

Fort Caspar Academy

Parent * Student * Staff
Handbook
2019-2020



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Natrona County School District #1

Table of Contents

<u>Statement of Philosophy</u>	3		
<u>Character Education</u>	3	Nurse	12
<u>History of Fort Caspar Academy</u>	4	Lost and Found	13
<u>Vision and Mission Statement</u>	4	Cellular Phones and Other Electronic Devices	13
<u>Parent Involvement</u>	5	Parent Concerns	13
<u>Curriculum</u>	6	Library and Book Fines	13
English Language Arts	6	Grades	13
Penmanship	6	Honor Roll	14
Spelling	6	Report Cards and Progress Reports	14
Required Reading, Book Reports, Recitations	6	Parent-Teacher Conferences	14
Mathematics	6	Guest Speakers and Assembly Programs	14
Science	7	Whole Group Instruction	14
Social Studies	7	Academic and Behavior Support Services	14
Health	7	Spalding Tutoring	15
Music	7	Student Retention	15
Art	7	Field Trips	15
Physical Education	7	Audio – Visual	15
Technology	7	Internet Access	15
<u>Attendance</u>	8	Extra-Curricular Activities	16
Arriving at School in the Morning	8	After-School Sports Programs	16
Tardiness	9	Student Directory	16
Doctor Appointments	9	Bicycles, Scooters, and Skateboards	16
Safety – Coming to and Leaving School	9	School Parties	16
Going Home After School	10	Birthdays	16
Picking Up Your Child During School	10	Contacting Teachers	16
Leaving School Grounds	10	Fingerprinting	17
Transportation	10	<u>Homework and Make-Up Work</u>	18
<u>General Information</u>	11	Homework	18
Bell Schedule	11	Late Work and Incomplete Assignments	19
Enrollment	11	Make-Up Work	19
Back-to-School Night	11	<u>Discipline</u>	20
Class Placement	11	School Rules and Expectations	20
District Waiting List	11	Bullying	21
FCA Parent-Teacher Organization	11	Ticket System	21
Visits to School	12	Tickets for Homework	21
School Closure and Emergency Phone Numbers	12	Point System	21
Food Service and Meal Plans	12	Citations	22
		<u>Dress Code</u>	23
		Dress Code and Personal Appearance	23
		Dress Code Enforcement	25
		<u>Contract of Mutual Responsibility</u>	Appendix A

NOTE: The policies in this handbook are intended to be consistent with applicable laws, district board policies, and administrative regulations. Should any provision in this handbook be in conflict with such laws and policies, those laws and policies shall be paramount to the policies in this handbook. Throughout this document, the word ‘parent’ has been used to refer to all parents and legal guardians.

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

As a school of choice with the Natrona County School District, the ideology of Fort Caspar Academy is to emphasize the training of the intellect, teaching of basic academic skills, to promote parental involvement, and to provide a structured environment that enhances the learning process. This is accomplished by:

- *Teaching students to be self-disciplined and accountable for their actions.*
- *Instilling in all a sense of pride and responsibility for self and for others.*
- *Inspiring students to strive toward standards of excellence in all fields of endeavor.*
- *Preparing students for the world outside by challenging them to high standards of achievement within the classroom.*
- *Equipping students with the necessary skills to become decision makers and problem solvers.*
- *Developing an atmosphere of respect toward all students, regardless of ability, physical appearance, and culture.*

CHARACTER EDUCATION

Fort Caspar Academy utilizes the *Core Virtues* program by Mary Beth Klee to teach students about lifelong values and the importance of a good character. The information below is an excerpt from www.corevirtues.net, where you can find a complete description of the program.

“*Core Virtues* is a character education program that promotes civility, respect for the human person, and human excellence in every way. The word *virtue*, in fact, derives from the ancient Greek philosophical tradition and means *excellence*. It is our best hope for a brighter future.

Core Virtues is a practical, non-sectarian approach to character education on the kindergarten to sixth grade level. Each month teachers highlight a key intellectual, moral, or civic virtue – such as respect, responsibility, diligence, honesty, generosity, or perseverance. They read quality children’s literature at a “Morning Gathering” to provide inspirational or insightful examples of virtue in action. The reading of these well-written and often beautifully illustrated stories helps children fall in love with the good, and cultivate a vocabulary of virtue.

