

# *Parent Handbook*

2021-2022

## **First Wesleyan**



Equipping for Eternity

**Christian School**

# **Student & Parent Handbook**

**Elementary and Middle School**

**August 2021-2022**

# Welcome to FWCS!

Our vision is to equip students for eternity. We accomplish this by the combined efforts of our staff, the mature spiritual maturity of our environment, and the wide scope of our curriculum. Students will have chapel once a week to develop a discipling relationship with Jesus. They will study the Christian worldview and acquire skills of reasoning, comprehension, and observation about the world around them. Students will also study the values and lessons of history.

It is our deepest desire to serve you and your family in a way that is pleasing to God and to you. Please use this handbook to become familiar with our policies and procedures. You may also contact the office regarding concerns or questions. Please note that the school reserves the right to interpret rules and policies as individual situations and needs arise.

At First Wesleyan Christian School, we view the entire process of Christian education as a means used by God to bring the student to Himself through personal faith in Christ and to develop a Christian mind in the student so that he/she may fulfill God's will for his/her life both vocationally and personally. We pray that this will be your child's experience as you partner with us to provide a Christian education for your child.

## **Instructions on Using Your Parent-Student Handbook**

This handbook has been carefully designed to provide you with a quick reference guide to various aspects of First Wesleyan's K-8 division. The Table of Contents and the Index on Page 37 will enable you to quickly obtain answers to various questions you may have throughout the school year. It clearly lays out the various philosophies, policies, beliefs, and procedures by which the school is operated. All families are asked to read through this handbook before beginning enrollment. Before making an application to FWCS, new families are asked to carefully study the specific Admission Requirements section beginning on Page 8.

**Office Phone: (704)865-9823**

**Office Email: [office@fwcsfwcs.org](mailto:office@fwcsfwcs.org)**

**[www.fwcsfwcs.org](http://www.fwcsfwcs.org)**

208-A South Church Street

Gastonia, NC 28054

Rev. Kenny Johnston

Administrator

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# **SPIRITUAL MISSION AND EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVE**

## **FWCS's Mission Statement**

The mission of First Wesleyan Christian School is to create mature Christian disciples who will be academically and spiritually equipped to be productive citizens for both our Nation and the Kingdom of God.

## **Statement of Spiritual Purpose**

The primary purpose and objective of First Wesleyan Christian School is to train the student in the Christian way of life and to give the student the educational foundation to help him/her be a productive citizen now and in the future. The staff of First Wesleyan realizes that their solemn responsibility before God is to mold the life and character of each of their students.

The academic program of our school includes an emphasis on the mastery of the fundamental blocks of reading, writing, and arithmetic. Character training strives to teach obedience and self-discipline. The Bible curriculum introduces students to the teachings and worldview of Scripture. To know, love, and serve God are attributes we strive to instill in each student, equipping him/her for the role in God's plan for his/her life and proper place in society.

## **Academic Objectives**

First Wesleyan's academic goal for each individual student is for him/her to experience success while working up to his/her God-given capabilities. The school strives to preserve each child's self image while effectively educating his/her mind and spirit. The school aims to place each child at a level of instruction that will allow him/her to experience this success without undue frustration and stress. Grade placement is determined through required entrance testing.

## **Academic Standards**

First Wesleyan Christian aims for its students to achieve above national grade levels. This is necessary because the national grade level across America has been lowered substantially over the past four decades. Presently, a majority of students in First Wesleyan Christian score an average of twelve to eighteen months above the national norm on standardized national achievement tests. In an average year, over 90% of FWCS students score above national grade level. The school feels this is a desirable goal since our children will live in a society in which the mastery of basic skills will be essential to their vocational success.

## **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATIONS AND BELIEFS**

### **Ministry of First Wesleyan Church**

First Wesleyan Christian School is an interdenominational ministry of the First Wesleyan Church of Gastonia. The school was established in 1971 to provide quality Christian education to the general evangelical Christian community of the Gaston area. Though FWCS is legally owned by and meets in facilities owned by the First Wesleyan Church, the school only promotes and/or teaches those common, central, Biblical beliefs that are shared by all conservative evangelical denominations. Members of FWCS's governing School Committee are elected annually from among the believers of the church's congregation. The committee also annually elects one teacher representative and one parent representative to share in committee decisions.

During any given school year, FWCS's staff and student body represent 25-plus churches and denominations. All staff members are required to be professing evangelical Christian believers who live lifestyles consistent with their essential spiritual task of serving as Christian role models to FWCS's students.

### **Statement of Faith**

1. We believe the Bible to be the only inspired, infallible, and authoritative Word of God.
2. We believe there is one God, infinitely perfect and eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
3. We believe in the complete deity and perfect humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His substitutionary atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, in His ministry of intercession for His people, and in His personal return in power and glory.
4. We believe man was originally created in the image and the likeness of God, and that through sin he fell, and is therefore spiritually dead in trespasses and sin.
5. We believe in salvation by the sacrifice of Christ received by grace through faith alone.
6. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit in this world, which includes the convicting of the lost of sin, the regenerating and indwelling of all who believe, and the empowering of believers for service and godly living.
7. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the dead; the saved to the resurrection of eternal life, and the lost to the resurrection of eternal punishment.
8. We believe in the spiritual unity of all believers under the headship of Jesus Christ.

## **Regarding Marriage & the Family**

We believe that every person is created in the image of God, that human sexuality reflects that image in terms of intimate love, communication, fellowship, subordination of the self to the larger whole, and fulfillment. God's Word makes use of the marriage relationship as the supreme metaphor for His relationship with His covenant people and for revealing the truth that this relationship is of one God with one people. Therefore God's plan for human sexuality is that it is to be expressed only in a monogamous lifelong relationship between one man and one woman within the framework of marriage. This is the only relationship which is divinely designed for the birth and rearing of children and is a covenant union made in the sight of God, taking priority over every other human relationship. We adhere to the teachings of Scripture regarding gender identity, sexual conduct, and the sacredness of marriage, and believe that sexual relationships outside of marriage and sexual relationships between persons of the same sex are immoral and sinful (*The Wesleyan Church, The Discipline 2016, 17*).

### **Our Final Authority for Matters of Belief and Conduct:**

The above statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of First Wesleyan Christian School's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our Church's senior pastor and Local Board of Administration are FWC's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

### **Association of Christian Schools International**

FWCS is an active member of the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI), which is the largest and fastest growing Christian school association in the world. ACSI has over 5,000 member schools which minister to over 1,000,000 students. ACSI is a worldwide, interdenominational fellowship that provides its member schools with a variety of services, e.g., legal guidance, regional teacher conventions, curriculum, and various student activities such as spelling bees, speech meets, math contests, athletic tournaments, etc.

# ACADEMIC PROGRAM

## Curriculum Overview

The academic requirements for each grade level have been developed to exceed the course of study prescribed by the Department of Education of the State of North Carolina. Emphasis is placed upon the students' masteries of academic fundamentals and upon their spiritual development for service in the Kingdom of God.

The school uses traditional textbooks published by various leading Christian publishers, such as ABeka, Bob Jones, Veritas, Summit, Notgrass, and Well Trained Mind. Texts from Saxon Math, A Purpose for Writing, McDougal Littell, and Sadlier-Oxford are also used. Digital resources such as Mystery Science are being integrated into the curriculum (2020) as well as McGraw Hill Science for middle school.

The school's curriculum is designed for the average and above average student. It places strong emphasis on the basic skills of reading, writing, and math, as well as on moral and spiritual values. Starting in preschool, phonics is used as the basis of all reading and spelling instruction. FWCS's basic curriculum covers the following subject areas:

Science	Math/Logic	History	Social Studies
Reading	Spelling	Language	Physical Education
Bible/Worldview	Music	Art	Computer Science

## Books and Supplies

The annual book rental fee covers the cost of required textbooks and workbooks. Pen, pencils, homework planners, notebooks, crayons, glue, etc., are to be supplied by the parents. Students are financially responsible for all lost textbooks and damage to hardback reading texts that remain the property of FWCS.

## Conferences with Teachers

Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled each October in grades K-8. If parents desire conferences at other times, they should contact teachers before 8:05 a.m. or after 3:00 p.m. to set up a conference. Whenever problems arise, parents should always follow the principles given in Matthew 18:15-18 and personally confer with their child's teacher before having any discussion with other parents, teachers, the Administrator, or a School Committee member. In the event that the parent is dissatisfied with the teacher's response, the parent is encouraged to make an appointment with the Administrator.

## Cumulative File Review Rights

State law gives parents full rights to review the contents of their children's academic cumulative files. Parents are required to present a written request to the school 24 hours in advance. Parents may request that any nonacademic material of a derogatory nature be removed from their child's file.

## Field Trips

The purpose of school field trips is usually observation for education, non-experimental research or to provide students with experiences outside their everyday activities. They are typically a fun experience for the students involved. Should you decide that your student will not participate in a class field trip, please note the following...

