

FORT ST. JAMES SECONDARY SCHOOL



STUDENT HANDBOOK

2024-2025

This booklet is designed to inform the parents/guardians of students attending Fort St. James Secondary School about the school's personnel, programs, future events and services offered to students and parent/guardians. Further information can be obtained from the student's teachers, the school administration and the Parent Advisory Council.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Fort St. James Secondary School. We hope the activities at school this year will be interesting and rewarding for you. The teaching staff will be providing you with challenging activities and a positive learning experience. You have the responsibility to make the best use of these activities and get the most from your educational experience.

This school is a community. It is a gathering place for many students from a variety of backgrounds and it exists for the purpose of education in many forms - the academic, the vocational, the social, the cultural and the athletic.

SCHOOL GOAL

To increase student graduation to 100%.

SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT - "Learn and Belong"

The general shape and the words of our Mission Statement accurately represent what we are about and are striving to be as a school community. The circular form of our Mission Statement represents a safe and nurturing environment (the center) in a dynamic atmosphere where students can learn, mature, express themselves, practice good citizenship, and define themselves. We are not satisfied only to accomplish this within our school; we also work to prepare and send our students out into the greater community. All these things we value and strive for as a school.



SPECIFIC SCHOOL RULES AND REGULATIONS

1. Attendance:

One of the most reliable indicators that a student is at risk of failing or dropping out of school is poor attendance. It is very important to make attendance at school a high priority.

- A. Appointments should be scheduled outside of class time wherever possible.
- B. Parents should either phone the school or send a note ahead of time if their son or daughter is going to be absent or late.
- C. If a student misses an exam, the school must be notified ahead of time. Failure to do so may result in a mark of zero.
- D. Students who do not attend school should not expect to attend school dances, practice or play with school teams, nor participate in school field trips.

2. Computer and internet use:

- A. Computers with Network/Internet access are available for student use from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM.
- B. Internet use in the library is guided by the Electronic Network Access Policy and Network on-line Etiquette.
- C. Limited Wifi is available within the school.

3. Course Withdrawal Date:

Students who wish to withdraw from a course, must withdraw by:

Semester 1: October 18, 2024

Semester 2: April 9, 2025

Courses dropped after the withdrawal date will be assigned "F" fail.

4. Counselling

Fort St. James Secondary School offers a full range of counselling services including academic, vocational and personal counselling. The counsellor will:

- A. Assist students in selecting courses appropriate to their chosen career path.
- B. Assist students in determining a career path.
- C. Assist students in choosing an appropriate post-secondary institution.
- D. Provide opportunities to visit post-secondary institutions or meet with representatives from these institutions.
- E. Assist students in choosing courses that will lead to graduation.
- F. Act as a liaison to the post-secondary institutions that the students will be attending. This includes helping students with applications to colleges and universities and providing official interim transcripts.

- G. Register Grade 12 students for Evaluation Assessments and prepare reports to the Ministry of Education on the courses that the Grade 10, 11 and 12 students have completed (with grades) and those in which they are presently enrolled.
- H. Assist students in accessing other social agencies, such as personal counselling, drug and alcohol counselling, legal assistance, medical assistance.
- I. Verify course and demographic information for Ministry of Education.
- J. Set up timetable of courses working with School Administrators.
- K. Provide student course information to parents.
- L. Set up student course selection process, gather and record these selections and generate individual student timetables for each student.
- M. Make requested or necessary changes to student schedules and enter changes to the Master Timetable (all courses and teacher assignments).
- N. Help mediate discussions between teachers and students upon request.
- O. Provide current information on bursaries or scholarships.
- P. Provide current information on social issues (for example: drug and alcohol awareness, date rape, and racism).
- Q. Liaison with schools sending and receiving our transfer students.
Students wishing to see a Counselor during class time should first get a Permission Slip from the Counselor. The Counselor is usually available before school, at noon, or after school, but it is a good idea to first make an appointment.

