

Freeport Middle School

Student Handbook 2017/2018

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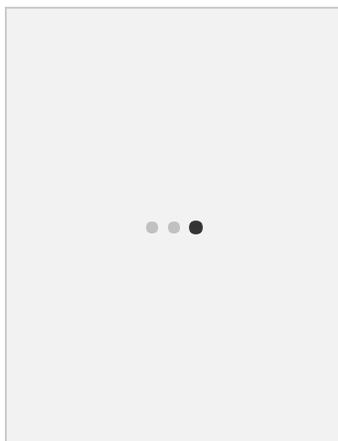


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***Please note that it is the right of administrators to change the terms of the handbook at any time, without notice. New expectations and changes will be posted in the handbook online. If there is a conflict between the handbook and policies, policies govern.**

Parent/Guardians: Please review Handbook with your child.

INTRODUCTION

Freeport Middle School Mission Statement

The Freeport Middle School exists to serve the unique academic, physical, social, and emotional needs of students who are in a special and critical period of their lives as they change from childhood to adolescence.

The staff of Freeport Middle School is committed to creating and maintaining an orderly, trusting, and caring environment where teaching and learning are exciting and students are assisted as they develop responsibility. All aspects of the school's organization, curricular and cocurricular activities are child centered and designed to accommodate individual learning styles so that all may experience success.

BELIEF STATEMENTS OF FREEPORT MIDDLE SCHOOL

- **All programs are child centered** and all school activities are designed to accommodate the unique needs of middle school students.
- **Grade level teams** assume responsibility for planning a variety of instructional and non-instructional activities.
- **Teacher-advisor** programs exist to assist all students.

- **The process** of learning is as important as the content.
- Planning and instruction are **interdisciplinary** and extend across grade levels.
- **Exploratory courses, activities, and clubs are available** according to students' interests and abilities.
- **Flexible grouping** is important in all areas.
- **Parents' involvement** during the middle school years is crucial for success.

Faculty Message: Welcome to Students of Freeport Middle School

As you settle into Freeport Middle School you will see that our school is designed and organized for students your age. It is different from both the elementary and high school.

This is a time for you to explore. You will discover new skills and areas of success; you will develop new interests. The time to expand your knowledge and venture into new areas is now!

An important goal of our school is to teach you **how** to learn. We will encourage you to think for yourself, learn the art of asking useful questions, to seek answers on your own, and to study effectively. We will also emphasize the following skills:

1. How to organize materials, time, and information.
2. How and when to ask for help.
3. How to listen and follow directions.
4. How to begin and complete an assignment or task.

Student Code of Conduct

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Everyone has the right to feel **safe** and **welcome** at Freeport Middle School. Bullying, harassment, and mean teasing are unacceptable. "WE DON'T DO THAT HERE" is our way of reminding one another that **everyone has the responsibility** for ensuring that the school environment will be free of disrespect and violence. Another important thing to remember is that students absolutely need to tell an adult if they feel unsafe at school. It is the responsibility of ALL adults in our school and community to help everyone feel safe at school. If your child is being bullied please let the Principal know so it can be addressed immediately. (Refer to policy JIC)

FIVE IMPORTANT SCHOOL RULES

Even though a specific rule may not be listed below, we expect everyone to respect the rights of others.

1. **Bullying of any kind** (physical, verbal, or written) is **unacceptable** and will result in suspensions. "I was just joking" is never an acceptable excuse for making others uncomfortable.
2. **Vandalism of any kind** is **unacceptable**.
3. **Rough play or pretend fighting** is not permitted. Often people lose control and get hurt. Others who are watching may be hurt or feel threatened.
4. **Arrive for class on time** with necessary materials (pencils, pens, books, etc.)

5. **Public displays of affection** (kissing, hugging, hand holding, etc.) are not appropriate in school or during school activities

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ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

Parents can call the school any time before 7:30 AM on the day of the absence. If parents know prior to the day of the absence they may call and leave a message the night before. (865-6051 and press 1). Students are expected to make up any work missed as a result of absences from class. Students who are absent are encouraged to visit the FMS web sites or email the teachers directly for homework assignments. Students have two days to make up work for each day they are out sick. School attendance is required by state law and policy JHB will be followed for students who are truant. If a student is out for 3 consecutive days or 5 days total over a two week period a note from your doctor will be required to excuse the absences.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A copy of each day's Announcements is emailed to all students, staff and parent email list by 4:00pm for the following day. Students should check for information of importance to them. Copies are also available in the office and on the FMS Web site.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS/DISCIPLINE

FMS students are expected to be courteous, orderly, and respectful of the rights of others. Disruptive behavior and harassing others will not be tolerated. Parents will be contacted by staff members if students participate in disruptive behavior. If students continue to behave inappropriately, they may not be allowed to attend school or extracurricular activities for a time and a family conference will be required to discuss conditions for their attendance. Freeport Middle School does use video cameras to monitor students and will use the tapes to determine discipline for students.

Discipline Rubric for Inappropriate Behavior

Although most forms of behavior will be governed by self-regulation, common decency, common sense, and mutual respect of students, faculty and administrators, some rules must be specifically stated. The following infractions of school rules will result in the consequences stated in the rubric.

