

The Ferndale area School District will not discriminate in its educational programs, activities, or employment practices, based on race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, ancestry, union membership, or any other legally protected classification. Announcement of this policy is in accordance with state and federal laws, including Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the American with Disabilities Act of 1990. the Ferndale Area School district employees and participants who have an inquiry or complaint of harassment or discrimination or who need information about accommodations for persons with disabilities, should contact John Kowal, Business Manager, Administrative Office, 100 Dartmouth Avenue, Johnstown, PA 15905 (Telephone 814-535-1507)

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GASKIN

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ALMA MATER

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**FERNDALE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT HOMEPAGE**

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## Principal's Welcome Letter

On behalf of the administration, faculty and staff at Ferndale Area Elementary School, I would like to welcome you to the 2009-2010 school year. With the support of our school board, teachers, staff, community and family members, we have been able to make progress toward our collective goals for each and every student in our building. Looking forward to the coming school year, we have utilized time preparing to set even higher expectations for our students with the purpose of having every student ready for the next grade level.

I believe that it should be the goal of any school system to ensure that every student reaches their fullest potential. Our school's devoted educators and research-based curriculum, combined with high expectations, will pave the path to success for our students. In addition to the academic standards set forth by the school district, we also emphasize the importance of the social and emotional development of our students.

Ferndale Area Elementary School has a reputation for high academic standards, but it is also well known as a very caring school community. I'm certain that you will quickly experience the warm and caring environment through our administration, staff and students over the years your child is attending our school. Everyone at our school feels important no matter what role they play.

I also believe that the greatest resource a school has is its people. Parental support and community involvement is critical to our success. I will be seeking to promote this idea as a crucial component of our learning community. Needing your help, we invite and encourage you to become involved and participate in our school's programs and activities.

I am delighted to be associated with Ferndale Area Elementary School and I'm sure that we share the same excitement for challenges and joys of each new school year. I am proud of our school's accomplishments and am looking forward to working with you, as a team, to continually improve the Ferndale Area Elementary School.

Educationally yours,

**Justin Zahorchak**

Justin Zahorchak  
Elementary Principal

# FERNDALE AREA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENT / PARENT HANDBOOK

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### ATTENDANCE & ABSENCES

Regular attendance is necessary for a student to progress through his formal education at a rate commensurate to his ability. If a child will be absent from school, the parent or guardian is required to notify the school office (535-6724) in the morning before the start of the school day. Calls should be made between 7:30 and 8:15 A.M. **All absences must be accounted for by a written excuse from the parent or guardian.** Please send this written excuse with your child the day she/he returns to school. If the student has been seen by a physician please send the doctor's excuse to the school. The absence will be recorded as unexcused / illegal until the written excuse has been sent to the school. **Unexcused and illegal absences are one and the same for children of elementary school age, so every effort should be made to keep a good attendance record.** However, no child should be sent to school whenever he or she is obviously ill. This is not fair to the child or to the other children who might contract the same illness.

A pattern of unexcused absences or absenteeism will result in a **warning letter being sent to the child's guardian. Continued absences will result in a medical letter, which will require that all future absences be accompanied by a doctor's excuse** or they will be considered illegal absences. We are required by law to monitor students' attendance and must report illegal absences to the proper authorities. Substantial fines could result for the parents or guardians of a student who has excessive absenteeism. The elementary office will contact parents daily, to confirm absences of students.

### ASSIGNMENTS WHEN ABSENT

When a student is absent from school, assignments may be sent home with a brother, sister or a neighborhood child or picked up by the parent. Please call the school office to let the classroom teacher know who is to take the schoolwork home for the absent student. Please call the school early in the day to give the teacher ample time to gather all necessary work. If parents are picking up homework they may stop in the office at 2:50 P.M.

### BIRTHDAY PARTIES

Parents may send treats to the school for the children in their child's classroom if they choose. These treats must be store bought. A note should be sent to the teacher ahead of time so that she/he can plan accordingly. Invitations to parties **may not** be distributed in school.