5. DEPARTURES FROM SCHOOL DURING THE SCHOOL DAY:

If you wish to leave school for specific and valid reasons, the following policy is to be followed:

- A. Bring a note or have a parent phone the school justifying your departure. Otherwise, you must have the permission of the Principal or Vice-Principal to leave the school.
- B. Sign out at the office when leaving during regular class time.
- C. When returning to school, check in at the office.

6. FIRE DRILL

Fire Alarms in the school are for the purpose of warning all occupants of a fire in the building. Fire alarms and fire prevention are to be taken seriously by everyone in the school.

It is necessary to have periodic fire drills in a school to familiarize all occupants with the procedures followed in case of an alarm. There is a notice in each room giving fire alarm exit directions. The procedure in the school is to move immediately and quietly, following the classroom instructor. When the building is cleared, students are to line up quietly by classes at least 50 feet clear of the building. A runner from each class shall report to the Administration in front of the school when the class has cleared the building.

It is an offense, punishable by jail or fine, to interfere in any way with the alarm system in a public building.

7. FOOTWEAR:

- A. Non-marking gym shoes are to be worn on the playing area of the gyms.
- B. For sanitary reasons, students must wear shoes while on the school premises.

8. GRAD CRITERIA: Convocation is a formal, school-sponsored ceremony that marks the completion of graduation requirements as established by the British Columbia Ministry of Education.

For the ceremony in June 2025, students who wish to participate will have to meet the following conditions:

- A. The student must be enrolled in Grade 12 and taking a program of studies that will lead to a Provincial Graduation Dogwood Diploma or an Evergreen Certificate (Adult Graduation).
- B. The student must be able to complete the program by June 20, 2025. The list of eligible students will be finalized by June 13, 2025.
- C. The student must abide by all school and district rules and regulations. Failure to do so may mean that the student will not be permitted to participate in the ceremony.
- D. The student will be required to follow the directions of the teacher in charge of the ceremony, attend rehearsals and abide by the dress requirements established for the ceremony.
- E. The student will be required to pay a ceremony fee of \$40.00.

Any student who cannot meet these requirements will not be included in the ceremony.

9. GUESTS TO THE SCHOOL

- A. Guests will not normally be allowed to spend the day in school.
- B. All visitors to the school should be directed to the office.
- C. Any student wanting to bring a guest to school must get approval from administration in advance.

10. HARASSMENT POLICY:

The Board of School Trustees, School District No. 91 (Nechako Lakes), recognizes that all students have the right to participate and learn in an environment free from harassment and bullying.

Harassment and bullying is defined as inappropriate remarks, jokes or innuendoes, comments, persistent teasing or leering, false accusations, unwelcome sexual advances, use of sexually demeaning language, stalking, comments or actions that create an uncomfortable or hostile environment.

A bully is someone who:

- uses power to hurt others or harm their possessions.
- purposely scares or intimidates others.
- often hurts the same person repeatedly.
- is sometimes supported by other people who just watch and laugh, instead of helping the person being bullied.

Harassment and bullying are considered to be significant issues at any age. Students who commit acts of bullying shall be subject to disciplinary action, which may include suspension from school.

11. HATS:

Hats may be worn in halls before school, at breaks and after school. Hats may not be worn in Mr. Houghton's office nor at assemblies. Hats may only be worn in classrooms at the discretion of the teacher.

Consequences for failure to respect this policy include reprimand, and/or loss of the hat for a period of time (up to the rest of the school year).

12. HONOUR ROLL

Students must have a minimum of three regular school subjects to qualify for the Honour Roll. Students with a G.P.A. of 3.0 or greater and no failing grades will be placed on the Honour Roll. The Honour Roll will be calculated for each term based on the students' Grade Point Average (G.P.A.). Semester Honour Rolls are calculated on the following grade points:

A = 4.0

B = 3.0

C+ = 2.5

C = 2.0

C- = 1.0

No Ebus or outside FSJSS courses will qualify for Honour Roll.

The Yearly Honour Roll will be composed of students who were on all four Term Honour Rolls.

13. LATES:

Students who frequently arrive late without a note or a phone call from their parents may be detained and have their parents/guardians contacted. Students are required to produce a note from their parents, or have their parents phone the school for all absences and lates.