The offenses listed in this rubric do not cover all incidents that may result in disciplinary action. Student behavior that violates general norms of student conduct will result in disciplinary action by the administration whose judgment will be based on the seriousness of that behavior relative to the offense. The following rubric is the general guideline the administrator will follow; individual situations may require additional discipline at the administrator's discretion. Violations of some school rules are also violations of the law and under certain circumstances will be referred to the police, superintendent and school board. (e.g., theft, drugs, alcohol, weapons, assaults, and traffic offenses.) (Refer to school district policy JIC). Any student suspended or having detentions during the three weeks prior to a social is not allowed at the social.

RESPECT

Incident	Disciplinary Action		
	First Offense	Second Offense	Third Offense
<p>Assault Including but not limited to fighting, assault and/or battery. Physically touching another person to intimidate or invoking pain on another student is considered an assault.</p>	1 to 5 days of out of school suspension, Police will be notified and possible charges pressed	Minimum of 5 days of out of school suspension, re-entry meeting with Principal, Police will be notified and possible charges pressed	Minimum of 10 days of out of school suspension, re entry meeting with principal, Police will be notified and possible charges pressed
<p>Bullying/Intimidation Harassment Harassment or intimidation of students via insults, rumors, etc. If the victim has been bullied by other students previously, the consequence will automatically be increased and step of the rubric will be skipped without warnings being given.</p>	Conference and/or mediation and/or minimum of 1 detention	Minimum of 1 day out of school suspension	Minimum of 3 days out of school suspension
<p>Disruption of School Function/Class Disruption – Any negative behavior that tends to disturb or endanger the educational process and/or the people involved, students watching a fight or bullying situation need to leave the scene and/or report it to a teacher</p>	Conference and/or detention	3 detentions and required meeting with guidance	Minimum of 1 day out of school suspension, minimum 3 detentions and required parent meeting with Principal
<p>Insubordination/ Disrespectful Behavior Refusal to identify one's self, disrespectful language, challenging authority, lying to an adult in authority, refusing to obey reasonable request, (running from an adult, refusing to leave an area when requested by an adult in authority, skips to step 2)</p>	Conference and/or detention and/or minimum of 1 out of school suspension	Minimum of 1 day out of school suspension	Minimum of 3 days out of school suspension
<p>Sexual Harassment/Misconduct Sexual harassment consists of sexual</p>	Conference, detention, possible	Minimum of 3 days out of school	Minimum of 5 days out of school

advances, requests for sexual favors or inappropriate verbal, written, physical contact or conduct of a sexual nature, including, but not limited to, touching oneself, another student, making suggestive statements or asking or sharing inappropriate pictures, which makes people uncomfortable in the educational process.	1-3 days out of school suspension, student meeting with guidance	suspension, parent meeting with Principal	suspension, parent meeting with Principal
Verbal or written statements, which threaten, intimidate, harass others or lead to possible assaults or bullying situations Anything that tends to incite violence and/or disrupt the school program	Possible 1 – 3 days out of school suspension, 2 detentions, meeting with guidance	Minimum of 3 days out of school suspension, re-entry meeting with Principal	Minimum of 5 days out of school suspension, required parent meeting with Principal
Vulgarity or Obscene Language/Gesture/ Profanity directed at other students Obscene language, gestures (written, drawn, acted, or spoken) between students and used openly in school	Minimum of 1 detention	Minimum of 2 detentions	Minimum of 1 day out of school suspension
Destruction / Misuse of School or Personal Property - This includes writing on objects not meant to be written on or other misuse that is a distraction to the education of others	Minimum of 1 detention	Minimum of 2 detention	Minimum of 1 day out of school suspension

RESPONSIBILITY

Incident	Disciplinary Action		
	First Offense	Second Offense	Third Offense
Dress Code Violation Any shorts or skirt shorter than the fingertips, no undergarments showing. No references to drugs, alcohol, weapons or violence on any clothing. Please see the handbook for further details.	Change of clothing	Change of clothing and parent contacted	Remainder of day suspension and parent contacted
Electronic Equipment and other Items not to be used during school hours Electronic music players, toys, recorders, pagers, phones, games, candy, gum,	Loss of item, student can retrieve the item at the end of the day (candy	Loss of item until parent retrieves the item (candy and gum will not	Loss of item for 1 week and parent retrieves item (candy and gum

chains, and other similar items are not allowed to be in or used in school.	and gum will not be returned)	be returned)	will not be returned)
Failure to Serve Student who did not serve their detention or other consequence	Reschedule detention and 1 additional detention	Reschedule detention and 1 additional detention	Reschedule detention and 1 additional detention
Truancy Unauthorized absence from school. After the 8th day, a letter will be sent to the parents and the superintendent based on Maine State Law	Minimum of 1 day in or out of school suspension	Minimum of 3 days in or out of school suspension	Minimum of 5 days in or out of school suspension.
Violation of the school department's Tobacco policy	Minimum of 1 day out of school suspension, substance abuse referral, guidance referral	Minimum of 3 days out of school suspension, required parent meeting with Principal	Minimum of 5 days out of school suspension, required parent meeting with Principal
Violation of the School Unit's Drug/Alcohol policy	Minimum of 5 days out of school suspension. Principal required to report incident to the Superintendent and School Committee for possible further consequences	Minimum of 10 days out of school suspension. Principal required to report incident to the Superintendent and School Committee for possible further consequences	Minimum of 10 days out of school suspension. Principal required to report incident to the Superintendent and School Committee for possible further consequences