### CAFETERIA

The Ferndale Area Elementary School offers a breakfast and lunch program for the students in the elementary school. Prices for both are set at the beginning of the school year. Low income families may be eligible for free or reduced cafeteria prices. Applications and additional information on this program are available in the elementary office.

The Ferndale Area School District uses a computerized system to monitor the payment of lunch, breakfast, and milk purchases. **Parents are asked to calculate the amount**

needed to **prepay** for the all meals within a given time period and write one check per family to cover the purchase of lunches, breakfasts, and milks. There are envelopes available in each homeroom for payment, or you may use any envelope from home. Please specify the student's name and home room teacher for each child in the family and the amount that is to be deposited in each account. Students are asked to make payment for multiple days. When a student makes a purchase, that amount will be deducted from their account. Students will be notified when their account balance is low or has been spent. **All meals are to be paid in advance.** In an emergency situation when a student forgets his/her money or lunch, she/he will be given a credit for that day and parents are asked to reimburse the cafeteria on the following school day.

**Please pay outstanding cafeteria debts promptly.** Contact the FAES cafeteria if you have any questions regarding the student's account status.

Students will receive a monthly lunch menu. Please be sure to check the bottom of the menu for additional information concerning early dismissals and activities that may be scheduled during that month.

### **DAILY SCHEDULE**

The normal school day begins at 8:25 and dismissal is at 3:00 for students in grades kindergarten through six. K4 students' day begins at 8:45 ends at 2:00. If it is necessary to transport a student to or from school on a particular day, please plan for their arrival between 8:15 and 8:20 and for their dismissal between 2:50 and 3:00. A written note from the parent is required if the student will be picked up by the parent. If there is a need to change the daily schedule, there will be a written notice sent home to the parent or announcements will be made on the local radio and television stations.

**Please establish a plan so that your child is always supervised in the event of an early dismissal.**

### **DETENTION**

School detention is held after school for misbehavior on the bus, incomplete homework / class work assignments or for disciplinary purposes. Parents will be notified if detention is assigned. Detention may be assigned by the principal or an individual teacher. It is the responsibility of the parent to provide transportation from school for any detained student.

### **DOCTOR'S APPOINTMENTS**

A note should be sent to the school alerting the teacher and the office that a child is to be dismissed early for a doctor's appointment. All parents should come into the office and their child will then be called. The parent **is not** to go directly to the child's classroom. Under no circumstances will students be released to anyone other than the parent or legal guardian without written permission from the parent or legal guardian. Parents will need to sign the register in the office when taking a child from the school. Because regular school attendance is vital to a student's academic success, every effort should be made to schedule appointments after school hours.

If a student is returning to school following a medical or dental appointment, please submit a doctor's excuse to the office upon returning. The student should attend school prior to and/or following an appointment that is scheduled during the instructional day.

## **DISCIPLINE**

The school district encourages students to be the best they can be. Our goal is to help the students become self-disciplined individuals. However, if a student chooses to violate the school rules, discipline measures will be taken and the penalties will increase according to the severity or persistence of the misconduct. There is no division of authority among the faculty of the Ferndale Area Elementary School. Teachers are authorized to reprimand or correct misbehaving students at any time or any place during the school day and at any school function or activity. A copy of the FASD discipline policy is in this handbook.

The actual sequence of disciplinary action may vary, depending on the individual case. In general, the following sequence is followed:

1. Teacher and student
2. Teacher and parent
3. Teacher, parent and student
4. Teacher, parent, student and principal or guidance counselor
5. All of the above and other school personnel involved

1. In-School Suspension – Separation from the student body while assigned to the principal's office. The teachers will send academic work to the office and monitor the student's progress.
2. Temporary Suspension – Exclusion from school for an offense for a period of up to three school days, by the principal.
3. Full Suspension – Exclusion from school for a period of up to ten school days, after an informal hearing before the principal is offered to the student and student's parents. In all suspension cases, the student has the responsibility to make up exams and work missed.
4. Expulsion – Exclusion from school for an offense for a period exceeding ten school days and may result in permanent removal from school rolls.

