup> offense – Tier 2: parent/guardian must pick up phone and two-hour office detention issued

Subsequent offenses – automatic two hour office detention issued and parent/guardian must come to school to claim phone

## **CHROMEBOOKS**

Ferri students in grades 6-8 will be issued Chromebooks for use in school and at home. The district Chromebook Agreement provides students and their parents/guardians with information about taking care of the Chromebook, using it appropriately for school, and being a good digital citizen. Parents/guardians are expected to sign the Chromebook agreement prior to students receiving a device. The agreement can be found on the Ferri website.

Students and their parents/guardians are reminded that use of District Technology is a privilege and not a right and that everything done on any District-owned computer, network, or electronic communication device may be monitored by school authorities. Inappropriate use of District Technology is subject to all consequences outlined in the Chromebook Agreement.

## **MISUSE OF TECHNOLOGY**

Student computers and the accompanying networks/systems are provided for academic purposes only. Students who misuse their devices will be subject to the following disciplinary consequences:

1st offense - Tier 1: Student may receive teacher detention

2nd offense - Tier 1: Disciplinary referral to the office & 1-week internet restriction via GoGuardian

3rd offense - Tier 2: 2-week internet restriction via GoGuardian & 1-hour office detention

Subsequent offenses - student will be placed in the Penalty Box until further notice

NOTE: Students who misuse technology in the commission of other infractions outlined in this handbook may be subjected to loss of device privileges and/or other disciplinary action.

## **DRESS CODE**

It is expected that students will dress in a manner which contributes to their role as learners. Proper dress instills feelings of community pride amongst the student body. The dress code ensures attire is not a distraction to the educational environment and reflects our goal of safety, order, and respect for the rights of others.

**The minimum dress guidelines for a proper learning environment are as follows:**

1. Attire that does not interfere with normal school work.
2. Attire that does not create classroom and/or school distractions.
3. Attire that is appropriate. (A teacher will refer the issue of appropriateness to an administrator who will then make the final decision).

**Examples of inappropriate dress include, but are not limited to, the following:**

- Face painting is prohibited.
- Halter-tops, plunging scoop necklines, exposed midriffs, muscle shirts; spaghetti straps (minimum **2 inch width requirement on all sleeveless shirts**), tube tops, see through clothing, pajama bottoms and/or tops are not permitted. Torsos (front & back) are expected to be covered at all times.

- Very short skirts, dresses, and shorts (**greater than 4 inches above the knee** – or deemed inappropriate by the administration), and beach attire are not allowed.
- No clothing with imprints and/or messages that are profane or obscene, as interpreted by US Supreme Court decisions, or clothing which is immodest and revealing; or clothing which promotes alcohol, drugs, sex and/or violence will be allowed in school.
- Dress that presents a safety or health hazard, including, but not limited to, pocket chains, wallet chains, sharp-edged decorative jewelry on collars, bracelets, necklaces, earrings, or shoes will not be tolerated.
- Unsafe footwear including, but not limited to, flip/flops, sport slides, slippers, and high heel shoes are not allowed.
- No sunglasses, hats, hoods, bandanas, or head scarves shall be worn in the school building, unless for medical or religious purposes.
- Any dress or state of undress, which is disruptive to the educational environment, shall not be worn in the school building.
- Under garments will not be visible by either male or female students. Students are expected to keep their pants at their waist.
- Students are not permitted to wear jackets, coats, at any time during the school day.
- **Backpacks are not to be carried during the school day. The only allowable bags to transport class materials shall be a tote bag (no larger than 12x14 inches) or a drawstring bag.**

Items not permitted by the dress code should be stored in student lockers.

**NOTE:** Under special circumstances such as religious beliefs, or due to health or handicapping conditions, students may be exempted from the provisions of the dress policy by the building administration. In the latter instance, exceptions to the dress policy will be granted by the building administration upon presentation of substantive evidence from the student's physician. Such evidence shall include the specific condition and how the student's health will be affected by the dress policy, information regarding and previous instances of problems, and the length of time the exception is to be in place.

### **Scope of Disciplinary Action**

- 1<sup>st</sup> offense – Tier 1: warning, parent/guardian will be contacted
- 2<sup>ND</sup> offense – Tier 1: parent/guardian will be contacted to bring a change of clothing
- Subsequent offenses – parent/guardian will be contacted to bring a change of clothing and Tier 2 action will be assigned
- Students may be assigned to FOCUS for the remainder of the school day for any or all of the following conditions:
  - Parents/guardians are unable to be contacted
  - Proper clothing is unavailable or cannot be supplied
  - The student refuses proper temporary attire (school issued T-shirts, shorts, or pants)
  - Repeated non-compliance with the dress code

## **CHEATING POLICY**

Cheating in school may be defined as misrepresentation of the truth including deceptive completion of school responsibilities. Cheating also includes but is not limited to plagiarism. **Cheating will not be tolerated at Ferri Middle School.**

The consequence for this infraction is: Zero grade on the assignment, written referral to the office, and parental/guardian notification.

