

Five Fork Middle School 2008-2009

MISSION STATEMENT

FFMS prepares students to be independent learners and responsible world citizens by providing a rich and challenging curriculum in a safe, nurturing, and structured environment.

BELIEF STATEMENT

We believe that students learn best when

- a) they are involved in their own learning*
- b) their lessons are connected to the real world*
- c) their learning is connected across content areas*
- d) meaning and understanding are sought*
- e) parents are involved in their children's learning*
- f) teachers exemplify the following:*
 - *genuine concern*
 - *encouragement*
 - *enthusiasm*
 - *patience*
 - *active involvement*
 - *openness*
 - *sense of humor*
 - *high expectations*
 - *fairness*

AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Five Forks offers a wealth of after school activities including: intramurals, concerts, basketball games, and club activities. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that their child is picked up on time. Late pickups will result in the student being unable to attend future after school events.

AGENDA BOOKS

Each student will be expected to use the FFMS agenda book as a means of organizing schoolwork and for providing communications between parents and teachers. Students will be using their agenda books as a hall pass. This record is maintained in the back of the agenda book. **Cost for this book is \$6.00.**

ATTENDANCE

Regular school attendance is essential for a quality education. The time missed from class results in a loss of many educational experiences. To be successful in school students must be on time to school, remain in school until the end of the day, and be at school every day possible. We encourage you to make every effort to schedule dental and doctor appointments after regular school hours. Students arriving after 9:20 A.M. are counted tardy. In order to be counted present a student must attend at least half of the school day (approximately 3 hours, 20 minutes). The cutoff time is 12:40 P.M.

Students will be considered truant after five (5) unexcused absences. Also, students who are 14 and above and have 10 or more unexcused absences will be unable to obtain, keep, or renew a driver's or learner's permit. Excessive absences may warrant an attendance review committee meeting with the county social worker to review an attendance plan.

Check In

When a student arrives late to school, he/she must sign-in at the office. It is not necessary for parents to accompany students to the office; however, the school must have a note indicating why he/she is late. The note should be given to the homeroom teacher. The student will be given a hall pass to class after signing in. Excessive unexcused tardiness will result in an administrative referral and possible consequences.

Check Out

If a student is to be checked out prior to dismissal, parents must come to the office before 3:30 P.M. and ask the school secretary to call for the student. The parent must sign the student out before the student can leave the building. **Proper identification is required.** It is helpful for the parent to know which class the student is in at the time the parent wants him/her dismissed.

If it is necessary for a high school brother, sister, or friend to pick up a middle school student, the middle school student **must** bring a note to the office stating this immediately after morning announcements. The school secretary will call the parent to verify the note. All special request notes **must** be brought to the office at the **beginning** of the school day in order to be verified by office personnel.

Excused Absences

In the case of a necessary absence from school, a student must bring a written excuse from parent/guardian stating the reason for the absence. This excuse must be given to the homeroom teacher on the day the student returns to school.

State Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.10 defines the following as excused absences:

1. Personal illness or attendance in school endangers a student's health or the health of others. (i) Local boards of education may require students to present appropriate medical documentation upon the return to school for the purpose of validating that the absence is an excused absence.
2. A serious illness or death in the student's immediate family necessitating absence from school. (i) In the event of a serious illness in a student's immediate family, local boards of education may require students to present appropriate medical documentation regarding the family member upon return to school for the purpose of validating that the absence is an excused absence.
3. A court order or an order by a government agency, including preinduction physical examinations for service in the armed forces, mandating absence from school.
4. Observing holidays, necessitating absence from school.
5. Conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to student health or safety (For Gwinnett County Public Schools, the closure of schools for hazardous conditions may only be made by the Superintendent for the purposes of excused absences.)
6. Local boards of education shall count students present when they are serving as pages for the Georgia General Assembly.
7. Public school students whose parent or guardian is in military service and who is being sent overseas for active duty or returning from active duty are allowed five excused absences per school year, for the day or days missed from school to visit with his or her parent or legal guardian prior to such deployment or during leave.

