

French Gulch-Whiskeytown School
Parent-Student Handbook

2021-22

French Gulch-Whiskeytown School Parent-Student Handbook

Our Vision Statement

Successful Students Today~ Successful Citizens Tomorrow

Our Mission Statement

The French Gulch-Whiskeytown School District is dedicated to building resourceful, respectful, academically strong individuals.

Please do not hesitate to contact the school for clarification or concerns about any content in the handbook.

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Welcome to French Gulch-Whiskeytown School where children come first! We strive to educate the whole child. It is our desire to ensure intellectual, academic, social, and physical growth for all of our students using a Montessori approach to inform and guide our practices.

Your active support and cooperation, combined with our best professional efforts will help to ensure success for every child.

Please take the time to review the contents of our parent/student handbook. We are looking forward to a vibrant, creative and productive year for each student.

PARENTS PLEASE NOTE: Until further notice FGWS will follow the indoor masking guidelines set by the CDC and Shasta County Public Health Department. Masks will be worn by students and adults inside the school building until we are advised otherwise.



General Information


SCHOOL HOURS

Class start and dismissal times are the same for all grade levels TK-8. School begins at **8:10 am**. Dismissal is **2:35 pm**. The first Monday of the month is a minimum day unless otherwise posted. Dismissal is one hour earlier (**1:35 pm**) on minimum days. Hours of operation for **Project SHARE**, our extended day program, are **2:35-6:00 pm**. On minimum days the after school program will operate from 1:35-6:00 pm. Project SHARE requests that students who walk home do so when there is still daylight due to safety concerns. If your child is picked up after the program closes at 6:00 pm, you will be charged a fee for every 5 minute increment past 6:00 pm.

In the event of an emergency school closure due to weather or some other unforeseen event, we will notify local radio and TV stations. We will make every effort to personally notify all school families of the closure. If the school should close, Project SHARE and any other planned programs or events scheduled for that day will also be canceled.

ABSENSES

If you know in advance that your child will be absent, please phone the school office (359-2151). Follow up written notes of explanation are appreciated for documentation of the absence.

 In the event that your child will be absent **3 or more consecutive days**, please obtain an **independent study form** from the office. A packet of schoolwork will be assembled for your student to complete. Upon receipt of the completed work, your child will be credited with full attendance for those days covered by the independent study contract. Work must be returned in a timely manner, generally within a week of return. Teachers ask that they be given advanced notice of an independent study request in order to have adequate time to create a meaningful work packet reflecting class study for the period of time your student is out of school. An independent study contract of this nature may extend a maximum of

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15 accumulative days throughout the year. Completed work must be returned within a week of a student's return to school.

INDEPENDENT STUDY related to Covid-19: although currently the state is not allowing a hybrid attendance model, it is allowing study from home. Due to internet connectivity challenges within the community it is difficult to provide synchronous online instruction for every family who may choose this option. However, the minimum requirement is a daily check in. Teachers will provide a daily opportunity for students who are able, to check in with their teachers and classmates via Google meet. If this isn't a viable option, phone calls and FaceTime provide other check in options. Teachers will work with families who might choose this instructional option. School work will be evaluated weekly.

Excused absences include illness, death of a family member, observance of religious holidays, and a parent's work obligation out of town. Other absences are coded unexcused.

Regular on time attendance is important! Chronic absenteeism or late and tardy arrivals affect everyone, your child most of all. Late and tardy arrivals impact the learning environment of classmates as well. When your child arrives late to class, the flow of instruction and/or student work is disrupted. Your child misses out on initial lessons while the work environment of other students is interrupted. Excessive absences or late arrivals (1/2 hour after class starts) may result in referral to SARB (School Attendance and Review Board). Remember: **EVERY DAY COUNTS!**

Please review the following chart that gives you an idea of the importance of regular on time daily attendance.