Our school district's policies on drugs and alcohol, and the policy on sexual harassment are described elsewhere in this handbook. Violations of these policies, as well as violations that show disregard for civil, state, or federal laws will be dealt with severely and may result in detentions, suspensions, or expulsions.

Continued defiance of rules of behavior may result in detention, suspension or expulsion. Students may also lose privileges of field trips, participation in activities or other appropriate penalties determined by the principal

## **EMERGENCY INFORMATION / CHANGES**

For the safety of all, students are required to have an emergency card on hand in the school office. Parents are asked to complete and return these cards at the beginning of the year. Please be sure to notify all parties that are listed on the card as emergency contacts of their responsibility to your child. In the event of an emergency, it may be necessary to contact one of these parties if the school is unable to contact the parent.

**Please notify the school office if there are any changes in this emergency information throughout the school year. It is important to keep information up to date in the event of an emergency.**

## **HOMEWORK**

Homework assignments are given to help reinforce concepts discussed during the school day. They are an important tool in the learning process. Homework assignments are to be completed by **all** students and returned to the teacher at the assigned time. Homework that was not done will be completed during free periods including, lunch, and assemblies. Three incomplete homework assignments in a row will result in a night of detention for the student in grades 2 through 6. Alternate arrangements will be made for kindergarten and grade 1 students. If a student continues the habit of not completing homework, he/she will be required to complete the work during detention after school. **It is the responsibility of the student to complete all assignments on time and in an acceptable manner.**

## **FAMILY SUPPORT TEAM**

The Family Support Team is a core team comprised of the principal, guidance counselor, and family support teacher, whose purpose is to support and assist teachers with students who are experiencing social, academic, and attendance problems. The parent is also a very important member of this team. The school nurse and any special teachers may be asked to be a part of the team if they have contact with or insights regarding the child. Decisions regarding student attendance violation, retention, advancement, referral, evaluation, and classroom interventions are made through the FAMILY SUPPORT TEAM. A student may be referred to the team by any teacher or by the parent. Information pertaining to parental referrals can be obtained in the elementary school office or by contacting Mrs. Kopusko, the Family Support Coordinator.

## **FERNDALE AREA ELEMENTARY GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT MISSION STATEMENT**

Ferndale Area Elementary school's developmental guidance program believes that the foundation of successful learning includes education regarding the development of positive character traits that will enable students to experience life with integrity by making positive life decisions towards themselves, others and their community. Implementation of character development skills are delivered to students via four essential program components: guidance curriculum, responsive services, individual planning, system support.

## **INSURANCE**

As in the past, the Ferndale Area School District will provide you with an opportunity to purchase accident/medical insurance coverage for your child. Participation is voluntary and all students are eligible. Parents will be notified early in the school year as to the coverage and costs. The school district **does not** carry medical insurance on students but does provide access to a group insurance plan.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Every year there are numerous unclaimed items lost by students. There is a lost and found box in the office and cafeteria. Please have your child check this box for items that she/he may have lost. Every year many articles of clothing and other personal items are unclaimed and cannot be returned to the owners because there are no names on them. Please put the student's name on all items of removable clothing or belongings that they carry. Hats, gloves, sweaters, scarves, etc. could easily be returned if marked with the child's name. Any items not claimed by the end of the school year will be donated to a local charity.

