

FLORENCE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENT HANDBOOK

FLORENCE SCHOOL DISTRICT PHILOSOPHY

Philosophy of Florence School adheres to the idea that education must be considered as a process of growth in which the individual student is motivated and is stimulated by the controlled and uncontrolled environments of home, community, school, state, and country. Our philosophy is aimed at developing each student's capacities through a democratic process with regard for individual differences and responsibilities. We believe we should teach the students how to think but not necessarily what to think as each student develops his/her own decision-making capabilities. It is our belief that through educational opportunities adjusted to reflect individual differences, our children may become free to grow intellectually and morally, understanding the natural force of life and learning to live in harmony with others.

MISSION STATEMENT

Mission of Florence School is to provide each student with educational opportunities that enable them to learn and find success in school to the full extent of their ability.

PURPOSE OF THE HANDBOOK

Purpose of this handbook is to familiarize students and parents with the rules, regulations, required courses, activities and organization of Florence Elementary School. With this information, it is our hope that a better understanding of the policies of the school by students, parents, and faculty members will consequently result in cooperation and harmony as school and home work together to improve the educational process. We want each student to feel that he is a citizen of the school. As citizenship is one of the main objectives of the educational system, we advocate student's become aware of the restrictions that our complex and ever changing society is constantly making on us. Certain rules and regulations must be proscribed and followed to enable each student to reach their full potential.

Children are our most valuable resource. It is important for the elementary school to develop, nurture, and promote the best interest of the individual child. The school will provide opportunities for our children to mature into responsible, participating members of society. All parents can assist the school in doing a better job by showing genuine interest and concern, attending conferences, communicating effectively with the teacher, sharing an interest in what is being studied, assisting in homework, and encouraging good work habits. Ideally, cooperation between school and home with the school to see that your child follows rules and attends school regularly, and volunteer in your child's classroom or elsewhere in our school.

ELEMENTARY STAFF

Pre-kindergarten	Jill Kahnke	ext. 207
Kindergarten	Hilarie Lenox	ext. 208
Grade One	Kathy Leighton	ext. 201
Grade Two	Ashley Johnson	ext. 202
Grade Three	Sarah Spiering	ext. 203
Grade Four	Stacey Buszkohl	ext. 205
Grade Five	Dawn Gross	ext. 206
Special Education Teacher	Becky Binde	ext. 204
SPED Aide/Librarian	Dawn Bistodeau	ext. 204/210
SPED Aide	Kendra Mastel	ext. 204
SPED Aide	Jocelyn Schroeder	ext. 204
SPED Aide	Sandy Zubke	ext. 204
Student Advisor	Krisit Koll	
Speech	Gina Chilson	ext. 213
Music/Band	Marcy Klitzke	ext. 229
Physical Education	Dan Lund	ext. 231
Reading Recovery/Title 1	Jean Case	ext. 209
Elementary Lead Teacher	Jean Case	ext. 209
Business Manager	Sherri Sumner	ext. 216
Secretary	Sue Flisrand	ext. 215
Superintendent	Gary Leighton	ext. 217

Parents are encouraged to direct any questions or concerns to the appropriate teacher. Lead teacher- Mrs. Case should be contacted if further assistance is needed. The Florence School phone number is 758-2412.

ACTIVITIES

Students must be seated in the stands during games held in the gym. Not following this rule may result in being asked to leave a game or to not attend future games. Everyone's cooperation makes games safe and enjoyable for all. Individual and family tickets are available at the school business office for all home games.

ATTENDANCE

School and the entire educational process involve continual learning. All classroom assignments and activities necessitate regular attendance at school. Students are required to be in attendance for a full day to participate in an athletic event after school unless the absence has been cleared by school administration.

BIKES

Students may ride their bikes to school. The bike must be parked in the bike racks as soon as the student arrives. Bikes are not to be ridden during the day.

BIRTHDAY INVITATIONS

Parents are requested to not send student birthday or other party invitations to school to be distributed unless the entire class is being invited to the activity. Even though it is never intentional, hard feelings and disappointment result when only some students are excluded for a planned activity.

BULLYING & OTHER HARASSMENT

Students attending Florence School are under the expectation that their conduct always be appropriate for a school setting and free from any form of negative behavior that may impact the learning of another student. Bullying is defined as any teasing, taunting, coercive behavior, humiliation, or similar conduct that causes someone to feel bad. Bullying includes agitating a situation that may cause or aggravate an issue between others. Bullying may occur in a one-to-one situation, in a group setting, or through various electronic means such as Facebook and text messages posted or sent outside of regular school hours or the school building itself.