Unexcused Absences

Family trips are deemed unexcused and must be recorded as such.

For work missed during absences due to prearranged unexcused trips, **the student is responsible** for the following:

- 1) Staying current with his/her classes and completing assignments;
- 2) Taking tests over material covered during his/her absence if the teacher so desires;
- 3) If an assignment sheet is given prior to absence it is expected that work will be turned in the day the student returns.

BIRTHDAY BALLOONS

If students receive balloons or other gifts during the academic day, those items will remain in the front office for parent pick-up. Balloons are also a safety issue on the bus.

BUS INFORMATION

The bus driver will implement the following interventions for misbehavior on the bus:

1st Step - Verbal reminder, conference with student, bus seat assignment, phone call home to parents to discuss the problem

2nd Step - Parent notification form

3rd Step - Referral to administrator

Major offenses will be referred directly to the administration.

Bus Discipline

In order to maintain the safety of all students, we follow the following discipline scale:

1st bus referral: 1-5-day suspension from bus

2nd bus referral: 6-10-day suspension from bus

3rd bus referral: 11-15-day suspension from bus

4th bus referral – could result in suspension from the school bus for the remainder of the school year.

Additional consequences may be assigned depending on the level of the infraction.

Request to Ride Another School Bus

We will allow students to ride another bus for emergencies only. If the change is for every morning or afternoon, we will have the driver add the student to the official bus list, and we will need a one-time note. The note must have:

- Student's full name
- Homeroom teacher's name
- Name of the student whom your child will be going home with and the bus number
- Date/s that your student will be riding the alternate bus

The note must contain a current daytime phone number in order to be confirmed. The student should take the note to the front office upon arrival at school.

An Alternate Bus form must be completed before the student may board the bus. If the request is not approved, usual transportation is followed. Some buses are restricted due to capacity limits.

CHEATING

“Cheating includes any attempt to defraud, deceive, or mislead a teacher in arriving at an honest evaluation of student achievement.”

Cheating includes, but is not limited to:

- 1) Looking at a test, quiz, or exam of another student while taking an evaluation.
- 2) Attempting to communicate information in any way during an in-class evaluation.
- 3) Having cheat sheets, or information written on the body or other personal objects.
- 4) Using programmed calculators or other electronic devices unless expressly permitted by the teacher.
- 5) Looking at quiz, test, or exam materials prior to their administration.
- 6) Failing to properly give credit when the ideas, words, or works of others are used.
- 7) Giving information regarding an evaluation to another student who is scheduled to take the same evaluation.
- 8) Submitting work through the use of technology that is not created by the student. This includes, but is not limited to file sharing (submitting the same work with different header, copying files to and from disks) and/or receiving or purchasing solutions or works from others.

Cheating is inexcusable conduct and will be dealt with strictly. A zero will be given for the assignment, the teacher will contact the parent(s), and a record of the incident will be placed in the student’s disciplinary file.

CLINIC WORKER

Five Forks Middle has a full-time clinic worker; however, we do not supply any medications. All medications received from parents in the clinic must be supplied in the original container (no loose pills in a plastic bag). Prescription medication (including inhalers) must have a copy of the pharmacy label taped to them. This serves as the doctor’s signature. The clinic clerk will be responsible for dispensing daily medication.

All medication must be transported to/from FFMS by a parent/guardian, not students. A medical form must be completed and signed by the parent/guardian before any medication can be administered. The medication and form should be taken to the clinic immediately upon arrival to school. The medication form is available on the FFMS web site.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

It is the parent’s responsibility to notify the school in writing of any changes to contact information (telephone, email, address, emergency contacts, etc.).

Thursday Updates

On Thursday of each week, parents may expect their student to bring home information of interest. Many important papers such as parks and recreation notices, community school programs, P.T.A updates, mid-term reports, progress reports, and general information relating to our school will be sent home on Thursday afternoons of each week via students. It is our hope that by clustering information we will increase the items that parents receive at home. Please ask your students on Thursday if they have any news from their school!