## **MEDICATIONS**

The school district will cooperate with parents and their medical practitioners in giving prescribed medication when these must be taken during school hours. Ideally, all medication should be given at home. It is also recognized that at the present time, many students are able to attend regular school because of the effectiveness of medication in the treatment of chronic disabilities and illness. However, any student who is required to take medication during the regular school day must comply with school regulations. These regulations include the following:

**Prescription and Non Prescription Medication** will be administered by the school nurse or other authorized personnel under the following conditions:

1. A written request from the physician shall be submitted to school officials indicating the student's need for medication. Included in the request must be the name of the student, name of the medication, dosage and frequency of administration.
2. Parental or guardian written request that medication be administered as prescribed in the physician's statement.
3. All medication must be in protective containers which are properly labeled by the physician or pharmacy.

All medications (prescription and non prescription) must be transported to and from school by a parent or guardian for all students' safety. **No student will be permitted to carry any medication at anytime.** \*Inhalers may be carried by a student only after written consent by a physician is obtained to verify the students' knowledge of the use and administration of the medication. It is each child's responsibility to come to the office for his medication.

Medication is to be accompanied by a form for this purpose. Forms are available from the main office in each building. Please be sure that there is a completed form in the office for your child. These regulations are for the safety and protection of all students in the district. Your cooperation with these regulations is appreciated.

## **PARENT - TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Two scheduled conference days provide opportunities for parents to meet with teachers throughout the school year. However, a parent need not wait for an invitation to a conference. A parent may request a conference at any time. Parents may contact teachers to establish a meeting date and time.

These conferences are a valuable time for reporting student progress to parents and also for parents to provide teachers with information that could help them better understand each child. **Conferences must be scheduled in advance in order to eliminate classroom interruptions.** If you request a conference with a teacher and for some reason you do not receive a reply, please call the principal.

Messages for individual teachers may also be left before and after school hours using the district's voice-mail system. To leave such a message, dial the elementary office (535-6724) and follow the directions as prompted.

## **PERSONAL PROPERTY**

Students are expected to respect the personal property of others. Students are not to use or take items that belong to others without the permission of the owner. It is best to keep your hands off of things that do not belong to you. **Damage or theft of personal property will result in disciplinary action by the principal.**

Unless items are needed for a class or school activity, they may not be brought to school. Items prohibited include, but are not limited to, personal stereo equipment (radios, CD players, MP3 player), electronic games, and cellular phones.

The school district is not responsible for any prohibited items brought to school. Any prohibited items that are confiscated will be placed in the principal's office until parents or guardians retrieve them. Items will not be returned to students.

## **PICKING STUDENTS UP AT THE SCHOOL**

Please send in a **written note** if it is necessary for you to pick your child up at the school and he/she will not be riding the bus home. If a child does not have a written note, she/he will be required to ride the bus home at the end of the day. Please notify the office of any change in the regular routine **in writing**. Proper notification eliminates confusion and ensures the safety of your child.

Please arrange to pick up your child at the end of the day **at dismissal time**. Teachers are expected to conduct classes until dismissal time. In order to eliminate classroom interruptions, we ask that you sign your child out and wait for your child to be called to the lobby immediately prior to the first call for buses. Because of the danger factor, we will not send the students into the parking lot or across the street. **You will need to come into the elementary office to pick up a student.**

## **REPORT CARDS / RETENTION**

Report cards in grades one through six are issued four times throughout the school year. Kindergarten students receive three report cards yearly. K4 students will receive a progress report twice yearly. Academic grades are for parental information based on predetermined percentages and reflect the achievement of the student during each grading period. Grades are not a reward or a punishment. They are a reflection of your child's academic performance. **Any questions regarding grades should be addressed with your child's teacher.**

### **Ferndale Area Elementary Grading Scale:**

<b>92 - 100</b>	<b>A</b>
<b>83 - 91</b>	<b>B</b>
<b>74 - 82</b>	<b>C</b>
<b>65 - 73</b>	<b>D</b>
<b>0 - 64</b>	<b>E</b>

When a student has a pattern of poor or failing grades, it may be necessary for the student to be retained. Prior to retention, parents will be consulted. A determination will be made that is acceptable to both the parent and the school district. Remember, the overall benefit to the child will be the determining factor for any retention or promotion. Students with poor or failing grades may also be referred to the Family Support Team.