Any student engaging in bullying or other forms of harassment of another student will be subject to all of the provisions of the school code of discipline to help insure that the school environment remain free of behavior that may negatively impact the education of any other student. Discipline may be as severe as in-school or out-of-school suspensions.

BUS CONDUCT

The following rules apply to students any time they are riding a school bus:

1. Stay sitting.
2. Face forward.
3. Keep your hands to yourself.
4. Keep your feet on the floor.
5. Respect other people's space and property.
6. Use appropriate language.
7. Nothing goes out the bus window- trash or hands.

CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION

To promote effective communication and settle issues that may arise among the students, parents, and staff of Florence Elementary, appropriate channels of communications need to be followed in handling conflicts and concerns. In addressing issues that arise, it is best to first address the problem or issue with the classroom teacher or other staff member most directly involved in the issue to see if the problem or issue can be resolved at that level. Only after that has been done and no remedy or solution found should the issue be taken to the next level. Levels of authority for Florence Elementary are: Classroom Teacher, Elementary Lead Teacher, Superintendent, and School Board in that order.

CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT

Classroom teachers and school administrators are mandatory reporters of all suspected incidents of abuse or neglect of a child. If abuse or neglect is suspected, the Department of Social Services/Child Protection is contacted and a report is made to caseworkers of the suspected abuse or neglect. Investigation including interviews with individual students are completed by and at the discretion of DSS staff and case management investigators. School personnel do not contact the child's family or any other individuals to discuss any suspected abuse or neglect. Duty and responsibility of teachers and administrators are to report suspicions of abuse or neglect and not to investigate suspicions. Matters such as this are treated with the utmost confidentiality.

COMPLAINT POLICY:

If a parent has a complaint or a grievance regarding an elementary staff member, the following procedure will be followed:

1. Parents initially bring the complaint or grievance to the staff member.
2. If the problem cannot be taken care of at the teacher level, then the parents approach the respective principal who in turn sets up a meeting with parents, principal, and teacher.

3. If the problem cannot be resolved at the principal level, the complaint or grievance is taken to the superintendent.
4. If the problem is not resolved at level three, the complaint is taken to Florence school board for final resolution.

If a parent fails to follow this procedure by bypassing the teacher and coming to the principal first, the principal will direct the parent back to the teacher. This policy will be followed by all levels of the administration.

Complaint involving the implementation of a federal program:

1. Parents bring the complaint or grievance to the principal.
2. If the problem is not resolved at the principal level, the complaint is taken to the superintendent.
3. If the problem is not resolved at the superintendent level, the complaint is taken to the board for final resolution.
4. If the matter is still unresolved, the grievance may be taken to the South Dakota Department of Education.

COORDINATION/TRANSITION PLAN

4-year olds within the district may take advantage of the school's pre-kindergarten program at no cost to the family. Florence has no Even Start, Head Start, or Reading First programs but we do have an agreement between the school and Inter-Lakes Community Action Head Start to collaborate and cooperate if their services and program is needed. A child thought to have a learning, speech, or developmental disability once identified is screened by appropriate staff employed through our special ed cooperative- Northeast Education Services Cooperative- and/or Birth-to-Three Connections.

Each August at our elementary open house, students and parents have an opportunity to meet the pre-K and kindergarten teachers and see their respective classrooms. Parents have an opportunity to visit with the teacher and other parents during this time.

Children determined to have a disability within the special education criteria are serviced through an early childhood program. Records are kept in the school office with copies going to the Kindergarten teacher before the start of the next school year.

Coordination/transition plan is reviewed yearly by the Title I committee and revisions are made on recommendations by the entire committee. Parents, elementary teachers, paraprofessional staff, NESC staff, and school administration are involved in program evaluation. We have a signed contract with the Inner-Lakes Head Start

program. This is the only preschool in Florence so we use the expertise of the many people.

DDN CAMPUS/ONLINE VIEW OF STUDENT GRADES

The Florence School uses the DDN Campus grading system. Parents can request user rights and a password from the school. Parents are also encouraged to utilize the Florence School Homepage and communicate with teachers via e-mail.

DISCIPLINE PHILOSOPHY

In order for children to gain control of their lives and realize a sense of academic and personal fulfillment, they must first learn how to accept responsibility for their behavior, how to respect the rights of others, how to solve problems, and how to make choices and decisions that can benefit them or that are in the best interest of others.

Teachers are in charge of their classrooms and can make any reasonable rule governing their classroom. Students are expected to respect all staff at all times and follow their directions whether they are in the classroom, on the playground, in the halls, in the lunchroom or at any school sponsored activities.