Five Forks Flyer

Our e-mail newsletter, The Five Forks Flyer, is sent monthly.

Phone Messenger System

This communication tool will automatically place phone calls confirming absentees, send reminders, announcements, emergency information, etc.

CONFERENCES

Teacher conferences are held at the request of the parent or teacher. Parents may request a conference by sending a note to the teachers or through the school secretary (770-972-1506). Conferences will be held in the morning before school begins or during the team planning time. Anytime you have a concern, we request that initial contact be made with the teachers.

Because a middle school student has a team of teachers, it is necessary that the request for a conference date be made several days in advance to allow the various teachers to adjust their schedules and clear their calendars for a meeting date and time.

Early release days will be provided in the fall and spring to accommodate parent conferences for the purpose of discussing student progress. Each parent will be offered an opportunity for an individual conference during the school year.

CONNECTION CLASSES

Each student is rotated through a set pattern of connection classes each year. Connection classes consist of physical education, health, art, technology education, computer technology, foreign language, music appreciation, journalism, peer leaders, and drama. Band, chorus, and orchestra are full year programs and are taken in place of other connection

classes. **These classes cannot be dropped without administrative approval. A change cannot be made once the nine weeks begins.**

COUNSELING

As part of the school curriculum, counseling services are available to all FFMS students during the school day. The middle school counseling program includes prevention and intervention activities to assist students in their academic, emotional, and social development. These needs can be met through classroom guidance lessons, small group counseling, and individual counseling. ***If parents would like for their child to be excluded from individual or group counseling, the FFMS counseling department must have that request in writing.***

DISCIPLINE

GENERAL SCHOOL RULES & INFORMATION

The Gwinnett County Board of Education Parent/Student Discipline Handbook is sent home at the beginning of the year. Please review these rules and return the signed sheet to your child's homeroom teacher.

LOCAL DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

◆ The classroom teacher is the first line of student management. The school's philosophy is to provide an optimum learning environment for all students. Teachers keep records on a student having discipline problems. A teacher may develop a behavioral contract with the student or assign detention if the student continues to be a discipline problem. Individual teacher teams may utilize other consequences. If a student continues inappropriate behavior, an administrative discipline referral will be the next step.

- Administrative Detention is assigned by administrators and is held after school from 4-6 P.M. Twenty-four hours notice is given to parents to insure transportation and prompt pickup. The detention will be rescheduled if parents note sufficient reason. Failure to report to an assigned detention without sufficient reason noted by parents will result in additional consequences.

- Saturday School is assigned by administrators. It is assigned for a period of time from 8:30 A.M. -12:30 P.M. on designated Saturdays. Twenty-four hours notice is given to parents to insure transportation and prompt pickup. When a student is assigned Saturday School, the parents will receive information about the behavior and work expectations of the student during this time.

- Behavior Contracts are developed to help students by listing specific behaviors that are expected in school. Failure to meet these expectations will result in predetermined consequences. All aspects of the behavior contract will be established and reviewed by the parent(s), student, teacher, and administration.

- In-School Suspension is another discipline intervention. Students may be placed in In-School Suspension for continuous disruptive behavior or serious infractions of rules. I.S.S. is designed to allow students to remain in school so that their educational progress is not interrupted. Students in I.S.S. are isolated from their peers and must remain in the I.S.S. room for the entire school day. Students are under direct supervision during this period of time. Students are expected to complete their assignments in I.S.S. If students fail to finish their assignments, they may receive additional in-school time. If students are disruptive, they may receive out-of-school suspension or additional I.S.S. days.