HONESTY

Incident	Disciplinary Action		
	First Offense	Second Offense	Third Offense
Forging/Misrepresentation Plagiarizing/Cheating Forging and/or changing school or parental documents/misrepresentation of parent/guardian when calling school, cheating on school work, any form thereof, including stealing/destroying tests, or copying another's work (including cutting	Conference and/or minimum of 1 detention, work needs to be redone for full credit	Conference and minimum of 2 detentions, work needs to be redone for full credit	Conference and 5 detentions, work needs to be redone for full credit

and pasting from the internet w/o citing the source			
Leaving school grounds (step 3 on first offense) or class without permission	Minimum of 1 detention, and/or conference with Principal and/or guidance	Minimum of 3 detentions and conference with Principal and/or guidance	Minimum of 1 day suspension and parent meeting with Principal
Stealing or attempting to steal school or personal property	Minimum of 5 detentions, or suspension, return/replace property, police will be notified	Minimum of 3 days of suspension, return/replace property, police will be notified	Minimum of 3 days of suspension, return/replace property, police will be notified

Drugs and Alcohol

No student shall distribute, dispense, possess, use, or be under the influence of any alcoholic beverage, malt beverage, fortified wine, or other intoxicating liquor. Nor shall a student manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, use, or be under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, anabolic steroid, prescription drug, any other controlled substance defined in federal and state laws/regulations, any look-alike substance, or any substance that is represented to be a controlled substance. (Refer to school district policy JICH) These prohibitions apply to any student who is on school property, who is in attendance at school or at any school-sponsored activity, or whose conduct at any time or place directly interferes with the operations, discipline, or general welfare of the school. Random, unannounced police canine searches will take place in all areas of the school, including, but not limited to, personal bags and belongings.

In all cases, possession of paraphernalia, possession, use, or conduct showing effects of controlled substances or alcohol on school grounds will result in an automatic suspension. The selling or furnishing of drugs may result in the immediate recommendation to the School Committee for expulsion. (See Policy JICH)

Fire Crackers and Other Explosives

Possession of firecrackers and explosives is illegal and any student with them (detonated or not) will be referred to the Superintendent of Schools and to the police. The student will be suspended from school pending legal action.

Pyrotechnics

The setting of a fire or causing a disruption in the school or on school grounds by any devices, which are caused by fire, is a criminal offense. Any student who is responsible for, or contributes to such an act, will be suspended from school, and they will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

Smoking/Tobacco Use

Smoking and/or the possession of tobacco products in the building or anywhere on the school grounds are prohibited. Violations of this rule will result in disciplinary action. (Refer to school district policy ADC)

Weapons

Weapons are not permitted at Freeport Middle School. Any weapon or item that can be used as a weapon, (Examples of such articles include but are not limited to: pocket knives, stun guns, laser pointers, wrist bands and chokers with spikes, or any object which can cause harm to another) seen by a staff member will be taken. Depending on the nature of the weapon, the weapon or item may be turned over to the local law enforcement personnel. Disciplinary action will be taken which may include detention, suspension, meeting with the Superintendent/School Committee, or expulsion. (Refer to school district policy JICIA)

BICYCLES/SKATEBOARDS

State law requires helmets to be worn by everyone riding bicycles. Bikes are to be placed in the rack provided in front of the school. The bike must remain in the rack during school hours. Skateboards are not to be used in the school building ever; but may be used at recess as long as the student wears a helmet.

BOMB THREATS

The RSU No. 5 Board of Directors recognizes that bomb threats are a significant concern to the school unit. Whether real and carried out or intended as a prank or for some other purpose, a bomb threat represents a potential danger to the safety and welfare of students and staff and to the integrity of school property. Bomb threats disrupt the instructional program and learning environment and also place significant demands on school financial resources and public safety services. These effects occur even when such threats prove to be false. Any bomb threat will be regarded as an extremely serious matter and treated accordingly. The Board directs the Superintendent to react promptly and appropriately to information concerning bomb threats and to initiate or recommend suitable disciplinary action. Refer to NEPN/NSBA Code: EBCC for more information.

BUILDING USE AFTER SCHOOL HOURS

Students are not to loiter inside or outside the school building after 2:20pm. In order to be in the building, students must be supervised by a staff member. If there is a game or practice after school, students should get whatever they will need from their lockers before leaving because the building may not be open later. Students are not permitted to be in the gym without adult supervision.

BULLYING

The Board believes that bullying, including cyberbullying, is detrimental to student well-being and to student learning and achievement. It interferes with the mission of the schools to educate their students and disrupts the operations of the schools. Bullying affects not only students who are targets but also those who participate in and witness such behavior.

Bullying, including "cyberbullying," is not acceptable conduct in RSU5 and is prohibited. Retaliation for the reporting of incidents of such behavior is also prohibited. Students who violate this policy may be subject to

disciplinary action which may include suspension, expulsion or a series of graduated consequences including alternative discipline or other behavioral interventions. (Refer to NEPN/NSBA Code: JICK)

BUSES AND TRANSPORTATION

Students who live a mile or more from the school are provided bus transportation. Refer to policy EEA. Bus schedules are published in the local paper at the end of August. Questions about busing should be directed to the Director of Transportation, Dennis Ouellette (865-0928).

