

2018-19
FAMILY & STUDENT HANDBOOK



1914 Pacific Avenue
Forest Grove, OR 97116
Phone: 503-359-4600
Fax: 503-359-4622
Website: www.fgcschool.org

Staff Contact Information	3
School Governance	4
FGCS Board of Directors	5
School Calendar	5
Daily Schedule	5
Student Arrival & Release	6
Visitors	8
School Lunch Program	8
Bus Service	
Attendance: Absences & Tardies	9
Closed Campus	10
Materials Distribution	10
Dress Guidelines	10
Fees	11
Communicating Needs & Concerns	11
Bullying, Threats and Harassment	12
Restorative Discipline	12
Out & About Program: Experiential Education at FGCS	14
Accidents & Illness at School	15
Bringing Personal Items to School/Weapons	15
Special Education	17
School Closures	20

About FGCS

Our Mission: Forest Grove Community School is a small, caring public charter school that fosters scholarship, stewardship and citizenship with the goal of educating for sustainability. Our multi-age classrooms support diverse learning styles and our curriculum provides academic and real-world experiences that help create self-motivated, actively involved learners who contribute to and enhance the world.

Non-Discrimination Policy: No student or applicant for enrollment as a student at Forest Grove Community School shall be discriminated against in any educational program or activity on the basis of race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, national origin, disability, income level, proficiency in the English language or athletic ability.

No employee or applicant for employment shall be discriminated against on the basis of race, color, age, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, marital status or disability.

Staff Contact Information

To reach staff members by phone, please call the main office at 503-359-4600. Keep in mind that teachers cannot accept phone calls during the school day and may not be able to check voice mail messages until after the end of the school day or the next day. **Please report all absences and late arrivals to the school office by phone.**

Administrative Staff

Name	Title	Phone Extension	Email Address
Vanessa Gray	Principal	101	v.gray@fgcschool.org
Karen (Kari) McFaddin	Administrative Assistant	103	k.mcfaddin@fgcschool.org
Vickie Jares	Administrative Assistant	100	v.jares@fgcschool.org
Theresa Tricarico	Lunch Program Assistant	102	t.tricarico@fgcschool.org
Karen Torry	Director of School Operations	104	k.torry@fgcschool.org

Teaching Staff

Name	Title/Classroom	Phone Extension	Email Address
Lou Ann Amina	Special Education Coordinator	117	lamina@fgsd.k12.or.us
Rick Boudreau	PE/Instructional Assistant	120	r.boudreau@fgcschool.org
Ginny Brown	Puffins/Level 2	109	g.brown@fgcschool.org
Eva Conway	Barn Swallows/Level	107	e.conway@fgcschool.org

	1		
Laura Harley	Plovers/Level 2	105	l.harley@fgcschool.org
Jennifer Hiatt	Special Education Instructional Assistant	117	jhiatt@fgsd.k12.or.us
Erin Morgan	Kestrels/Level 3	106	e.morgan@fgcschool.org
Shannon Perry	Great Horned Owls/Level 4	113	s.perry@fgcschool.org
Chris Stanton	Barn Owls/Level 4	112	c.stanton@fgcschool.org
Amy Staat	Out & About Coordinator Levels 1, 2 & 3 Garden Coordinator	120	a.staat@fgcschool.org
Kathleen Stephenson	Speech/Language Pathologist		kstephenson@fgsd.k12.or.us
Karen Thias	Violet Green Swallows/Level 1	108	k.thias@fgcschool.org
Stephanie Woods	Art/Level 4 Out & About Coordinator	111	s.woods@fgcschool.org
Gretchen Ziemer	Merlins/Level 3	110	g.ziemer@fgcschool.org

School Governance

FGCS is a public charter school incorporated as a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization and operated by an independent board of directors pursuant to state and federal laws. The FGCS Board of Directors governs school operations according to its bylaws and policies, and pursuant to a charter contract with the Forest Grove School District. The FGCS Board is responsible for ensuring sound fiscal management, implementing the school's strategic plan and assuring that all programs and activities are consistent with the school's mission and the law.

The FGCS Board of Directors meets at 6:30 p.m. the second Tuesday of each month. Meeting times may be changed or special meetings scheduled with advance public notice (at least 24 hours). Pursuant to state law, all board meetings are open to the public but the Board may meet in executive session to discuss certain sensitive matters. Agendas are posted on the school

website before meetings and meeting minutes are posted after they have been approved by the Board. Please contact the Board chair with questions about Board matters or Board service.