1 or 2 days of missed school might not seem like much but

If you child misses.....	That equals.....	Which is.....	And over 13 years of schooling that's....
1 day every 2 weeks	20 days per year	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1 ½ years
1 day per week	40 days per year	8 weeks per year	Over 2 ½ years
2 days per week	80 days per year	16 weeks per year	Over 5 years
3 days per week	120 days per year	24 weeks per year	Nearly 8 years

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How about 10 minutes a day? Surely that won't affect my child's schooling but

He/she is just missing	That equals.....	Which is.....	And over 13 years of schooling that's....
10 minutes per day	50 minutes per week	Nearly 1 ½ weeks per year	Nearly ½ year
20 minutes per day	1 hr 40 minutes per week	Over 2 ½ weeks per year	Nearly 1 year
30 minutes over day	Half a day per week	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1 ½ years

PROJECT SHARE

FGWS operates an excellent extended day program after the instructional school day has ended. Project SHARE is administered through the Shasta County Office of Education (SCOE). It provides a safe setting for students at school from dismissal through 6:00 pm. The program provides a nutritional snack and a balance of homework help, physical activity, art and science projects among other activities. Parents need to sign their children out of the program upon pick up.

Older students may be given permission to sign themselves out of SHARE provided their parents/guardians have sent in a written note with details such as times and dates. Students signing themselves out of SHARE must leave by the front entry and may not reenter the program until the next day.

While the FGWS operates an open campus after its instructional hours that extends through the SHARE program's day which ends at 6:00 pm.

SCHOOL SPIRIT

French Gulch-Whiskeytown School's mascot is a gold miner. School colors are black and gold. We encourage students to wear school colors each Friday to promote school pride and spirit.

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DRESS GUIDELINES

Dress should be appropriate for a school setting. We recognize that norms are changing but we have several guidelines on what constitutes “appropriate school dress.” Shorts or skirts for girls should be no shorter than mid thigh length. Exposed midriffs may be appropriate for the lake but not the classroom. Undergarments must not be visible; therefore spaghetti straps tops, particularly for older students, are not acceptable school wear. Transparent tops should be layered with an opaque shirt underneath.

Tee shirts promoting: alcohol, drugs, sexual imagery, inappropriate language/messages, hate messages targeting a religious, ethnic or racial group and/or gang symbols are expressly prohibited.

These standards also apply to images on backpacks, binders, folders and book covers.

Students must have shoes that are sturdy enough for safe, active outdoor play, including but not limited to PE activities. Closed toed shoes with a back strap are a must for PE and recess. Students may bring a spare pair of shoes for indoor and outdoor use. Safety is our first concern. As with many Montessori programs, slippers may be worn in the classroom but appropriate shoes for other areas of the school are required.

Should dress not reflect these guidelines, parents may be asked to bring a change of appropriate dress or students may be asked to wear “loaner” items from the school.

Boys are asked to take their hats off while in the gym and/or classrooms, although we encourage students to wear hats outside for UV protection.

SCHOOL VISITATION

All visitors, including parents visiting or volunteering at school must check in with office staff first. Visitors are also requested to sign the visitor log located to the left after entering the building. We want you to feel free to visit our school frequently, but we also want to know who is on campus and why. This is for the safety of our students and our school personnel.

Please Note: While we are still under pandemic guidelines, we are discouraging parent visitation during instructional hours. If necessary, please make an appointment with your child’s teacher to meet before 8:10 am or after 2:35 pm.

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OFFICE HOURS

Our school office is open from 7:30 am to 3:30 pm each day. The school phone number is (530) 359-2151, fax (530) 359-2010. A message phone will record your calls before/after office hours or when office personnel is unable to answer the phone. Kristin George, our office manager, periodically reviews recorded messages throughout the day as well as each morning.

USE OF THE OFFICE

The office is a business office Students are not to use the office during class time without permission from a teacher unless there is a legitimate reason or an emergency. Likewise, the office phone is not for casual student use to call home. Permission from a staff member must be obtained before student use of the office phone.

MEDICATION

The Governing Board recognizes that some students may need to take prescribed medication during the school day. Office personnel and other persons designated by the administration will assist students in taking their medications. All prescription medication and any over the counter medication (i.e. aspirin, Tylenol, cough medicines, decongestants etc) administered at school will require the following in accordance with Education Code Section 49423:

- ✓ **Medication Authorization Form** completed and signed by the physician and parent. This form may be requested from the school office and/or faxed to your physician's office. Completed paperwork will detail the method, amount, and time schedules by which such medication is to be taken.
- ✓ A prescription indicating the student's name, medication, strength and directions written by the prescribing physician in the original bottle or container.
- **Medications cannot be administered by school personnel unless the above steps are followed- no exceptions.**
- **Students are not allowed to carry any medication, prescription or over the counter, on their persons or in their backpacks at any time.**
- **In lieu of a medical authorization form, a parent or parent designee may come to school to administer medication during instructional hours.**

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PICKING UP STUDENTS BEFORE DISMISSAL

If students are picked up before class dismissal time for reasons such as dental or medical appointments, a parent or preauthorized designee must sign them out in the office first. A sign in/out log is to the left as you walk into the office foyer. Please sign your name, indicate the student(s) being picked up early and a brief description of why the student is being picked up early such as: dentist appt, counseling, etc.