## **SCHOOL SAFETY AND SECURITY**

Rhode Island General Law (16-2-17) states:

**Each student, staff member, teacher and administrator has a right to attend and/or work at a school which is safe, secure and peaceful, which is conducive to learning and which is free from the threat, actual or implied, of physical harm by a disruptive student...**

In order to mitigate serious matters of misconduct, the school, as part of its philosophy, will employ restorative practices focused on conflict resolution and coping-skills. Concurrently, students have a right to attend school where they feel safe and supported. As such, students who engage in serious matters of misconduct, which involve dangerous or highly offensive acts, may require Tier 3 consequences for each infraction:

### **Scope of Disciplinary Actions**

- Counsel the offending student
- Notify parents/guardians and the Johnston Police Department
- File charges with the Johnston Police Department
- Suspend the offender for 1 to 10 days
- Seek restitution for damages (where/when applicable)
- Recommend long term suspension for grave incidents and/or repeated infractions

**Serious acts of misconduct may include, but are not limited to, the following infractions as they adversely impact a safe, secure, peaceful learning environment**

- Engaging in physical contact/aggression (initiating or responding)
- Fighting
- Arson, setting off firecrackers, bombs, calling in a bomb scare, or creating a false emergency
- Forgery
- Willfully striking/hitting another student
- Willfully striking/hitting a staff member
- Weapons possession (see pg. 34)
- Harassment (see pg.36)
- Directing obscenities, obscene gestures, or abusive language toward staff (verbally or in writing)
- Vandalism or willful destruction of school, student, or staff property
- Willfully not reporting to (skipping) class
- Blackmail, extortion, intimidation or threats toward other students
- Blackmail, extortion, intimidation or threats toward administration or other staff members
- Allowing outside persons access to the school building
- Substance abuse (see pg.35)
- Bullying (see pg.29)

**NOTE: Any other acts of misconduct not stated in the above section shall be resolved at the discretion of Administration**

## **BEHAVIOR PROBATION**

Behavior probation is defined as any student who has received Out of School Suspension or In School Suspension for any disciplinary infraction. *Behavior Probation* will also include chronic tardiness or chronic detention, unexcused absences in excess of five (5) times per quarter. Once placed on *Behavior Probation*, the student will remain there for (20) school days. He/she is then ineligible to participate in any sports, sporting events, or extracurricular activities.

- Behavior probation will begin on the day of the incident. The administration will maintain a list of all students who are placed on behavior probation.

## **BULLYING**

There are many definitions of bullying. Bullying behaviors are **unprovoked by the victim** and **represent a “systematic abuse of power.”** It is distinguished from a conflict between rivals and therefore, involves a power imbalance between the bully and victim.

Many definitions categorize bullying behaviors as physical, verbal, or social. Physical bullying refers to attacks on the victim, such as kicking, pushing, or hitting. Verbal bullying consists of teasing, taunting, or mocking the victim. Social or relational bullying involves manipulating the social status of an individual within his or her peer group by changing the way others perceive and respond to the individual. Examples of social

or relational bullying include telling false stories or spreading rumors about someone and encouraging peers not to associate with someone. Some bullies don't recognize themselves as bullies. They insist they are just "having fun" or "joking around" even though their behavior is intimidating or distressing to their victims.

We say someone is bullying when he or she hits, kicks, grabs, or shoves you on purpose. It is also bullying when a student threatens or teases you in a hurtful way. It is also bullying when a student tries to keep others from being your friend or from letting you join in what they are doing. It is not bullying when two students of about the same strength argue or fight.

The impact of bullying extends beyond the individual and victim to affect many other students. Students who observe bullying may fear that they could be the next target, or they may feel guilty that they stood by and permitted the bullying to take place. Worse, some students may be encouraged to emulate the bully and become bullies themselves. Please review RI State Policy below for clarification on how bullying and reporting incidents of bullying will be handled at Ferri Middle School.

## RI State Bullying Policy

### 1. DEFINITIONS

**BULLYING** means the use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof directed at a student that:

- a. Causes physical or emotional harm to the student or damage to the student's property;
- b. Places the student in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property;
- c. Creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or abusive educational environment for the student;
- d. Infringes on the right of the student to participate in school activities; or
- e. Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

The expression, physical act or gesture may include, but is not limited to, an incident or incidents that may be reasonably perceived as being motivated by characteristics such as:

Race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression or mental, physical, or sensory disability, intellectual ability or by any other distinguishing characteristics.

Bullying most often occurs as repeated behavior rather than as a single incident between the bullying/cyber-bullying offender(s) and the bullying victim(s).

CYBER-BULLYING means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, texting or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications.

Forms of cyber-bullying may include but are not limited to:

- a. The creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person;
- b. The knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages; or
- c. The distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of materials on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the creation, impersonation, or distribution results in any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (a) to (e) of the definition of bullying.

AT SCHOOL means:

- a. on school premises,
- b. at any school-sponsored activity or event whether or not it is held on school premises,
- c. on a school-transportation vehicle,
- d. at an official school bus stop,
- e. using property or equipment provided by the school, or
- f. acts which create a material and substantial disruption of the education process or the orderly operation of the school.