FGCS Board of Directors

Name	Title	Email Address
Bob Hatt	Chair	b.hatt@fgcschool.org
Anita Zijdemans-Boudreau	Vice Chair	a.zijdemans-boudreau@fgcschool.org
Jon Stagnitti	Treasurer	j.stagnitti@fgcschool.org
Steve Molin	Secretary	s.molin@fgcschool.org
Robbie Pock	Member	r.pock@fgcschool.org
Roger Neyman	Member	r.neyman@fgcschool.org

School Operations

School Calendar

FGCS follows the Forest Grove School District calendar for all regular holidays (Veterans Day, Memorial Day, etc.) and all school vacations (Thanksgiving break, winter break, spring break). Please note that there are several days each year when FGCS is in session when other District schools are not and vice versa. Please always consult the FGCS calendar, which is included in student registration packets and can be found [here](#). You may also request a copy of the school calendar in the school office.

Daily Schedule

IMPORTANT NOTE: Students may not be on campus without a supervising adult earlier than 8:35 a.m. unless they are reporting for a scheduled activity or meeting. School staff supervision is not available for students before 8:35 a.m. For students' safety, please make sure students do not arrive prior to 8:35 a.m. Parents/guardians who arrive early with their students are

responsible for their supervision until the doors open at 8:35 a.m. unless they are dropping off their students for a before-school activity.

Starting with the 2018-19 school year, all FGCS students will be released at the same time every day as follows:

Monday-Thursday 8:50 a.m.-3:20 p.m.

Friday 8:50 a.m.-1:05 p.m.

School begins promptly at 8:50 a.m. Students should be in their classrooms ready to start the school day by 8:45 a.m. Please call the school office at 503-359-4600 to report that your student will be absent or arrive late. Please do NOT use email to report absences or late arrivals.

Student Arrival & Release

Arrival

As noted above, students may not be on campus without a parent/guardian or responsible adult supervisor before 8:35 a.m.

Parking: If you are driving to FGCS, please park in legal curbside spots or in free, nearby city parking lots (next to Hello Market on 19th Ave. and behind Pac Thai restaurant off between Pacific and 22nd Ave.). Students may walk from parents' cars with parent permission or parents may walk their students to the school door. **Please observe safe, courteous practices:** Reduce speed, watch for pedestrians, use crosswalks and do not double park, idle in traffic lanes or park in private business parking lots (e.g., Bank of the West lot next door). *For student safety reasons, please do not use the school parking lot on A Street to turn around or drop off students.*

Release

Release at Regular Times

- Level 1 students who do not ride the bus will be released by their teachers under the canopy near the main student entrance. **Level 1 students may not be self-released,** but they may be picked up by older siblings who have parent permission to self-release.
- Level 2 students who do not ride the bus or are not self-released wait with their teachers behind the main building near the wheelchair ramp for pick up.
- Level 3 students who do not ride the bus or are not self-released wait with their teachers near the Level 3 building for pick up.
- **All Level 4 (7th/8th grade) students are self-released,** meaning that they leave school on their own at the end of the school day.

Special Note: Parents are expected to pick up students promptly at release times. If parents remain on campus with their students, parents are responsible for closely supervising their

students after pick up. Parents are asked to enforce school expectations with their students as long as they remain on campus. Please contact a school administrator with any questions about school expectations.

Self Release

At FGCS, 'self release' means that a student has permission to leave school without adult supervision at the regular dismissal time. Parents are asked to carefully consider a student's age, maturity, ability to self-manage and ability to make responsible decisions in determining whether to give permission for the student to self release.

Level 1 students may not be self-released but may be released to an older sibling with written parent permission. Keep in mind that FGCS is located in a busy downtown location along a main thoroughfare. We provide a crossing guard across Pacific Avenue and A Streets for 20-30 minutes before and after school, but FGCS is not responsible for students' actions or safety after they leave campus. When students are self-released, they are expected to leave campus when they are dismissed by teachers or from an after-school activity. If you want your Level 2 or 3 student to be self-released, please email Vickie Jares at v.jares@fgcschool.org.

Release During the School Day

All students, including those approved for self release, must have parent/guardian permission to leave before regular dismissal time for any reason. Only parents/guardians listed in the student's file may pick up students during the school day unless prior arrangements are made with the school office. Parents must send written notice to the school office in advance if they wish to give permission for someone other than a parent/guardian to pick up their students during the school day or to authorize self-released students to leave early on their own. Email notices may be sent to Vickie Jares at v.jares@fgcschool.org.