The students will be responsible for their choices and consequences. Consequences can be privileges for using appropriate behavior or completing appropriate tasks. Consequences can also be privileges lost for not completing tasks or for not using appropriate behavior. The Florence Behavior plan is used to outline specific consequences for negative behavior towards other students and disrespect of our staff.

DRESS CODE

Proper attire is expected of all students while in attendance at school. Administration reserves the right to confer with a student and parent in the event a certain style or form of dress is detrimental to positive classroom and school atmosphere. Clothing with objectionable language, sexual innuendo, or alcoholic beverage/tobacco advertisements are not considered proper attire and will not be permitted. Caps and hats are not permitted to be worn in school during the school day. Students are required to wear boots at recess when conditions warrant.

DRUGS

Federal and state laws and school policy prohibit student possession or use of any drugs or chemicals, including alcohol and tobacco. Violation of this law/policy will result in confiscation of the drug/chemical and disciplinary action of a severe nature taken against the student. The student will be subject to suspension from school for up to ten

days. Referral of the particular incident will also be made to the proper judicial authorities.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS DEVICES

Students who possess cell phones or other electronic communications equipment while on school property are subject to any and all limitations of use by the school district and its staff. Student use of electronic communication devices without administrative approval is limited to the time prior to arrival at school and the conclusion of the school day. Students violating this policy will be subject to disciplinary action with the electronic communication device confiscated pending completion of any necessary investigation. We discourage and will not allow iPods or similar devices either.

FLORENCE SCHOOL WEBSITE

www.florence.12.sd.us

FOOD SERVICE

Florence School maintains a breakfast and lunch program sponsored by the school district and SD Child and Adult Nutrition Services for the benefit of all students in attendance. Healthy and nutritious meals are served daily. Breakfast will be served daily except when a late start is announced. **Students with special diets must have written doctor orders on file at the school office.** Students not wishing to take part in the school lunch program are permitted to bring their own lunch. Sack lunches must be a balanced meal (only 100% juice allowed if student does not take school milk and no pop). The charge for eating school breakfast and lunch will be kept at the minimum level necessary to recover expenses. Public notification will be made on meal charges at the beginning of the school year. **Parents are encouraged to apply for free or reduced lunches by filling out the application form sent home with each student/family at the start of the year.** Food Service will use a checklist system to record meals served to each student. Billing to parents will be at the end of each month with remittance due in the business office by no later than the 15th of the next month. Families that have not paid by the 20th of the month will no longer be able to charge meals until the past due amount is paid. Those students shall be able to purchase meals daily on a cash basis until the past due amount is paid.

FIRE AND FIRE DRILLS

School officials will hold fire drills a minimum of twice each semester to insure that all students can properly evacuate the building in case of a fire. During fire drills or in case of an actual fire, students are to follow instructions of the teacher in charge. Every person is to walk quickly and quietly outside and immediately go to his station of safety.

GRADING SCALE

Grades 3-5

A+	100
A	94-99
A-	92-93
B+	90-91
B	86-89
B-	84-85
C+	82-83
C	78-81
C-	76-77
D+	74-75
D	70-73
D-	68-69
F	67 and below

Grades K-2

E	92-100
S+	84-91
S	76-83
S-	68-75
U	67 and below

HEALTH INSURANCE

Florence School does not provide medical insurance for students including those who participate in extra-curricular activities.

HOMEWORK POLICY

Homework is a necessary and valuable part of each child's education. The following guidelines have been established. Because of individual differences in children, the times may vary.

Grades Kindergarten through 2nd is given a small amount of work to be done at home with the help of the parents nightly.

Grades 3-6:

3rd grade - 30 minutes daily.

4th grade - 40 minutes daily.

5th grade - 50 minutes daily.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In case of inclement weather or any other emergency situation, School Messenger system will be used contact families by phone and a "no school" announcement will be made on local radio and TV stations. KELO Closeline is a recommended online source of information. One-hour or two hours late announcements may be used if reports indicate that roads and weather will improve later in the morning of a school day.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Students must be excluded from attending classes under the following illnesses:

- Impetigo: excluded until affected area is dry and is being treated.
Head lice: excluded until after treatment has been initiated with special shampoo.
Mononucleosis: excluded until a physician directs otherwise.
Pink Eye: excluded until 24 hours after treatment with eye drops has begun.
Streptococcal Infections: excluded until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated.

Please refer to SD Dept. of Health Guidelines for questions arise. For all infectious diseases, school follows the SD Department of Health recommendations on inclusion and exclusion from school attendance.

LOCKERS

Each student will receive his/her own locker at the start of the school year. Lockers and their contents may be searched by school personnel under reasonable suspicion guidelines. Please remember that backpacks with wheels do not fit in the lockers.