- FWCS will not provide alternative care for your student at school on the day of the field trip.
- The classroom teacher will count your child absent on field trip day unexcused.

Before being permitted to go on out-of-town field trips, students must have a permission slip signed by a parent. Seatbelts must be worn by all passengers while on any school-related activity. Students are expected to abide by all regular school rules and the school's dress code while on field trips. A few volunteer parent drivers are necessary to drive FWCS's mini-buses.

Neither teachers' children nor students' siblings are permitted to go on field trips. The only exception we have made is for the kindergartener's annual circus trip. Thank you for your cooperation.

## Grading/Evaluation

Photo copies of student report cards will be sent home at the end of each nine week grading period. Parents are to keep these copies and need only to sign and return to school the report card envelope. The following grading system will be used:

Grading Scale	Percentage Breakdown
<b>100 - 93 = A</b>	40 percent - tests
<b>92 - 85 = B</b>	30 percent - quizzes
<b>84 - 77 = C</b>	20 percent - homework
<b>76 - 70 = D</b>	10 percent - classwork
<b>Below 70 = F</b>	

Various tests and samples of the student's work will be sent home in folders on an appointed day. Parents are to sign that they have seen the materials enclosed and return the empty folder to school on the following day. Teachers will communicate with parents about academic problems. To notify parents of work that is a C or below, a midterm progress report will be sent home halfway through each grading period. Conferences will be scheduled at the end of the first nine weeks.

## Homework

FWCS believes that homework is an integral part of the school program. To strengthen students in their studies, each teacher is at liberty to give homework. Students are required to complete homework assignments on time.

Homework is given for several reasons:

1. **For reinforcement.** Most students require adequate review to master essential skills.
2. **For practice.** Following classroom explanation, illustration, and review of new material or concepts, homework is given so that the material will be mastered.

3. **For remedial activity.** Weak areas in a student's grasp of a subject need additional repetition.
4. **For special projects.** Book reports, compositions, research assignments, collections, etc., require time outside the classroom.

It is essential that we have parents' full cooperation in monitoring the completion of homework assignments. Your child should be able to complete the assignment without undue amounts of time. Parents should check for completion. To assure that each assignment is finished; most teachers require a parent's signature. Delinquent or incomplete homework is a failure to obey the teacher's requirements on the part of the student. Failure to check for completion of assignments is a breach of cooperation on the parent's part. The student's daily grade will be affected by delinquent or incomplete homework.

### **Honor Roll (Grades 4-8)**

First Wesleyan Christian School will publish a listing of 4th through 8th grade Honor Roll students four times each school year. All subjects in the curriculum will be used to determine a student's eligibility to be included in the Honor Roll. Please note that FWCS's middle school honor roll will be based on grades earned in specials such as P.E., Music, Art, and Computer. Students who have unsatisfactory grades in non-graded subjects or incomplete grades **will not** be included on the Honor Roll. Students who have less than satisfactory on behavior/attitude grades **will not** be included on the Honor Roll. At the end of the report period, a listing of all Honor Roll students will be sent out to parents via Class DoJo, School DoJo and FWCS Newsletter.

### **Library Procedures**

FWCS's library is available to all students. Books may be checked out at specified times. Checked-out books should be returned by due date on the card inside the book cover of each book. The student/parent will be responsible to pay for damaged or lost books.

### **Library Fines for Overdue Books**

A 10¢ per day fine will be assessed once a library book becomes seven days overdue. Final report cards will not be issued until all library fines are paid or lost books are paid for.

### **Parent Volunteers**

The school needs and welcomes parent volunteers to participate in various activities such as field trips, parties, tutoring, and other special events. Please contact your child's teacher if you are able to help.

### **P.E.—Dress Requirements**

Students in grades K-8 are required to wear clothing suitable for full participation in their P.E. classes. Their quarterly grades will be lowered for failure to comply with these stipulations.

## **Religious Instruction**

Approximately 30 minutes per day is devoted to religious instruction. This usually includes prayer, teaching from the Bible, singing of hymns and choruses, Scripture memorization, Bible games, and weekly chapel. An effort is made to lead each student to accept Christ as his/her personal Savior. Since students from many denominations attend FWCS, it is not the school's purpose to weaken their denominational ties but rather to provide them with a basic understanding of the fundamental principles of successful Christian living and the basic events, characters, and doctrines of the Bible.

## **Report Cards**

Report cards are issued four times per year at the conclusion of each nine-week grading period. Students in K-8 earning Cs or lower are also issued a midterm report. FWCS's report cards are designed for parents to retain at home for future reference. Parents need only to sign and return to school the report card envelope.

## **Retention Policy**

Whenever the school feels the retention of a student is necessary, a conference will be scheduled with the parents, classroom teacher, and Administrator. The desired goal of this conference is to gain parental consent for retention. We recognize this consent is a vital component for the retention to be effective. Generally, the school will not retain a student without parental consent. However, in some instances when the school believes that promotion would be educationally detrimental to a student, the school reserves the right to retain a student if he/she plans to continue as a student at FWCS.

## **Special Adaptations for Weaker Students**

Even though FWCS has exceptionally high academic goals and standards, the school is very progressive and proactive in identifying and helping students who struggle due to special learning needs (LD, Autism, ADD, etc.) Accommodations are made when/as possible. A pediatrician or specialist's diagnosis is most helpful and a copy of evaluations should be placed in the student's cumulative file for reference.

## **Standardized Testing**

Each spring, FWCS has administered the widely used TerraNova 3 Achievement Test to all students in grades kindergarten through eighth. (This year FWCS will be switching to the Iowa Standardized Test.) Over 35% of students across the United States take this test each school year. FWCS students' scores are compared to those of other public, private, and Christian schools. FWCS's average scores are consistently higher than those of the other three groups. FWCS's scores in reading, math, and language arts have consistently fallen between the 80th and 90th percentile when compared against the combined scores of all public and private schools. Parents are provided with a detailed explanation and breakdown of their children's individual scores with final report cards in June.

## **Teacher/Student Ratio**

FWCS's traditional, self-contained classrooms have average class sizes of 14 students. The maximum class size at FWCS for grades 1-8 has been set at 19 students per classroom. The maximum class size for kindergarten is 17 students.

## **Transgender Behavior & Restroom Policy**

Gender matters. God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female, and these distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. (Gen 1:26-27.) But some individuals reject their biological sex and often present as the opposite sex. In so doing, these confused individuals reject God's design and the person He created them to be.

While FWCS feels compassion for these conflicted individuals it is the school's spiritual conviction that no form of transgender behavior has a place on our Christian school campus. Therefore, the school will not admit or continue the enrollment of any student who practices or promotes any degree of transgender behavior or gender identity opposite of one's gender at birth, such as changing one's names or dress styles to match those normally used or worn by the opposite sex. It is also FWCS's official policy that both adults and students are to only use restrooms in accordance with the sexual identity or gender classification that appeared on their birth certificates at birth.

## **Visiting Classrooms**

Parents are encouraged to visit their child's class from time to time. The school does ask them to make prior arrangements with the classroom teachers before such visits.

## **Chapel Services**

Chapel is held three or four times monthly. Parents are invited and encouraged to share in these worship experiences. Regular chapel begins at 8:40 a.m. and ends at 9:15 a.m.

# ADMISSION PROCEDURES

## General Overview

Admission to First Wesleyan Christian School is obtained by:

1. Obtaining and reading a Parent/Student Handbook.
2. Submitting a written application.
3. Providing the office with the student's social security number, emergency form, and physical form for kindergarten.
4. Paying a registration fee.
5. Scheduling a family interview.
6. Passing an entrance academic screening test

It is essential that prospective families carefully read the specific admissions requirements listed on the next page, paying special attention to the spiritual, family values, and immunization/physical requirements.

The school seeks to minister to all children but finds that due to its limited financial resources and staff, it is unable to serve students who have severe academic, behavioral, or emotional needs.

Enrollment forms and information concerning current tuition rates and payment plans may be obtained by contacting the school office.

## Annual Admissions Calendar

February 1	Restricted re-enrollment period limited only to current school families.
March 1	Enrollment opens to the general public and new applicants.
June 1	Book fees are due.
July 1	First of ten tuition installment payments is due.
July 5	Family loses slots in classes if the first tuition installment and the book fee payment have not been paid.

## Nondiscrimination Policy

FWCS admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship programs, and other school programs.