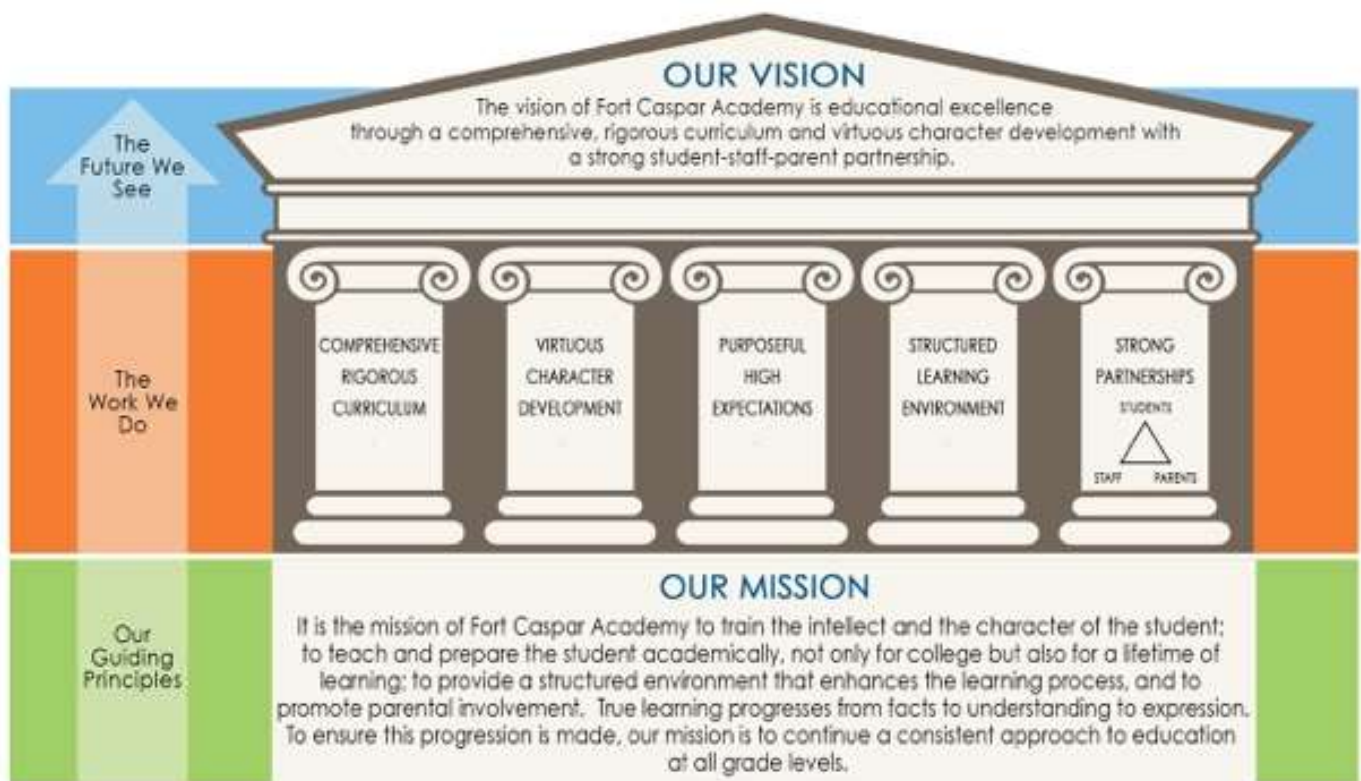
Virtues highlighted each month in the *Core Virtues* program are common ground, consensus virtues, not controversial social or political agendas. A partial list includes: respect, responsibility, diligence, gratitude, honesty, generosity, perseverance, courage, faithfulness, compassion, openness to inquiry, and humility in the face of facts.

The program objective is to ignite the imagination of the young, inspiring them to do and be their best. The program is a catalyst for academic success because it encourages the habits of the mind and heart that are necessary for quality scholarship.”

HISTORY OF FORT CASPAR ACADEMY

Fort Caspar Academy was established in 1995 by a group of caring and concerned parents and educators who desired an enriched curriculum for children. They sought a back-to-basics approach that encompassed strong, rigorous academics. Fort Caspar Academy was innovative in its engaging and nurturing philosophy that all kids can succeed. This philosophy also contains strong character education through the use of the *Core Virtues*. Strong parental involvement was also recognized as a necessity for student success. FCA has been an academic leader in the district, as well as the entire state. Fort Caspar Academy is an integral part of the “School of Choice” philosophy our district adopted.

VISION AND MISSION STATEMENT



PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parental involvement is the basis of Fort Caspar Academy values and contributes to the overall success of each student. For these reasons, a strong volunteer program is a vital aspect of Fort Caspar Academy. Parents are encouraged to seek out opportunities for volunteering in the school. Parent volunteers help develop school/home partnerships that result in an increased quality of education for our students.