- Suspension from school is a disciplinary procedure used if the above procedures are ineffective. A student can be suspended for up to ten days from the local school without appearing before a county panel. A panel may be convened upon the recommendation of the principal. A student may also be suspended from school for any serious infraction of school or county rules and regulations. A suspended student shall make-up those major assignments (major tests or assignments) that will have a significant impact on the student's final grade. It is the student's responsibility to request and complete make-up work upon return to school or on the specified due date.

- A county disciplinary panel may be called by the principal for any student who has a major offense or an accumulation of minor offenses. See *System-Wide Disciplinary Procedures Rule 12* for details. Records of the panel hearing are kept on file in the Assistant Principal's office.

- If rules are violated on days before holidays or summer break, students will receive consequences upon returning to school.

- Corporal Punishment is not administered at FFMS.

LOCAL SCHOOL RULES

GCPS Student Conduct Behavior Code 11A

- 1) Students are expected to conduct themselves as mature young adults while on the FFMS campus and while participating in school sponsored events.
- 2) Students are expected to comply with reasonable requests of staff, including identifying themselves by name when asked.

- 3) Running in the building is absolutely prohibited.
- 4) Loud and boisterous behavior is not allowed.
- 5) Do not block hallways. Do not congregate in groups in the hallways. Move in an orderly manner to class. Walk on the right side of the hallway. Be courteous in the hallways.
- 6) Students must exit the building by 4:00 in the afternoons unless at a school sponsored activity supervised by a teacher.
- 7) Students are not to loiter in the restrooms.
- 8) No food or drinks are allowed in the hallways or classrooms.
- 9) Students may not chew gum on campus.

DRESS CODE

FFMS acknowledges that good grooming and personal attire positively affect student achievement and conduct. Five Forks' dress code is designed to reduce the likelihood of distraction or disruption and to maintain an academic focus in the classroom and on campus. Instruction is interrupted when a student has to be seen by an administrator because of inappropriate dress. If in the judgment of the administration or staff, a student is dressed inappropriately, the student will be required to change clothing. Often, the student has to miss instructional time while waiting for a change of clothing to be brought to the school. **Time out of class will be regarded as unexcused.**

FFMS administration and staff would like the cooperation of the students and parents in reviewing the student's dress to insure it meets the following dress code guidelines before the student comes to school.

- 1) **Headgear – Headgear is prohibited and must be kept out of sight in the building.** This includes, but is not limited to, caps, hats, hoods, bandanas, wave caps, sweatbands, sunglasses, or any other head covering. No combs, rakes, curlers, or picks can be worn in the hair. Exceptions for religious or medical reasons may be granted by the principal.
- 2) **Shirts/Blouses/Tops/T-Shirts** – Blouses/shirts should be constructed so that the **tops of the shoulders are covered** (no halter tops, strapless tops, spaghetti straps, or bare shoulder tops of any type will be allowed). Blouses/shirts that expose any portion of the waist, hips or midriff are not allowed. **(If you raise your arms to shoulder level and the stomach shows, the top is unacceptable.)** Other blouses/shirts that are not appropriate for school include, but are not limited to, low-cut, see through, backless, or tube tops. **Rips or holes are not allowed in shirts/tops.** Boys are not to wear sleeveless shirts (except in P.E.). (Boys must wear shirts in P.E.).
- 3) Excessive make-up and hair coloring that could potentially disrupt the learning environment is unacceptable and consequences will be issued.
- 4) Tattoos, stickers, or drawings on skin are not allowed.
- 5) **Shorts/Skirts/Pants** – All shorts and skirts must be no shorter than 8 inches from the bottom of the knee. Slits in skirts cannot be above mid-thigh. **Waistline of shorts/skirts/pants must be on or above the hips with no underwear showing.** There should be no rips or holes above mid-thigh.
- 6) **Students may not wear trench coats or other long coats that resemble the style of a trench coat to school.** Students may not wear blankets, capes, or cloaks to school. All coats must be properly worn.
- 7) **Shoes** – Health regulations and safety factors require that shoes be worn at all times at school (bedroom shoes or **flip flops** are not allowed).
- 8) **Undergarments should not be visible.**
- 9) No pajamas or sleepwear of any kind are to be worn to school.
- 10) Stretch, Lycra, spandex or nylon tights, leotards, biker pants, cheerleading shorts, or underwear worn as an outer garment are strictly prohibited (except in P.E.).
- 11) Overalls must fit and be fastened appropriately. A shirt of proper length and style must be worn under the overalls at all times.
- 12) No student clothing shall display words or symbols that advocate or depict violence, drugs, alcohol, sex, illegal gang affiliation or other illegal activity expressed or implied. No student clothing or accessories shall be disruptive (or have caused past disruption) to the school environment.
- 13) **Jewelry or accessories that may be used as weapons are not to be worn at school.** This includes, but is not limited to, wallet chains, jewelry such as spiked rings, spiked bracelets, two or three finger rings that are joined, and bulky chains worn around the neck or waist. Sharp objects that could pose a danger, such as spikes or safety pins, are not allowed on clothing or book bags.
- 14) Students are not allowed to display clothing or symbols that have been identified by the Gwinnett County Police Gang Taskforce as being commonly identified with gangs. Garments, jewelry, body art and tattoos that communicate gang allegiance are not to be worn at school, and no item may be worn in a manner that communicates gang affiliation. **Gang related attire includes but is not limited to the following:** Students rolling up one pant leg, long bulky chains and necklaces, gang styled belt buckles (belt buckles which have Old English script letters and symbols), large oversized pendants on necklace and chains, bandanas, altering clothing from its original form to change the names and/or