For safety reasons a student must have a note from their parent or guardian in order to ride a different bus at the end of the school day. We cannot accept phone calls requesting changes in bus transportation, but can accept emails and faxes in addition to notes from home. Please plan accordingly as the bus drivers will not allow changes without a written note. **FMS Fax #: 865-2902**

Students can have their privilege to ride the bus revoked for short or long terms due to behavior issues. It will become the parents' responsibility to transport the child to and from school. (Refer to policy EEAE)

CELLPHONE USE

School phones are to be used only by staff members for school business. Exceptions are made only for changes in schedules due to school sponsored activities such as sports, clubs, and at the request of a staff member. Cell phones are only allowed before or after school hours. Cell phones must be turned off and away during the school day. Students should plan ahead with their parents to avoid conflicts in after-school social schedules. Parents wanted to get a message to your child are encouraged to call the office. Students who have their phone out during the day without permission from a staff member will be asked to forfeit it over for the remainder of the day.

COMPUTER AND INTERNET USE

Students are required to sign an acceptable use policy before use of computers. (IJNDB-E). Policy IJNDB-R is the district's acceptable use policy. This includes what is acceptable and that discipline may be applied if the policy is not followed. The words laptop, computer, iPad and tablet are all considered the same for the middle school student handbook.

Student Computer and Internet Use

RSU No. 5's computers, network, and Internet access are provided to support the educational mission of the schools and to enhance the curriculum and learning opportunities for students and school staff. This policy and the accompanying rules also apply to laptops issued directly to students, whether they are used at school or off school premises. Compliance with RSU No. 5's policies and rules concerning computer and internet use is mandatory. Students who violate these policies and rules may have their computer privileges limited, suspended, or revoked. The building principal is authorized to determine, after considering the circumstances involved, whether and for how long a student's computer privileges will be altered. The building principal's decision shall be final. Violations of this policy and RSU No. 5's computer and Internet rules may also result in disciplinary action, referral to law enforcement, and/or legal action. RSU No. 5

computers remain under the control, custody, and supervision of the school unit at all times. The school unit monitors computer and Internet activity by students. Students have no expectation of privacy in their use of school computers, whether they are used on school property or elsewhere.

Internet Safety

RSU No. 5 uses filtering technology designed to block materials that are obscene or harmful to minors, including child pornography. Although RSU No. 5 takes precautions to supervise student use of the Internet, parents should be aware that RSU No. 5 cannot reasonably prevent all instances of inappropriate computer and Internet use by students in violation of Board policies and rules, including access to objectionable materials and communication with persons outside of the school. The school unit is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of information that students obtain through the Internet. In the interest of student Internet safety, RSU No. 5 also educates students about online behavior, including interacting on social networking sites and chat rooms, the dangers of hacking, and issues surrounding “sexting” and cyberbullying awareness and response. (Refer to NEPN/NSBA Code: IJNDB)

MLTI Computer Use

All Freeport Middle School students receive an **Acceptable Use Agreement** form at the start of the year outlining our expectations for proper use of the school’s network, email system, computer equipment and Internet by students. Both the student and a parent/guardian must sign the form to acquire access to the above equipment outside of class.

All students in grades 6, 7 and 8 are issued laptops owned by the State of Maine. Acceptable Use Agreements must be signed by students and parents for student use of the laptops as well as other computers within the middle school. Normal wear and tear requiring repair is covered by the MLTI project. Information about this exciting teaching and learning project is distributed to families throughout the year.

Students are responsible for their laptop and the accompanying peripheral material (charger, cables, case). This includes seeing that they are fully charged at the start of each day and are not left unattended. Laptops are not to be moved from class to class without being placed in the case provided.

The laptops are to be used for educational purposes. Downloading or use of non-academic material while on school property is not allowed.

After receipt of a signed slip acknowledging responsibility for damage, theft, etc. when the laptop leaves school grounds (the same as if this was a musical instrument), a student may take his/her laptop home. (Information regarding acquisition of insurance to cover liability for the laptops is available in the school office.) Policies regarding use of a home computer apply to the use of the MLTI laptop at home.

DETENTION

A teacher or administrator may assign a detention after school or during recess or lunch (the student will still eat). Students must report promptly to the detention room and are expected to work quietly for the duration of the detention. Students asked to leave detention may be sent home and will need to make up the whole detention and another, the next school day. Three detentions for similar infractions may result in suspension.

Detentions will not be postponed for any extra curricular activities including sports, practices and games. It is the responsibility of the student who desires to be available for athletics to avoid detention situations. Lunch/Recess detentions may also be given by teachers or the office for being late to school. Students will get their lunch and then bring it the assigned room.

DISMISSAL FROM SCHOOL

Parents must come into the school office to sign students out. If students need to leave school early for a medical or other appointment, parents should provide a note to the school secretary before school begins. In the case of illness, the nurse or secretary may dismiss students but only with the permission of a parent or guardian.

DRESS CODE

All students should be neatly and appropriately dressed. Clothes that refer to drugs, alcohol, violence, weapons, tobacco or have inappropriate messages are not allowed. Dress that is distracting, too revealing or that disturbs the learning process is not allowed. If a staff member asks a student to cover up inappropriate clothing the student must cover up or change into appropriate clothing immediately. Students unwilling or unable to comply will be sent home for appropriate clothing.

Inappropriate dress includes clothing that is too revealing such as halter tops, tops with skinny straps, tank tops with excessively large neck or arm openings, low-cut tops, shoulderless tops, short tops which expose the midriff, see-through clothing, visible under clothing such as boxers or bras, and short skirts or shorts. Tank tops should be at least three fingers wide. Shorts and skirts should be longer than the finger tips.