14. LEAVING CLASS:

You must have your teacher's permission to leave class for any reason. Bells do not dismiss students; teachers dismiss students.

15. LIBRARY

You will find the library a pleasant place for study, leisure reading and information searches. Please show your respect for the library and the materials by keeping it clean and orderly. Please take advantage of the many resources available for your use. This is your Library and to make sure that you will be able to use it effectively, a few simple procedures have to be followed:

- A. The library is normally open every school day between 8:15 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. including lunch hour. Students coming to the library during school hours are required to present passes from their teachers.
- B. The Library circulation system is automated. Students electronically sign out books at the circulation desk.
- C. Most of the Library's materials are available for a loan period of approximately fourteen days. Some reference materials and materials placed on reserve by teachers are available on an overnight basis. Some audio-visual materials and a few books may be used only in the library.
- D. Networked computers with Internet access are available for student use in the library. Students are responsible for ALL books that they sign out.
- E. If a student does not return book(s)/textbook(s), loses books or returns books damaged, they will be given a replacement fine. All fines must be paid before the student can sign or receive any more books/textbooks; the student's account will be blocked until the books are paid for. The fine must be paid at the office, and then the student must bring the receipt to the library so that librarian can take the block off the student's account.

16. LOCKS AND LOCKERS:

- A. Locks and lockers are the property of the school. Students are assigned a lock and locker when they have paid their Locker Rental charge of \$15.00 and have signed the following disclaimer.

I, _____ hereby agree that I will use my locker (Number) _____ only for accepted school related activities and agree that it may be inspected by the Administration Officer or other person in authority with the Administrative Officer at any time without notice.

Signed: _____

- B. The assigned locker is to be used unless there are special circumstances, in which case, students should see the Office Personnel.
- C. Regular locker checks will be held throughout the year.
- D. In certain circumstances, such as getting books for a student who is ill, the locker will be opened.
- E. School combination locks must be used, and the combination will be kept on file at the Office.
- F. Combination numbers will be kept confidential.
- G. When opening your locker, do so in a way that will not allow other students to learn your combination.
- H. Refrain from leaving money or valuables in your locker.
- I. The school will not be held responsible for missing items.

17. LOST AND FOUND:

All articles of clothing and everything else of value found on the grounds or in the school should be taken to the office. The Lost and Found will be cleared of all articles on a regular basis. Textbooks found should be turned in to the Vice-Principal.

18. MEDICAL SERVICES

- A. A student who becomes ill or is injured while at school must report to the Office after receiving the classroom teacher's permission to do so.
- B. While the personnel in the Office do not dispense pills, i.e. aspirin, etc., they are able to provide minor first aid. If that is not sufficient to alleviate the problem, the Office Personnel will contact the student's parents, or, if it appears necessary, take the student to the clinic. Every effort will be made to assist the student.
- C. The Public Health Nurse makes periodic visits to the school for routine immunizations.

19. PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism occurs when another's words, ideas or work, whether it is an invention, a lyric, music, a picture, a research paper, information on a web site, etc. is submitted as one's own or used without the creator's permission. The claim may be in the form of a paper containing another's words, graphics or ideas, a Power Point presentation, or any other form of written, audio or visual expression. Plagiarism is theft.

20. REPORTING

A. Interim Reports: Interim reports will be issued midway through Terms 1 and 3. Teachers may issue interim reports at other times throughout each semester. The intention of these reports is to inform parents of some of the positive things occurring in the classroom as well as inform parents of academic or behavior problems that their son or daughter is experiencing and solicit the parents' support.

B. Formal Report Cards:

Report Cards will be provided for parents at four intervals during the school year.

First Report.....Mid November

Second Report.....Mid January

Third Report.....Mid April

Fourth Report.....End of June

Grade 8 - 9 Proficiency Scale

Proficiency Scale				
	Emerging	Developing	Proficient	Extending
	The student demonstrates an initial understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.	The student demonstrates a partial understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.	The student demonstrates a complete understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.	The student demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.

