



Fort Madison

K-6 Student Handbook

2024-2025

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OPENING STATEMENT

Welcome Letter

Mission

The mission of the Fort Madison Community School District is to ensure all students learn the academic and life skills necessary for personal success and responsible living.

Vision

We see the Fort Madison Community School District as a place where:

- every student receives a strong academic foundation and experiences social success,
- every student graduates and is well prepared and confident with an education that enables them to pursue whatever role in life they wish,
- all students learn and accept the importance of personal responsibility,
- highly motivated, knowledgeable and caring staff members strive to attain the highest educational achievement for each student,
- district-wide leadership supports students and faculty with continuous, system-wide improvements of learning and teaching practices guided by research-based professional development,
- parents citizens and the business community provide generous support to benefit every student in the entire district,
- an integrated learning system provides a district-wide focus to align curriculum and quality learning environments with community and business/industry interests to ensure all students achieve at high levels,
- and district staff and community members communicate in meaningful ways to pursue the district's mission of success for all students.

Beliefs

We believe that:

- everyone can learn,
- education is the responsibility of family, students, community and school,

- learning is best achieved in a safe and nurturing environment,
- all people will be treated with respect,
- a commitment to community is essential,
- effort is necessary for growth,
- learning is a lifelong process.

District Goals

- All students in FMCS D will learn through a rigorous curriculum with an emphasis on higher order thinking skills in order to solve complex problems.
- All students in FMCS D will be prepared with the necessary life and social skills for success after graduation.

Map of the School

Equal Educational Opportunity

Fort Madison Community School does not discriminate in its education programs or activities on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, disability, religion, creed, marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status (for programs). The school district's goal is to educate students in programs and activities that foster a healthy social, intellectual, emotional, and physical self-concept. Each student has the opportunity to use Fort Madison Community School District's educational programs and activities. Each student is expected to conduct themselves in a manner that assures each student the same educational opportunity. ([Policy 102](#))

Students who feel they have been discriminated against are encouraged to report it to the school district Affirmative Action Coordinator. The Affirmative Action Coordinator is Director of Student Services at Central Office, 319-372-7252.

Inquiries by students regarding compliance with equal educational opportunity and affirmative action laws and policies, including but not limited to complaints of discrimination, may be directed in writing to the Director of the Region VII office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, John C. Kluczynski Federal Building, 230 S. Dearborn St., 37th Floor, Chicago, IL, 60604 (312) 730-1560, fax (312) 730-1576 OCR.Chicago@ed.gov, the Iowa Civil Rights Commissioner, <https://icrc.iowa.gov>, (515) 281-4121 or the Iowa Dept. of Education, Grimes State Office Bldg., Des Moines, IA 50319. (515) 281-5294. This inquiry or complaint to the federal or state office may be made instead of, or in addition to, an inquiry or complaint at the local level.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

School Day – Arrival and Departure

8:20-3:20

Student Attendance

Students must attend school for the number of days or hours school is in session in accordance with the school calendar. Students are expected to be in class and to make attendance a priority. Attendance is not only compulsory by Iowa law ([Iowa Code Chapter 299](#)) but is the only way a student can participate and benefit from Fort Madison Community School District's education program and accomplish the student's educational objectives. Although Fort Madison Community School District believes that traditional, in-person school attendance leads to the greatest learning opportunities for students, there may be rare and unusual circumstances created by public emergencies declared by state or local officials which temporarily prevent students from attending traditional, in-person school. In such cases, the superintendent will have discretion to make reasonable accommodations for students on a case-by-case basis, to attend school through remote learning opportunities. Attendance will still be taken during these remote learning experiences.

Should a student return to school from an absence during the school day, or leave the school during the school day, the student must report to the main office. If the student is returning to school during the school day, the student must sign in at the office prior to returning to class. This process is not meant to excuse an absence or act as a reason for an unexcused absence but merely to keep track of student activity and attendance.