intended marking on the clothing, sweat, head, and/or wrist bands, and draping articles of clothing, towels, or other objects out of pants pockets or over the shoulder or neck area.

- 15) All belts must be properly fastened around the waist. The belt should not be excessive in length and should not be hanging from either side of the body.
- 16) All students should be dressed in a symmetrical fashion. Students may not wear clothing or accessories in a manner that would distinguish a particular side of their body.
- 17) Any student dress/appearance not specifically stated which the faculty or staff deems distracting will not be permitted. It is essential that students respect the learning environment by being appropriately dressed for school. The purpose of the student dress code is not to inhibit any persons taste in attire, but rather to better facilitate the process of education through reasonable guidelines of "dress" instilling dignity and pride. Students wearing clothing or accessories not described in these rules but which becomes distracting to the learning environment or identified as gang-attire will receive a written warning in advance of any disciplinary action.
- 18) The Principal or his/her designee for specific reasons may make exceptions to the FFMS dress code.
- 19) Dress code expectations include field trip experiences.

DRIVING LAW

TEENAGE AND ADULT DRIVER RESPONSIBILITY LAW

(House Bill 681)

The Teenage and Adult Driver Responsibility Law (House Bill 681) requires that the local school district central office report to the Department of Public Safety a student who: (1) has more than ten consecutive school days of unexcused absences in any semester; or (2) has been suspended from school for threatening, striking, or causing bodily harm to a teacher or other school personnel; possession or sale of drugs or alcohol on school property; or possession or use of a weapon on school property. Upon receiving this report, the Department of Public Safety will revoke or will not issue your driver's license or driver's permit. All students 15 through 17 years old are required to bring a notarized Certificate of Attendance form when they go to apply for a driver's license or permit. These certificates may be obtained from the school attendance clerk. A nominal fee of \$2.00 will be charged, payable by cash or check to Five Forks Middle School.

ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT

Students are not permitted to bring radios, mp3 players, laser pointers, tape players, walkie-talkies, CD players, camcorders, or any other type of electronic equipment to school. These electronic items will be confiscated, and the students will be subject to disciplinary consequences. Confiscated items will be returned to a parent or guardian only, and must be picked up from the school office.

ELIGIBILITY

Only academically eligible 8th grade students are allowed to participate in tryouts, practices, exhibitions and game events. Academic eligibility is determined on the first day of the semester and is based on students having passed five of six courses the previous semester.