Emerging EMG - Developing DEV - Proficient PRF - Extending EXT scale is already in use in the Provincial Assessments in Grades 4, 7, 10 and 12. The Proficiency Scale will be used in learning updates and summaries of learning (previously known as report cards).

In all courses the following letter-grade equivalents are adhered to:

1. Midterm reports

The following percentage breakdowns are used for assigning letter grades:

A	86% or higher
B	73 - 85%
C+	67 - 72%
C	60 - 66%
C-	50 - 59%
IE	Insufficient evidence of learning
W	Withdrawn

2. Final reports

The following percentage breakdowns are used for assigning letter grades:

A	86% or higher
B	73 - 85%
C+	67 - 72%
C	60 - 66%
C-	50 - 59%
F	0 - 49%
IE	Insufficient evidence of learning
W	Withdrawn
SG	Standing granted (assigned with permission by admin)
TS	Transfer standing (credit earned through an outside institution)

* When an "IE" is assigned, additional information for parents will be provided.

* Ebus or outside FSJSS courses will NOT qualify for Honour Roll.

21. **SCHOOL DANCES:**

- A. All school rules and regulations apply for school dances.
- B. Students may apply to bring a (one) guest to a school dance by speaking with the principal or vice-principal before 3:30 on the day prior to the dance. Guests may not be students attending Elementary School.
Guests must enter and leave with the student who has invited them. Students will be responsible for their guest and their behavior.
- C. Dances will be held 7:00 - 10:00 pm. Doors close at 8:00 pm. Students and guests may leave the dance at any time; however, they may not re-enter. Students who will arrive late because of work must receive prior permission from the Principal or Vice-Principal.
- D. Coats must be checked at the coatroom.

E. No alcohol or prohibited drugs are allowed on school property. Any student or guest who is suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs will not be allowed to enter the dance. Any student found under the influence of, or in possession of alcohol or drugs at any school function will be automatically suspended and their parents will be phoned to come and pick them up. In the case of students being in possession of or under the influence of prohibited drugs, they will be suspended from school.

22. SCHOOL LEAVING PROCEDURES:

A student withdrawing from school, or transferring to another school, must report to the Office where appropriate action will be taken concerning textbooks and refunds owing.

23. CELL PHONES:

Cell phones cannot be used during instructional time.

24. TELEPHONES

A telephone is located across from the counselling office for student phone calls. Students will not be allowed to use the Office phones except in the case of an emergency.

25. TEXTBOOKS:

All textbooks are provided to students free of charge by their classroom teachers. Textbooks are the student's responsibility. If they are lost or damaged, the student must reimburse the school for their cost. If a textbook is lost, another may be obtained at the Office after paying for the missing text.

Each textbook is assigned a number and the student must ensure that he/she has his/her own books at all times. Students should write their name inside the front cover of each book in the appropriate place, so that it can be readily identified.

26. VALUABLES:

Students should not leave valuables in their lockers or in the gymnasium change room areas. The school cannot be responsible for property lost in this way. Students can arrange to store valuables in the office, or they can make arrangements with the coach or instructor for safe storage of valuables.

Student Code of Conduct

Responsibility and Expectations

- At Fort St. James Secondary, the responsibility for student discipline in school is shared among students, staff, and parents.
- Students have a responsibility to respect the rights and dignity of others and to become actively and productively involved in their own academic learning and social growth.
- Educators are responsible for establishing a positive school climate in which structure, support and encouragement assist students in developing a sense of self-discipline, responsibility, and positive relationships.
- Parents are responsible for establishing a positive learning atmosphere in the home, knowing school policies and procedures, supporting the school in the enactment of these policies and procedures, and encouraging their children to understand and respect these policies and procedures.
- Appropriate behavior is consistently encouraged and acknowledged, thereby increasing student self-esteem, and reinforcing self-control.
- On-going communication exists between staff and parents that encourages and provides increased opportunities for active and constructive parental involvement in their children's education.
- Students are disciplined in a timely, fair, judicious and responsible manner taking into account the student's age, maturity and special intellectual, physical, sensory, emotional or behavioral needs if any.