Parents who pick up their children after school are asked to be at school at dismissal time. If you are going to be late, please notify the office. **We appreciate it when students know in advance if they are being picked up, walking home or going to Project SHARE.** Student use of the school phone to change these plans does not constitute an emergency!

As a legal and personal precaution, students will not be released to anyone not designated on the enrollment form. If you need to have your child picked up by someone previously not indicated in writing, you must call the office to advise us of your permission before we will release your child.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS AND MONEY

Students are responsible for their own personal property. Money brought to school for lunches or milk should be paid in the office upon the student's arrival at school (although this year all student meals are free!). **Large amounts of money should never be brought to school for any reason.** Any money for field trips, fund raisers, etc. should be sent in a sealed envelope with your child's name on it. The school **is not** responsible for students' personal belongings or money although we try to promote a culture that respects the property rights of others. If something is lost, it should be reported to the office. Every effort will be made to find it.

BICYCLE RIDERS

Bike riders must obey the traffic and **helmet laws** of the state and conduct themselves in a safe manner. We encourage adults to model responsible, safe behavior by using helmets whenever they ride as well. Bikes are to be parked at school in the area provided for them.

WALKERS

Generally walkers should be walking against the flow of traffic. In our little community there are clearly areas where the students are safer walking with the flow of traffic due to the shoulder width and visibility of both the walker and driver. **We recommend walking the route initially with your child to determine the safest practices.**

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CELL PHONE USE AT SCHOOL

French Gulch-Whiskeytown School acknowledges parental concern for the safety and well being of their children while they are attending school or school sponsored activities. We also understand the belief of some that a student's possession of a cell phone may enhance that feeling of safety and security for both parent and child. FGWS realizes, however, that student misuse of cell phones during school hours may:

- (1) undermine the learning environment
- (2) disrupt academic instruction and distract students
- (3) compromise the integrity of student testing
- (4) increase disciplinary problems
- (5) violate privacy rights of students and school staff.

In light of the foregoing, the school permits student possession and use of cell phones as set forth below.

POSSESSION OF CELL PHONES

Students may possess cell phones on school property subject to the following restrictions:

- Students will not display, use, activate or permit cell phones to be activated during school instructional hours without a teacher's expressed approval for legitimate purposes such as specific academic research, reading approved downloaded e books or specified use as an earned incentive.
- During instructional time students' cell phones will be turned off and kept in their backpacks, cubbies or checked in with their teachers depending on the classroom policy. We want our students to be **PRESENT** when they are in the classroom.
- The school's policy on cell phones applies to cell phone usage in the Project SHARE program.

Parents, please do not text or phone your child during the instructional day *with the expectation that she or he will respond back to you immediately.* If you have an important message or a change of after school plans that need to be communicated to your child, please call the office.

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SCHOOL ISSUED CHROMEBOOKS/LAPTOPS

Students are issued a chromebook or laptop at the beginning of school. Student and parent are asked to sign an agreement for its use. All chromebooks are numbered and will follow a student in the following year. This is an incentive to make sure that proper care and use of the device is maintained. **We ask that chromebooks come to school charged so that power cords may be left at home. That is one less thing to keep track of at school!** The staff recognizes that accidents do happen. Repairs will be made. Should a second accident occur, a student will have access to a chromebook or another computer while at school but will not be issued one to take home. Homework assignments will be adjusted accordingly if this is the case.

We urge all parents to speak to their children about the responsible use of all electronic, smart phone and computer devices. **We strongly encourage parents to periodically review their child's usage of such devices** by checking the history of Internet usage, including social media, review downloaded games and songs as well as regular review of text messaging. Electronic posting is a forever thing! Keep your student safe. Teach him or her wise use of electronic devices, including the proper time and place for their use.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR

It is our expectation that French Gulch-Whiskeytown School students will distinguish themselves by their decorum. The school staff expects appropriate behavior of students in the classroom, in the lunchroom, on the playground, at school activities, traveling to and from school, and in the Project SHARE program.