Excused Absences

Students or Parents of minor students who know they will be absent must notify the main office, grades PK-2nd at 319-372-2765 or grades 3rd-6th at 319-472-4687 in advance of the absence. Absences approved by the building Principal or designee are considered automatically excused absences. Excused absences include but are not limited to

- Illness
- Family emergency
- Recognized religious observances
- School activities
- Family trips/vacations
- Other family circumstances
- Other determined excused absences

If advance notification is not possible, parents must notify the main office, grades PK-2nd at 319-372-2765 or grades 3rd-6th at 319-472-4687 on the day of the absence prior to 9:00 a.m. Normal office hours are 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. If notification is not received, the office will attempt to contact the parent at the given emergency number on file.

Unexcused Absences

Unexcused absences are absences that have not received prior approval and in which a student is absent without a reasonable excuse, as determined by the building Principal or designee.

Open Enrollment

Iowa's open enrollment law allows students residing in one school district to request transfer to another school district upon the parents' request. Parents/guardians may apply for open enrollment for their child to attend another Iowa public school at any time during the year. Students wishing to open enroll to another school must contact the Director of Student Services for more information.

Inclement Weather

Should school be canceled due to inclement weather prior to the start of the school day, students and parents will be notified via a Power Announcement, [the district automated calling

system]. In addition, school cancellations will also be broadcast on the following local radio stations: KBUR 1490 AM, KBKB 1360 AM, KBKB 101.7, KGRS 107.3, These days are typically built into the school calendar, however, there may be instances where missed days will need to be made up.

Should school be dismissed early due to inclement weather, parents will be notified by Power Announcement, [the district automated calling system]. Parents will also be notified of the status of the school's transportation services by the same means.

Unless weather conditions prevent it, students will still be returned to their regular drop-off sites. Should weather conditions be too extreme for regular school transportation, students will be kept at school, or potentially returned to school until parents are available for pick-up.

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Student Appearance

Fort Madison Community School District believes inappropriate student appearance causes material and substantial disruption to the school environment and can present a threat to the health and safety of students, employees, and visitors. Fort Madison Community School District believes there is a strong correlation between student academic performance and conduct and students' appearance. Because of this, students are expected to wear clothing that is appropriate to their age level and does not disrupt the school or educational environment.

Students are expected to adhere to standards of cleanliness and dress that are compatible with the requirements of a good learning environment. Clothing or other apparel promoting products or activities that are illegal for minors and clothing displaying obscene material, profanity, or reference to prohibited conduct are disallowed. When in the judgment of the school Principal or designee, a student's appearance or mode of dress disrupts the educational process or constitutes a threat to health or safety, the student may be required to make modifications. Clothing that may be restricted, or requested to be modified include but not limited to:

- Shoes with cleats except for outdoor practices.
- Clothing that is not conducive to the health and safety of a student against certain weather circumstances (i.e. requiring shoes).
- Clothing or accessories that are dangerous or could be used as a weapon.
- Displays of obscenity, profanity, or vulgarity.
- Discriminatory remarks.

Students who refuse to comply or are found to be a habitual offender may be sent to the building Principal or designee who will determine appropriate consequences in accordance with district adopted disciplinary policies and procedures.

Student Care of School Property/Vandalism

Students must take care of school property including desks, chairs, books, lockers, school equipment, and other school property. Vandalism and/or destruction of school property is not tolerated. Students found to have committed vandalism or to have destroyed or otherwise harmed school property may be subject to discipline. In certain circumstances, students may be reported to law enforcement authorities.

Accidental damages may, but are not required to, be treated differently. Whether an incident is considered accidental will be determined on a case-by-case basis by building Principal or designee, depending on the circumstances of the situation, the student's actions leading up to the situation and the student's response after the situation occurred.