## Specific Admissions Requirements

1. **Agreement with First Wesleyan's Mission/Beliefs.** All families are required to read the school's Mission Statement and Statement of Faith and understand that these statements are the foundation of the school's curriculum, policies, and educational philosophy. Parents are also required to annually sign their agreement to having their children taught according to First Wesleyan's value system, Statement of Faith, philosophy of education, etc.
2. **Lifestyle/Family Values.** First Wesleyan Christian School is a religious institution providing an education in a distinct Christian environment, and it believes that its biblical role is to work in conjunction with the home to mold students to be Christ-like. On those occasions in which the atmosphere or conduct within a particular home is counter to or in opposition to the biblical lifestyle the school teaches, the school reserves the right, within its sole discretion, to refuse admission of an applicant or to discontinue enrollment of a student. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, living in, condoning, or supporting sexual immorality; practicing a homosexual lifestyle or an alternative gender identity from their gender at birth; promoting such practices; failure or refusal to be discreet about their unbiblical lifestyle practices/beliefs while on FWCS's campus and at other school sponsored events; or otherwise having the inability to publicly support the moral principles of the school. (Leviticus 20:13a, Romans 1:27, Matthew 19:4-6)
3. **Student's Attitude and Cooperation Requirement.** All students whether they are from are required to conform to and to maintain positive, cooperative, non-antagonistic attitudes towards First Wesleyan's Biblical teachings, values, and lifestyle requirements. FWCS reserves the right to either dismiss or to not re-enroll students who are antagonistic in these areas or who seek to propagate other opposing theological systems or lifestyles.
4. **Immunization and Physicals.** All entering students must provide proof of having received required immunizations. In addition, state law requires that children entering kindergarten must have a physical exam. Documentation must be submitted to the office by October 1 or else the student will be removed from class.
5. **Family Interview.** All new parents are required to be interviewed by the Administrator if requested.
6. **Entrance Testing/Screening (Grades K-8).** All prospective students, kindergarten through eighth grade, are given entrance tests to determine grade placement and to determine if the school will be able to meet the student's academic needs. Students from FWCS's preschool are usually screened for developmental maturity before they are accepted into kindergarten.
7. **Policy regarding Registered Sex Offenders:** State law requires that any adult sex offender enrolling a child in any school must notify the school in writing regarding their status of being a registered sex offender. Copies of additional policies related to sex offenders may be obtained in the K-8 office.

## **Annual Re-Enrollment**

All current FWCS students must be readmitted each year by submitting new enrollment forms and paying the annual enrollment fee. Re-registration is limited to existing families during the month of February. Beginning March 1 each spring, registration is opened to the general public. All applications are taken on a first-come, first-enrolled basis. Current FWCS students are not automatically accepted back each new school year. Students whose attitudes, language, and general behavior repeatedly conflict with FWCS's biblical standards will not be allowed to re-enroll. Registration fees increase after April 1.

## **Kindergarten Entrance Requirements**

Applicants for kindergarten must:

- Be five years of age before September 1.
- Pass a kindergarten readiness test.
- Obtain all required immunizations.
- Present a physical exam obtained within the previous 12 months prior to the first day of school. Those lacking a physical are allowed a 28-day grace period to obtain one. This physical exam must include a lead screening.
- Present a copy of the child's birth certificate.

## **Communicable Disease Policy**

Students admitted to First Wesleyan Christian School shall be protected from influences negatively affecting their well-being. The school shall exclude students from classes who are currently infected with live (active) viruses from illnesses and diseases of a communicable nature.

## **Proper Grade Placement**

The school reserves the right to place each student in the grade level or class that is best suited to his/her individual needs, developmental maturity, and scholastic abilities.

## **Probation Status of New Students**

All new students are accepted on a nine-week academic and behavioral probationary period.

## DAILY SCHEDULE AND ATTENDANCE POLICIES

### School Hours (8:00 a.m. - 2:55 p.m.)

7:00-7:30 a.m.	Morning Care (see office for pay rates)
7:30	Morning Care students escorted to classroom
7:30-8:00 a.m.	Students may enter the building and go directly to their classrooms
8:00 a.m.	Class starts
8:15 a.m.	Students tardy to class (Students not allowed to enter w/o doctor's note after 8:15)
2:00-2:55 p.m.	Students are dismissed in shifts to be picked up or to go to extended care K5/1st - Dismissed at 2:00 pm and held till 2:30 pm after which they are placed in extended care 2nd/3rd - Dismissed at 2:35 pm and held till 2:50 pm after which they are placed in extended care 4th/5th - Dismissed at 2:45 pm and held till 3:00 pm after which they are placed in extended care 6th/7th - Dismissed at 2:55 pm and held till 3:10 pm after which they are placed in extended care.
2:30 p.m.	Extended care begins for younger groups
3:00-6:00 p.m.	Extended child care activities begin

If you have multiple students, your students will be picked up at the place and time of your oldest student. However, they may not be dropped off at the same places. Middle school students must be dropped off at the upper glass doors near the middle school wing. Kindergarten through fifth grade students must be dropped off at the lower office doors.

If MS students arrive after 8:00 am, they must then use the downstairs office to check in and be brought to class.

### ATTENDANCE POLICY

**FWCS Attendance Policy recognizes that daily classroom attendance is an integral and essential component of the learning process for the following reasons:**

1. The teacher clarifies, interprets, and supplements information given in textbooks and other instructional resources.
2. The classroom environment lends itself to planned, as well as to impromptu discussions, which are educationally enriching and impossible to replicate.
3. The classroom affords the opportunity for a student's social skills to develop; co-existence, responsibility, and commitment to others in the classroom is an essential part of a student's education.

Therefore, as a student enrolled at FWCS it is his/her commitment to attend all class sessions.

**ABSENCE:** Absences are classified as excused or unexcused. Each absence is considered unexcused until a note or call from a parent/guardian explaining the reason for the absence is received. A student must attend school/class for half the time to be counted present. Each student

must have an excuse (parent/guardian's phone call, voice mail, email, or written note) the day he returns from any absence. If forgotten, a student has two (2) days to bring a written excuse. If no reason is provided for the absences, then it is documented as unexcused.

**Excessive Absences:** A middle school student (6-8<sup>th</sup>) who has more than 9 absences per semester may not receive credit for the class. A student (K-8<sup>th</sup>) who misses more than 18 days of school may not be promoted, require remedial tutoring, or summer school.

**Excused Absence:** The following are acceptable reasons for an absence:

- Student's illness
- Medical or other appointments
- Family trip with prior approval – A parent needs to provide the school office a written request for a student's work and waiver for days missed due to a trip at least a week before the trip.
- Missions trip
- Exams at another school
- Death of a relative

**Unexcused Absence:** A student with habitual unexcused absences may be asked to withdraw or denied re-enrollment. The following are categorized as unexcused absences:

- Receiving no documentation for absence
- Going to bed late or sleeping late
- Skipping school
- Suspension or other disciplinary actions

**Make-Up Work for Excused Absence:** A student will have one (1) school day for every day missed to a maximum of five (5) school days to complete make-up work. (Special arrangements can be made upon the approval of the teacher.) Students may receive zeros for work not turned in, and loss of credit of 10 points per day may be assessed for work turned in late. Normally, pre-announced tests, which have been scheduled on the day of a student's return from an absence, shall be taken unless prior approval has been provided to the student by the teacher. (Students receiving an in-school suspension fall under this section of the policy.)

**Unexcused Absences:** All other reasons for absence from school will be considered unexcused. This includes those times when a note is not received from home concerning the student's absence.

**Make-up Work for Unexcused Absences:** Daily class work and assignments due on the day of the unexcused absence will be graded as a zero. Major tests and assignments missed will be made up with reduced credit (i.e. loss of credit of 10 points per day for each day it is turned in late), within the same time period allotted for excused absences. Any work not made up within five (5) school days will receive a zero for the test or assignment.

**TARDY to SCHOOL POLICY:** FWCS desires to develop Christ-like character and encourage academic excellence in each student. One important character trait is punctuality. Parents are encouraged to assist FWCS in this training by making sure their student promptly arrives and departs from school. Tardiness is strongly discouraged for the following reasons:

1. It is poor training.
2. It starts the student's day with an embarrassing situation.

3. It diminishes a student's opportunity to participate in the full range of activities planned for that class (assignments, directions, etc.)
4. It distracts the teacher and the class.
5. It is a disadvantage to learning and discipline.

Students must be in the classroom when school begins at 8:00 a.m. A student is expected to be in his seat for school and each class. A student who arrives after 8:00 a.m. must report to the office to receive a tardy slip in order to enter class.

**FWCS Tardy Procedures:**

1. Tardies are excused or unexcused.
2. Students are allowed 4 unexcused tardies.
3. Any student upon receiving a fifth unexcused tardy at any point in the school year will then receive one (1) **unexcused** absence.
4. All absences count towards the total allotted per year.
5. See policy on absences for consequences regarding excessive absences.

**EARLY DISMISSAL** A note requesting an early dismissal must state the reason, give the time of dismissal, be signed by the parent, and be given to the teacher at the beginning of that period or school day. A parent must sign the student out at the school office. Any child who leaves before 11:30 a.m. is recorded as being absent for the day.

Regular attendance is essential to successful class work. Absences may be classified as excused for the following three reasons:

- Student Illness
- Death in the immediate family
- Doctor appointments

Students leaving **before 11:30 a.m.** will be counted absent for the entire school day.

Students leaving **after 11:30 a.m.** will be counted present for the school day.

