

JAMES FENIMORE COOPER MIDDLE SCHOOL



Student Handbook

SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

The Cooper community supports the growth of all students to think critically and function as empathetic, respectful, and responsible global citizens.

STUDENT MISSION STATEMENT

As a Cooper student, I strive to think critically and function as an empathetic, respectful, and responsible global citizen.

The Cooper Code of Conduct

Courteous

- We show empathy and are kind to one another
- We use appropriate language
- We cooperate and have a positive attitude

On Time

- For school
- For class
- For lunch

On Task

- We focus
- We participate in class activities
- We follow procedures

Prepared

- We advocate for ourselves
- We bring supplies to class
- We complete assignments in a timely manner

Excellence

- We follow the Cooper Honor Code
- We give our best effort
- We take responsibility for our actions and learning

Respectful

- To staff
- To students
- To property

General Information

James Fenimore Cooper Middle School
Fairfax County Public Schools
977 Balls Hill Road
McLean, VA 22101

Main Office 703-442-5800

Attendance 703-442-5858

Guidance Office 703-442-5812

FAX 703-442-5897

<http://cooperms.fcps.edu>



ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Principal - Ms. Barrow

Assistant Principal– Ms. McLoughlin–8th Grade

Assistant Principal– Mr. Rath–7th Grade

Director of Student Services– Ms. Scabis

Counselors -

Ms. Donnelly

Ms. Lewis

Ms. Saint Germain

Ms. Wiley

Principal's Administrative Assistant/

Front Office Support- Ms. Midgley

Finance Officer–Ms. Ahearn

Student Information Assistant–Ms. Eisman

After School Specialist–Mr. Frengel

Clinic Aide–Ms. McLarty

Librarian–Ms. Psaltis

Safety & Security Assistant- Mr. Klana

School Resource Officer- Mr. Hunter

Technology Specialists–

Mr. Dabbondanza- TSSpec

Ms. Dorman- SBTS

HAVE A QUESTION OR PROBLEM? WHOM TO SEE...

Checkout of school

Front Office

Discuss class issues

Teacher/Student Counselor

Discuss personal matters, schedule concerns, and/or set-up parent/teacher conference

Student Counselor

Join a club

Club Sponsor or Mr. Frengel

Pre-arranged absences

Ms. Midgley and/or Ms. Eisman

Transportation Issues

Ms. McLoughlin, 8th Grade

Mr. Rath, 7th Grade

GRADING AND REPORT CARDS

Each student will be evaluated in seven subjects each nine-week grading period. The Fairfax County Public Schools' grading scale is as follows:

Symbols	Scale	Quality Points
A	93-100	4.0
A-	90-92	3.7
B+	87-89	3.3
B	83-86	3.0
B-	80-82	2.7
C+	77-79	2.3
C	73-76	2.0
C-	70-72	1.7
D+	67-69	1.3
D	64-66	1.0
F	BELOW 64	0.0

In order to be promoted, a student must pass English, math, science, and social studies. Parents can review their child's grades by logging into their SIS Parent Account. Directions on how to set up and access the SIS Parent Account can be found on the Cooper website under the Parents. Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) will send out a weekly academic progress report via email that provides a summary of your student(s) grades for the current quarter.

Check the Cooper Website for a detailed explanation on our grading and reporting policy.



Guidelines and Procedures

SCHOOL HOURS

Students are allowed to enter the building 20 minutes before the first block of the day. Students should be in their first block classroom before the bell. Students arriving after the start of the school day must sign in at the front office and get a pass.

After school Kiss and Ride students go to the back of the building to meet their car. Walkers must be off school grounds 20 minutes after school ends unless they have made arrangements to stay after school with a teacher or for a club.

Students leaving school during the school day must bring a note from a parent/guardian to the front office in the morning and obtain a dismissal pass. A parent/guardian will need to come in and present a photo ID to pick up a student.

BLOCK SCHEDULE

Cooper students follow a block schedule. On "Odd Days" students participate in blocks 1, 3, 5, & 7. On "Even Days" students participate in blocks 2, 4, 6, & 8. Students will have 30 minutes for lunch each day during blocks 5 or 6.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

All students are expected to be in school each day. If a student is going to be absent from school, his/her parent or guardian should call 703-442-5858 to record a message on our 24-hour Attendance Line. If a parent or guardian does not call the school, a written excuse is required. The written excuse must be submitted to the main office on the first day of the student's return to school. All students arriving late and/or leaving early must sign in/out in the main office. If someone else (sister, brother, aunt, neighbor, etc.) is picking up a student, they must have a note from the parent/guardian and present a picture ID. For prearranged absences, students must fill out FCPS Form SE289 before they are going to be absent. This form requires students to talk to all teachers, obtain teacher signatures, as well as administrator approval.

Students are expected to make up work when absent.

Excused absences include:

Illness of a student, death in the family, doctor/dental appointment, observance of religious holiday, suspension (except for certain substance abuse violations,) approved pre-arranged absence, or other reasons acceptable to the principal.