Determine academic eligibility;

For the last 18-week semester, the pass-fail for the two exploratory periods (or the time spent other than math, language arts, science, and social studies) will be determined by the following method:

- The four grading periods will stand alone (each two subjects, each nine-week segment = four grades)
- Any two of the exploratory grades may be combined and if the numerical average equals or exceeds 70%, then one of the six possible classes is passed.
- If the other two exploratory grades are combined, and these grades average 70% or more then two of the six possible classes are passed.

GIFTED PROGRAM

The Gwinnett County Public Schools gifted education program serves students in grades K – 12 by providing academic challenges for those who are intellectually advanced. The gifted program is called FOCUS at the elementary level, PROBE at the middle grades level, and Gifted Program at the high school level. Any person who has knowledge of a student's intellectual abilities may refer him/her to his/her homeroom teacher or the local school's gifted referral committee.

The PROBE classes offer accelerated learning and enriched academic curriculum experiences that focus on and extend the Gwinnett County Public Schools' Academic Knowledge and Skills. These classes are provided through a content-based delivery model. Information about the PROBE program can be obtained

from the PROBE teachers, the counselors, or the administration.

Students are identified and placed in gifted education based on criteria established by the Georgia General Assembly and the Georgia State Board of Education. Students who transfer from gifted education programs within the state of Georgia have reciprocity into the Gwinnett program providing the original placement was correctly completed. Students who transfer from out-of-state must meet the Georgia requirements before placement in a gifted class. Parents should notify the school when registering their child that he/she was identified as a gifted education student in their previous school.

GRADING

Student academic progress is reported on progress reports as a numerical average. The following scale is used:

- A 90-100 (excellent progress)
- B 80-89 (above average progress)
- C 74-79 (average progress)
- D 70-73 (below average progress)
- U below 70 (unsatisfactory progress)

Conduct and Effort shall be reported as follows:

- E = Excellent
- S = Satisfactory
- N = Needs to Improve
- U = Unsatisfactory

HANDICAPPED ACCESS/MOBILITY IMPAIRED

Gwinnett County Public Schools wishes to meet the needs of all our students and families. If any member of your family needs assistance or has any questions regarding mobility impaired issues or handicapped access, please contact the principal of your local school.

HARASSMENT

Harassment and/or bullying are not tolerated. If a student feels that another student is harassing him, it should be reported immediately to a teacher, counselor, or administrator.

HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH

The Stewart B. McKinney/Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth Act ensures the educational rights and protections for children and youth experiencing homelessness. It provides legal protections for children and youth in homeless situations to enroll in, attend, and succeed in school

and preschool programs. In accordance with this law, Gwinnett County Public Schools affords homeless children and youth equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education such as Head Start, Even Start, State Pre-K, and Title I Preschool Programs as provided to other students. Homeless children and youth will have access to education and other services that he/she needs to have an opportunity to meet the same challenging state student academic achievement standards to which all students are held. Please contact the counseling department for further information.

HOMEWORK

Homework reinforces concepts presented at school and is an integral component of each student's educational experience. It provides an opportunity for students to explore and master skills more thoroughly than class time alone will allow. Additionally, homework encourages the development of responsibility, self-discipline, and personal study skills.

HONOR ROLL

An Honor Roll is posted each nine weeks to recognize all students who have earned all A's or A's and B's on their progress report.

INDIVIDUAL MONEY MAKING PROJECTS

Students are not allowed to sell or trade items at school. The school should also not be used as a place for distributing items sold outside the school. Distribution of non-school materials is not allowed.

LOCKERS

A student may share a locker with another student. No one will know the combination except the locker mate, the homeroom teacher, and the administration. Students should secure personal items in classroom and P.E. lockers.

Lockers are not the private property of the students. Lockers are issued to students as a service and for their convenience. Students are responsible for the contents of their lockers. Lockers may be searched at any time without the student's consent.