Search and Seizure

School district property is held in public trust by the Board. School district officials may search students or protected student areas based on a reasonable suspicion if a school district policy, rule, regulation or law has been violated. The search is in a manner reasonable in scope to maintain order and discipline in the schools, promote the educational environment, and protect the safety and welfare of students, employees and visitors to the school district facilities. The furnishing of a locker, desk or other facility or space owned by the school and provided as a courtesy to a student, even if the student provides the lock for it, will not create a protected student area and will not give rise to an expectation of privacy with respect to the locker, desk, or other facility. ([Board Policy 502.8-R-1](#)) ([502.8](#))

Student Lockers and Desks

Students are allowed to use the lockers and desks for storing school-related materials and personal items where necessary for attendance at school. Students are required to keep their assigned locker (if applicable) and desk clean and undamaged. Expenses to repair any damage done to a student's locker and desk may be charged to the student.

It is highly recommended that students do not store valuables in their lockers or desks. The school district is not responsible for such items.

Bullying and Harassment

Fort Madison Community School District is committed to providing all students with a safe and civil school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with dignity and respect. A safe and civil school environment is necessary for students to learn and achieve. Bullying and/or harassment can seriously disrupt the ability for a school district to maintain a safe and civil environment, hindering the students' ability to learn and succeed. Bullying and/or harassment of students, employees, and volunteers is against federal and state law, and Fort Madison Community School District's rules, regulations, and policies.

Bullying and/or harassment will not be tolerated on school district property, on property within the jurisdiction of the school district, while on school-owned or operated or chartered vehicles, while attending or engaged in school activities, or while away from school grounds if the misconduct materially interferes with the orderly operation of the educational environment or is likely to do so.

[Anti-Bullying and Anti-Harassment Policy 104.0](#)

[Anti-Bullying and Anti-Harassment Investigation Procedures 104-R-1](#)

Threats of Violence

Discipline of Students Who Make Threats of Violent or Cause Incidents of violence.

[\(Policy 503.08\)](#)

Weapons

Weapons and other dangerous objects are not permitted on school grounds as stated in Board Policy Weapons Code No. 502.6. Students bringing a weapon to school may face possible suspension or expulsion for up to one year. Copies of this policy are available upon request.

Student Complaints

[\(Policy 502.04\)](#)

STUDENT CONDUCT

Discipline and School Rules

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is implemented at the elementary building. The entire school staff helps to establish a social culture in which both social and academic success is likely. Expectations in all areas of the school are taught by the teachers to help promote positive behavior choices.

There are two levels of behaviors within the elementary building. Minor behaviors are addressed by the teacher in the classroom. Major behaviors will be referred to the office and are considered serious enough to lead to some form of immediate consequence.

The Board of Directors of the Fort Madison Community School District may follow a recommendation of the superintendent or building principal to suspend or expel a student from school. [\(Policy 503.2\)](#) [\(Policy 503.1-R-1\)](#)

All behavior will be handled on an individual basis with consequences deemed appropriate by the building administrator or designee.

STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Health Care Services and Information

Wellness

The Fort Madison Community School District and the Board promote healthy students by supporting wellness, good nutrition and regular physical activity as a part of the total learning environment. The school district supports a healthy environment where students learn and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices. Schools contribute to the basic health status of students by facilitating learning through the support and promotion of good nutrition and regular physical activity. Improved health optimizes student performance potential. ([Policy 507.9](#))

Screenings and Health Education

Annual vision and hearing screenings are completed with rechecks and referrals as needed. Height and weight is done annually. The dental program is done annually for all 1st graders.

Communicable Diseases

Students showing symptoms of possible communicable diseases are reported to the school nurse. Each case is treated according to school guidelines with length of exclusion from school variable with the specific disease. Parental notes are sent home when the school deems it appropriate to inform parents of reported communicable diseases. ([Policy 507.3](#))

Immunization Requirements

Prior to starting school or when transferring into our school district, parents must present current immunization records for their child.