Unexcused absences include:

All-day truancy, class truancy, family trips, sports tournaments, missing a ride on the bus, alarm not working, heavy traffic, etc.

COOPER TARDY POLICY

A student is on-time if he or she is in the classroom when the bell rings. The policy (which restarts every quarter) for unexcused tardy arrival to class for all other times is as follows:

- 1st tardy - verbal warning/policy review between teacher and student
- 2nd tardy - parent contacted by teacher by phone or email
- 3rd tardy - parent contacted by teacher by phone or email, student detention with teacher
- 4 or more - referral to administration

Note: The administration will manage tardy situations before either Block 1 (odd days) or Block 2 (even days). Chronic attendance violations that continue after the consequences have been imposed will result in further discussion with an administrator.

BUS REGULATIONS

Bus service is provided for middle school students living more than 1.5 miles from school. Stops and times are designated and adjusted as needed for maximum overall efficiency. Please contact FCPS Department of Transportation with any inquiries about bus routes and time schedules at (703) 249-7100.

To provide the safest possible situation on the bus, it is necessary that all students follow reasonable and sensible safety procedures and directions from the driver at all times.

1. Students will have assigned seats.
2. Remain seated while the bus is in motion.
3. No shouting or screaming, which may distract the driver.
4. Keep heads, hands, and limbs inside bus windows.
5. No throwing objects on the bus or out the windows
6. Report all safety violations to the driver and/or assistant principal.
7. In addition, the following are not permitted at any time on the bus:
 - Possession of water projectiles and weapons
 - Operation of doors or standing in the door well
 - Bullying, fighting, rowdiness, harassment, or vaping/smoking

Any acts of vandalism, profane language, and/or obscenities will be reported to the office. Parents will be notified if the safety of a bus is being jeopardized by the actions of their children. Students are responsible for following the guidelines set forth in the Students Rights and Responsibilities while on the school bus. Bus service may be suspended or denied to students with repeated safety violations and/or further discipline assignments from an administrator for any infractions.

STAYING AFTER SCHOOL ON LATE BUS DAYS

Late activities are held on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday. Late buses are available to take students home after the programming. Students must prearrange with their parent/guardian and the supervising teacher. Students are required to sign up in advance when staying after school. The sign up sheet is available via Google and can be accessed during all lunches. Students are required to sign up for an A session and a B session if riding the late bus. After school is an extension of the school day. The Cooper Code of Conduct and the FCPS Student Rights and Responsibilities (SR&R) apply to all after school activities.

CAFETERIA PROCEDURES

Students are welcome to bring their own food or purchase a lunch from the school cafeteria. For safety and security reasons, students and/or parents are not permitted to order lunch from meal delivery services (UberEats, Door Dash, etc) and have it delivered to Cooper Middle School. Students will be assigned a table; all students at the table will be responsible for keeping the table and surrounding area clean. It is expected that students respect one another and their environment during lunch. The Cooper Code of Conduct also applies to the cafeteria.

To leave the cafeteria to use the restroom, visit a teacher, or eat in the library, students must have a pass and sign out of the cafeteria.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Cell phones, SMART watches, airpods, and any other non-computer communication device must be powered off and in backpacks before the first block of the day. The device must remain off and away for the day. At the end of the school day, students may use their devices again.

Students who need to make an emergency phone call during the school day may use the phone located in the front office.

Phones will be taken from students who are using them without permission.

- For the first infraction, cell phones will be returned to the student at the end of the day with a warning. An email will be sent home to a parent.
- For a second infraction, parents will need to pick up the cell phone from the front office.
- For subsequent infractions, parents will need to pick up the cell phone, as well as have a conference with the administrator. A disciplinary action will be assigned.

(Please note: For any infractions beyond the first, phones will not be given to anyone other than a parent or guardian. The phone will be put in the safe until a parent or guardian can pick up the phone.)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION RELATED TO DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

The Cooper Code of Conduct and the SR&R apply to electronic device usage.

Electronic devices should not be used unless permitted by the teacher or administration. Students must always abide by the Appropriate Use Guidelines for FCPS information technology. Disciplinary sanctions will be imposed for violation of these rules.

Remember that your network password should be unique and easy to remember. You should not use your name or your student ID as your password, and you should not share your password.

BACKPACK PROCEDURES

Students will carry their backpack, FCPS issued computer, and personal items with them throughout the school day.

Do's:

- Power down and put any electronic devices in an area that will not be distracting
- Pack the course materials you need for your classes the night before
- Keep your belongings with you throughout the day. Leave your backpacks in the classroom when you go to lunch.
- Organize your backpack to best fit your needs. Keep it neat!
- Ask a staff member for help with organization if you need

Don'ts:

- Leave your backpacks on top of lockers, in the hallway, or in the restroom
- Bring any items that would be distracting throughout the day
- Keep too many items or binders in your backpack that you no longer need
- Leave food in your backpack overnight

DRESS CODE PROCEDURES

Students are asked to abide by Cooper Dress Code Guidelines and FCPS SR&R policy for dress code. Parents and students should review this information and direct any questions to their school counselor or grade level administrator.