Code of Conduct:

It is expected that students will:

- be aware of and obey all school rules;
- attend classes punctually and regularly;
- work cooperatively and diligently at their studies and home assignments with the goal of always improving;
- respect the rights of all persons within the school including peers, staff and parents;
- respect the legitimate authority of the school staff; Follow directions of school staff, speak to principal or vice principal about any concerns or questions regarding directions;
- respect the school's physical school facilities; equipment and the property of fellow students. Students (or their parents) will be held financially responsible for repairs or replacement of property willfully damaged.
- respect the diversity of our school community and the BC Human Rights Code which prohibits discrimination on the grounds of: ancestry, color, family or marital status, physical or mental disability, national or ethnic origin, race, religion, sex, age, gender identification/expression, and sexual orientation or sexual orientation as perceived by others.
- conduct themselves in a safe and responsible manner at all times;
- not threaten, harass, bully, intimidate or assault, in any way, any person within the school community. This includes cyber bullying.
- not be in possession or under the influence of drugs, drug paraphernalia, vaping equipment and/or alcohol;
- not use tobacco, drugs or vape type products in school buildings, on school property, or on school trips.
- not be in possession of any object that in the opinion of the principal or vice principal, is potentially dangerous. This includes any weapons, legal or illegal, including replicas/imitations, knives, and any other object with a blade, or firearms.
- adhere to the regulations of student conduct on school buses.

The Board restricts the use of personal digital devices at school for the purpose of promoting online safety and focused learning environments.

For students in secondary schools, personal digital devices must be powered off and safely stored away during instructional time, unless being used for instructional purposes or to promote digital literacy; this may be done with the permission and under the direct supervision of a teacher or other staff member. Secondary school students may use personal digital devices during the school day outside of instructional time, for example, before school begins, between classes, or during lunch break.

Any use of personal digital device during instructional hours will be appropriate to a student's age and developmental stage.

All students are responsible for safe storage of any personal digital device(s) brought to school.

Individual students (and their caregivers) at any grade level with documented and verified needs, such as accessibility, medical, health, or learning needs may work with the School Based Team to develop an exemption plan that requires the use of a personal digital device for full inclusion.

Use of a personal digital device during the school day or instructional hours will be considered in matters of equity, such as a lack of internet access at home.

Final approval of any exemption must be given by the School Principal, and the approved plan will be shared as necessary and appropriate with staff members.

School jurisdiction over its students includes:

- any activity occurring during a regular school day on school premises (building and grounds) or any activity that is sponsored by, or organized by the school, regardless of time or place,
- student conduct occurring outside the regular school day and off school premises (building and grounds), if in the opinion of the Principal circumstances warrant,
- student conduct occurring in connection with an activity that is sponsored by, or organized by the school regardless of time or place,
- student conduct on school buses or transportation arranged by a school,
- student conduct while traveling to school and returning home from school, if in the opinion of the Principal circumstances warrant.
- Community residents have a right to privacy, private property, and freedom from abusive behavior. While the School does not assume responsibility for student behaviour outside the school's jurisdiction, it may take disciplinary action against a student **in circumstances where misconduct has or can reasonably be expected to have an impact on the school environment**. The school may report to and will cooperate with the local RCMP in cases where students violate the law.

Consequences

- Reprimands, detentions, parent meetings, in school suspensions, out of school suspensions are all possible consequences for unacceptable behaviors.
- Incidents involving drugs / alcohol will result in suspension.
- Serious breaches of conduct, including threat making behaviors, that threaten the safety and welfare of others will be referred directly to district staff and potentially to a threat assessment team at the district level.
- Whenever possible and appropriate, students are given consequences that are restorative in nature rather than punitive.
- The school and district will take all reasonable steps to prevent retaliation by a person against a student who has made a complaint of a breach of the Code of Conduct.
- Where a student 16 years of age or older repeatedly fails to comply with the Code of Conduct, rules and policies of the school, or has failed to apply him/herself to his/her studies as set out in Section 85 of the school Act, **and there is documented evidence over time to outline the school's efforts to engage the student in appropriate behaviors**, the School Board is empowered to refuse further school service to the student.