Absences & Late Arrivals

Parents/guardians should call the school office at 503-359-4600 to report absences or late arrivals. You may leave a message at that number 24 hours/day. Please do not call the student's teacher or email any staff member to report absences or late arrivals; these messages may not be received in a timely manner.

Students who arrive at school after 8:50 a.m. must report to the office, sign in and get a pass to give to their teachers. These late passes confirm that the student has checked in. If a student does not arrive at school by the time teachers take attendance, parents/guardians will receive an automated call notifying them of the absence. This call will be made to the number listed as the student's home number on registration forms. Please list as your home number the one that is most likely to reach you during the school day. Call the school office at 503-359-4600 if you want to verify or change your home number listing.

Important Note: FGCS, as a public school, follows all state laws regarding truancy. See Policies & Procedures below for more information.

Visitors

All visitors to FGCS must enter through the east office door, sign in and wear a visitor/volunteer badge. For safety reasons, visitors may be asked to provide photo identification and must sign out when they leave the building.

FGCS welcomes visits from prospective students and their parents by prior arrangement. Please call Vickie Jares at 503-359-4600 to arrange a tour.

School Lunch Program

FGCS is a National School Lunch Program sponsor and offers a hot lunch program featuring fresh, organic and locally sourced food through Oregon vendor Fresh 'n Local Foods. Our meals meet all federal requirements for a nutritious, balanced lunch containing whole grains, protein, fresh fruits and vegetables.

Lunch costs \$3/day. Students may qualify for free or reduced-price school lunch. For the 2018-19 school year, the Oregon Legislature has allocated funds to provide free lunches to students who qualify for reduced-price lunch. Please see the [School Lunch Program](#) page of the school website or your student registration packet for complete information and application forms. Families are strongly encouraged to complete an application to determine whether students in their household are eligible for lunch benefits. Applications may be submitted at any point during the school year.

Students who order school lunch on days their classes will be off campus during the lunch hour will receive a sack lunch in lieu of the hot entree. Sack lunches include a sandwich, fresh fruit, fresh vegetable and milk. Please check with your child's classroom teacher to be aware of what days students may be off campus.

FGCS is an equal opportunity employer and provider under the National School Lunch Program.

Classroom Snacks & Student Lunches From Home

Some classroom teachers organize a daily class snack with the help of parent volunteers and donations. Other teachers ask students to bring their own snacks to school as needed. Please check with your child's teacher about classroom snack practices. All students should bring a refillable water bottle to school daily.

If students bring lunch or snacks from home, we encourage parents to help their students pack nutritious lunches and snacks. Do not send food that needs to be heated. Please do not send or allow your student to bring soda, energy drinks or candy to school. Check with classroom

teachers about bringing in food for birthday celebrations or other special occasions. In accordance with county health regulations, all shared food must be prepared in a commercial kitchen.

School Bus Service

Starting in the 2018-19 school year, FGCS will have daily bus service for eligible students. Students who live more than one mile from FGCS inside the Forest Grove School District boundaries are eligible to ride the school bus.

School bus routes (locations, pick up time and drop off time) are determined by Mid-Columbia Bus Company. Parents will receive bus route information by postcard the week before school starts. If you do not receive a postcard, contact Karen Torry at k.torry@fgcschool.org or 503-359-4600 to determine whether your student is eligible for bus service.

All school rules and behavioral expectations apply when students are riding the school bus. Please review [bus rules](#) with your student.

Parents are encouraged to accompany students to bus stops at least the first day of school to make sure they know where to wait and how to safely cross streets, if needed.

If your student's bus is more than a few minutes late, please call Mid-Columbia Bus Co. directly at 503-992-7167.

Policies and Procedures

Attendance: Absences & Tardies

Arriving at school on time and attending school regularly are essential to student learning and academic progress. Student attendance also affects teacher workload, group projects and funding. Please make every effort to make sure your student is at school on time every day.

Some absences are unavoidable due to illness, medical appointments or emergencies. If your student will be absent or tardy, call the school office before 8:50 a.m. **Do not call the classroom teacher or email any staff member about absences or tardies.** You may leave a message anytime at 503-359-4600, ext. 100. Reporting absences and tardies helps us make sure all of our students are safe and accounted for every day. Parents/guardians will receive automated calls when their students are absent or tardy without having been excused in

advance. Calls will be made to the number listed as the student's home number on registration forms.