## **SCHOOL DELAYS, CANCELLATIONS AND EARLY DISMISSALS**

If it becomes necessary to announce the cancellation of school, a delay in the start of the day or an early dismissal, this information will be relayed over the local radio stations or television channels. Please feel free to call the school if you have any questions about delays or early dismissals.

Certain circumstances may make it necessary to dismiss students early, (power failure, lack of water, smoke etc.). This information will be broadcast on the local radio and television stations. Every effort will be made to give you as much notice as possible. However, it is not possible to call each student's home. With many parents working, it may be a good idea to form a network with relatives, neighbors and friends to look after each other's children in the event that one of you is not home and did not hear the news of the early dismissal. **The parent/guardian is responsible for formulating an emergency plan with each child. Be sure that the student knows what to do and where to go in case of early dismissal.**

One hour early dismissals are scheduled the day before Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter. You will be reminded of these on the menu, the school newsletter, and an additional memo.

## SCHOOL NURSE

The school nurse does much more than provide first aid in the school. She is responsible for all health records, immunization, examinations, health related instruction, etc. which have become a part of the school program. The school nurse does not perform duties that are the responsibility of a physician.

The school nurse is available to distribute medications and consult with parents from 10:30 – 3:00 at the elementary Monday through Friday. She can be contacted between the hours of 7:30 and 10:00 at the High School. Finally, she is available for assistance and emergencies throughout the district every day.

There are certain instances when the school nurse is mandated by the PA Department of Health to exclude students from school. An example of this would be when there is a question of communicable disease. If excluded, the student will have to be seen and released by a physician prior to returning to school.

## SCHOOL PROPERTY

We take pride in our building and need the cooperation of **all** to maintain its appearance. Abuse or vandalism of school property will not be tolerated. Offenses of this nature will be punished as per the Ferndale Area School District's discipline policy. The cooperation of all is necessary to maintain the beautiful school that we have.

## STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The Ferndale Area Elementary School provides services for exceptional students. If you have a child that is exceptional or thought to be exceptional, **and** is in need of special services or programs, please contact the school. We will take the steps necessary to begin the evaluation process and provide services to your child. Further information on exceptionalities can be provided by the building principal.

## TEXTBOOKS

The text books given to students for the year are numbered in order to maintain a record of inventory. Students are expected to take care of the books and return them at the end of the year in good condition. **Parents will be required to pay for lost or destroyed textbooks.** A letter will be sent informing of the book lost or destroyed and the amount owed. If the child destroys or loses a consumable workbook, it will be necessary for the parent to pay for a replacement workbook.

# GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR STUDENTS

## APPEARANCE

Students should take pride in their appearance and develop good habits of personal hygiene. Students are not expected to dress "in their Sunday best" for school, however the clothing should be neat, clean and appropriate for school.

Clothing meant for strictly recreational purposes (short shorts, halters, midriff tops, tanktops, shirts with spaghetti straps, camisoles, spandex clothing etc.) is prohibited and not appropriate to wear to school. Long dresses, high heels, flipflops, and other types of clothing that could cause a child to fall are prohibited. Any clothing or hairstyle that is so bizarre as to be a distraction to the other students is also prohibited. Students are not permitted to wear clothing that depicts obscene language, drugs, alcohol, inappropriate messages or vulgarity. If a student wears inappropriate clothing to school, the parent will be called to bring an appropriate outfit for the student to wear. Students are permitted to wear shorts from the beginning of the school year until October 15 and from April 15 to the end of the year.