Rules and expectations covered in this section are designed to meet the following goals:

- Maintain an orderly school operation.
- Maintain optimal learning opportunities for all students.
- Help students develop skills and behaviors necessary for healthy social interaction, both present and future.
- Help students learn how their decisions affect the quality of their lives and those of others.
- Help students develop responsibility and character.

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IN PERSON AND CYBERBULLYING

Bullying will not be tolerated.

Bullying:

- is behavior characterized by use of force, coercion, hurtful teasing or threat in order to emotionally or physically abuse, aggressively dominate or intimidate another
- is targeted and repeated in nature
- represents an imbalance of physical or social power between the bully and his/her victim.

These three components ***distinguish bullying from conflict***. It's important to discuss the difference with your child. Young children, especially, might feel someone is a bully if they don't get their way in a game or aren't immediately handed over something they want. "You're mean!" "You can't come to my birthday party...." (one of the ultimate threats heard from the mouths of littles!) It takes patience and modeling for young children to learn appropriate rules of social engagement. While some comments and actions may be mean spirited, not every instance constitutes "bullying." It is often difficult, especially for younger children, who are princes and princesses at home to learn to share the throne with other "royalty" when they first start school. We encourage parents to talk with their children about social appropriate ways to resolve conflict when it occurs. Have them reflect on their own behaviors: is there something you could have said or done differently that could have resulted in a better outcome? On the other hand, no student at FGWS should feel ongoing intimidation by another student. If your child confides in you regarding bullying, please let his/her teacher or other staff member know immediately.

CYBERBULLYING

Cyberbullying provides a whole new and expanded venue in which a person can attack, slander and intimidate another. It includes sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or mean content about someone else using digital devices and platforms. Posting personal or private information or images without consent about someone else with the expressed intent of causing

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embarrassment or humiliation is not only unacceptable, it risks crossing the line into unlawful or criminal behavior. Your child needs to know that digital posting is forever. Deleting does not permanently erase electronic posts. Think twice before hitting send. Again, we encourage parents to keep tabs on their children's electronic device usage.

French Gulch-Whiskeytown School Rules:

1. Treat others with the same respect with which you are treated by the adults in this school.
2. Your actions, dress, possessions, etc. **may not cause a problem** for anyone else.
3. If your actions, dress, or possessions cause a problem for anyone else, you will be asked to solve that problem.
4. If you cannot, or choose not to solve the problem, appropriate consequences will be imposed by staff members. These consequences will depend upon the situation and the person or persons involved. Staff members will use their best judgment based upon the information they have at the time.
5. If students and/or parents feel that the consequences do not appear to be fair, they may request a "due process" hearing.

DUE PROCESS

FGWS students have rights guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution and acknowledged and protected by the District's Board of Trustees. With these rights, however, come responsibilities - including student adherence to a reasonable code of conduct. If students fail to fulfill their responsibilities in regard to conduct, disciplinary action may follow. In disciplinary cases, students are entitled to due process. This means:

1. Students must be informed of the accusations against them.
2. Students must have the opportunity to accept or deny the accusations.
3. Students must receive an explanation of the basis for the accusations.
4. Students must have a chance to present an alternative position if the accusations are denied.

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A due process hearing does not need to be formal in nature. It is simply a time for concerned individuals to meet together and share information related to the situation in question. In the event that this discussion provides additional information that sheds a different light on the situation, or shows the consequences to be unfair, the consequences may be changed or eliminated to better fit the unique situation.

Due Process also allows a way for parents or the public to voice concerns about school practices which they may question.

Title IX

Title IX provides for gender equality. If you feel that your child has been discriminated against based on gender, please submit your concern to Linda Swayne, FGWS' Title IX coordinator. The complaint may be submitted in writing, in person or in a phone call (359-2151). The complaint will be investigated following the due process procedure to determine its legitimacy and if found necessary remediated to be in compliance with Title IX regulations.

FGWS CORE BELIEFS WHICH GUIDE ENFORCEMENT OF SCHOOL RULES AND EXPECTATIONS

Each student is a unique individual with unique personal, social, and educational needs. As a result, every disciplinary situation becomes unique in nature. Consequences for misbehavior provide the best learning value when matched to the unique student and the unique situation. The odds for children learning from their mistakes increase dramatically when children see a reasonable connection between their behavior and the resulting consequences.