A **written note** giving the reason for the absence should accompany your child's return to school.

Family vacations and trips should be scheduled during school vacation breaks whenever possible. Should it be necessary for a student to miss school for personal reasons, please contact the classroom teacher to procure the make-up work for your student.

Students absent more than five (5) days in any one-quarter will be subject to having their letter grade lowered by one letter. Before being promoted to the next grade, the staff and Administrator will evaluate any student who is absent twelve (12) or more days. Retention in the current grade or summer tutoring may be either required or recommended.

## **Homework Makeup Policy**

Upon their return to school students shall be allowed two days to make up each missed day's assignments. The following chart illustrates this policy.

<b># Days Missed</b>	<b>Makeup Work Due</b>
1	3rd day back
2	4th day back
3	6th day back

Work not completed within the above limits will receive a lower grade no higher than a "C".

## **Morning Extend Child Care (7:00-7:30 a.m.)**

FWCS offers paid extended child care each morning from 7:00 to 7:30 a.m. Other non-child care students are not allowed in the building until 7:30 a.m. The additional charge for this morning service will be established annually.

- This additional fee will be paid through ten monthly installment payments.
- Drop-in care is available. Daily fees should be paid within three days of service or else a \$3 per day fee will be assessed if billed through the office.

## **After School Extended Child Care (2:30-6:00 p.m.)**

Extended Care is available for kindergarten and elementary school students (K-8). Students will be divided into units of about 12-16 students per supervisor. A study hall/quiet time will be scheduled for each unit. An afternoon snack will be offered. Supervised play will be scheduled also. Students will spend time outside, weather permitting. Pick-up time is no later than 6:00 p.m. After 6:01 p.m., an additional charge of \$10.00 per 15 minutes or fraction thereof will be assessed. Drop-in afternoon care is available at a daily rate which should be paid within three days. An additional \$3 per day will be assessed if the drop-in must be billed through the office. **Note:** FWCS's tax number is 58-1362131.

## **Daily Arrival and Departure Procedures**

**Please do not park next to the sidewalk in front of the school office and gym at any time.** We must keep this area clear for arriving and departing students and delivery vehicles. The parking area is congested under the best of circumstances. Your cooperation is essential.

Children may arrive at school no earlier than 7:30 a.m. unless they pay for the a.m. extended care services. Arrivals between 7:30 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. should report directly to the classroom. Students will be supervised at tables during these forty-one (41) minutes. Arrivals between 7:30 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. should go directly to their individual classrooms. Prior to 7:30 a.m., no

students should be in the halls or in any preschool or K-8 classrooms. Remember that school starts promptly at 8:00 a.m.

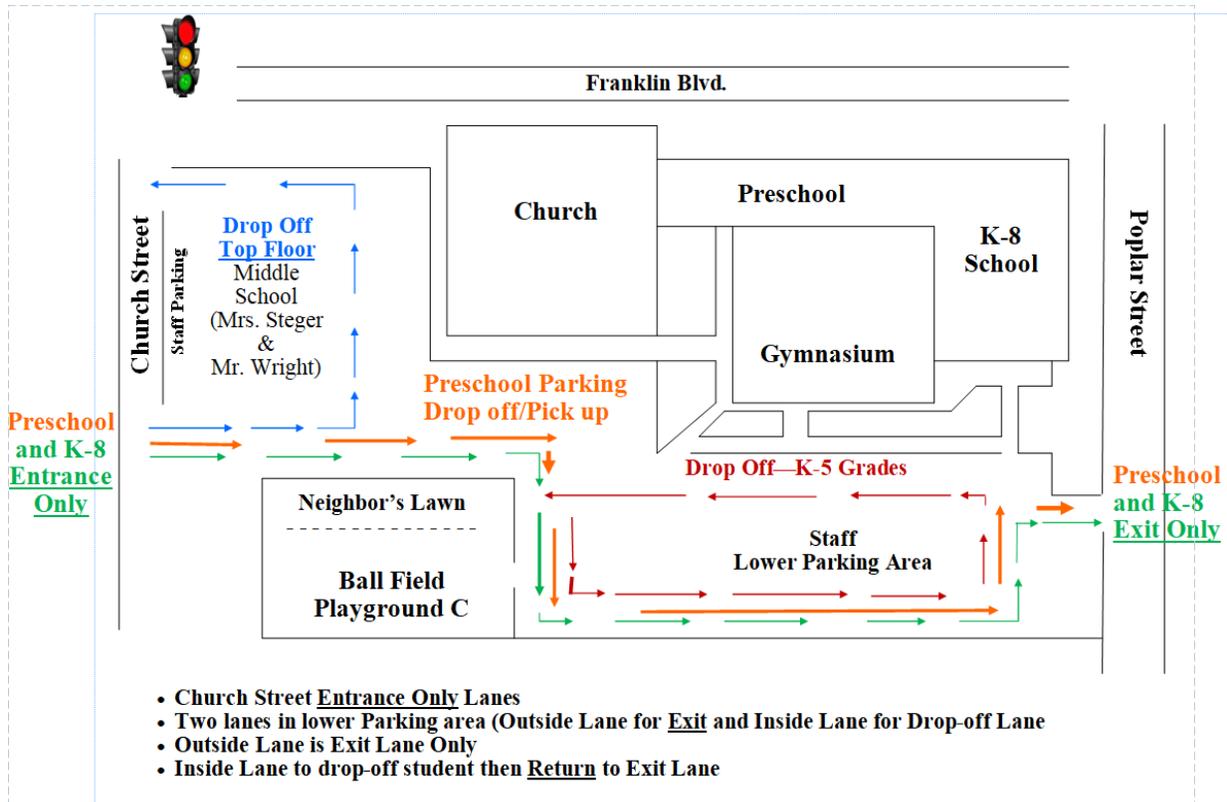
### **Dismissal Schedules**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Full Day</b>	<b>Half Day</b>
Kindergarten - First Grades	2:00 p.m.	11:00 a.m.
Second - Third Grades	2:35 p.m.	11:35 a.m.
Fourth - Fifth Grades	2:45 p.m.	11:45 a.m.
Sixth - Eighth Grades	2:55 p.m.	11:55 a.m.

Students being picked up by parents or other approved drivers are taken by their teachers to the stone wall at the front of the building. The flow of traffic and the exit door for the different grades is described at the orientation meeting for parents. If you have more than one child to pick-up, please use the dismissal time for the oldest child. After 2:30, kindergarten and first graders are taken to the gym for extended care. For second through eighth grades, students will be given fifteen minutes for pick up before being sent to extended care unless the delay is due to something on our end.

If parents are divorced or separated, and one parent is not allowed to see or pick up the child, a certified copy of the latest court order must be on file in the school office. Any other out-of-the-ordinary procedures must also be described in writing and will be placed in the student's file.

To provide for the safety of the children and promote a smooth flow of traffic, parents will use a one-way approach from the Church Street entrance, unloading within a designated area and exiting onto Church Street again. Please note that this means that children will be exiting and entering the car from the right hand side.



Please be courteous, considerate, cooperative, and cautious in adhering to traffic routines on the school grounds. Please be careful at all times when driving through this area.

### Rainy Day Pickup

On rainy days the K-8 pick-up location will be moved to the main front entry doors of the First Wesleyan Church which has a large covered porch. On rainy days parents are encouraged to enter from Poplar Street and form a line up through FWCS's parking lot to the front (west doors) of the church.

### Students do not enter classrooms before 7:30 a.m.

Please be reminded that students are not to enter the building, hallways, or classrooms before 7:30 a.m. Students arriving before 7:30 a.m. are to report directly to the gym.

### Early Pick-Up Procedures

If you need to pick up your child from school before the end of the regular school day, please come to the office and sign your child out.

## **Visitors on Campus**

All parents and guests visiting the campus during school hours must report immediately to the school office as soon as they arrive. Please cooperate in FWCS's effort to keep our school campus safe.