Inappropriate accessories and other personal items include items decorated with messages, slogans, logos, symbols, etc. which are inappropriate for school. Examples of inappropriate messages include references to any race, symbols of racial supremacy, references to drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or any other controlled substance, reference to weapons or explosives, violent messages, profane, vulgar or sexual overtones. Inappropriate jewelry includes heavy chains such as spiked choke chains, spiked bracelets, "safety pin" jewelry, or jewelry with protrusions that could be considered dangerous, unsafe, or used to cause damage or injury.

Please note that these examples are not intended to be a complete list. Staff members and the administration will determine when clothing is inappropriate.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

RSU5 believes that students learn best in classrooms free of unnecessary disruptions. Devices that may interrupt the teacher and other students have no place in the classroom. Personal radios, CD and MP3 players, iPods, video recorders, electronic games, pagers, cell phones, smartphones, or other similar devices are not to be used during the school day, unless a teacher gives permission and is providing direct supervision. School-owned electronic devices can only be used for the intended educational purposes.

The following guidelines apply to possession and use of electronic devices:

1. Electronic devices may not be used in any unethical or illegal manner.

2. Camera devices may not be used to photograph another person in areas or situations when a reasonable person would have an expectation of privacy (locker room, restroom, etc.).
3. Electronic devices may not be used in a way that would violate another person's copyright.
4. Electronic devices may not be used to harass, intimidate, or bully another person or to invade another person's privacy.

When it has been established that a student has failed to follow the above stated guidelines, the school may take any or all of the following actions:

1. The teacher may give a warning to the student to put the electronic device in a locker, backpack/purse, or other secured location during the regular school day.
2. The teacher may confiscate the device and release it to the student at the end of the regular school day.
3. The principal or designee may confiscate the device and release it only to a parent/guardian. At the discretion of the principal or principal's designee, the student may be prohibited from possessing a personal electronic device on school property or at any school-sponsored activity for such period of time as the principal or designee deems reasonable.
4. The student will be subject to disciplinary consequences up to and including expulsion. Where appropriate, police authorities may be contacted.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Band

New members are always welcome! See Mrs. York, the band director, if you are interested in joining. Band members participate in a number of concerts and parades during the year. Except in cases of emergency, members are expected to attend **all** band functions. There is a sixth grade band and a separate, combined band for seventh and eighth graders. Students can also try out for jazz band. Small group lessons are scheduled on a rotating basis during the school day.

Chorus

New members are always welcome! See Mrs. Lawson, the choral director, if you are interested in joining. Chorus members are expected to participate in **all** chorus activities unless an emergency occurs. A sixth grade chorus, combined seventh and eighth grade chorus, and a chamber choir are opportunities for students to perform for the community.

Drama

Each year a performance is produced for the public by students. Watch for notices of tryouts if you are interested in participating. It may be a musical or a dramatic production. This is definitely a fun family event!

Other Activities

FMS students may participate in any of the following activities during their middle school years: Yearbook, Math Team, Travel Club, Camp Kieve Week for 6th graders, Science Club, Coding Club, Cooking Club, NASA Space Camp for 6th graders, Project Adventure activities, numerous field trips, Fab Fridays, and Odyssey of the Mind.

We also encourage students to participate in the many RSU5RCE and Teen Center activities offered throughout the year. Contact RSU5RCE (865-6171) and Teen Center (869-1036) for more information.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

RSU No. 5 shall comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”) and all other federal and state laws and regulations concerning confidentiality and maintenance of student records and student information. (Refer to policy JRA-E)

FAMILY VACATIONS

School attendance is extremely important. Absences create difficulties for both students and teachers. Students fall behind in their work and it is more difficult for teachers to work with classes and plan group activities when students are missing. Although teachers may be able to provide some make-up assignments, it is very hard to replicate the quality of assignments and interactions that result from a student’s regular attendance and active participation in class. Teachers are not responsible to provide work for students during family vacations. *Although we realize the value of family activities, we ask that vacations be taken during scheduled school vacations. **Thank you in advance for your assistance!***

FIRE/EVACUATION DRILLS

Fire drills are necessary to assure that everyone knows how to exit the building safely and quickly. Fire exit signs posted in the rooms explain exiting procedures. Do not run. Once everyone is outside, the classroom teacher will take attendance of students. When directed by the classroom teacher, students should return to their classrooms in an orderly fashion.

FOOD/BEVERAGES

During school, healthy snacks may be consumed in the classroom with the teacher’s permission. According to federal law, only the school cafeteria may sell food to students during the school day. Food is not allowed to be taken out of the cafeteria. Caffeine drinks, soda and energy drinks are not allowed during school.

GUIDANCE COUNSELOR

Guidance services and access to a counselor is an important aspect of effective middle school programs. The Guidance counselor is a resource to students, teachers, and parents in addressing many of the developmental needs of middle school students. Students may make an appointment with the counselor by seeing her in person or by leaving a note in the office. Individual and group sessions are available. Once an appointment has been arranged, students will receive a guidance pass. They **must show this pass** to the classroom teacher and obtain their permission BEFORE missing class for the appointment. **The classroom teacher** will determine whether a student will be able to attend a guidance session during class time.

GYMNASIUM USE – Physical Education Class

Students must wear sneakers to participate in activities in the gym. Please purchase sneakers with non-marking soles. All FMS students take Physical Education as part of their regular schedule.