The FGWS Staff dedicates itself to following a set of core beliefs which provides a guide for dealing with student discipline. These core beliefs guide our attempts to individualize disciplinary procedures and to help students see reasonable connections between their behavior and the resulting consequences.

Since these core beliefs provide the guiding light for our professional decisions, the staff encourages parents to bring concerns and questions to us in the event we operate in ways that appear to be inconsistent with these core beliefs.

FRENCH GULCH-WHISKEYTOWN STAFF CORE BELIEFS

The following list of core beliefs outlines the professional actions and attitudes of all staff members in this school.

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1. Every attempt will be made to maintain the dignity and self-respect of both the student and the teacher.
2. Students will be guided and expected to solve their problems, or the ones they create without creating problems for anyone else.
3. Students will be given opportunities to make decisions and live with the consequences, be they good or bad.
4. Misbehavior will be handled with natural or logical consequences instead of arbitrary punishment, whenever possible.
5. Misbehavior will be viewed as an opportunity for individual problem solving and preparation for the real world as opposed to a personal attack on school or staff.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

All students have the following duties and responsibilities to pursue the required course of study in a diligent manner, including:

- Listening attentively to teachers and to other students
- Completing assigned work on time
- Being regular and punctual in attendance
- Showing a willingness to work towards constant self-improvement
- Learning to criticize fairly as well as accepting constructive criticism appropriately
- Respecting the property rights of others as well as developing a sense of stewardship toward school materials and grounds
- Respectful acknowledgement of the authority of school personnel
- Treating fellow students with respect
- Displaying proper conduct to and from school, on campus, and at all school related activities both on and off campus
- Complying with the rules and regulations of the district

POSSIBLE GROUNDS FOR SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION AS CITED IN CALIFORNIA EDUCATION CODE

The following acts committed while under the jurisdiction of the school shall may constitute good cause for suspension and/or expulsions, however, good cause is not limited to these offenses:

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1. Continued willful disobedience (EC Section 48903)
2. Open and persistent defiance of the authority of school personnel (EC Section 48903)
3. Habitual profanity or vulgarity (EC Section 48903)
4. Smoking or having tobacco (EC Section 48904)
5. Use, sale, or possession of narcotics (EC Section 48904)
6. Willfully cutting, defacing, or otherwise injuring in any way, any property, real or personal, belonging to a school district (For paternal responsibility, see EC Section 48909, CAC, TIV, Section 305)
7. Stealing (EC Section 48906)
8. Fighting or molestation (EC Section 48906)
9. Gambling (CAC, Title V, Section 301)
10. Use, sale, distribution, or possession of any alcohol for beverage purposes on or near school premises (EC Section 48906)
11. Hazing (EC Sections 32050, 32051, 32052)
12. Carrying or using weapons or instruments which might cause bodily harm (EC Section 48906, 48907) Knives are not allowed on the school campus at any time for any reason. Law enforcement will be called if knives are discovered.
13. Habitual truancy (EC 48260,48261,48262)
14. The possession or use of explosives or fireworks, including caps (EC Section 48906)
15. Unsatisfactory appearance or mode of dress. Any pupil who goes to school without proper attention to cleanliness or neatness of dress (EC Section 48906, and CAC, Title V, Article 2, Section 302) may be sent home to be properly prepared for school
16. Forgery of notes, signatures, excuses, or other school documents (EC Section 48906)
17. Serious infractions of pupil behavior standards which shall make the presence of a pupil in a school inimical to the welfare of the student body (EC Section 48907)
18. Failure to be diligent in study (EC Section 48906, and CAC, Title V Article 2, Section 3000)
19. Intimidation (EC Section 48906)
20. Extortion (EC Section 48900 {e})
21. Battery (EC Section 48903)
22. Assault (Penal Code Section 245, EC Sections 44014, 48903)
23. Becoming a member of a secret organization (EC Section 48903)
24. Having concealed electric listening/recording device in the classroom without prior consent of teacher and principal (EC Sections 51512, 78907)
25. Sexual harassment (EC Section 48900.2)
26. **The infraction of any school rule or for any good reason not specifically stated above (EC Section 48906)**