## 2. SCHOOL CLIMATE

Bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation against any person associated with a report of bullying or the investigation thereof is prohibited in all schools that are approved for the purpose of the compulsory attendance statute (§§16-19-1 and 16-19-2). School staff shall take all reasonable measures to prevent bullying at school. Such measures may include professional development and prevention activities, parental workshops, and student assemblies among other strategies. School faculty, administration and staff, at all times, will model courteous behavior to each other, to students, and to school visitors. Abusive or humiliating language or demeanor will not be accepted. Additionally, students and their families are expected to exhibit courteous behavior to all members of the learning community in school and at school sponsored events.

## 3. POLICY OVERSIGHT and RESPONSIBILITY

The school principal, director, or head of school shall be responsible for the implementation and oversight of this bullying policy.

The school principal, director, or head of school shall provide the superintendent, school committee and/or school governing board with a summary report of incidents, responses, and any other bullying-related issues at least twice annually.

For public schools, the prevention of bullying shall be part of the school district strategic plan (§ 16-7.1-2(e)) and school safety plan (§16-21-24).

#### 4. INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

The school principal, director or head of school shall ensure that students, staff, volunteers, and parents/legal guardians are provided information regarding this Policy. This information shall include methods of discouraging and preventing this type of behavior, the procedure to file a complaint, and the disciplinary action that may be taken against those who commit acts in violation of this policy.

This policy shall be:

- a. Distributed annually to students, staff, volunteers, and parents/legal guardians
- b. Included in student codes of conduct, disciplinary policies, and student handbooks
- c. A prominently posted link on the homepage of the school /district website

#### 5. REPORTING

The school principal, director or head of school shall establish, and prominently publicize to students, staff, volunteers, and parents/guardians, how a report of bullying may be filed and how this report will be acted upon.

The victim of bullying, anyone who witnesses an incidence of bullying, and anyone who has credible information that an act of bullying has taken place may file a report of bullying.

Any student or staff member who believes he/she is being bullied should immediately report such circumstances to an appropriate staff member, teacher or administrator.

Parents /Guardians of the victim of bullying and parents/ guardians of the alleged perpetrator of the bullying shall be notified within twenty-four (24) hours of the incident report. When there is a reasonable suspicion that a child is either a bully or a victim of bullying, the parents/ guardians of the child will be notified immediately by the principal, director or head of school.

**Responsibility of Staff:** School staff, including volunteers, who observe an act of bullying or who have reasonable grounds to believe that bullying is taking place must report the bullying to school authorities. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

**Responsibility of Students:** Students who observe an act of bullying or who have reasonable grounds to believe that bullying is taking place must report the bullying to school authorities. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action. The victim of bullying, however, shall not be subject to discipline for failing to report the bullying. **Student reports of bullying or retaliation may be made anonymously, provided, however, that no disciplinary action shall be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report.**

**Prohibition against Retaliation:** Retaliation or threats of retaliation in any form designed to intimidate the victim of bullying, those who are witnesses to bullying, or those investigating an incident of bullying shall not be tolerated. Retaliation or threat of retaliation will result in the imposition of discipline in accordance with the school behavior code.

**False Reporting/Accusations:** A school employee, school volunteer or student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation shall be disciplined in accordance with the school behavior code.

Reports in Good Faith: A school employee, school volunteer, student, parent/ legal guardian, or caregiver who promptly reports, in good faith, an act of bullying to the appropriate school official designated in the school's policy shall be immune from a cause of action for damages arising from reporting bullying.

## 6. INVESTIGATION/RESPONSE

The school principal, director or head of school shall promptly investigate all allegations of bullying, harassment, or intimidation. If the allegation is found to be credible, appropriate disciplinary actions, subject to applicable due process requirements, will be imposed. The School Resource Officer or other qualified staff may be utilized to mediate bullying situations.

The investigation will include an assessment by the school psychologist and/or social worker of what effect the bullying, harassment or intimidation has had on the victim. A student who engages in continuous and/or serious acts of bullying will also be referred to the school psychologist and/or social worker.

Police Notification: Immediate notification of the local law enforcement agency will be made when circumstances warrant the pursuit of criminal charges against the perpetrator

Protection: If a student is the victim of serious or persistent bullying:

- a. The school principal, director or head of school will intervene immediately to provide the student with a safe educational environment.
- b. The interventions will be developed, if possible, with input from the student, his or her parent/guardian, and staff.
- c. The parents/ guardians of a victim shall also be notified of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation.

## 7. DISCIPLINARY ACTION

The disciplinary actions for violations of the bullying policy shall be determined by the appropriate school/district authority. Disciplinary actions for violations of the bullying policy shall balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. The severity of the disciplinary action shall be aligned to the severity of the bullying behavior.