MEDICATIONS

Prescription medications should be given at home whenever possible. If medication is to be administered by a school employee, a **written note must accompany the medication.** *This does include cough drops.* Prescription medication must be brought in the **original** container which must include the student's name, medicine name, doctor's name, and dosage.

PARENT'S RIGHT TO KNOW POLICY

The federal education law called ESEA requires that all parents in public schools have a right to know the professional qualifications of teachers and paraprofessionals who work with their children in school. To request this information, please contact the school principal or the superintendent's office.

PUBLIC RECORDS

Florence School District #14-1 operates in a complete, open, and transparent manner and makes district records available for public inspection provided the release of the record requested does not conflict with state or federal law; FERPA is the governing statute. School board designates the superintendent as the district public records officer. As such, he is responsible for allowing the inspection of records upon public

request and for maintaining the confidentiality of those records not open to the public. Superintendent as the public records officer shall also establish fees that may be charged for the retrieval and copying of any public records requested. Superintendent shall also give the individual making the public request a reasonable time frame in which the public records request will be complied with.

RECESS

Students are supervised and are expected to follow rules to ensure everyone's safety. Students are expected to go outside unless weather causes health or safety concerns. Students are allowed to stay inside **one day** only due to illness as long he/she has a note signed by his/her parent. If the request to stay indoors is for an extended period of time, a physician's note will be required. If the weather outside is extremely cold, students are kept inside or may only go outside for a very short time. Students who stay inside during recess for health or injury reasons are not allowed to participate at PE class.

RETENTION POLICY (Grade K-5)

Florence School District's retention policy for grades K- 5 is intended to help students who struggle in basic skills through tutoring and differentiated instructional methods. Referrals for testing as a qualifier for special education services are initiated when a learning disability is suspected and other modifications are still not resulting in academic success. Age and maturity of the student will also be considered prior to any decision made to retain a student in the same grade for the next school year.

SUMMER SCHOOL (K-5)

If funding is available, summer school will be offered to students in K-5 who need additional assistance in school or for those who may want to participate in enrichment activities. Need will be determined by the following criteria: test scores, teacher recommendations, and parent recommendations. Time will be determined on an individual basis.

SCHOOL DAY

The school day begins at 8:30 a.m. Students should arrive no earlier than 8:00 a.m. School is dismissed at 3:14 p.m. (Pre-K hours are from 8:30 until 11:00 and 12:45 until 3:14.) **Parents are asked to call the school or send a note before 8:30 a.m. if your child will be absent.** A call will be made to parents if a student is absent and no notice has been received. If a student is absent more than 1 hour in the morning or more than 1 hour in the afternoon, the student will be counted absent $\frac{1}{2}$ day. For safety reasons, students will not be allowed to leave school property during the school day without parent permission. **Parents are asked to stop at the office when picking a student up early from school.** The secretary will call the student to the office.

SUSPENSION/EXPULSION

In extreme cases, it may be necessary for school administration to temporarily suspend (up to ten school days) a student because of a disciplinary incident. With the recommendation of the school superintendent, the school board may expel a student from school as a result of a disciplinary incident. Such expulsion shall not extend beyond the end of the current school year unless the disciplinary incident involves a violation of the school weapon's policy.

VANDALISM

Any student who intentionally causes damage or destruction to school property or shall deface any furniture, building, or other school property shall be required to compensate for such damage and will be subject to school disciplinary action. Violators may also be referred to the proper authorities for appropriate action should criminal action be suspected.

WEAPONS

In accordance with the Gun Free Schools Act of 1994, any student who is determined to have brought a weapon to school is subject to expulsion for up to one calendar year. School administration may determine the length of such expulsion on a case-by case basis.

Wellness Policy

Introduction:

In the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, PL 105-268, the U.S. Congress established a new requirement for all local agencies) with a federally-funded National School Lunch program. School districts are encouraged to establish and maintain a coordinated school health program that addresses all components of school health.

Rationale

The increasing rates of overweight and obesity among youth threaten to jeopardize the future health and productivity of our children. Will academic success become more and more difficult for students to attain as lifestyle choices diminish a child's ability to learn? Will the students of today be the first generation to have a shorter life expectancy than their parents? Do over nourished and malnourished children face similar adversities?

A healthy school environment goes beyond school meals in the cafeteria. Living a healthy lifestyle and maintaining a healthy weight requires a combination of healthy food choices, knowledge of nutrition, and appropriate amounts of physical activity. All foods made available on school campuses should offer children nutritious choices.