**A child who habitually attends school unwashed and in dirty clothes or with clothes that are not suitable for the season is considered to be neglected. The Elementary Counselor will contact parents when the situation arises. We are required by law to report such incidents to the appropriate authorities. School personnel have an affirmative obligation to report to the appropriate authorities on the basis of their professional training or other experience that a child has been abused or neglected.**

## BUS ASSIGNMENT

Students are to ride the bus that passes nearest to their home or provides for the safest route to walk to and from the bus stop. They are to sit in their assigned seat and board and get off of the bus at this same stop **every day**. In the case of an emergency, students will be permitted to ride a different bus with permission from the principal. In this circumstance, parents should provide a written or verbal request to the principal justifying the need for this change. If you move during the year and the bus number or stop changes, please notify the office so we can update our bus lists and assign a new seat. The school district is required to maintain a daily roster for each bus. Students who ride a bus other than the one to which they are assigned are violating school policy and may lose riding privileges.

\*\*\*Parents must establish **one** consistent morning and afternoon bus number and bus stop, which **cannot be changed on a daily basis nor be changed via the telephone.** **Frequent changes and telephone requests create an unsafe situation, are difficult to monitor, and will not be permitted. Students must ride their assigned bus home or be picked up by the parent.** For the safety of all students, the school must know where the students are being transported at the end of the day.

## **BUS BEHAVIOR**

Proper student discipline is necessary to ensure the efficient and safe operation of the school bus system. Failure to show regard for bus safety rules will result in the suspension of riding privileges. Students whose bus privileges are suspended are still required to attend school. **It is the parents responsibility to provide transportation for the duration of the suspension.**

## **BUS STOPS**

The vast majority of complaints about student behavior originate from incidents that take place either before students get on the bus or after they get off the bus. Students are often without adult supervision at these times. The safety of the students while waiting for the bus is of utmost importance, and students must behave in a safe manner to avoid injury.

Students are to wait in a safe place, stay off of the streets and stay off of private property when waiting for the bus. Parents can help by accompanying their child to and from the bus stop daily.

## **GENERAL CONDUCT**

Students have a responsibility to be aware of all classroom and school rules and regulations and to conduct themselves accordingly. Each individual teacher will tell you exactly how you are to behave in his/her room. Students have a responsibility to behave in an appropriate manner at all times in the Ferndale Area Elementary School. Acceptable behavior is conducive to learning and shows respect for self and others. Any behavior that disrupts the class or school or injures another is not permitted. Profanity is not acceptable in the Ferndale Area Elementary School.

Chewing gum on school property is prohibited.

If a student chooses to violate school rules, discipline measures will be taken and penalties will increase according to the severity and persistence of the misconduct. Students who consistently display unacceptable behavior will be subject to school detention or suspension. **In addition, students who demonstrate an inability to behave properly will not be permitted to go on class field trips or participate in other school functions. The revocation of field trip or, extra curricular activities will be at the discretion of the principal and teacher.**

## **LIBRARY**

We are very fortunate to have a beautiful, well equipped library. Many new books are added to the library every year. When using the library, students are to be quiet so as not to disturb the other children.

Many books are available to borrow and use for research. Books are not to be removed from the library unless, they have been properly checked out by the librarian. Students must take good care of the books so that other students will get to enjoy them. Please return all borrowed books on time. **Parents will be billed for lost or destroyed books.** Library books can be very expensive and some are not replaceable.

## **LUNCHROOM**

Proper manners and talking in a reasonable tone of voice are expected of all students while in the lunchroom. Poor manners or loud, disruptive behaviors are not permitted. Food should be kept off the floor because it is not only unsightly but could cause someone serious injury. Students are to remain in their seats and follow the direction of the cafeteria supervisor. Students who display inappropriate behavior and violate lunchroom rules will be removed from the cafeteria and may receive further disciplinary action.

## **PARENTS' LUNCH / VISITOR**

Parents are invited to eat lunch with their child. We ask that any parent eating lunch call the school office one day prior to make a reservation. Parents are asked to sign in with the Elementary Office upon arrival and to wear their visitor tag throughout the stay.