HARASSMENT

The board recognizes the right of each employee and student to a working and learning atmosphere, which

is free of intimidation, hostility, and offensiveness. In order to ensure such an atmosphere, employees and students are not to engage in harassment of any other person. Saying that you were just joking after is not an excuse. Acts of harassment based upon on race, color, sex, religion, ancestry or national origin, sexual orientation, or disability are not only a violation of this policy but also constitute illegal discrimination under state and federal law. (Refer to school district policy ACAA)

Examples of prohibited harassment:

- Unwelcome sexual advances, gestures, comments, or contact
- Threats
- Offensive jokes
- Ridicule, slurs, derogatory action, or remarks
- Basing employment or academic decisions or practices on submission to harassment

Sexual Harassment

Includes but is not limited to unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or pressure to engage in sexual activity, physical contact of a sexual nature, gestures, comments, or other physical, written or verbal conduct that is gender-based that interferes with a student's education.

Employees and students should also be advised of the importance of informing the harasser that his/her behavior is unwelcome, offensive, in poor taste, or highly inappropriate. Students who believe they are victims of harassment should report such occurrences to a teacher, counselor, or administrator, or parent/guardian. The person who has allegedly been harassed shall be advised of the various options available to the person; Maine Human Rights Commission complaint, Title IX civil action, or formal request for discipline by the superintendent and/or board. Freeport Middle School will take disciplinary action as well. (Refer to school district policy ACAA-R and AC). If there is an issue please immediately contact Ray Grogan, Principal.

HAZING

Maine statute defines injurious hazing as "any action or situation, including harassing behavior, that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health of any school personnel or a student enrolled in a public school." Injurious hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational process and shall be prohibited at all times. (Refer to school district policy ACAD)

HOMEWORK

Homework is an essential part of the middle school program. Homework completion is the responsibility of each student. Teachers assign homework as a review of skills taught in class or as a way of preparing students for upcoming classes. All teachers provide students with a system for keeping track of homework assignments using student agendas, homework calendar, and digital classrooms. Students should get into the habit of doing assignments well and on time. If you have questions about any assignment, ask the teacher. Students can get extra help by making an after-school appointment or a study hall session with a teacher. All teachers are available before or after school for extra help. All homework/classwork/projects/ tests/quizzes can be made up if they are not done on time.

HONOR ROLL

The FMS Honor Roll includes two categories: **High Honors for all grades of 3 and 4. Students need to have a least 3 - 3.5s or 4s to be on high honors. Honors for all grades of 3 or higher.** All subjects in which grades are given are considered in the determination of honor roll status. Content and habits of work count equal.

ILLNESS

If a student becomes ill or gets injured, they must report to the office and be seen by the nurse or front office staff. Students should NOT remain in the bathroom if they are not feeling well unless they send another student to let the office know where they are. Students are not to call parents to be dismissed without permission from the nurse or front office staff.

INTERSCHOLASTIC ACTIVITIES

Freeport Middle School offers the following interscholastic athletics for 7th and 8th graders:

Fall: field hockey, boys' and girls' soccer, and cross country (6th grade included), football

Winter: boys' and girls' basketball, downhill and nordic skiing, cheering, indoor track

Spring: boys' and girls' lacrosse, softball, and baseball, track

Athletic Code

General Rules:

1. **Academic or disciplinary obligations take precedence over all other school activities.**
2. As a team member you represent your school and RSU5. Please respect both!
3. No smoking. No drinking.
4. No unauthorized use of drugs.
5. Athletes must attend all practices on time except for meeting academic or disciplinary obligations.
6. Dress Code:
Boys: During Basketball season and/or any season when competing in play-off or tournament: sweater and/or coat, and must be worn to and from games.
Girls: During basketball season and /or any season when competing in a play-off or tournament: dresses, skirts, or slacks must be worn to and from games.
7. School attendance: Athletes will be subject to all provisions of the school attendance policy. Additional school attendance regulations may be imposed by the coach.
8. All athletes are required to travel to and from out - of - town contests with the team. An athlete may be released directly to a parent (for certain reasons) if prior arrangements have been made with the coach.
9. All participants on a middle school athletic team must obtain in writing:
 - (a) permission to play by parent or guardian
 - (b) proof of insurance
 - (c) a medical examination
10. Students must be passing all classes to play in games.
11. Team managers must have permission and insurance.

Eligibility Policy

Co-curricular activities are an integral part of school life. The knowledge and skills learned through these activities are critically important to the healthy development of students (MPA – Sports Done Right, 2005). At Freeport Middle School academic work is our first priority. While there are many benefits to participating in co-curricular activities, the time commitment involved can sometimes detract from academic work. In an effort to help students balance the demands of academics and participation in interscholastic competitions we have developed the following eligibility procedure:

Student Athletes must have habits of work or content grades of 3 or higher to participate in games. All classes include core academic classes, unified arts, band and chorus. Any student athlete who does not have a 3 on either the habits of work or content will immediately be placed on academic probation. Academic probation dictates that a student may not participate in game situations/interscholastic competitions with their respective team until he/she has successfully raised their grade(s) to 3 or higher. The student is expected to practice if they are not staying after school to make up work. If a student has been ineligible for 3 weeks they can be dismissed from the team.