## **Security Doors**

FWCS has self-locking security locks on all three of its main entrance doors. The Preschool entrance is locked at all times. The main K-8 entrance door unlocks automatically from 7:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. to allow for a free flow of students during the heaviest drop-off and pick-up times. The gym door is unlocked from 7:00 a.m. to 7:30 a.m. and from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

## DRESS CODE—STUDENT

FWCS requires students to wear modest attire that is conducive to both learning and a spiritual classroom climate. This code applies fully to all special events such as **middle school formals**, **8th grade graduation**, and **First Wesleyan Sunday**. These guidelines should be followed:

1. Students should be comfortably dressed for the classroom and playground.
  - Classroom temperatures vary with the season and location in the building.
  - A light jacket or sweater is a good thing to keep in a book bag at all times.
  - In the spring and fall, it is good to dress in layers.
2. Clothing should always be clean and tidy in appearance.
  - All clothing must be free of holes and tears.
3. Socks must be worn at all times and students are asked to wear closed-toe shoes.
4. Modest shorts may be worn. Shorts must have inseams of **at least four (4) inches**.
5. The following items are **not** appropriate:
  - Bike shorts and/or spandex shorts/pants.
  - Cut-off T-Shirts, Oversized T-Shirts (below child's fingertips), and midriff tops.
  - **Sandals** (K-4), jellies, flip-flops, turf shoes, cleats, and clogs. Students in grades **5-8** have the privilege of wearing wide strap sandals as long as they have proper shoes on all P.E. days. Crocs are acceptable if worn with heel straps.
  - Clogs are not acceptable school shoes. For various safety reasons we require that girls' shoes must have full wrap around heels or full heel straps.
  - Clothing and accessories that depict secular celebrities or themes that give an anti-Christian message are prohibited and should not be worn to school.
  - Clothing items such as shorts or jogging pants with lettering or pictures printed on their seats or backsides.
  - Clothing items that promote transgender beliefs or practices or reflect gender identity contrary to one's gender at birth. E.g. a boy wearing a dress.
6. **Caps, Hoodies, or hats** may not be worn in class or at the lunch table.
7. All students are required to wear proper undergarments.
8. Dresses and skirts should be of a modest length - no more than 2 inches above the center of the knee. Girls in lower grades are asked to wear shorts under their dresses. Backless dresses, sun dresses, those with straps thinner than two inches are never approved attire.
9. All girls, K-8, are expected to wear tops that are long enough so that no midriff shows at any time, including when the girls lift their arms up above their shoulders. Dresses cut immodestly low in either the back or front are not acceptable attire.
10. Dresses and tops on older girls may not be overly tight or excessively form fitting. Girls ignoring this standard will be required to (1) either phone their parents to bring a change of clothes or (2) wear a large oversized T-shirt over their top until the end of the school day. The school will provide these T-shirts.
11. Tank tops with large arm holes, sundresses, and dresses with spaghetti straps are not acceptable attire. Dresses or tops must have tight fitting arm holes with at least two inches or four fingers wide shoulder straps.
12. **Sandals:** Sandals with full heel straps may be worn in grades 5-8 as an upper grade privilege on the condition that the students always wear tennis shoes to P.E. classes. After the third failure to bring tennis shoes to P.E. class a student will lose his/her privilege to wear sandals to school.

13. **Shoes:**
- **Heel Straps:** All shoes must have an enclosed heel or heel strap which holds the student's foot securely in the shoe.
  - **Crocs:** These are acceptable in K-8 if they are equipped with straps on the heels.
  - **Flip flops:** Flip flops are never acceptable footwear for any grades.
  - **Heely Shoes:** Heely shoes equipped with wheels may not be worn at FWCS. They have proven to be dangerous both to the wearers and to others.
  - **Sandals:** Sandals may only be worn by students in grades 5-8. They must be full strapped with a wide strap across the top of the foot and around the heel.
14. Girls must wear either one piece swimsuits or covering T-shirts to all FWCS sponsored swimming activities. Midriffs must be covered.
15. Skirts worn over leggings or footless tights must also meet our two inch length rule as discussed above.
16. Transgender cross-dressing is not acceptable attire.

Keep in mind that FWCS is a Christian school and that we strive to demonstrate this distinctive trait through our speech, actions, and dress. If there is a question regarding appropriate clothing, students will **either be asked to call home** for other clothing or **not be allowed to participate** in the special event such as formals and graduation. The Administrator reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of any clothing or hairstyle.

Every year, numerous items of clothing end up in the lost and found. Consider placing your child's name on all coats, jackets, and sweatshirts to ensure keeping track of them.

## FINANCIAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### **Philosophy**

It is hoped that families would view it as a *privilege* for their children to attend First Wesleyan Christian School. The actual cost of educating students is subsidized by the financial sacrifices of the school's staff. Our goal is to provide adequate facilities, equipment, and instruction for the development of Christian character in the lives of those young people entrusted to our care. In order for the school to achieve these goals, parents are expected to do their part by paying all financial obligations when due and cheerfully participating in all school fundraisers.

### **Fund-Raising Obligations**

The School Committee feels that all families have a moral obligation to participate in school fundraisers. In the event that a family doesn't choose to participate, the school asks that parents consider giving a cash donation equivalent to the profit their children would have generated if they had participated in the fundraiser. We ask that you make a cash contribution for each time of non-participation. Your children's classrooms will then receive equal credit towards any interclass contests or prizes related to the fundraiser. Everyone comes out a winner.

### **Payment Policies and Procedures**

We are now doing all tuition and payments via our FWCS App. This app can be found on Apple and Google formats. If a different arrangement is needed, you will need to make an appointment with the office to discuss options.

### **Installments:**

Tuition and extended care fees are prorated over ten monthly installment payments. Holidays are taken into consideration and thus do not result in reduction of fees on a monthly basis. All fees are paid in advance and are due on the first of each month.

### **Book Rental Fee:**

Book "rental" fees are due June 1<sup>st</sup> and extended care fees and the first advanced tuition installment payment are due July 1. Payment of these fees activates your child's enrollment and places them on a classroom roster for the coming year. Failure to pay book fees or advanced tuition on time delays the entire enrollment process for your child.

### **Late Payment Fees:**

A late fee of \$30 will be charged after the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month on all fees due on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month. An account that is two weeks overdue may result in the student being excluded from class. Please do not place the FWCS staff in the position of needing to enforce this procedure. If you are contacted regarding overdue fees, please do not abuse the staff members. **Verbal abuse of staff members could result in immediate expulsion of your child.**

### **Academic Records Held:**

FWCS may be a non-profit organization, but it has to be financially responsible. We expect parents to be responsible as well. If fees are unpaid at the end of a grading period, the school will hold report cards until such time as these fees are paid. If fees are unpaid at the end of the year, FWCS will hold all school records until all fees are paid.

**Return Check Fee:**

Checks should be made payable to First Wesleyan Christian School. A \$20 charge will be added for "Insufficient Funds."

**Fee Payment Schedule**

March **	Registration Fee per Child Due to Re-enroll
June 1	Book Rental Fees (Due by the 10 <sup>th</sup> )
July 1	First Tuition Installment Payment (Due by the 10 <sup>th</sup> ) First Extended Care Installment Payment Due
September 1	Second Tuition Payment and Extended Care Payment
October 1	Third Tuition Payment and Extended Care Payment
November 1	Fourth Tuition Payment and Extended Care Payment
December 1	Fifth Tuition Payment and Extended Care Payment
January 1	Sixth Tuition Payment and Extended Care Payment
February 1	Seventh Tuition Payment and Extended Care Payment
March 1	Eighth Tuition Payment and Extended Care Payment ** Re-enrollment
April 1	Ninth Tuition Payment and Extended Care Payment Re-enrollment Fee increases
May 1	Tenth Tuition Payment and Extended Care Payment

**Tax I.D. Number: 58-1362131**

When submitting your tax return, you will need FWCS's Tax I.D. number to claim dependent care expenses.

**Registration Fee**

There is an annual registration fee for both first time and returning students. This fee must be paid and application turned in to the office before a student is considered officially enrolled.

**Tuition Payment Options**

Parents of K-8 students may choose from two different payment plans:

**Plan A:** Lump sum payment by July 11. A 2% discount per student is given.

**Plan B:** Ten monthly installments (July and September through May).

### **Extended Child Care Fees**

Students needing extended care on a regular basis should have the monthly fee included with their regular tuition payments. Those who need extended care on a "drop-in" basis should pay their fee the same morning (7:00-7:30). Those using P.M. "drop-in" care may pay the daily fee on the following school day. A \$3 per day billing fee will be accessed if drop-in extended care fees aren't paid within seven days. No prior arrangements are required for drop-in care.

### **Late Pick-up Fee after 6 p.m.**

There is a \$10 late fee after 6 p.m. for each 15 minutes and for each fraction of 15 minutes thereof afterwards.

### **Teacher Workday and Holiday Child Care Fees**

Childcare services are available for FWCS students on teacher workdays, one week at Christmas, and Spring Break at a daily rate established annually. Payment for this service should accompany your student on the day he/she attends the program or else a \$3 per day billing fee will be added. Students will be provided a hot lunch and two snacks on these days and the group usually goes on an off-campus activity or field trip.

### **Field Trip Expenses**

There will be incidental expenses for field trips and other events. These expenses will be paid to the classroom teacher at the time of the trip or event.

### **Mandatory June Book Rental Fee Payment**

If a family fails to make its June 1<sup>st</sup> book rental fee payment by July 5, the school reserves the right to consider the family as having withdrawn from school and to assign the family's reserved classroom slots to someone else on the waiting list. Their previously paid registration fees will not be refunded. Book rental fees are not refundable after August 20.

### **Registration Fee Refund Policy**

Registration fees, less a testing fee, are refunded only in the event that a family is not accepted for admission by the school. Registration fees are not transferable to other students.