**Reminder:** parents are asked to not stay for recess and under no circumstances are they to go to their student's classroom.

## **LUNCH TIME RECESS**

Most students enjoy going outside when the weather is suitable. Students must follow safety rules to avoid injuries. Dangerous or unsafe behaviors are not permitted. Jump ropes, balls and other materials are provided so that you can enjoy the outdoors in safety. Play equipment is to be used for its intended purposes. Students should not go into the alley, between the cars, into the bushes or on the street. Parents are asked to not use the alley parking lot entrance during school hours.

It is imperative for each student's safety that all students follow the guidelines for playground safety. All parents and students are required at the beginning of each school year to sign and return the playground safety consent form after reviewing the safety guidelines. After the first two weeks of school, any child without signed consent will not be permitted on the playground facility.

## **RESPECT FOR OTHERS**

Respect for others is a very important part of life. Students in the Ferndale Area Elementary School are expected to treat all of the people in the building, as you would like to be treated. Your teachers, other school personnel and students should be treated with respect and courtesy at all times. Bullying in any form will not be tolerated as outlined in the Anti-bullying Procedure sent home on the first day. Parents and students will be asked to sign a form confirming their awareness of the elementary procedure.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION DISCIPLINE POLICY**

The discipline policy for regular education students will apply to special education students. However:

1. No emotional support or learning support student will receive more than 10 days suspension at any one time or more than 10 days cumulative unless given a NOREP for change of placement.
2. Students who do not comply with school rules will have an individual behavior management program drawn up. The student's parents will be a vital part of the management program.

## **VANDALISM**

Any activity which, mars or destroys school property shall be considered a serious offense. Students will be required to repair or pay for any damages to the school property or buses. Such activity could cause unnecessary expense for parents.

## **WEAPONS POLICY**

For the safety of all, the federal and state governments have enacted laws and the Ferndale Area School Board has adopted a policy that bans weapons of any kind in the school or on school property. **Failure to comply with this policy will result in suspension and may result in expulsion from school regardless of age.**

It is very important for parents to be aware of and carefully monitor the items (toys and weapon replicas) that children possess and pack in their book bags and pockets. **The only way to prevent a serious incident is to prohibit dangerous objects and weapons on school property.** Parents and students will be asked to sign a form confirming their awareness of the Ferndale Area School District policy and consequences regarding weapons on school property. Your cooperation is extremely important in this matter.

# **SPECIAL ACTIVITIES**

## **ASSEMBLIES**

A variety of entertaining and educational programs have been planned for this year. Some programs are for specific grade levels and others are for the entire school. Please remember when attending an assembly that you represent our school. The presenters and guests are to be treated with respect. Students who do not complete their assigned work or behave in an unacceptable manner will not be permitted to attend the special assemblies.

## **BAND**

Group lessons are available to those children who want to learn to play band instruments. If you are interested, contact your music teacher for details. In some instances, it may be necessary for the parent to provide transportation prior to or after school.

When you join a group such as the band, you are making a commitment to your school and your fellow members. Once you join you should remain for the entire year. This is only fair to those others who work so hard to form a group that we all can be proud to call the Ferndale Area Elementary Band.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

From time to time individual classrooms or entire grades will go on educational field trips. When on such a trip, our students represent the school in the public eye. In all cases parental permission will be required. **Students who demonstrate an inability to behave properly and do not follow school rules and regulations will not be permitted on field trips. Attendance on a field trip will be at the principal's and teacher's discretion.**

## **PEER TUTORS**

The Peer Tutor program at Ferndale Area Elementary is designed to give any elementary grade child in need of study guide reviews, math fact or computation skill reviews, spelling word reviews via a peer tutor. Fifth and sixth grade peer tutors are selected by classroom teachers, guidance counselor and principal. Characteristics of peer tutors include exemplary academic ability, positive character traits as well as excellent school attendance. The peer tutor program provides leadership and mentoring skills that benefits both the tutor and tutoree. All tutors receive leadership training and academic study skill review by the school counselor. Recipients of the peer tutoring program are referred at the request of a parent or teacher via the family support program.