Extended Absences: Families sometimes choose to take children out of school for vacation or other reasons not connected with illness or family emergency. While parents have the right to make these choices, we ask parents to consider the potential impact of extended absences on children's learning. Absences/tardies are noted on all student report cards. Parents should also be aware that FGCS does not provide school work for children to take on vacation and certain school work cannot be made up after an extended absence. Assessments and tests cannot be rescheduled to accommodate optional absences. Contact your child's teacher or the principal with any questions if you are planning this kind of absence. Please be aware that extended absences may result in your student being out of compliance state compulsory attendance requirements.

Truancy

FGCS, as a public school, follows all state laws and regulations regarding truancy. Students who have irregular attendance or excessive tardies will be contacted by the school principal. State law defines 'irregular attendance' as 8 unexcused one-half day absences, or the equivalent thereof, in any four-week period, or 5 or more excused absences in any three-month period. In certain cases, the principal is required by law to refer families to a truancy officer, who will contact parents.

Closed Campus

For the safety of our students, FGCS is a closed campus. All students must remain on school grounds unless they have received prior permission to leave and are accompanied by a parent/guardian or authorized adult. Students may not leave campus after they arrive in the morning, even if class has not started yet.

Materials Distribution

Because of its commitment to sustainable practices, FGCS does not distribute or facilitate the distribution of published materials on paper except registration materials, report cards and, on occasion, permission/release forms (e.g., for attendance at Outdoor School). FGCS maintains a community bulletin board on which members of the school community may post flyers or brochures about free or low-cost community events and activities geared toward children, youth and families.

Dress Guidelines

Our dress guidelines encourage a school atmosphere that allows freedom of expression while maintaining an environment conducive to learning. Students and parents are encouraged to contact the principal with questions about appropriate dress at school. Students may be asked to change clothing or wear additional clothing if their dress or grooming disrupts the learning environment, threatens the health or safety of the student concerned or is inappropriate for a school setting. Students should not wear clothing that displays images of nudity, drugs/alcohol, gangs/gang affiliations, weapons of any kind, or words/language that are profane or offensive.

FGCS students are active and spend time outdoors most days year round. Clothing must be appropriate for indoor and outdoor activities including community walks, physical activity class, recess and outdoor learning activities such as gardening and scientific field work. Appropriate footwear is important. Students should wear sneakers/athletic shoes on PE days. Flip-flops and slip-on shoes/sandals are generally not considered school-appropriate footwear. Parents are asked to check with classroom teachers about special requirements for clothing or footwear for Out & Abouts (e.g., waterproof boots for a trip to the wetlands). Parents are encouraged to put a change of clothing in students' backpacks.

Please label student coats, jackets, boots and personal belongings such as backpacks and lunch boxes with the student's first and last names. This will help us return misplaced items to their owners. Unmarked items are placed in Lost & Found for two weeks, after which unclaimed items are discarded or donated.

Fees

FGCS charges a \$30/student supplies fee in lieu of having parents buy pencils, notebooks and other classroom supplies. This fee allows us to purchase supplies in bulk at discount prices and assure that all classrooms have adequate supplies throughout the school year.

Families are also asked to contribute toward the costs of overnight trips and, occasionally, class activities such as plays or concerts.

No student will be denied the right to attend school or to fully participate in class activities based on inability to pay fees. If you are unable to pay fees or need to pay fees over time, please contact Vanessa Gray at v.gray@fgcschool.org or 503-359-4600. All requests for fee waivers are handled confidentially.

Communicating Needs & Concerns

When to Contact Us

We value open, honest communication between families and our teachers, administrators and staff. We recognize that issues or conflicts can arise that affect a child's sense of safety or desire to be at school. Other situations, such as transportation difficulties or family crises, may affect a student's attendance or experience at school. If a problem or circumstance is affecting your child's experience at school, we strongly encourage you to contact your child's teacher or an administrator to share information and discuss solutions. Please immediately report any concerns about bullying or harassment to a school administrator (more below). We believe that most situations can be resolved by working together and we want to do everything possible to help students feel happy about coming to school each day. Please don't hesitate to contact us with your questions and concerns!

Addressing Specific Complaints

Complaints and concerns are most effectively resolved when they are handled directly by the individuals involved whenever possible. Please follow these steps for resolving complaints other than those involving Board actions or Board operations.