Five DPT (Diphtheria, Pertussis and Tetanus) and 4 Polio immunizations, with the last dose given after the age of 4; 2 MMR (Measles, Mumps and Rubella), 3 Hepatitis B shots and two varicella or proof of having had chickenpox are required for admission to school.

Proof of dental and physical screenings are required for all students entering Kindergarten or who are transferring from out-of-state. ([Board Policy 507.1](#))

Medication Policy

Taking prescription medicine during school hours requires :

1. Physician's and parent's signature on medical authorization form
2. Medicine must be in the original container with the pharmacist's label, student's name, etc. Ask the pharmacist for two containers (one for school, one for home).
3. The medicine to be dispensed by school health personnel.

Taking non-prescription medicine requires:

1. A note from parent stating the medication, dosage and time medication should be given
2. Medicine must be in original container

The school will request health information for emergency use. If students carry and/or take prescription or non-prescription drugs themselves, the Fort Madison Community Schools will not assume liability or assume responsibility for any consequences.

Administration of Medication to Students

The board is committed to the inclusion of all students in the education program and recognizes that some students may need prescription and nonprescription medication to participate in their educational program.

Medication shall be administered when the student's parent or guardian (hereafter "parent") provides a signed and dated written statement requesting medication administration and the medication is in the original, labeled container, either as dispensed or in the manufacturer's container.

When administration of the medication requires ongoing professional health judgment, an individual health plan shall be developed by an authorized practitioner with the student and the student's parent. Students who have demonstrated competence in administering their own medications may self-administer their medication. A written statement by the student's parent shall be on file requesting co-administration of medication, when competence has been demonstrated. By law, students with asthma or other airway constricting diseases may self-administer their medication upon approval of their parents and prescribing licensed health care professional regardless of competency.

Persons administering medication shall include authorized practitioners, such as licensed registered nurses and physicians, and persons to whom authorized practitioners have delegated the administration of medication (who have successfully completed a medication administration course). A medication administration course and periodic update shall be

conducted by a registered nurse or licensed pharmacist, and a record of course completion shall be maintained by the school.

A written medication administration record shall be on file including:

- date;
- student's name;
- prescriber or person authorizing administration;
- medication;
- medication dosage;
- administration time;
- administration method;
- signature and title of the person administering medication; and
- any unusual circumstances, actions, or omissions.

Medication shall be stored in a secured area unless an alternate provision is documented. Emergency protocols for medication-related reactions shall be posted. Medication information shall be confidential information as provided by law.

Disposal of unused, discontinued/recalled, or expired medication shall be in compliance with federal and state law. Prior to disposal school personnel shall make a reasonable attempt to return medication by providing written notification that expired, discontinued, or unused medications need to be picked up. If medication is not picked up by the date specified, disposal shall be in accordance with the disposal procedures for the specific category of medication. [\(Policy 507.2\) \(Policy 507.2 R\) \(Parental Authorization & Release Form for the Administration of Prescription Medication to Students\)](#)

Lice, Scabies, and Bed Bug Infestation

Because school brings large numbers of children into close contact daily, head lice, scabies, and bed bugs are always a possibility. Although lice, scabies, and bed bugs do not carry communicable disease, they can be a nuisance to treat. If there is a suspected case, students will be checked on an individual basis by the school nurse. If the case is confirmed, the following control measures will be initiated:

1. Upon receiving notice of a suspected case of head lice, scabies, or bed bugs, school personnel will examine the child to confirm the report.
2. When a case is confirmed, siblings of the infested student will also be checked.
3. Parents will be contacted by the nurse and instructions for treatment will be sent home if necessary.

4. Students may be sent home at nurse/administration discretion if a secondary infection has taken place.

Student Illness or Injury at School

A student that becomes ill or is injured at school must notify their teacher or another employee as soon as possible. In the case of a serious illness or injury, the school shall attempt to notify the parents according to the information on the student's emergency contact form. If the student is too ill to remain in school, the student will be released to the student's parents or, with the parents' permission, to another person directed by the parents.