## **FUND RAISER**

Every year the elementary school sponsors **one** fund raiser in the fall of the year. Students are asked to participate in the fund raiser to raise money for the yearbook, assemblies, special student projects and field trips. Students who participate are eligible to receive prizes. Parents are asked to return the payment for the fund raiser on time. The fund raisers have been very successful in the past. **We appreciate your support of this project.**

## **INTRAMURAL SPORTS**

A program of intramural sports will be available for students in grades 5 and 6. In some instances, it may be necessary to schedule games after school hours. When the games are scheduled after school hours, it is the parent's responsibility to provide transportation. Good sportsmanship and active participation are the primary goals of the intramural program.

## **STAR READER PROGRAM**

Volunteer fourth and fifth grade volunteer buddy readers are paired with kindergarten or first grade children to promote enjoyment of reading. Students "buddy" read in the library before classes begin for approximately 15 minutes at least twice a week.

Star readers share positive time with kindergarten students reading out loud and assisting with identification of sounds and letters. The first grade youngsters read several books to their tutors. The tutors select and read a variety of books chosen from our library that are appropriate for first grade children. Sharing good books is a great way to begin the day.

## **READING TEAM**

Students in grades 5 and 6 may participate in the reading team. There are two area competitions yearly. Students who enjoy reading may want to think about joining the reading team.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION CLASSES**

Some of our students attend special education learning support and speech and language classes held in our building. These students are given instruction by an itinerant teacher or in special education resource classrooms either part-time or full-time depending upon their individual needs. Other special education services are contracted with the Appalachia Intermediate Unit 8.

Special education students are treated no differently than any other students. All students are expected to follow the rules and regulations of the school. It takes the cooperation of all students to make our school a place for educational excellence.

Name-calling or any other harassment of special education students will not be tolerated. Such behavior demonstrates a weakness in the character of the person who does it, and will be considered a serious offense. To the credit of the students in our school, such offenses have been very rare.

There is information in the elementary school office and lobby regarding the evaluation of students for special education programs and services, and the services available through the Ferndale Area School District and the Appalachia Intermediate Unit 8. A copy of the public notice is available in the office. Please contact the school to request any additional information you may need regarding special education services.

## TITLE I MATH

The Ferndale Area Elementary School provides Title I Math services via a school wide model. Currently, Ferndale Area Elementary is using “Everyday Math” in grades K4 through grade 5 and Prentice Hall/Connected Math in grade 6. These programs provide a balance of instruction in computation and problem solving. Teachers and staff have been trained in this educational model and information pertaining to the program will be shared with parents throughout the year. As a parent it is vital that you support your child’s education in the home. Helping with homework, asking about their day, or discussion of a certain topic are easy ways for you to help educate your child. Only with cooperation between school and home can we meet the educational needs of your child.

## TITLE I READING

The Ferndale Area Elementary School provides Title I reading services via a school wide model. We are using the Macmillan/McGraw-Hill *Treasures* reading program. *Treasures* is research based and scientifically tested. It is built upon a foundation of research supporting the requirements of No Child Left Behind. *Treasures* will provide our students a balance of rich, motivating fiction and engaging content area text. The program also uses a variety of effective manipulatives to increase student achievement. Guided Reading is also going to become a part of our reading program. We will be using Guided Reading libraries from Pearson Learning. Our K4 and Kindergarten programs will be using Ready Readers. This will provide all the books we need to match individual abilities and build reading confidence. Ready Readers features both nonfiction and fiction titles for the students to use. First through sixth grades will be using iOpeners for Guided Reading. iOpeners equips students with the skills and strategies they need to access and comprehend nonfiction. Students will not only be learning to read, but reading to learn. **Your help will be very instrumental in the success of this program.**