Step One: Initiating a Complaint - Speak directly to those involved. Any member of the FGCS school community (students, staff, teachers, parents/guardians) who wishes to express a complaint should discuss the matter with the school employees involved as soon as possible after the events. E.g, if you have a concern about your child's classroom teacher, first talk directly to the teacher in person, by phone or by email. Make an appointment outside of school hours if you wish to talk by phone or in person. Please respect student confidentiality and the privacy of all involved in raising your complaint. If the complaint cannot be resolved with the individuals involved and does not involve the principal, the complaining party may ask the principal to get involved.

Step Two: Written Complaint - Put your concerns in writing. If you cannot resolve your complaint directly with those involved, write a detailed description of the problem and submit it to the principal or, if the complaint involves the principal, to the chair of the FGCS Board of Directors. The principal or chair will investigate the complaint, talk with the parties involved and try to find a mutually acceptable solution. The complainant may appeal the principal's decision to the Board by filing a written, signed complaint with the Board chair. The written statement should clearly state the nature of complaint and a suggested remedy. If a complaint is filed with the Board, the principal will prepare a written report of his/her findings and conclusions. For complaints involving the principal: If unable to resolve the problem or concern at Step One, the complainant may file a written complaint with the FGCS Board of Directors (see Step Three). The Board will follow the procedures outlined below.

Step Three: Appeal to the Board of Directors. The Board will consider written complaints and principal's findings, if any. The Board will hold a hearing to review the principal's findings and conclusions, if any; to hear from the complainant and to take such other information as it deems

appropriate. The Board may elect to hold the hearing in executive session if the subject matter qualifies under Oregon Open Meetings laws. Note: Before any hearing or action by the Board, the principal will investigate any complaint about school personnel other than the principal. The Board will investigate any complaint about the principal.

Student Conduct & Discipline

Bullying, Threats and Harassment

FGCS does not tolerate bullying, intimidation, threats or threatening behavior in any form. Bullying is defined as repeated, targeted use of power to cause harm to another. Students and parents are asked to immediately report any concerns about possible bullying or harassment involving FGCS students. Reports may be made to any FGCS staff member. All FGCS staff are required to immediately notify an administrator of any allegations of bullying, harassment or threats. FGCS will investigate any allegations of bullying, threats or other conduct affecting the safety of students, staff and others at school, including allegations of conduct that occurs off campus or after school hours

Restorative Discipline

FGCS is committed to creating and maintaining a safe, healthy learning environment for students. All members of the school community are expected to treat one another with honesty, courtesy and respect, and to behave safely, respectfully and responsibly. To maintain these standards, we are committed to teaching, modeling and practicing social-emotional skills that will support children in working towards their highest potential as scholars, stewards and citizens.

At the beginning of each school year, classroom teachers and students develop classroom expectations and rules based on school-wide tenets of scholarship, stewardship and citizenship. Students' participation in this process enhances their commitment to those rules and helps reduce disciplinary problems. All FGCS teachers use the Second Step curriculum to teach developmentally appropriate social-emotional skills needed for school success. School-wide expectations are taught through All-School Meetings and through daily interactions between staff and students.

Our approach to student discipline at FGCS focuses on restorative practices. This approach sets high standards for student behavior while recognizing that students need positive adult and peer support to achieve those standards. When students engage in behavior that disrupts the learning environment or breaks rules, restorative practices focus on helping students (1)

understand and take responsibility for their behavior, including how the behavior has affected themselves and others; (2) learn from their mistakes and make plans to avoid repeating the misbehavior; and (3) make amends for the harm caused. Restorative practices at FGCS focus on repairing and strengthening relationships, building community and supporting student growth.

Our shorthand for the restorative process at FGCS is **The Four A's**:

Accountability: Understanding and taking responsibility for one's own behavior

Assurances: Agreements that misbehavior will not be repeated and plans for keeping those agreements. Agreements may include plans for teachers, staff, parents or others to support students in developing skills needed to refrain from similar behavior in the future and ongoing monitoring to assure all students' safety.

Apology: Outreach to those harmed often includes face-to-face meetings among those involved in the situation, facilitated by an administrator or teacher, where appropriate.

Amends: Taking action to restore relationships and repair the harm caused.

A restorative approach to discipline requires willing participation by students and, in some cases, their families. Parents/guardians are always notified when students are referred for a disciplinary violation that requires an intervention beyond an informal talk with a teacher or administrator. In most cases, individuals harmed by student misconduct are invited, but not forced, to participate in the process.