Nutrition education and physical activity should be incorporated into the school day as often as possible. The healthy, nutritionally astute, and physically active child is more likely to be academically successful.

The federal government recognizes that a coordinated effort by the entire community including child nutrition professionals, school board members, parents, students, school administrators, and teachers is warranted. These efforts involve adults serving as role models and community members being informed of the policies that improve the long-term health and well being of students. The local agency has a strategic role to play in improving the health and well being of children.

NUTRITION EDUCATION

The primary goal of nutrition education is to influence students' eating behaviors. At each grade level nutrition education will be integrated into existing curriculum and designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote their health.

Nutrition Education should:

- Teach consistent scientifically-based nutrition messages throughout the school, classroom, cafeteria, home, community and media;
- Be included in the scope and sequence of the curriculum in core subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences and elective subjects;
- Include the school cafeteria which serves as a "learning laboratory" to allow students to apply critical thinking skills taught in the classroom;
- Provide enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant and participatory activities (e.g. contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, and school gardens);
- Offer information to families that encourages them to teach their children about health and nutrition and provide nutritious meals for their families.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Primary goal of the school's physical education curriculum is to provide opportunities for every student to develop the knowledge and skills for specific physical activities, maintain physical fitness, regularly participate in physical activity and understand the short and long term benefits of a physically active and healthful lifestyle.

Physical Education Classes

- All students in grades K-5 will receive daily physical education classes for the entire school year. Students with disabilities, special health-care needs and in alternative educational settings will be included.
- Activities in PE class will be broad-based and cover a spectrum of age appropriate skills to promote activity and physical fitness.
- Student involvement in other activities involving physical activity will not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirement.

Daily Recess

- All elementary school students will have at least 15 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which students are encouraged to engage in moderate to vigorous physical activity.
- Extended periods of inactivity, two hours or more, are discouraged. When activities make it necessary for students to remain indoors for longer periods of time, students will be given periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School

- Florence Schools will offer activities that meet the needs, interests and abilities of all students including boys, girls, students with disabilities and students with special health-care needs.

Rewards, Incentives, and Consequences

- Rewards and incentives will be given careful consideration as to the messages they send to the students receiving them. Food and treats will not generally be used as a reward or incentive in the classroom. Other more appropriate rewards are suggested as a replacement to candy or high-sugar snacks(e.g.-free time, pencils, bookmarks, etc.).
- Food will not be withheld from students as a consequence for inappropriate behavior and poor academic performance.
- Physical activity should not be used as a consequence of bad behavior but can be used to promote positive learning habits.

Use of School Facilities Outside of School Hours

- Florence School will attempt to make school spaces and facilities available to students, staff and community members before, during, and after the school day, on weekends, and during school vacations.

- School space and facilities may be available to community agencies and organizations offering physical activity and nutrition programs.
- School policies concerning safety will apply at all times.

Other School-Based Activities

Florence School promotes an environment that provides consistent wellness messages, is conducive to healthy eating and being physically active, and contributes to forming healthy life long habits.

Professional Development

- Florence Schools will strive to provide ongoing professional development and education for food service professionals and educators.
- Florence Schools will strive to provide nutrition and physical education for students, staff, parents, and, where appropriate, for community members.

Eating Environment

- Students and staff will have adequate space to eat meals in clean, safe, pleasant surroundings with adequate time scheduled.
- Safe drinking water and convenient access to facilities for hand washing and oral hygiene will be available during all meal periods.
- Students and staff will have adequate time passing between classes and activities, bathroom breaks, hand washing, and socializing so as to allow adequate eating time for breakfast and lunch.

Nutrition Standards

Students' lifelong eating habits are greatly influenced by the types of foods and beverages available to them. Foods of good nutritional content including fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy foods, and high fiber grain products are recommended by Child and Adult Nutrition office in Pierre.

General Guidelines

- Procedures shall be in place for providing to families, on request, information about the ingredients and nutritional values of the foods served.

- Beverages sold or served on school grounds or at school-sponsored events during the normal school day shall meet the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the Standards for Food and Beverages as set forth in this document.

School Meal Program

- School food service program shall operate in accordance with the National School Lunch Act and the Child Nutrition Act as amended and applicable laws and regulation of the state of South Dakota. All schools must comply with USDA regulations and state policies.
- Florence School shall offer varied and nutritious food choices that are consistent with the federal government's Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- Menus are planned with to meet both dietary guidelines and appeal to student and staff food preferences.
- Students with special dietary needs (diabetes, celiac disease, allergies, etc.) will be accommodated as required by USDA regulation.

Parties and Celebrations

- Schools should limit celebrations that involve food during the school day.

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