While the school is not responsible for treating medical emergencies of an ill or injured student, employees may administer emergency or minor first aid if possible. The school will contact emergency medical personnel, if necessary, and attempt to notify the parents where the student may have been transported for treatment.

Sexual Abuse and Physical Abuse of Students by School Employees

Fort Madison Community School District does not tolerate physical or sexual abuse of students, including inappropriate and intentional sexual behavior, by employees. Students who are physically or sexually abused by an employee should notify their parent or guardian, and report to a principal or other trusted school employee. ([Policy 402.02](#)) ([Policy 402.03](#)) ([Policy 402.03-R 1](#))

Emergency Drills

Periodically the school holds emergency drills for fire, tornado, and other threats or disasters. At the beginning of each semester students are notified by their teachers of the emergency drill procedures. Additionally, the procedures and proper exit areas are posted in each room.

Students are expected to remain quiet and orderly during a drill or an emergency. Fire alarms and other calls to alarm should be taken very seriously. Students who pull the fire alarm or call in false alarms, will be disciplined up to and including suspension or expulsion. Additionally, depending on the situation, they may be reported to local law enforcement authorities.

Physical Restraint and Seclusion of Students

Corporal punishment, mechanical restraint and/or prone restraint is prohibited in all schools by Iowa law. Employees are prohibited from administering corporal punishment, mechanical restraint and/or prone restraint.

That said, trained district employees and others may have to use behavior management interventions, physical restraint and/or seclusion of students. The school uses the least restrictive behavioral interventions appropriate for the situation.

Physical restraint or seclusion may be used for the following reasons:

- To prevent or terminate an imminent threat of bodily injury to the student or others; or
- To prevent serious damage to property of significant monetary value or significant non-monetary value or importance; or
- When the student's actions seriously disrupt the learning environment or when physical restraint or seclusion is necessary to ensure the safety of the student or others; and
- When less restrictive alternatives to seclusion or physical restraint would not be effective, would not be feasible under the circumstances, or have failed in preventing or terminating the imminent threat or behavior; and
- When the physical restraint or seclusion complies with all applicable laws.

All physical restraints and seclusions will be conducted and documented in accordance with state law. iowa.gov

STUDENT SCHOLASTIC ACHIEVEMENT

Conferences and Student Progress

Parents will receive a learning report at the end of each trimester. Parent/teacher conferences are held twice a year; once in the fall and once in the spring. Please feel free to contact your child's teacher during school hours to schedule a conference any time you have concerns.

Testing/Survey Programs

Students undergo standardized testing annually. These tests are used to determine academic progress for individual students, for groups of students, and for the school district and to comply with state law. Students may be excused from testing for certain reasons by contacting the Director of Student Services.

The Iowa Department of Education lists all federal and state required student assessments on their website: [Required Student Assessments | Iowa Department of Education \(educateiowa.gov\)](http://Required Student Assessments | Iowa Department of Education (educateiowa.gov)). Certain survey or testing programs are established and maintained to evaluate Fort Madison Community School District's educational program and to assist in providing services to students and their families. These programs include surveys, marketing surveys, analysis, or evaluations. Fort Madison Community School District will provide notification, information and/or request permission prior to surveys being administered in accordance with state and/or federal law.

Health Education Program for Students

[Insert district] provides instruction in health education in compliance with the Iowa Department of Education's Human Growth and Development Education requirements adapted appropriately for each grade level. [\(Policy 603.05\)](#)

STUDENT RECORDS AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Student Records; Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Notice (FERPA)

Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) student records containing personally identifiable information, except for directory information, are considered education records and are confidential. For a complete copy of Fort Madison Community School District's policy on education records and other related information and procedures contact the Director of Student Services at Central Office, 319-372-7252.