### **Withdrawals from FWCS**

If you wish to withdraw or transfer your student from FWCS, please follow this procedure:

1. Contact the school office and speak with the Administrator.
2. Withdrawing students will only owe prorated tuition for the actual number of school days that they were enrolled in FWCS during the current school year. Any prepaid tuition credit will be prorated and refunded.
3. **Note:** School cum records will be held by FWCS until all overdue account balances are paid in full.

4. Book rental fees are not refundable after August 20. Withdrawing students are not allowed to take their rented textbooks with them.

## HEALTH AND MEDICAL INFORMATION

### Emergency Information Updates

It is absolutely essential that parents keep their children's emergency information completely current so that they may be quickly contacted in the event of illness or injury. The school will not be held responsible for any health problems caused by its inability to contact parents due to inadequate or outdated emergency information.

### Illness During the School Day

If a child becomes ill during the day, the school will attempt to contact his/her parents for instruction in dealing with the situation. If the parents cannot be reached, the school will contact the next authorized person listed on the registration form. In the event that neither can be reached, the school will employ whatever means are reasonable or necessary at our discretion.

### Forty-Eight Hour Rule

During epidemics of very contagious illnesses, the school will institute its 48-Hour Rule which requires students to be held out of school at least 48 hours if they (1) experienced any vomiting or diarrhea and/or (2) repeatedly come to the school office complaining of headaches or stomach problems. This policy protects the health of the school staff and your child's classmates.

### Contagious Disease Policy

FWCS has conferred with the county health department for assistance in controlling communicable diseases. To protect all children the following policies will be followed:

1. Many diseases are not easily detected during the communicable period; however, the following symptoms are often warnings or signs of a communicable disease. Children should be kept home if they display any of the following symptoms:
  - diarrhea
  - vomiting twice in 12 hours
  - excessive runny nose
  - swollen glands
  - \* fever of 100.4 or higher
  - flushed skin, chills
  - sore throat
  - earache or headache
  - red or discharging eyes
  - chronic sneezing and coughing
  - skin eruptions or rashes
  - head lice or nits
2. **Fevers:** Students registering a fever of 100.4 degrees or higher will be sent home.
3. Children who are at school when these symptoms appear will be isolated from other students and their parents will be notified to pick them up.
4. In case of chicken pox, children should be kept home for at least one week.

5. **Twenty-four Hour Rule:** A child should be free of fevers, vomiting, or diarrhea for at least 24 hours before returning to school. During periods of massive illnesses the school will switch to a 36-Hour Return Rule which requires children to remain out of class for at least 36 hours after they go home or are out due to vomiting, high fevers, diarrhea, etc.
6. Children who have been out of school due to illness for more than a week must provide a doctor's statement that the child is able to return to school.
7. Since ringworm is extremely contagious the school will immediately contact parents whenever any spots are discovered that we suspect to be ringworm. Parents will be required to pick up the student and have him/her checked out by a doctor. The office must receive a release slip from the doctor stating either that the ringworm is being treated or that the spot is not a ringworm before the child will be readmitted to class. During treatment students are expected to keep ringworm spots on their hands, face, or legs covered by a band aide.
8. To protect other students from communicable diseases, the school requires students who become ill with the following communicable illnesses to not return to school until they are definitely beyond the contagious stage and are free of all open sores or other possible contagious symptoms:
  - measles
  - chicken pox
  - mumps
  - scarlet fever
  - impetigo
  - conjunctivitis
  - AIDS
  - streptococcal sore throat
  - impetigo
  - hepatitis

For more serious diseases, the school reserves the right to require a written release from a physician or the health department before a student is allowed back in class.

### **Dispensation of Medication at School**

Medication may be administered to children at school if it is absolutely necessary for the critical health and well-being of the student. **Under no circumstances may students keep medication or vitamins on their persons for self-administering.** The following guidelines must be adhered to:

1. All meds will be kept in the K-8 school office, to include daily (once-a-day) medications and P.R.N. inhalers. All prescribed meds will require a special permission form completed by the physician and the parent will be dispensed during a prearranged schedule.
2. Written physician instructions and/or a labeled container must be provided to the school detailing the name of the drug, size of dosage, and the time when the medication is to be given.
3. Parents or guardians must fill out and submit a Medication Permission Slip to our morning child-care supervisor in the gym before 7:30 a.m. or to the main school office after 7:30 a.m. (Slips are provided on the following two pages.)
4. Medications should be dropped off at the K-8 office starting at 7:30 a.m.

5. Medication in its original container must be brought to the school appropriately labeled by the pharmacy or physician and should not exceed a one-month supply.
6. The school staff will administer Tylenol to students on the condition that (1) the separate Tylenol permission slip is signed, and (2) parents are contacted by phone.
7. **Please note:** Tylenol, and non-prescription drugs are considered medication and thus must be stored in and issued by the office.
8. **Please do not ask classroom teachers or non-office staff to administer medication.**

### **Limitations on Medication Administered by FWCS**

1. FWCS will only administer Tylenol a maximum of twice monthly to any individual student unless a physician's note is provided to the school which clarifies the student's chronic need for Tylenol.
2. FWCS does not administer medications such as Tums or Pepto-Bismol.

### **Head Lice**

It is FWCS's policy that students are not allowed in class with either live lice, or dead lice eggs, or nits in their hair. Students sent home with head lice will not be readmitted to class until their heads have been checked and declared nit free by the school's office. Please contact the school office for additional details.

### **Accident Insurance**

All students are covered with a Student Accident Insurance policy. This is a supplemental plan. The benefits are payable only for the portion of expenses that are not recoverable under any other insurance or service contract parents may have. All injuries that have resulted in a doctor or hospital visit should be reported to the office immediately. Records of filing for insurance and copies of primary insurance payments need to be submitted to our bookkeeper in a timely fashion. Certain time restraints apply to claims.

### **Safety Policy at FWCS**

Safety is a foremost consideration of the FWCS staff. Our teachers attempt to supervise students at all times. Students are not permitted to leave the school grounds without permission and supervision. Fire drills are held regularly and state health standards and maintenance inspections are carried out according to state law. FWCS has developed detailed procedures for responding to a terrorist event. Teachers are instructed annually in specific steps to take in the event of a terrorist attack on FWCS's campus.

## **SCHOOL CLOSING NOTIFICATION**

When a decision is made regarding FWCS's closing due to bad weather or any other emergency, it will be announced immediately via text message through the FACTS communications system.

**FWCS is not bound by decisions that pertain to Gaston County Schools.** The county must accommodate buses while we do not. We do not usually have a delayed starting time.

Following major snow/ice storms the K-8 division usually stays closed an additional day since our sloping parking lot usually freezes to a thick sheet of ice which is impossible to navigate and takes several days to melt.

**Either FWCS's elementary school or preschool, at times, may operate when the other is closed.** Any weather-related announcements will list the elementary school and preschool separately. The decision will be made on the facts available. Conditions in the community and surrounding area may vary considerably. If you choose not to bring your child to school, the absence will be considered an excused absence. If bad weather develops during the school day, you are encouraged to pick up your child early. If you do so, please come to the office and follow the usual early pick up policy. Please do not act distressed or upset. Children easily interpret your uneasiness as a direct threat to their security.

## HOME AND SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS

### School Phone Numbers

Main Number (704) 865-9823

Fax Number (704) 852-4219

**Office Hours:** Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

### Sending Notes or Money to School

When sending written notes or monies to school through your children, please place the money, notes, etc., in a clearly-labeled envelope. Also, please itemize what monies are for on checks.

### Forms to be Signed (On Yellow Paper)

The school will attempt to always print various permission slips and other forms requiring parents' response and/or signatures on yellow paper.

### Matthew 18 Principle

The Bible in Matthew 18:15-18 gives specific instructions as how to deal with interpersonal relations. FWCS puts into practice this Matthew 18 principle. Accordingly, if a problem develops, parents are expected to first go to the teacher involved and try to resolve the issue. If that is not deemed successful, then the matter should be brought to the attention of the school Administrator. The final step, if necessary, would involve a meeting with the FWCS School Committee.

### Resolving Home-School Conflicts

First Wesleyan Christian School seeks to meet the needs of its students. Parents who are dissatisfied with the performance of the school, please use the following steps:

- Begin with prayer. Pray for the teacher, student, or situation.
- If the classroom teacher is involved, ask for an explanation of the situation from his/her perspective.
- Ask for clarification of rules or consequences.
- Ask for the teacher's advice in dealing with the problem.
- Be realistic in your expectations of the teacher and school.
- Be willing to view your child from the teacher's perspective.
- Express your concerns in a non-aggressive manner.

- Work with the teacher to establish a written plan of action. This should include a clear statement of what you will do and what the teacher will do. Establish a reasonable time frame for the improvement of the problem.
- Should this plan of action fail to resolve the problem, please schedule a conference that will include both the teacher and Administrator.
- **Another parent should never confront a student.** This confrontation often leads to threats and accusations and is clearly contrary to FWCS policy. Any concern involving other students should be handled through the child's teacher or the school office.