The range of disciplinary actions that may be taken against a perpetrator for bullying, cyberbullying or retaliation shall include, but not be limited to:

- Admonitions and warnings
- Parental/ Guardian notification and meetings
- Detention
- In-school suspension
- Loss of school-provided transportation or loss of student parking pass
- Loss of the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities
- Loss of the opportunity to participate in school social activities
- Loss of the opportunity to participate in graduation exercises or middle school promotional activities
- Police contact
- School suspension: No student shall be suspended from school unless it is deemed to be a necessary consequence of the violation of this Policy.

## 8. SOCIAL SERVICES/COUNSELING

Referral to appropriate counseling and/or social services currently being offered by schools or communities shall be provided for bullying victims, perpetrators and appropriate family members of said students.

## 9. SOCIAL NETWORKING

Students shall be prohibited from accessing social networking sites in school, except for educational or instructional purposes and with the prior approval from school administration.

## 10. OTHER REDRESS

This section does not prevent a victim of bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation from seeking redress under any other available law, either civil or criminal. This section does not create or alter any tort liability.

## 11. ADOPTION OF POLICY

The governing bodies of all schools approved for the purpose of §§16-19-1 and 16-19-2 shall adopt this Policy by June 30, 2012.

## **ZERO TOLERANCE FOR WEAPONS AND VIOLENCE POLICY**

The purpose of this policy is to provide a school environment that is conducive to learning. The underlying belief of this policy is that all children have the right to be educated in a safe and nurturing environment. Therefore, the possession and/or use of weapons and/or violence will not be tolerated at Ferri Middle School. For the purposes of this Policy, a “weapon” includes the following definitions:

- Firearms - The Gun-free School Act, Section 921, Title 18 of the Code 1994, defines firearm as follows: Any weapon which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant; the frame or receiver of any weapon described above; any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas, bomb, grenade, rocker having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce or similar device; and any combination of parts either designed or intended to use in converting any device into a destructive device described in the two immediately preceding examples and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled. **The Johnston Public Schools also considers BB guns, Air Soft guns, pellet guns and paint guns to be firearms**
- Knives - Any object that is designed to cut or stab such as any knife, dagger, bowie knife, stiletto, folding knife, razor, pocket knife, kitchen knife, or carving knife; and
- Any device, instrument, material or substance, animate or inanimate, that is used for, or is readily capable of causing harm or serious bodily injury”.
- Assault - Assault is defined as an act of physical violence or an aggravated threat of physical violence by a student on another student or staff member.

Any student found to be in possession of a weapon, or involved in an assault, as defined herein, shall immediately be suspended in accordance with applicable due process provisions. During this suspension, the Johnston Public Schools, in accordance with its Zero Tolerance Policy, shall take the necessary steps in determining any additional action, which may include expulsion. An electronic copy of this Policy is available online at: [www.johnstonschools.org](http://www.johnstonschools.org), and a hard copy of this policy may be made available upon a request addressed to the principal.

## **SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY**

In order to ensure the highest possible standards of learning as well as the safety, health and well-being of students, the Johnston Public School District hereby adopts a Substance Abuse Policy, which will:

- Aid students to abstain from the use of tobacco, alcohol and other illicit drugs
- Intervene early when student use is detected
- Take corrective disciplinary action when necessary

### **NOTE: THIS POLICY APPLIES TO ALL INDIVIDUALS IN ATTENDANCE OR SUPERVISING ANY SCHOOL RELATED EVENT.**

The use, possession, transportation or sale of alcohol, tobacco, controlled substances, or any substance that can be used in an unsafe fashion such as artificial stimulants, aerosols, glues, permanent markers, over the counter diet pills, herbals, or other products **will not be tolerated** in the Johnston Public Schools. This also includes imitation substances that are being passed off to others as real (RIGL 21-28-4.01).

Any student found to be under the influence of, or in possession of alcohol, tobacco, other illicit drugs, or a controlled drug, **except, those medications prescribed by a medical doctor for the use of the student and for which the user has a valid, current prescription**, will be subject to the following penalties and actions:

- Parents/guardian will be notified immediately and will be requested to meet with an administrator
- The Johnston Police Department will be notified
- The student may be suspended for 1-10 school days depending on the specifics of the offense and will be required to attend counseling at an appropriate school or community agency
- The student will be placed on **Behavior Probation**
- A hearing will be held with the Superintendent, with the possibility that long-term suspension proceedings may be initiated

Any student who sells alcohol, tobacco, or controlled substances or is in possession of such quantities of alcohol, tobacco, or controlled substances for the purpose of selling will be referred to the Superintendent with a recommendation for long-term suspension. The Johnston Police Department will be notified.

**Smoking – SMOKING IS NOT ALLOWED BY ANY INDIVIDUAL** in school, on school grounds or at a school-related activity. This includes electronic cigarettes and other vaping devices. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against offenders.