The process of restorative discipline ranges from informal (brief conference in the classroom or on the playground between student and teacher, administrator or other staff member) to formal (meeting in the office with student and others involved, e.g., parents, administrator or other students).

Restorative discipline does not emphasize punitive responses to misbehavior such as detention, suspension and expulsion. However, this approach does not rule out traditional responses such as detention or suspension if necessary for student safety. In addition, if students who are accused of misbehavior or their parents/guardians are unwilling or unable to participate in the restorative process, or if misbehavior continues despite restorative efforts, sanctions such as detention, suspension or expulsion may be applied. In such cases, FGCS refers to the Forest Grove School District's disciplinary matrix, contained in its [Student Handbook](#), for guidance in determining the range of possible consequences for specific types of misbehavior.

In addressing student misbehavior, we make every effort to gather as much information as possible from those involved and from witnesses. Students will always be given the opportunity to speak on their own behalf and tell their side of the story. Parents are an important part of the process and may in some cases be asked to take part in a meeting to determine appropriate responses to misbehavior. We welcome parent feedback and appreciate parent support for this disciplinary model, which emphasizes learning from mistakes, restoring relationships and repairing harm rather than punishing misbehavior.

By its nature, restorative discipline is not a 'one size fits all' approach because it takes into account the facts, circumstances and individuals involved to arrive at a decision all parties believe is most likely to help students understand the impact of their actions, make amends and avoid future misbehavior. While each situation is unique, we strive for fairness and consistency in how we respond to all instances of misconduct.

Legal consequences: If student misconduct violates or may have violated state law, school officials may notify the appropriate authorities.

Out & About Program: Experiential Education at FGCS

The term 'Out & About' at FGCS refers to student outings that are part of our core program. Out & About activities are planned by classroom teachers and our Out & About coordinators. They are tied to the curriculum and provide opportunities for students to enhance their own learning, apply what they have learned in real-world settings and develop a deeper appreciation and understanding of the community and the natural world. These trips are usually one half day weekly with occasional full-day trips or in-class presentations and activities. Classes may travel on foot, by chartered school bus or on public transportation for Out & Abouts. Volunteer support for Out & Abouts is always welcome. Please contact your student's teacher or the Out & About coordinator (see Staff Directory) for your child's level to volunteer.

Accidents & Illness at School

In case of serious accident or illness at school, we will contact parents/guardians as well as emergency medical response if appropriate. If we cannot reach parents/guardians, we will attempt to contact all individuals listed as emergency contacts in the student's file. Based on the recommendation of emergency responders, we may have the student transported to the hospital for further evaluation or treatment, but we will always make every effort to contact parents so they can make medical decisions for their children.

No care beyond minimum First Aid will be administered by school personnel. If injury or illness renders a child unable to participate in class, parents/guardians are expected to make arrangements to take the child home. FGCS cannot provide care for ill or injured students at school. Parents should have plans for how their children will get home in case of such emergencies.

Communicable Illnesses: Parents should keep students home when they are experiencing symptoms of communicable illnesses, such as fever, vomiting, dizziness, swollen glands, etc. Students should be kept home until they have been fever free without medication for at least 24 hours. If students come to school with symptoms of illness or develop them while at school, parents/guardians will be contacted to take them home.

Medical Insurance: FGCS is not responsible for medical bills related to student illness or accident at school.

Bringing Personal Items to School/Weapons

Parents/guardians and students should first check with teachers about any applicable classroom rules before bringing personal items to school. **Weapons of any kind - including pocket knives, replica weapons and toy weapons - are strictly forbidden.**

In general, students are strongly discouraged from bringing valuable or important personal items to school. Student lockers are not available in any classrooms. **FGCS is not responsible for the loss or theft of any personal belongings.** If any personal belonging of a student is misused or becomes a distraction, a teacher or administrator may take the item to hold until the end of the school day, may ask a parent to pick up the item or may bar the student from bringing the item to school.

Cell Phones: Students in Levels 1, 2 and 3 may not use personal cell phones during the school day. Level 4 students may use personal cell phones during lunch and breaks. Cell phones must be silenced and stored away during class time unless students have express teacher permission to use them.