### **Contacting Teachers**

Parents are asked to only contact their student's teachers via email or Class Dojo. Please do not contact teachers on their personal phones. Teachers need time away from their work and they will respond according to set times of the day. For all emergency needs, parents may contact the office.

### **Telephone Messages**

You may leave messages with the office between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Students and teachers will not be called out of classes except in emergencies. Please be sure your child is aware of transportation and lunch arrangements before leaving for school rather than calling in a message for them.

### **Telephone Usage by Students**

Student use of the school phones will be limited to emergency situations only. All arrangements for transportation, e.g., going to a friend's house or bringing a friend home should be made in advance.

### **Class DoJo**

Class Dojo is the platform FWCS uses for communicating with parents on what's happening inside the classroom and school. Announcements, photos, and videos help integrate every family into our school community. (Look for info from your child's teacher(s) about how to sign up.)

## MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

### **Hot Lunch Program**

FWCS operates a hot lunch program for grades K-8. Lunch prices are established annually. Lunch tickets are only sold in blocks of 170, 50, 30, 20, or 10 tickets. Please contact the main school office for current rates. Detailed menus are sent home at the beginning of each month and are posted on the school's website at all times.

**Note:** Students choosing not to purchase hot lunches may purchase milk or juice tickets either by the year or in blocks of 170, 50, or 30 tickets.

### **Microwaves are Not Available**

Please be advised that microwaves are not available for students to use in warming up their lunches brought from home.

### **Snacks Allowed at School**

Students are allowed to eat a snack during the mid-morning hours. Teachers may have specific guidelines but . . . **Please make your child's snack nutritious.** Children do not need high sugar snacks. The vending machines in the cafeteria have some acceptable items for snack use during school hours. The primary purpose of our vending machines being here is to provide after-school snacks and drinks. Children should be instructed as to what would be appropriate to purchase from the machine for a snack. Students will not be released from class to purchase items during their snack time. Please do not send carbonated soft drinks to school to be consumed during school hours. We have experienced many spills and other problems when children bring drinks to school that have a high concentrations of red dyes, sugars, and other substances that are often impossible to remove from our carpets. **It is thus the school's policy that red-colored drinks such as Gatorade, Kool-aid, Cheerwine, red juice boxes, etc., not be brought to school for any activity.** We are asking that children bring only bottled water with them from home to be consumed during the day. We also have bottled water available in the drink machines in the gymnasium. Water bottles may be refilled from the water coolers in the school. Children in extended care will be provided with one (1) juiced as part of their afternoon snack that is to be consumed in the cafeteria. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation in this matter.

### **Birthday Celebrations at School**

Your child is welcome to share simple snacks with his/her classmates in honor of his/her birthday. Individually wrapped treats, cookies, cupcakes, or ice cream treats may easily be shared without making a mess or consuming a lot of time. Please restrict your plans to these guidelines.

Occasionally parents decide to provide pizza lunch birthday parties for their children. This is allowed. We only ask that parents notify their child's teacher at least ten days in advance so that our kitchen staff can be notified to prepare fewer lunches on the pizza lunch day.

## **Private Parties and Valentine Cards**

Each school year across America, children's feelings are crushed when they are "left out" of the private party invitation circuit. At FWCS, we ask that families consider the feelings of these left out children by doing one of the following:

- Either mail invitations to selected friends, or
- Invite all the students of your child's gender i.e., all the boys, all the girls to the party.

We would ask that private parties be planned so that no one or two students in a given class are left out while the rest of the class is invited. This principle also applies to Valentine's Day. It expresses the greatest "true" love when valentines are given to everyone in the group. Let's show the compassion of Christ. Also, remember, it could be your child who is left out next time.

## **Seasonal Parties: (Halloween, Christmas, and Easter)**

FWCS has carefully formulated the following policies to protect our students from the questionable elements of and/or sometimes outright pagan origins of America's seasonal holidays. We would thus request your cooperation in following these guidelines.

### **Halloween:**

- FWCS's classes, both preschool and K-8, will neither promote the holiday nor hold Halloween parties.
- We thus ask that neither students nor parents wear Halloween costumes onto FWCS's campus.
- Teachers have been instructed to not display or allow the popular pagan symbols of Halloween such as witches, ghosts, jack-o-lanterns, etc., in their classrooms.
- Classes are allowed to do various fun things with pumpkins except for making jack-o-lanterns.

### **Christmas:**

- FWCS will aggressively promote and only celebrate the biblical account of the Christ child coming to save mankind from their sins.
- In contrast, the character of Santa Claus will be downplayed and will not be presented as a real person. As much as reasonably possible in America's Santa-centered holiday, the school will attempt to eliminate most images of Santa Claus from its classrooms/craft projects, etc. We would thus ask parents to abide by these same standards when bringing Christmas items to school.
- We ask that parents not bring to school Christmas party items (cups, plates, candy, napkins, etc.) which have the images of Santa printed on them.

- The biblical concept of sacrificial giving of gifts will be promoted instead of the commercial materialism that has nearly destroyed the true meaning of Christmas.
- Let's honor the convictions of these families who believe Christians should not promote Santa Claus.

**Easter:**

- FWCS will promote only the glorious historical event of Christ's physical resurrection.
- Mythical and unbiblical elements such as the Easter bunny will be downplayed and not promoted.
- Classes are allowed to conduct Easter Egg hunts.

**Asbestos Notice**

All parents, staff members, and vendors are hereby notified that the building that houses FWCS contains no materials suspected of containing asbestos. FWCS's Asbestos Management Plan (AHERA) is available for public inspection in the main K-8 school office.

## STUDENT CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

### **The Privilege of Attendance**

Attendance at First Wesleyan Christian School is a privilege and not a right. Students forfeit this privilege if they or their parents do not conform to the standards and ideals of work and life at FWCS. The school will insist on the withdrawal of a student at any time for either (1) inappropriate behavior, (2) inappropriate, rude, coarse, or profane language, (3) if in the opinion of the school, the student does not conform to the spirit of the ministry of the school, or (4) corrupting the morals and values of other students whether inside or outside of school. The school reserves the right to interpret the rules and policies as individual situations and needs arise.

### **Discipline Philosophy and Procedures**

FWCS believes that the teacher's time should not be consumed with behavioral problems of students, but with academic instruction. To that end, the school expects full cooperation from both students and parents. This involves training students in self-discipline. In order to train our students, FWCS uses an assertive discipline plan. This system clearly describes our expectations of students' behavior and the consequences that will be applied if a student chooses to misbehave. With this system, a student starts every day with a clean slate. Every day can be one in which he/she chooses to make good choices concerning behavior. The consequences are designed to alert the child, to change behavior, and to alert a parent of continued poor behavior choices. FWCS's philosophy works out as follows:

1. Discipline and its application at First Wesleyan Christian School is grounded in Scripture. (see particularly Proverbs 12:1, 13:18 & 24, 22:15; I Corinthians 13; Ephesians 5:1-4; Hebrews 12; and Revelation 3:9)
2. Discipline at FWCS seeks the following objectives:
  - To develop and maintain the optimum learning environment.
  - To correct behaviors and language that are disruptive or destructive to the learning or spiritual environment.
  - To train students in positive Christ-honoring behavioral, social, and language patterns which will be essential to them as adult believers and citizens.
  - To remove, as a last resort, disruptive and rebellious students so that the learning and spiritual environment may be maintained.
3. The school's policies apply to students while they are at school, in vehicles on a school-sponsored activity, or at a school-recognized function.
4. Students are held accountable 24/7 for any improper use of social media such as cell phones, Facebook, Twitter, etc. All forms of sexting is prohibited and will result in either major suspensions or expulsions.
5. Actions that give evidence of disregarding school rules (disrespect, lack of courtesy, and other such misconduct) shall be handled by the teacher as he/she deems best. Situations which are habitual or flagrant will be referred to the Principal.

6. There are several levels of disciplinary actions which are usually followed. These levels are not necessarily progressive in the administration of discipline.
  - a. Consequences for inappropriate behavior will start at the lowest level, such as eye contact, speaking with a student, etc. and will increase if inappropriate behavior continues.
  - b. Depending upon the severity of the behavior, the age of the child, and the circumstances, consequences may include but not be limited to: missed recess, detentions, exclusion from special activities, a note to the parents, a phone call to the parents, and/or a conference with the parents, teacher, and Administrator.
  - c. A student may be either placed on probation, suspended, or expelled if he/she does not respond to the efforts of the school for changing inappropriate behavior.
7. **Probation.** Decisions regarding probation status are made by the Administrator in consultation with the teacher(s) involved. The probationary period will last for a period of nine weeks. If at the end of the probation period there is no significant improvement, as determined by the teachers and Administrator, the parent will be required to withdraw the student from FWCS.
8. **Suspension.** The Administrator has, at all times, the authority to suspend a student. Suspensions will be from 1-10 days. Suspensions will be reported to the parents or legal guardians immediately with a full statement of the reason(s) for suspension.
9. **Expulsion.** The Administrator has full authority to expel students immediately if he feels the student's extreme or chronic behavior warrants it. Parents have the right to appeal expulsions to the FWCS School Committee within seven days by writing a letter to the Administrator. **Note:** No mandatory parental conferences, parental notifications, prior suspensions or probationary periods are required before final expulsion.
10. In its disciplinary procedures, FWCS uses no form of corporal punishment.
11. Parents will not necessarily be notified when students are sent to the principal's office for an initial pep talk or occasional exhortation.