**NOTE: If a student has engaged in a serious matter of misconduct, that student may not be allowed to participate in any extracurricular activities for the remainder of the school year.**

**Examples include, but are not limited to the following:**

- Any student found to be under the influence or in possession of alcohol, tobacco, or a controlled drug.
- Any student found to be selling/distributing alcohol, tobacco, or a controlled drug, including imitation substances,
- Any student found in possession and/or control of a dangerous weapon (e.g. guns, knives, clubs or any object which could be construed to present imminent danger to a person), whether in school, on school property, at school sponsored events or on any transportation provided by the school department.

**NOTE:** Staff members in the Johnston Public Schools will adopt this **“zero tolerance”** stand. Moreover, staff will be proactive in eliminating any substance abuse by students.

## **HARASSMENT**

It is the policy of Ferri Middle School to maintain a learning and working environment that promotes respect for all persons. Sexual harassment and/or harassment on the basis of race, religion, national origin, gender, ancestry, age, disability, sexual orientation, color, or any unwanted comments or advances deemed to be offensive to the individual will not be tolerated. Sexual Harassment may occur as: Student to student, student to staff, staff to student, male to male, female to female, male to female or female to male. The school department expressly prohibits harassment of/by any student. This policy applies to conduct during and relating to school and school sponsored activities.

**Sexual harassment is defined as, but is not limited to, any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or any other verbal, visual, or physical behavior of a sexual nature made by someone from or in the work or educational setting including, but not limited to, the following listed conditions:**

- Unwelcome leering, staring, advances, sexual flirtations or propositions.
- Unwelcome sexual slurs, epithets, threats, verbal abuse, noises, derogatory comments or sexually degrading descriptions.
- Unwelcome graphic verbal comments about an individual's body or overly personal conversation.
- Unwelcome sexual jokes, stories, drawings, pictures or gestures.
- Unwelcome spreading of sexual rumors.
- Unwelcome touching of an individual's body or clothes in a sexual way.
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects in the educational or work environment.
- Touching oneself sexually or talking about one's sexual activity in front of others.
- One person exerting power over another.
- Behavior that is demeaning to members of the same or opposite sex.
- Conduct that creates a sexually offensive environment.

**Hazing** is defined as any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. This conduct shall include, but not be limited to, whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug, or other substance, or any brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of the student or any other person, or which subjects the student or other person, or which subjects the student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest, or extended isolation.

### **Reporting Procedure/ Investigation**

Any student who witnesses or experiences harassment of any kind should report such harassment to a teacher, a guidance counselor, the principal or the superintendent. The administration will conduct an investigation and implement corrective action in accordance with the Johnston Public Schools Harassment Policy. An electronic copy of this policy is available online at: [www.johnstonschools.org](http://www.johnstonschools.org), and a hard copy of this policy may be made available upon a request addressed to the principal.

### **Scope of Disciplinary Actions**

- An administrator will counsel the offending student
- Parents/guardians will be notified and a conference will be scheduled
- The Johnston Police Department.
- The school will suspend the student for 1-10 school days, schedule a parent/guardian conference and may initiate legal action.
- The student must make restitution for damages.
- Court action may be initiated by the Johnston Town Solicitor and the Superintendent may initiate long-term suspension proceedings.

## **POLICY ON SOCIAL NETWORKING AND TEXT MESSAGING**

### **Purpose**

The Johnston School Department (“Department”) recognizes the increasingly-important role that technology plays in the educational process as well as in the personal lives of the students, faculty and staff of the Department. Online discourse through social computing, including the use of networking sites, text messaging, and the like empowers educators and students in the scope of their respective interactions. Instead of “mass communication” this environment represents “masses of communicators.” The Department respects the importance of open exchange and learning related to enhancing the educational environment in Johnston and supports this process.

Within this context, it is important that all participants feel free to express their thoughts and ideas in a manner that does not disrupt the educational process, or create unnecessary distractions to, or adversely impact, the interpersonal relationships between the students, faculty and staff. This Policy is intended to foster a thoughtful, responsible use of social networking and related technological communication tools that will minimize risk and be appropriately professional and respectful.

## **Policy Guidelines**

No student ("Student"), employee, faculty or staff of the Johnston School Department ("School Personnel") shall post, forward, or otherwise disseminate any data, documents, photos, images, videos, or other information using any technology medium, including social networking websites (e.g., Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, Flickr), which might result in a disruption of classroom activity or the educational process.

Fraternization, including, but not limited to, stalking, sexual harassment, and other objectively inappropriate behavior enabled by a position of authority, via the Internet, instant messaging, text messaging, or otherwise between School Personnel and Students (whether by mobile telephone, computer, or other communication medium) is prohibited. Students are prohibited from engaging in stalking, sexual harassment, and other objectively inappropriate behavior among and/or between fellow Students, via the Internet, instant messaging, text messaging, or otherwise (whether by mobile telephone, computer, or other communication medium).

In addition to this Policy, all School Personnel are encouraged to attend an in-service training on *Internet Safety for Students, Teachers, and Administrators*. The purpose of this Policy is to protect and maintain professionalism in the workplace for all School Personnel and to avoid, wherever possible, the appearance of impropriety in School Personnel-Student relationships.