Home-Family Communication

FGCS is committed to regular communication with parents/guardians to support students' education and strengthen our school community. We communicate with families primarily through email. We also share news and information through the school website, a public Facebook page and a closed, private Facebook group called FGCS Parent Group. To stay informed, plan to check your email inbox regularly for messages from your child's teachers and school administration. Read your teacher's weekly newsletter/blog for information about schedule, Out & About, homework assignments and special events. If you do not have regular internet access, please make a point of checking in regularly with the office and your child's teacher so we can help you stay up to date. Free internet access is available at public libraries and free email accounts may be established with many providers.

Two-Household Families: Student report cards and other school communications are sent to both parents unless a court order forbids it. Non-custodial parents may contact the school office at 503-359-4600 to provide contact information.

Family Directory: To promote connections among students and families, FGCS will publish a directory for distribution among all enrolled families. The directory will be created through a Google form to be sent out to all families in late summer/early fall. Parents/guardians will receive a link to a form for providing name, email address, phone numbers, etc. Families use the form to submit any contact information they are willing to share with other FGCS families. Participation in the directory is voluntary.

Publicity/Use of Student Photos, Names and School Work: FGCS may use student photos and images of their school work in school-sponsored publicity, including school website, newsletters and social media or teacher websites, blogs and newsletters. Students will be identified only by first name or first initial. Parents/guardians may decline to have their students' images or names used in school-sponsored publicity by notifying the school in writing. Please send publicity opt-out notices or questions to Karen Torry, director of school operations, at k.torry@fgcschool.org.

Note: Student images may appear in local newspapers or other media outlets when school events or activities are covered by reporters. FGCS does not control the use of student images by media outlets. In addition, individuals or organizations hosting our students for Out & Abouts may take photos of our students and use them in their own publicity. FGCS does not control these uses of student images.

Special Education

The Forest Grove School District is responsible under state and federal law for providing special education services to eligible students in public charter schools such as FGCS. Students who receive special education services are eligible to apply for enrollment at FGCS on the same basis as other students. If the student is offered a place after the enrollment lottery, the student's Individualized Education Program team will meet to determine how services will be provided to the student at FGCS. In some cases, the District may determine that the services should be provided in a different setting and may not approve placement at FGCS. Prospective parents should contact their student's IEP case manager or the special education coordinator at their student's current school. Contact principal Vanessa Gray at v.gray@fgcschool.org with questions.

Referring a student for special education services: The FGCS special education referral team considers all referrals for special education services. A parent, teacher or staff member may refer a student or the student may refer himself/herself. Parents should contact the classroom teacher or principal to request a referral.

Evaluation process: Parents are invited to attend a referral meeting, at which participants discuss whether a student should be referred for evaluation to determine eligibility for services. Referral team participants include parents, classroom teacher, administrator, special education coordinator, school psychologist, speech-language pathologist and other specialists (e.g., occupational therapist, autism specialist) as needed. If the team recommends an evaluation, parents must give written permission for the evaluation to occur. Evaluation staff may include special education teacher, speech-language pathologist, school psychologist, autism specialist, occupational therapist, physical therapist or other specialists. Evaluation typically includes a file review (grades, test scores, behavior history at school, etc.) and administration of cognitive, behavioral, speech communication and academic testing. Parents may be asked to provide medical and developmental history. The child's physician may be asked to provide information.

Timeline: The District must complete the evaluation within 60 school days from the date of referral. After testing is complete, a meeting is convened with parents, classroom teacher, administrator and District special education staff to share findings, including whether the student is eligible for services and, if so, how these will be provided. To be eligible for services, the evaluation must show that the child has a 'handicapping condition' and that the child needs specially designed instruction. Under federal law, there are 11 'handicapping condition' categories for special education purposes: specific learning disability, communication disorder, other health impaired, autism spectrum disorder, emotional disturbance, hearing impaired, visually impaired, mental retardation, orthopedically impaired, traumatic brain injury and deaf/blind.

Student Records

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. FERPA limits third-party access to student education records, keeps personally identifiable information confidential and allows students and their parents access to records. Detailed information about both students and parent rights under FERPA is available at the [U.S. Department of Education website](https://www.ed.gov/ferpa).

Forest Grove Community School is the custodian of student records. Records are confidential and kept in a secure place on school property. Parents may ask to view or make copies of their child's records by contacting the school office. Non-custodial parents may have access to student records unless such access is prohibited by court order and a certified copy of such order has been provided to FGCS. Students under age 18 may view their records with parent permission. When a student transfers or graduates, FGCS will forward the student's file to his/her next school upon request by the new school.