Student athletes who fail to honor their academic commitments, between progress checks, may be referred to the Middle School A. D. by their teachers. The M.S.A.D. will communicate with staff, parents, coaches and the student to determine a plan of action. The student athlete may be placed on a probation plan at this time as well. Should a student continue to struggle with juggling the demands of co-curricular activities and academics, they would need to drop the co-curricular activity in order to focus on their academics.

LIBRARY

The FMS Library opens daily at 7:30 a.m. and is open throughout the school day. Students visit the library with their classes and independently with teacher permission.

Students are able to check 5 books out at a time for a 3 week period, and are encouraged to renew books as needed. Additional resources may be checked out when needed for classwork. The library's catalog is accessible online and is found on the FMS website. Click on Library in the left column and then Catalog at the top of the FMS Library page. Audiobooks and eBooks are available through the online catalog. Students are provided with a username and password to access these resources. Audiobooks and eBooks are available in addition to the 5 book checkout. The login information also allows students to see what is currently checked out on their account. Any student having trouble accessing his/her account is encouraged to see the librarian.

No fines are charged for overdue books but students and families are expected to be conscious and respectful of due dates and to pay full replacement cost for books that are lost or damaged. Overdue notices are emailed weekly on Thursday morning to the student's email.

LOCKER AND DESK SPACES: SEARCHES

Lockers and desks used by students for the storage of their personal items are school property and shall

remain at all times under the control, custody, authority and supervision of the school authorities. The school has absolute discretion whether or not to make lockers available to students for storage of student personal items. Lockers are assigned by homebase teachers. Students are not to place locks on school lockers. Valuables such as money and other personal items should not be left in lockers. Students should place their names on all personal items. Students can hang pictures, stickers, and/or mirrors **inside** their lockers, but do not write on them inside or out. Never open or bother anyone else's locker. School authorities may – at any time and without prior notice to students – open, inspect and search desks and lockers and their contents. Locker searches are governed by Board Policy. (Refer to policy JIH)

LUNCH

Lunch is served in the cafeteria. Teachers may open rooms for students to eat in provided a staff member is with them. During good weather students may eat outside in the picnic area outside of the cafeteria. Students will be dismissed by duty teachers after all litter has been picked up and tables cleaned. RSU No.5 does offer Free or Reduced lunch for those who qualify. For more information check with the middle school office. During the recess period, students may be able to play basketball in the gym. Students may be able to work quietly in the library during recess or in the classrooms if a teacher is with them. Students may go outside during recess; they are to stay in the field area within sight and calling distance of the teachers on duty. Students are not to go near the pond, behind the school, in the parking lot, or on the circle in front of the school. ***Students are not to be near any automobiles or bicycles during recess.***

MEDICINE/MEDICATION

School policy is that student medication should be administered by a parent at home. The school nurse may approve exceptions to this policy. Please call the nurse with your individual situation. The medication and the medication form must be brought to the office. **Please obtain a medication form from the office if it becomes necessary to follow a doctor's prescription during the school day.** (Refer to NEPN/NSBA Code: JLCB)

PARENT RIGHT TO REQUEST QUALIFICATIONS OF STUDENT'S TEACHERS

As a parent, you have the right to request the professional qualifications of your child's teachers. This notification is part of our obligations under the "Parents' Right to Know" requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB).

All teachers in Title 1 schools must meet general qualifications as well as the specific requirements of the subject they are teaching. This means we will be informing parents whenever a child is taught for four consecutive weeks by any teacher who does not meet the new federal definition of "Highly Qualified".

QUESTIONING AND SEARCHES OF STUDENTS

The Board of Directors seeks to maintain a safe and orderly environment in the schools. Therefore, school officials will conduct reasonable searches if there are grounds for suspecting that the search will reveal evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the policies or regulations of the school. In an effort to minimize the threat of illegal drugs and weapons in our school environment we will be utilizing police canine teams to perform random drug searches without prior notice given of the school facilities which include (but are not limited to) school common area's, lockers, classrooms, locker rooms, parking lots, bags, computer cases and grounds.(Refer to school district policy JIH and JIH-R.) The search must be reasonable,

related in scope to the circumstances which precipitated the search and must not be excessively intrusive in light of the age, sex of the student, and the nature of the alleged infraction. Lockers, cell phones, computers, iPads and desk spaces may be searched.

REPORT CARDS/STUDENT PROGRESS

Report cards will be available on PowerSchool to print out at the end of each trimester. FMS will not send home a paper copy. In addition to a letter grade in each subject, students are evaluated in effort and behavior. The Parent Portal, an online electronic gradebook, allows parents and students to access their grades and progress online at any time.

RIGHT TO EDUCATION FOR HANDICAPPED AND/OR DISABLED STUDENTS

The Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 entitles students with identified handicaps and/or disabilities to a range of educational services and accommodations.

Examples of such disabilities include physical handicaps, Attention Deficit Disorder, drug/alcohol addiction, Learning Disabilities, temporary medical conditions due to illness or accident. If you think your child needs to be evaluated for special education, please contact the Office of Special Services. Policy IHBA is followed for special education referrals.

To get more information, contact the Office of Instructional Support 865-0928 x3, the Principal or the Guidance Office at the Middle School, 865-6051 x135.

SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS

School cancellations will be broadcast on all three local tv stations, local radio and you can get an automated phone call from the school on snow days. There are forms to opt out of the automated call in the middle school office.