Any violation of this policy by School Personnel will be subject to those disciplinary sanctions included in either the Employee Handbook or the Collective Bargaining Agreement applicable to said personnel. Any violation of this policy by Students will be subject to those disciplinary sanctions included in the Student Handbook.

Nothing in this Policy prohibits School Personnel or Students from using educational websites, such as [www.schoolnotes.com](http://www.schoolnotes.com) or the Johnston School Department's websites, since these sites are used solely for educational purposes. Access of social networking websites for personal use during school hours shall be reserved for School Personnel's authorized breaks or unassigned periods only and shall not be accessed during regular work hours, including classroom instruction time.

## **XII. OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

### **DUE PROCESS – PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS FOR ALL STUDENTS**

Student's due process – Civil and Legal Rights and Responsibilities 5145(a)

**Level 1** – Dismissal of student from class

**Level 2** – Dismissal of student from building

**Level 3** – Suspension of student from school

**Level 4** – Hearing with the Superintendent

#### **A. Informal “Due Process” – Levels 1, 2, and 3**

In cases, involving Levels 1, 2, and 3, the Principal or his/her designee shall conduct an informal “due process” hearing. The informal “due process” hearing shall contain the following steps:

1. The student and his/her parents/guardians shall be informed of the reasons for removal.
2. The student and his/her parents/guardians shall be given an opportunity to present his/her or their point(s) of view.
3. The student and his/her parents/guardians shall have the right to appeal to the Superintendent or a designated representative.
4. In cases of Level 3, the student and his/her parents/guardians shall be informed by written notice, in their dominant language.

#### **B. Formal “Due Process” – Level 4**

1. Clear written notice of the charges against a student will be provided to the student and his/her parents/guardians in their dominant language.
2. The parents/guardian will be allowed to be present at the hearing.
3. All parties involved may be represented by legal counsel.
4. All parties will be given an opportunity to present their version of the facts and their implications.
5. All parties should be allowed to offer the testimony of other witnesses and other evidence relative to the issue.
6. All parties involved will be allowed to examine all evidence offered against them. In addition, all persons will be allowed to question any witness.
7. The hearing will be conducted by the Superintendent or a designated representative who shall make a determination solely upon the evidence presented at the hearing.
8. A record shall be kept of each hearing. The record shall be preserved for transmission to the Commissioner of Education as soon as possible in the event of an appeal.
9. The Superintendent will render, within a reasonable time after the hearing, a written decision as to whether the student is guilty of the charges brought against him/her.
10. The findings of the Superintendent or designee will be translated into the dominant language of the parents/guardian and sent to the parents/guardian.
11. Parents/guardian may appeal to the chair of the School Committee if the decision of the Superintendent is not acceptable.
12. Such appeal will be submitted in writing within 10 school days to the Chair of the School Committee. A copy of the record of the hearing with the Superintendent and the decision

- shall be forwarded to the Chair of the School Committee.
13. A hearing will be held by the School Committee or its designated hearing officer. A stenographic record of such hearing will be maintained. A decision will be given to the parents not later than 30 days after the appeal.
  14. If the decision of the completed hearing is not satisfactory to the parents/guardian, they will have the right to appeal to the Commissioner of Education, Rhode Island Department of Education.
  15. In cases of appeal, a copy of the record of the hearing involving the School Committee and their decision shall be forwarded to the Commissioner of Education.

## **SPECIAL RULES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Students identified as disabled or in the process of being identified disabled under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

1. School personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case by case basis when determining whether a change in placement, consistent with the other requirements of this section, is appropriate for a child with a disability who violates a code of student conduct.
2. If school personnel determine that a child with a disability presents an immediate threat to him or herself or to others, the child may be removed from school for the remainder of the school day regardless of the number of days of suspension the child had already accrued during that school year.
3. School personnel may remove a child with a disability who violates a code of student conduct from his or her current placement to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting, another setting, or suspension, for not more than 10 consecutive school days (to the extent those alternatives are applied to children without disabilities).
4. During the first ten (10) school days of removal (cumulative) during the course of a school year, the School District may, but is not required to:

Provide educational services to the child;

- Conduct a manifestation determination prior to the disciplinary removal;
  - Perform a functional behavioral assessment of the child; or
  - Develop a behavioral intervention plan to address the behavioral factors such as the length of each removal, the total amount of time the child is removed, and the proximity of the removals to one another.
5. After a child with a disability has been removed from his or her current placement for more than ten (10) school days cumulative in the same school year, during any subsequent days of removal the public agency must provide services to enable the child to participate in the general education curriculum, although in a different setting, and to continue to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP. The School District must also provide the child with a functional behavioral assessment, and behavioral intervention services and modifications that are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur.