Cooper Dress Code Guidelines

FCPS respects students' right to express themselves in the way that they dress. It is important, however, that their appearance is tasteful and appropriate for a K-12 school setting.

Discussion about dress code violations shall be held privately and maintain the dignity of the student.

Clothing and accessories should not:

- Display vulgar, discriminatory, or obscene language or images
- Promote illegal or violent conduct
- Contain threats or gang symbols
- Promote the unlawful use of weapons, alcohol, tobacco, drugs, or drug paraphernalia
- Expose private parts or show an excessive amount of bare skin
- Contain studs
- Include hats or head coverings unless worn for significant religious, cultural, or medical purposes

Procedure for Students Dressed Inappropriately

Students who are not dressed appropriately according to the FCPS regulations and the Cooper Dress Code Guidelines will be asked to cover the clothing, change clothes, or go home.

Borrowed clothing must be washed and returned to the main office the next day. Repeated infractions will result in disciplinary action, and parents will be contacted. Students are kindly asked to abide by these procedures.

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES AND CONSEQUENCES

Teachers and administrators will approach discipline as a part of helping students make better choices. Interventions will be progressive. If a student fails to correct his or her behavior, more formal steps will be taken in accordance with FCPS Student Rights and Responsibilities.

ADVISORY BLOCK

WHAT IS IT? Advisory block is a block built into our school day to help students learn valuable skills in: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making. The Cooper Student Services department will also create and deliver lessons to support students with organization and study skills. Flexible time after these lessons will allow teachers to further support students' needs and students to seek assistance from other teachers and complete assignments.

The Advisory block and flexible time does not take the place of after-school support and intervention. After-school support serves as an additional resource for students to assist themselves in making sure they have their assignments and are prepared for the following school day.

COOPER MIDDLE SCHOOL HONOR CODE

Caring, honesty, fairness, responsibility, and respect form the basis for good moral character. At Cooper, we are committed to a school that promotes and embraces these qualities. We provide a school environment that enhances character-building experiences, so the students can gain a full understanding of the Honor Code. Students are encouraged to demonstrate the personal qualities associated with character building and good citizenship while doing their best and behaving in an honorable manner. We believe the effort each student makes in meeting academic challenges is more important than achieving high academic marks.

The Honor Code at Cooper addresses cheating, plagiarizing, lying, and stealing.

Cheating is...

- copying someone else's work.
- allowing someone else to copy your work.
- using notes, aids, or written materials in any form during a test.
- talking, copying from someone else's paper, giving or receiving information by signs, gestures, or deception during a testing period.
- sharing information from a previously taken test.
- accessing unauthorized digital information for assessments and assignments.

Plagiarizing is...

- presenting someone else's work as your own without proper citations or acknowledgement.
- copying word for word, without using quotation marks or giving credit to the source of the material.
- failing to use proper documentation and bibliography.
- having your parent or friend do an assignment which is then submitted as one's own work.

Lying is...

- making an untrue statement with intent to deceive.
- creating false or misleading impressions.

Stealing is...

- taking or appropriating without the right or permission to do so and with the intent to keep or make use of wrongfully.

Course of Action

Below is Cooper's course of action if an Honor Code violation should occur. Administration has the right to decide which of the following actions will be taken.

1. A meeting will be held with an administrator, teacher, counselor and student. At this meeting, the incident will be presented by the teacher who reported the violation. The student will have an opportunity to respond and explain. The parent will be notified of the violation by the teacher when the referral is made to the administrator and the administrator will follow up with the parent after the honor code violation meeting. The record of this meeting will be sealed and destroyed at the end of 8th grade if no further infractions occur. The student will be issued an administrative consequence.

2. A parent conference will be conducted with the counselor, administrator, and teacher. The student will be issued an administrative consequence, and a letter will be placed in the student's file that will be forwarded to the high school.

3. The administrator will enforce appropriate disciplinary actions in accordance with the Fairfax County Public School's Student Rights and Responsibilities handbook guidelines.

COOPER MIDDLE SCHOOL CALENDAR 2021-2022

August 23	School Begins
September 3-6	Labor Day Break
October 11	Student Holiday (Indigneous' People Day)
October 29	End of Quarter (2 Hour Early Release)
November 1-2	Student Holiday
November 11	2 Hour Early Release (Veterans Day)
November 24-26	Thanksgiving Break
December 20-31	Winter Break (Classes Resume January 3, 2022)
January 17	Holiday (Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birth- day)
January 20	End of Quarter (2 Hour Early Release)
January 21 & 24	Student Holiday
February 21	Holiday (George Washington's Birthday and Presidents' Day)
March 3	2 Hour Early Release
March 4	Student Holiday
March 31	End of Quarter (2 Hour Early Release)
April 1	Student Holiday
April 4-8	Spring Break
May 30	Holiday (Memorial Day)
June 10	Last Day of School, Year End (Early Re- lease)