***Every family will be expected to donate a minimum of ten (10) hours per semester to the school.**

Following are ways to volunteer:

Recurring Activities

- Take Home Library
- Yearbook
- Attending PTO Meetings

District-Wide Activities

- Spelling Bee
- Science Fair
- LEGO Robotics

Work at Home

- Prep for Events
- Staff Support Supplies

Behind the Scenes

- Setting Up Book Fair
- Book Fair Cashier
- Cutting Out Bulletin Board Items
- Putting Together Bulletin Boards
- Library Helper
- Library Maintenance
- Art Room Helper
- Hanging Artwork in Hallways
- Music Room Helper

- Copying

Committees

- Staff Support
- Teacher Appreciation Week
- Staff Luncheons
- Safe Schools
- Activities

One-time Events

- Last Blast
- Polar Express
- Book Fair
- Track Day
- Charger Challenge

Fundraising Efforts

- Counting Box Tops
- Clipping Box Tops
- Donating to Charger Challenge
- Fun Run

After School Activities

- Volleyball Coach
- Basketball Coach
- Clubs
- Student Council

- Yearbook

- LEGO Robotics

Classroom Help

- Room Parent
- Donating Classroom Supplies
- Covering Books
- Class Parties
- Sharpening Pencils
- Preparing Book Orders
- Laminating
- Making Copies
- Filing Saxon
- Donating Snacks
- Classroom Helper
- Cleaning Desks
- Kindergarten Centers
- Chaperone a Field Trip

Front Office Needs

- Hearing Tests
- Picture Day
- Crosswalk/Traffic Duty

Please contact your child's classroom teacher, Governing Council Representatives, or the school's website at www.fortcasparacademy.com to find out about volunteering opportunities. Governing Council Representatives' contact information may be found on the school website.

CURRICULUM

The Natrona County School District Curriculum (NCSD Curriculum) is followed. In addition to the NCSD Curriculum, skills and specific content from Core Knowledge and from the *Spalding Writing Road to Reading* are incorporated into daily instruction.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Reading/literature/phonics and written expression with correct grammar and clarity of thought is taught daily. Fort Caspar Academy uses the Spalding Method to teach language arts.

The Spalding Method is the methodology and educational philosophy of The Writing Road to Reading program. This total language arts program includes direct instruction in spelling, reading, writing, and speaking. The philosophy includes a child-centered approach, high expectations that all children can learn, and continued teacher improvement. Spalding instruction is explicit, interactive, diagnostic, and multisensory. Students see, hear, say, and write using all channels to the brain. In the higher grade levels, emphasis shifts to literature, writing, and advanced reading, study, and comprehension skills. Sets of children's books and novels are taught to develop skills and the love of reading.

For many years, Mrs. Romalda Spalding inspired teachers and parents with her love of literature and her desire to help all children learn to speak precisely, spell accurately, write proficiently, and read fluently with comprehension. Her dream was to prepare **all** children to become lifelong learners.

PENMANSHIP

Neatness and legibility of penmanship are stressed through daily practice. It is imperative for teachers to model and reinforce the importance of neatness and legibility. The Spalding Method provides handwriting instruction as a part of its total program.

SPELLING

A phonetics-based spelling program using the Spalding Method is implemented in all grades. Each student is expected to express clarity of thought with preciseness in spelling and handwriting in all subjects

REQUIRED READING, BOOK REPORTS, RECITATIONS

Students in grades one through five will complete at least one written book report per grading period. Books will be approved by the teacher. Failure to complete the required book report is considered an incomplete assignment.

During the year, memory work selections (recitations) will be required of students at all grade levels. There will be a minimum of one recitation each grading period.

MATHEMATICS

Saxon Mathematics provides a solid foundation in basic math skills, and adds topics incrementally, while continually reviewing what students already know. Topics are never dropped but are instead increased in complexity and practiced every day, providing the time required for concepts to become totally familiar. Teachers will attempt to challenge each student to an ever-increasing level of math proficiency. The goal is to combine "automatic" confidence in basic calculation (memorizing the basic arithmetic facts of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division) while preparing students for more complex mathematical processes.

Fort Caspar Academy implements an enhanced version of the Saxon Math program that is accelerated by one year. Saxon is supplemented with other resources as needed, to meet or exceed Wyoming math standards.

SCIENCE

Core Knowledge and the NCSD Curriculum guide our science instruction.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Core Knowledge and the NCSD Curriculum guide our social studies instruction.