6. For disciplinary changes in placement that would exceed 10 consecutive school days, if the behavior that gave rise to the violation of the school code is determined not to be a manifestation of the child's disability, school personnel may apply the relevant disciplinary procedures to children with disabilities in the same manner and for the same duration as the procedures would be applied to children without disabilities; however, the School District must provide the services outlined in paragraph 5 above.
7. A public agency is only required to provide services during periods of removal to a child with a disability who has been removed from his or her current placement for 10 school days or less in that school year, if it provides services to a child without disabilities who is similarly removed.
8. After a child with a disability has been removed from his or her current placement for ten (10) school days cumulative in the same school year, any subsequent removal constitutes a change in placement.
9. If the removal is a change of placement, the child's IEP Team determines appropriate services by providing the child with a functional behavioral assessment, and behavioral intervention services and modifications, that are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur.
10. Within 10 school days of any decision to change the placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, the School District, the parent, and relevant members of the child's IEP Team (as determined by the parent and the District) must review all relevant information in the student's file, including the child's IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parents to determine if the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability; or if the conduct in question was the direct result of the District's failure to implement the IEP.
11. The conduct must be determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability if the District, the parent, and relevant members of the child's IEP Team determine that either the conduct was caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to the child's disability, or if the conduct was the direct result of the District's failure to implement the IEP.
12. If the District, the parent, and relevant members of the child's IEP Team determine that the conduct was the result of the District's failure to implement the IEP, the District must take immediate steps to remedy those deficiencies.
13. If the District, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team make the determination that the conduct was a manifestation of the child's disability, the IEP Team must either conduct a functional behavioral assessment, unless the District had conducted a functional behavioral assessment before the behavior that resulted in the change of placement occurred, and implement a behavioral intervention plan for the child; or if a behavioral intervention plan already has been developed, review the behavioral intervention plan, and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior; and return the child to the placement from which the child was removed, unless the parent and the LEA agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the behavioral intervention plan, or if one of the following special circumstances arise:
  - The child carries a weapon to or possesses a weapon at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the School District;
  - The child knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the School District; or
  - The child has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the School District.

If any of these circumstances arise, the District may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 school days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability.

14. On the date on which the decision is made to make a removal that constitutes a change of placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, the LEA must notify the parents of that decision, and provide the parents the procedural safeguards notice.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Rhode Island Educational Records Bill of Rights, any parent or guardian of a student under eighteen (18) years of age has certain rights with respect to their child's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of eighteen (18) or attends a school beyond the high school level, heretofore known "eligible students." Parents, guardians, or eligible students have the following rights:

1. The right to personally inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school within ten (10) days of the receipt of the request. Any request to inspect/review student records shall be made to the School Principal.
2. The right to a reasonable explanation and interpretation of the records.
3. The right to have the records preserved as long as the request to inspect is outstanding.
4. The right to have copies of the records. The Johnston Public Schools may charge a fee for the cost of the copies of the records.
5. The right to request an amendment and/or expungement of the student's record if the parent, guardian or eligible student believes that the information contained in the records is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's right to privacy. Any request for an amendment and/or expungement shall be made in writing and shall be addressed to the School Principal.
6. If the Johnston Public Schools decides not to amend and/or expunge the records, the parent, guardian or eligible student may request a formal hearing. Any request for a formal hearing shall be made in writing and shall be addressed to the School Principal.
7. If, after the formal hearing, the Johnston Public Schools affirms the decision not to amend and/or expunge the records, the parent, guardian or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information. This statement shall be maintained with the contested part of the record for as long as the record is maintained and it shall be disclosed when the portion of the record to which it relates is disclosed.

8. The right to have the records kept confidential and not released to any other individual, agency or organization without prior written consent of the parent, guardian, or eligible student, except as permitted or required by law. These exceptions include the release of information to:
  - School officials with legitimate educational interests;
  - Other schools to which the student is transferring;
  - Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
  - Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
  - Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school
  - Accrediting organizations;
  - Comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
  - Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
  - State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.
9. A “school official” is a person employed by the Johnston Public Schools as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff, and law enforcement personnel); a School Committee member; or a person or company with whom the Johnston Public Schools has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist). A school official is deemed to have a legitimate educational interest in inspecting a student’s records if the information requested is necessary for that official to perform appropriate tasks that are specified in his or her position description or by a contract agreement.
10. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning any alleged failures by the Johnston Public Schools to comply with the requirements of FERPA. Any such complaint shall be in writing and addressed to: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C., 20202.

The Johnston Public Schools considers the following information to be directory information and will disclose it without the prior consent of the parent or eligible student:

- **Student’s name, address, telephone number, date/place of birth, parents/guardians’ names**
- **Electronic mail address, photograph, beginning and ending dates of attendance at the school, grade, extracurricular participation**
- **Weight and height of members of certain athletic teams, achievement awards or honors, and previous schools attended by the student**

Any parent, guardian, or eligible student who does not wish to have this directory information released must advise the school principal, in writing, and within two (2) weeks of the publication of this notice, of any item that they refuse to allow the Johnston Public Schools to release.

## **INTERNET POLICY**

Ferri Middle School recognizes that as telecommunications and other new technologies shift the ways that information may be accessed, these changes may alter instruction and student learning. The school supports access by students to rich information resources and the acquisition of appropriate skills to analyze such resources.