LOST AND FOUND

Lost and found is located in the custodians' office. To claim lost articles students should see a member of

the custodial staff for assistance with their lost clothing. Jewelry will be in the front office.

Note: All items contained in the Lost and Found box will be displayed once each month in a location accessible to all students. During the first two days of each month lost and found items are displayed in the cafeteria to give students another opportunity to claim any lost belongings. Any unclaimed clothing is given to a charitable organization.

LUNCHROOM

At Five Forks, students are offered a wide variety of food choices that provide a balanced meal. The price for breakfast is \$1.00, and our regular hot lunch is \$2.00 per day. Adult meals are \$1.25 for breakfast and \$2.50 for a regular hot lunch. Extra milk is \$.35. **We ask for your support of our school nutrition program by not bringing food from restaurants into the cafeteria.**

Parents, you are encouraged to come and eat with your child. Please sign in at the front office upon arrival. Checks or cash for your child's account should be taken to the cafeteria in the morning, so that the cashier's line runs smoothly and efficiently. The student's seven-digit student ID number is used as a debit code. For your added convenience, an online prepayment system is available at www.mealpay.com.

MAKE-UP WORK

When absent it is the student's responsibility to ask for assignments missed. The student must also return the work to each teacher within the time limit. For each day absent, students will be given one day to make up work. ***It is the student's responsibility to turn in make-up work without teachers having to give reminders.***

Please allow 24 hours for teachers to gather assignments for students who will be absent more than one day from school. Parents should call the front office at 770-972-1506 to request the student's books and assignments.

MEDIA CENTER

The Media Center Program at Five Forks strives to make numerous materials and services available to assist students with the learning process. Computer resources are available both at school and from home. (For home use passwords ask the Media staff.) There are also many books available for recreational reading. Student achievement is our primary goal.

Hours – The Media Center is open through the school day. Students must secure a pass from their classroom teacher on the day prior to using the media center. With this pass students may come to the Media Center no earlier than 8:15 A.M.

Sign In – Students visiting the media center without a teacher must sign in upon arrival. A teacher issued pass stating the purpose of their visit is required. When returning to class, the pass must be signed by the media staff.

Checking Out a Book - A book is due ten days from the day it is checked out, excluding weekends, holidays and teacher workdays. Students may have up to three books checked out at a time. A student may not check out a book for another student.

Overdue Books - Students may not check out another book until the overdue book is returned or paid for.

Reference Materials - Students may check out reference materials overnight. Items may be checked out after 3:30 P.M. and returned before first period the following day. A copy machine is available for student use at ten cents/copy. Students are charged five cents for copies printed from the computers.

Community of Readers – Reading is actively encouraged at Five Forks, with programs that promote reading various genres, levels, and interests.

POSITIVE RECOGNITION

Students who have exhibited exceptional classroom performance or positive leadership may be recognized in many ways.

Student of the Month - Each month teachers elect a student to be recognized for outstanding citizenship, effort and/or attitude. These students attend a special breakfast in their honor, their names are displayed on the student recognition bulletin board, and a congratulatory letter is mailed home to parents.

Positive Notes - Teachers recognize students through post cards and e-mail sent to students and their parents congratulating the students for something well done in class. The principal also sends positive notes and letters of recognition for student accomplishments.

Honor Rolls for Academic Achievement

All A's - Students earning all A's receive a special treat. Their names appear in the school newsletter and on

the hall bulletin boards. At the spring awards program these students will receive a certificate.

All A's and B's - These hard working students have their names appear in the school newsletter, on the student recognition bulletin boards, and receive a special treat. They will also receive a certificate at the spring awards program.

End-of-Year Award Programs - Grade level award programs honoring students' achievements are scheduled during the last days of the school year.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress Reports will be issued following the end of four and one-half (4 1/2) weeks of each nine-week grading period. Parents should sign and return the original copy of the report to the teacher.