Student Legal Status

If a student's legal status, such as a student's name or the student's custodial arrangement, should change, the parent must notify the district. These changes are important to keep up-to-date to ensure that the school district is maintaining a current and accurate student record.

Inspection of Instructional Materials

Parents and other members of the school district community may view the instructional materials used by the students upon request. Copies may be obtained according to board policy [605.02](#). Tests and assessment materials are only available for inspection with the consent of the Director of Student Services. Persons wishing to view instructional materials or to express concerns about instructional materials should contact the Director of Student Services at Central Office, 319-372-7252.

Should a parent or other members of the school district community have any objections regarding instructional materials, they may contact the Director of Student Services who will provide all necessary forms.

MISCELLANEOUS

Student Guidance and Counseling Program

Fort Madison Community School District maintains a guidance program that provides certain services that assist students with their personal, educational and career development. Confidentiality is maintained by the employees involved in the guidance program to the extent the law allows.

School Nutrition Program and Free and Reduced Lunch

Breakfast is free for all elementary students, and hot lunch is available at school each school day. The prices of hot lunches are announced each fall prior to the beginning of a new school year. Children also have the option of bringing a cold lunch. We request that pop not be provided as part of the noon meal.

Money for lunch and extra milk can be added to accounts daily from 7:50 to 8:20 a.m. Students eating lunch go through the lunch line and money is subtracted from their lunch account.

No breakfast is served on scheduled or unscheduled late starts.

Please see the district website for more information on school lunch. <http://www.fmcsd.org/>

Buses and Other School District Vehicles

Buses and other school district vehicles (“vehicles”) are primarily used to transport students to and from school. Appropriate classroom conduct is to be observed by students while riding the vehicle except for ordinary, appropriate conversation. Students are responsible to the driver, chaperone and/or sponsor while on the school district vehicle, loading, or unloading or leaving the vehicle. The driver may discipline the student and may notify the principal of inappropriate conduct. All people riding school district vehicles to and from the school, extracurricular activities, or any other destination must comply with the law and school district policies, rules, and regulations.

District Owned Recording Devices

The Fort Madison Community School District Board of Directors has authorized the use of recording devices on school district owned property to the extent permitted by law. The recording devices will be used to enhance safety and security within the educational environment. Students, employees, and parents are hereby notified that the content of the recording may be used in a student or employee disciplinary proceeding. The content of the recordings may be considered confidential student records and may be retained with other student records. Recordings may be routinely recorded over and only be retained if necessary for use in a student or employee disciplinary proceeding or other matter as determined necessary by the administration. Parents may request to view the recording of their child.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL RULES

Recess and Playground Rules

Students are expected to attend recess outside unless they have a note from a health practitioner, or a written excuse approved by the building principal or designee that would excuse a student’s outdoor participation. In certain cases of inclement weather, recess will not be held outside but will be held inside. Otherwise, students are expected to come dressed appropriately according to expected weather conditions to attend recess outdoors. School employees who supervise recess are to be obeyed in the same manner that students are expected to obey their classroom teacher.

Fort Madison Community School District expects all students to play in such a manner that facilitates safety and respect. Physical fighting will result in immediate removal from the playground and other disciplinary measures may be enforced.

Outside Food/Treats

Fort Madison Community School District allows for outside food/treats to be brought to a classroom by a student. If a student would like to bring outside treats, they must first notify and receive permission from the classroom teacher. All outside food/treats must be commercially produced and prepackaged.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT

I acknowledge that I have received or can access a copy of the Fort Madison Community Schools K-6 Student Handbook available at FMCSD.org. I understand the student handbook contains important information. I acknowledge I am expected to be familiar with the contents. I also understand that I should consult my student's Principal or the Director of Student Services with any questions I have about the contents of the student handbook.

I understand that the student handbook is a general source of information and may not include every possible situation that may arise.

Parent's Signature

Date

Parent's Name (Printed)