### **School-Wide Rules**

1. Follow directions the first time they are given by any staff person.
2. Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
3. Show respect for all staff members and students through your words and actions.
4. Treat all school property and other students' property with respect.
5. While in the building or on the grounds (except P.E.), walk at all times.
6. Talk when and where you have permission and always use a quiet voice inside the building.
7. The chewing of gum is not permitted on campus at any time.
8. Use only positive, kind, acceptable language and words which are (1) free of rude, sexually suggestive, coarse, and profane meanings and (2) free of slang words which were crafted as sly substitutes for either curse words (euphemisms), or for the holy names of God (i.e. darn, dang, shoot, bull, gosh, etc.)

### **Lunchroom Rules**

1. Follow directions the first time they are given by any staff person.
2. Walk at all times in the lunchroom area.
3. Use a quiet voice and observe "No Talking" time.
4. Leave the lunchroom clean and neat.

### **Playground Rules**

1. Follow directions the first time they are given by any staff person.
2. Use equipment properly as designed and treat equipment with respect.
3. Obey the rules of organized games.
4. Return equipment neatly to storage areas.
5. Solve disagreements with the help of an adult or through a conflict resolution process.
6. Do not pick up, play with, or throw any objects such as rocks, sticks, and sand. There will be zero tolerance.

### **Typical Consequences of a Classroom Discipline Plan**

<b>Number of Offense(s)</b>	<b>Consequence</b>
● 1st Offense	Warning
● 2nd Offense	Put head down, stand, stand at back of room, lose five minutes of recess, etc.
● 3rd Offense	Lose 10 minutes of recess, playtime, or free time and walk the line or sit in designated location. A phone call to parent may be made at this time..
● 4th Offense	Parents and Administrator are notified in writing or by phone. Lunch-time detention may be assigned for the next day.
● 5th Offense	One day "In-school Suspension" (solitary work area for the entire school day) served the next school day. Parent will be notified.

### **Severe Behavior Clause**

If a student engages in behavior that is willfully disobedient, openly disrespectful, physically or spiritually destructive, or violent, the student will be removed from the classroom immediately. This student will not be allowed to return to the classroom until the parents have been contacted. Disciplinary consequences may consist of only a parental conference or may be as severe as immediate expulsion from the school. **Note:** No prior warnings or suspensions are required before final expulsion.

### **Middle School Discipline Plan**

FWCS's middle school classes use a combination detention and demerit system of discipline. Students are assigned either in school or after-school detention sessions for minor offenses such as horseplay, talking, etc. Serious offenses such as fighting, sexual language, bullying, and disrespect to teachers result in students being assigned both detention time and demerits. Demerits accumulate and result in students missing out on off-campus events, being suspended, and finally being expelled from FWCS.

## **Forbidden Activities and Searches of Student Storage Areas**

1. FWCS reserves the right to have its personnel inspect any student's backpack, desk, cubbies, clothing pockets, cell phones, at any time, both on campus and on various off-campus trips, if the staff member believes that the contents are not in the best interests of the school and/or may contain dangerous, illegal sexting photos, or stolen items.
2. Students are forbidden 24/7 from using or possessing tobacco, illegal drugs, alcohol, vaping, e-cigarettes, and written and/or visual pornographic materials, which includes sexting pictures. Students discovered using or participating in these behaviors either during or after school hours, off campus are subject to severe school disciplinary actions which could include expulsion.
3. Please note that private-independent school employees acting in loco parentis rather than as government agents, are not subject to the constitutional prohibitions regarding unreasonable searches and seizures. Searches may be performed without notice, without consent, and without a search warrant. Cell phones may also be confiscated.

## **Games and Electronics Not Allowed on Campus**

- **Gameboys and Other Similar Electronic Toys...**  
The staff has asked that these be banned from campus due to their causing discipline problems in both before care and in extended care. Numerous experts believe that they severely deteriorate students' classroom attention spans.
- **Ipods, Tablets, CD Players, and MP3 Players...**  
These have proven to be very unmanageable; students have snuck in unacceptable music, which they then shared with other students. It is not reasonable or possible for FWCS's staff to monitor the content of the music on these electronics. We thus ask that they not be brought on campus or else be kept in book bags at all times.
- **Cell Phones...**  
Students' cell phones must be kept in their book bags at all times. Cell phones discovered out of book bags will be confiscated by the principal for 48 hours.

## **Toys at School**

Students may **not** bring their personal toys to school for use in the cafeteria before school (7:00 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.), nor in the extended care program (3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.). **Toys may be brought for special class occasions (such as show & tell).** During the school day toys are to be kept in the student's book bag. Whether a toy is large or small, it is not to be loose in a desk as a distraction to the student. Collections of sports cards will be treated with the same restrictions. FWCS asks that students not bring to school any items related to spiritually controversial characters or groups such as Harry Potter, etc. We also ask that students not bring toy guns or other military items to school.

## **Videos and Movies Acceptable at School**

Please do not send videos with your child to be shown at school until you have first cleared it with a teacher or the extended child care director. The school's general policy is to only show "G" rated movies. Occasionally "PG" movies with definite educational value will be shown to older students.

## **Campus Security Rules**

During the school day:

1. Students may **never** leave the school grounds without parental permission.
2. During the day, students may not be removed from campus by someone other than their custodial parents without prior clearance through the office. Persons lacking pre-authorization must have either (1) a written note from the parent or authorized person **or** (2) definite phone verification by parent or authorized person. Verbal verification without a note may not be honored.
3. All students remaining after 3:00 p.m. must be supervised at all times while on campus. They must stay within view of FWCS supervisors. Once a student leaves campus after school, he or she may not return.
4. Dangerous or expensive items such as knives, guns, radios, or tape players are not allowed on campus. Those bringing guns or knives to school face immediate suspension and/or expulsion.
5. Neither the school nor its staff members will be responsible for any items brought from home by the student whether for use in the classroom or at recess.

## **Sexual Exploitation/Victimization, Harassment and Bullying Policy**

It is against both biblical principles and Federal Law for anyone to sexually exploit/victimize, harass or bully any person of the FWCS family (adult or student). Legally, sexual exploitation is defined as any unwanted behavior of a sexual nature that makes a person feel uncomfortable, unsafe, or threatened. Harassment/Bullying is defined as any spoken, written, physical action, or electronic transmitted message that causes another student to feel either uncomfortable or threatened. (Bullying involves chronic, consistent targeting of an individual or group of people.)

Since sexual exploitation/victimization, harassment,, and bullying behaviors are biblically unacceptable and illegal, they will not be tolerated on FWCS school grounds or at any school activities. Offenders will be suspended and/or expelled. Cell phones will be confiscated and given over to law enforcement.

## **Reporting Procedures for Incidences of Sexual Exploitation, Harassment and Bullying**

1. The student should immediately communicate to the harasser or bully that the behavior is totally unwarranted and unacceptable.

2. Any (and all) incidences should be reported immediately to a staff person in authority, such as a teacher. The staff person will take action and inform the Administrator of the report.
3. The staff person shall be asked to document the incident from the person so victimized and any credible witnesses (2-3). Documentation should include the seriousness of the situation and a description of the steps taken to prevent a recurrence. This report will be given to the Administrator.
4. An administrative investigation will follow all repeated or chronic offenses.

## **TRANSPORTATION ISSUES**

### **Bus Transportation Not Available**

Neither FWCS nor local public school districts currently provide bus service for FWCS students at this time.

### **Car Pools**

Whenever it is workable, many families from outlying areas car-pool their children back and forth to school. New families should contact the school office in late summer to either obtain the names of other families who live in their neighborhood or to place their names on a car pool list.

### **Seatbelt, Air Bag, and Convertible Auto Policies**

Seatbelts must be worn by all students while traveling on any school-related activity. This includes the transporting of students for athletic events.

Students less than 5'2" in height or 100 pounds in weight are not permitted to ride in the front passenger-side seats of vehicles equipped with airbags unless they are riding in their own parents' automobile.

Students may not be transported in convertibles while on any school-sponsored events.

### **Booster and Car Seats not Required on Buses**

State Law does not require the use of either booster seats or car seats in either buses or limousines for K-8 students regardless of the child's age or body weight. The law exempts all vehicles that were originally manufactured to carry/transport ten or more passengers.

### **Liability Insurance Notice**

Drivers who volunteer to drive on school events need to be aware that the school's liability insurance does not provide primary coverage for volunteers in the event of an accident. FWCS's insurance is secondary and only kicks in after the volunteer's insurance is depleted.

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