### **Program**

In order to match electronic resources as closely as possible to the approved school curriculum, school personnel will review and evaluate resources and materials which support instruction. In this manner, staff will provide developmentally appropriate guidance to students as they make use of telecommunications and electronic resources to conduct research and other studies related to the district curriculum. All students will be informed by staff of their rights and responsibilities as the users of the school network prior to gaining access to that network either as an individual user or as a member of a class or group. As much as possible, access to school information resources will be designed in ways, which direct students to those, which have been reviewed and evaluated prior to use. While students may be able to move beyond those resources to others which have not been evaluated by staff, they shall be provided with guidelines and list resources particularly suited to learning objectives. Students may pursue electronic research independent of staff supervision only if they have been granted parental permission and have submitted all required forms. Permission is not transferable and may not be shared.

### **Internet Rules and Regulations**

Students are responsible for good behavior (Digital Citizenship) on school computer networks just as they are in classrooms or in school hallways. Communication on the network is often public in nature and general school rules for behavior and communications apply. The network is provided for students to conduct research and communicate with others. Access to network services is provided to students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner. Parent permission is required. Access is a privilege – not a right. Access entails responsibility. Individual users of the school computer networks are responsible for their behavior and communication over those networks. It is presumed that users will comply with school standards and will honor the agreements they have signed. Although the school is not responsible for restricting, monitoring or controlling the communications of the individual utilizing the network, it reserves the right to discipline users and/ or file civil or criminal complaints. Network storage areas may be treated like school lockers. Network administrators may review files and communications to maintain system integrity and ensure that users are using the system responsibly. Users should not expect that files stored on the district server will always be private.

### **Sanctions**

Violations may result in a loss of access and/ or additional disciplinary action at the building level or above in line with existing practice regarding inappropriate language or behavior. When applicable, law enforcement agencies may be involved. Therefore, use of the internet facilities of the Johnston School Department for telecommunications and electronic information resources will be permitted upon the agreement to the following policy guidelines:

- To use the Internet connection only for educational purposes which are consistent with the students' course of studies and the policies and objectives of the Johnston School Department.
- To use the Internet in ways that are not harmful physically, financially, or otherwise to individuals, their property, or their reputation and are within the law.
- To protect one and others by not issuing any addresses or telephone numbers over the Internet, remembering that Internet communications are not private.

- To use the Internet only with the permission of staff members who are in charge of it or with permission of supervising teachers.
- To be considerate of others while on the Internet abiding by the same rules that apply in school to language and behavior.
- To refrain from any commercial activity such as: buying, selling, or advertising.
- To avoid interfering with the Internet supporting equipment, or information available on it, by engaging in the following, which includes but is not limited to, tampering with hardware or software, vandalizing data, introducing or using computer viruses, etc., attempting to gain access to restricted information or networks or violating copyright laws, and to report any problems or breaches of these responsibilities to the supervising staff member.

Additionally, the students, employees, faculty, and staff at the Middle School are expected to comply with the Johnston Public Schools Internet Use Policy. An electronic copy of this Policy is available online at: [www.johnstonschools.org](http://www.johnstonschools.org), and a hard copy of this policy may be made available upon a request addressed to the Principal.

## **Residency Requirements**

### **POLICY (1)**

- 1.1 Only children who reside in Johnston, residency being defined by the RI General Laws §16-64-1, and who are legally under the control of the adults with whom they reside shall be allowed to attend the Johnston Public Schools.
- 1.2 Parents or guardians of non-resident children may request, in writing, from the Superintendent of Schools, permission for a child or children to attend Johnston Public Schools at a tuition rate established by the School Committee. Transportation for non-resident students will not be provided.
- 1.3 Parents or guardians who will be leaving Johnston prior to the end of the school year may request, in writing, permission to allow their children to attend Johnston Public Schools in accordance with the provisions of RI General Laws§16-64-8. When a student changes his/her residence during the course of a semester, the student shall be allowed to complete the semester in Johnston. If the student is a senior or about to enter his/her senior year, the student shall be allowed to complete his/her senior year in Johnston as long as the student has sufficient credits which will enable him/her to graduate upon completion of one additional year.

Parents or guardians who will be moving to Johnston soon after the school year begins may request, in writing, permission to allow their children to attend Johnston Public Schools. Said request must include any Purchase and Sale Agreement or Lease Agreement for the intended place of residence and a projected date of occupancy for the residence. Parents will be required to pay tuition beginning on the first day and must make, at a minimum, payment for the quarter. If the parents take up residency in the community within forty-five (45) school days from the start of school, the tuition will be refunded in full. If residency takes place after the forty-fifth (45<sup>th</sup>) school day, tuition will then be charged on a per diem rate for all days attended as a non-resident.

## **PROCEDURE (2)**

2.1 Affidavit of Residence will be required to be completed by all enrolled students.

2.2 Each principal shall submit to the Superintendent of Schools the name of any student in his/her school whom he/she suspects may not be residents of Johnston.

2.3 The Superintendent shall investigate each referral to insure residence requirements are enforced.