SCHOOL HOURS

Freeport Middle School hours are 7:40am to 2:10pm. Students should not be dropped off at school prior to 7:30am. The first bell rings at 7:38am. This is a 2 minute warning to students to go to their first period class. The second bell which rings at 7:40am designates the beginning of the school day. At this time all students must be in their first period class or they will be considered tardy and will be required to sign in at the office. The bell rings at 2:10pm to indicate the end of the school day.

SOCIALS / Fab Fridays / Field Trips

Socials are for only RSU 5 6th, 7th and 8th grade students. Students must be in school all day on the day of a social in order to attend (7:50-2:10). Students arriving after 7:50, may not be allowed to come to the social. If it is a special situation, please contact an administrator in advance. Once students arrive at the social, they must stay inside until the social ends or their parent comes to pick them up. Socials are from 6:00pm – 9:00pm. The rules for behavior and dress are the same as during the school day.

For safety we ask that students arriving to a social more than a half hour late be brought into the social by a

responsible adult, or that the student have a note from their parent letting the school know they are aware of their child's late arrival. Students who are suspended, given an office detention or placed on a restricted day, in the three weeks prior to a social may not attend the social.

The requirements for students wishing to attend off campus field trips / Fab Friday activities is the same as socials, students on restricted days, in school or out of schools suspension are not allowed to attend.

STUDENT RECOGNITION AWARDS

Periodically faculty selects students to be recognized in one or more of the following categories: citizenship, service, leadership, behavior and participation, scholarship, effort, and improvement.

STUDENT-STAFF APPOINTMENTS

Teachers and staff may request students to come after school for academic or disciplinary reasons.

Students are expected to keep these appointments before any other school activity. If a student skips an afternoon appointment to go to a game, they will need to make up the afternoon appointment on a game day. If students fail to keep an appointment with a teacher they may be assigned **additional** detention time.

SUSPENSION

Parents will be contacted for all suspensions. Students must make up all work missed during a suspension. They are not allowed on the school grounds or at any school activity during suspension. The suspension starts the day it is issued and continues until the morning they return to school. Any student suspended during the three weeks prior to a social will not be allowed to attend the social.

Please see the discipline rubric for the full details of expected behavior and consequences. If a student has been expelled or suspended, or withdrawn from a school before an expulsion hearing or suspension, the student will not be allowed to enroll in RSU5 until the superintendent has made a determination as to whether to admit the students and if so, under what conditions.

TEACHER ADVISORS

All FMS students will meet each day with their advisor in a small advisory group. Advisors serve as the families' link to the school. During the year the advisor and student will meet to discuss school-related issues.

TEXTBOOKS AND SUPPLIES

Textbooks and supplies, including laptops, are loaned to students by RSU 5. Students are financially responsible for all material issued to them.

VISITORS/GUESTS

All visitors must report directly to the office upon entering the building. FMS does not allow student guests of students. For example: If a cousin is staying with you for a week, they will not be allowed to attend school for the week

POLICY / PROCEDURE APPENDIX

The following are the policies referenced in the FMS student handbook. All of the RSU5 policies are listed on the RSU5 website. The RSU5 Board of Directors are always reviewing and updating policies. The most up to date policy will always govern, not what is in the handbook.

❖ Nondiscrimination: Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action	<u>AC</u>
* Harassment and Sexual Harassment of Students	<u>ACAA</u>
❖ Student Discrimination and Harassment Complaint Procedure	<u>ACAA-R</u>
❖ Hazing	<u>ACAD</u>
❖ Tobacco Use and Possession	<u>ADC</u>
❖ Bomb Threats	<u>EBCC</u>
❖ Student Transportation Services	<u>EEA</u>
❖ Student Conduct on School Buses	<u>JICC</u>
❖ Staff Conduct with Students	<u>GBEBB</u>
❖ Referral and General Education Interventions Policy	<u>IHBAA</u>
❖ Student Computer and Internet Use and Internet Safety	<u>IJNDB</u>
❖ Student Computer and internet Use and Internet Safety Acknowledgement Form	<u>IJNDB-E</u>
❖ Student Computer and Internet Use and Internet Safety Rules	<u>IJNDB-R</u>
❖ Homework	<u>IKB</u>
❖ Compulsory Attendance	<u>JEA</u>
❖ Truancy	<u>JHB</u>
❖ System-Wide Student Code of Conduct	<u>JIC</u>
❖ Drug and Alcohol Use by Students	<u>JICH</u>
❖ Weapons, Violence, and School Safety	<u>JICIA</u>
❖ Bullying	<u>JICK</u>
* Bullying - Administrative Procedure	<u>JICK-R</u>
❖ Questioning and Searches of Students	<u>JIH</u>
❖ Questioning and Searches of Students Administrative Procedure	<u>JIH-R</u>
❖ Student Fundraising Activities	<u>JJE</u>
❖ Use of Physical Restraint and Seclusion	<u>JKAA</u>
❖ Procedures on Physical Restraint and Seclusion	<u>JKAA-R</u>
❖ Disciplinary Removal of Students with Disabilities	<u>JKF</u>
❖ Immunization of Students	<u>JLCB</u>
❖ Communicable/Infectious Diseases	<u>JLCC</u>
❖ Administering Medication to Students	<u>JLCD</u>
❖ Student Education Records and Information	<u>JRA</u>
❖ FERPA Notice	<u>JRA-R- E, E FERPA Notice</u>
❖ Relations with Law Enforcement Authorities	<u>KLG</u>