Nine-week grade reports will be issued following the end of each nine-week grading period. The student is responsible for taking the report home to his or her parents or guardians. Nine-week grade report envelopes are to be signed by the parents or guardian and returned to the homeroom teacher within five (5) school days.

Should a grade fall from a passing grade to a failing grade after the four and one-half (4 1/2) week progress report is issued, the teacher will notify the parent or guardian by telephone, e-mail, or in writing as soon as possible after the grade drops and before the end of the nine-week grading period.

SCHOOL SAFETY

We take a proactive approach to school safety. Included in this effort are the following:

- Fire drills
- Bus evacuation drills
- Tornado drills
- Crisis plan
- Lock down drill
- Supervision during class changes
- Limited access to building
- Cluster security and resource officer
- Police security at basketball games and PTA socials
- First Response for medical assistance
- Student check-out procedure
- State immunization requirements
- Random locker checks
- Monitoring of bus arrival and dismissal
- County help hot line (770-822-6513)

- First aid and health information through Health classes
- Counseling services based on student need or in time of crisis

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Students may purchase pencils and paper from vending machines located on Gold Drive at the bookkeeper's office. These machines may be used at any time with the permission of the teacher and a hall pass.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Students with special needs who meet the eligibility requirements are provided services. The students receive help during all or part of the school day throughout the year.

Information about these programs can be obtained from the student's teachers, the counselors, or the administration.

STUDENT RECORDS

Parents have a right to review their child's educational records. These records may be shared with parents at conferences.

STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM

The Student Support Team (SST) is a committee composed of counselors, teachers, administrators, and other key personnel. The committee reviews academic or behavioral concerns of students. Parents will be invited to the SST meeting. If the parent cannot attend the meeting, the results will be shared with parents by letter.

SILENT STUDY HALL

The arrival of students before 9:00 AM is highly discouraged. Any student on campus before 9:00 A.M. will need to report to the gym for silent study hall.

TELEPHONE

If a student needs to use the telephone, there is a designated phone for their use in the front office. Students must show their phone pass to office personnel before using the phone.

The primary purpose of the school telephone is communication between parents and school

personnel. **There is a charge of 35 cents for calls.** Students will not be allowed to call home for homework assignments, etc. Classroom instruction cannot be interrupted to call students to the office to talk on the telephone. Emergency messages will be delivered to the student via the teacher.

Students are not allowed to use a cell phone during the school day or during their bus ride to and from school. **All cell phones must be turned off during the day and out of view during the school day.** Cell phones that are confiscated during the course of the academic day must be retrieved by the parent/guardian of the student. Consequences will be assigned by an administrator for violation of this rule.

TEXTBOOKS, EQUIPMENT AND INSTRUMENTS

All materials, textbooks, equipment, and instruments are purchased by the taxpayers of Gwinnett County through Gwinnett County Board of Education. FFMS is authorized by the School Board to issue and/or loan materials, textbooks, equipment, and instruments to students for their use during the school year.

The student and his/her parent are responsible for returning the materials at the end of each school year when an inventory is taken. Students will be charged for items lost or misplaced. If the item is later found a refund would be given.

The students and his/her parent are also responsible for losses, damages, or vandalism, whether accidental or purposeful that occurs to any material, textbook, equipment, or instrument that has been issued or loaned to a student.

VALUABLES BROUGHT TO SCHOOL

Students are not to bring valuables or large sums of money to school. Students are strongly encouraged to lock all valuables in their classroom/PE lockers. **For students who bring valuables and/or money to school, the risk is to be assumed by the student and his/her parents.**

WALKERS AND CAR RIDERS

Students are required to have a car rider/walker pass visible to staff members as they leave campus. Car rider/walker passes are issued to students upon the receipt of a note signed by the parent granting permission. Car riders are dismissed prior to bus call. After all car riders and buses have left campus, walkers will be dismissed.

Parents who provide their child's transportation should use the driveway circling the rear of the school for pickup and delivery. A single lane policy is in effect; **cars and buses loading or unloading students may not be passed.**