Family Involvement & Volunteering

FGCS welcomes the active participation of parents and other family members in support of our students, teachers and staff. There are many ways for you to get involved.

Classroom Volunteering: Contact your child's teacher to ask about volunteering directly with your child's classroom. Volunteers are always needed to chaperone Out & Abouts and garden work days, and teachers often can use help with photocopying, paperwork and other organizational tasks.

Tree House After-School Program: Managed by our AmeriCorps member under the supervision of an experienced teacher, Tree House offers homework support to students in Levels 2, 3 and 4 (3rd-8th grades). Volunteers help students complete assignments (math, writing, spelling, etc.) and play an important role in supporting student engagement and success. Contact principal Vanessa Gray at v.gray@fgcschool.org to volunteer.

After School Classes & Clubs: FGCS typically offers a variety of after-school classes and clubs for students of all ages. Most after-school activities are led by volunteers and are typically offered at no cost to families or for a nominal fee. Student-led clubs may be permitted when students submit a request form to the principal, find an adult and arrange a meeting day/time with an administrator. Check all-school email messages, the school website and school-sponsored social media for details.

Health and Safety

The safety of our students and staff is our foremost concern. FGCS is subject to the same health and safety laws and regulations as all public schools in Oregon. We follow state and district rules and practices in the area of health and safety. For questions about health and safety issues at FGCS, contact director of school operations Karen Torry at k.torry@fgcschool.org or 503-359-4600.

Drugs/Alcohol/Weapons

Possession and use of drugs, tobacco, alcohol or weapons of any kind are strictly forbidden. 'Weapons' includes pocket knives replica or toy weapons. 'Drugs' includes any prescription or non-prescription medication except cough drops. Students who violate rules regarding the possession or use of drugs, tobacco, alcohol or weapons are subject to discipline up to and including suspension or expulsion.

Medications - General Guidelines

Contact Kari McFaddin at k.mcfaddin@fgcschool.org or 503-359-4600 with questions about medications.

Students may take prescription or non-prescription medications during the school day under the direct supervision of trained staff with parent and doctor permission. Parents must fill out

paperwork giving permission and providing instructions for dispensing the medication. Ask for these forms in the school office.

Students may not carry any medications at school except cough drops or inhalers and Epi-Pens with parent permission. Parents are responsible for making sure students who have permission to carry their own inhalers or Epi-Pens have these items with them at school.

Prescription Medication

Prescription medications may be administered only by trained FGCS staff or by a parent/guardian. All medications must be provided in original packaging with dosage information on the label. Parents must bring in medications they wish to leave on file for a student at school; students may not bring in medications.

Non-Prescription Medication

Non-prescription medications, except cough drops, must also be administered at school by trained FGCS staff or by a parent/guardian. Parents must provide written permission and a doctor's note listing the medication to be taken and dosage instructions. Parents must also fill out the forms described above under Medications - General Guidelines.

Allergies/Asthma

If your child has allergies or asthma that require medication or accommodations at school, please contact director of operations Karen Torry at 503-359-4600 or k.torry@fgcschool.org to make a plan to address those needs.

Immunizations

FGCS is subject to Oregon's compulsory immunization law ([Oregon Revised Statutes 433.235 through 433.284](#)), which requires that school children be immunized at the time of enrollment. For a list of required immunization or other questions, contact Kari McFaddin at k.mcfaddin@fgcschool.org.

Safety Drills

FGCS conducts regular evacuation drills and twice-yearly earthquake and lockdown drills. If you have questions about safety practices at FGCS, please contact Karen Torry at k.torry@fgcschool.org.

School Closures

FGCS follows the direction of the Forest Grove School District if inclement weather forces a late start, early dismissal or school closure. Whenever there is inclement weather, consult the

sources listed below before heading out to school to determine whether school is open and starting on time.

The best way to stay informed about school closures/delays is to subscribe to [Flash Alerts](#) for notices from the Forest Grove School District. You may also check local TV/radio stations (if you hear that all Forest Grove schools are closed, that includes FGCS - you will not hear a separate listing for our school) and the District website at www.fgsd.k12.or.us.

FGCS will make every effort to update its website and send out closure/delay messages via email and Facebook. **Note:** In the unusual circumstance of inclement weather when FGCS is scheduled to be open but all other District schools are closed, FGCS will notify parents by all-school email about whether school will be open, closed or start late.