HEALTH

The NCSD Curriculum guides our health instruction. The human growth and development program includes information, discussion, and videos. Boys and girls are provided this information separately in the fourth and fifth grades, with the option for parents to attend.

MUSIC

NCSD currently utilizes the Game Plan Music Curriculum, by Randy DeLelles and Jeff Krisky, to support the NCSD Fine and Performing Arts curriculum, adopted in June 2017. This comprehensive, active music program incorporates all aspects of music education using the Orff Schulwerk model. Folk Songs, lots of movement, dance, and barred instruments, such as xylophones and glockenspiels, are all central to the music curriculum. Special events in music include Kinder Caroling outings, a school wide Christmas Sing-Along, and second and fourth grade performances.

Band and orchestra may be offered as an option for fourth and fifth graders. The program structure may vary each school year, depending on funding availability.

ART

Art learning is guided by the current Wyoming State Visual Arts Standards and the Visual Arts Curriculum established by NCSD. Classroom instruction uses a Discipline-Based Model, where students are introduced to methods and techniques of art production, art aesthetics and critique, a historical context for art, and an understanding of the relevance of art in students' lives.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Students participate in a structured physical education program twice per week unless excused for medical reasons, which must be in writing from a healthcare provider or a parent. The physical education program is designed to teach important physical skill development, conflict resolution, and sportsmanship that will carry over into day-to-day life and help promote good health and fitness. Tennis shoes must be worn on P.E. days to ensure student safety while participating in movement activities.

TECHNOLOGY

Technology instruction is aligned with the International Society of Technology in Education (ISTE) standards. Instruction of technology begins with typing skills in early grades and progresses in accordance with the school's curriculum and goals.

ATTENDANCE

Regular, complete, and continued class attendance by students is essential and vital to learning. Absence from class has a substantial negative effect on academic performance and is the single biggest predictor of a student's on-time graduation. FCA adheres to the district Attendance Policy, which can be located in the NCSD Student/Parent Handbook, Attendance & Enrollment section.

Excused Absence:

- Illnesses or Personal Appointments: Medical absences that are excused by a healthcare professional will not count against the student.
- Pre-Arranged Absences: Students going on vacations with parents or needing to be absent from school for other personal reasons may be considered excused if the absence has been pre-arranged with the school and for reasons acceptable to the principal.

The earlier you can notify the school of an absence, the better a teacher can assist the student in keeping up with his/her school work. This does not necessarily mean your child will receive all assignments prior to the prearranged absence. For more information, please refer to the HOMEWORK AND MAKE-UP WORK section.

Unexcused Absence:

- An absence that is without the knowledge of a parent or any absence of a student without acceptable cause, as determined by the principal or his/her designee, even with the knowledge of the parent is an unexcused absence.
- If a parent does not let the office know of a student's absence, it is considered unexcused.

If a student will not be in school, parents must notify the office in person, in writing or by telephone before 9:00 a.m. on the day of the absence. If the office is not notified, their absence may be considered unexcused. The office has voicemail available.

The school day ends at 3:30 p.m. If a student must leave school early, please send a note or contact the office as soon as possible. If a student must leave at or before 2:45 p.m., he/she will be marked absent for half a day. After 2:45 p.m. it is considered an early dismissal and not counted as an absence.

ARRIVING AT SCHOOL IN THE MORNING

It is very important that your child be punctual. Unless a student is attending a scheduled activity or appointment, he/she should not arrive at school earlier than 8:00 a.m.

Once doors have opened, students in kindergarten through second grade must go to the library (unless participating in the breakfast program). Students in third through fifth grades must go directly to the gym and remain in the gym until 8:25 a.m. Loitering in the school building is not permitted.

All students arriving after 8:25 a.m. but before the 8:45 a.m. bell, must go directly to the playground until the first bell (weather permitting).

The first bell rings at 8:45 a.m. followed by the tardy bell at 8:50 a.m. It is expected that students should be in their seats ready to work by the tardy bell. Students who arrive after the tardy bell must first report to the office to be removed from the absence list and receive a pass to class.

TARDINESS

Tardiness is disruptive to the learning process. In addition to having a negative impact on the tardy student, the entire class is also affected by the disruption. A student who arrives after the tardy bell with a note from a health care provider will not be considered tardy. The school has established the following plan to help curtail tardiness:

- After the 6th tardy (and all following tardies in any given semester), students will be required to serve a 15-minute detention after school of the following school day.
- After the 8th tardy of either semester, a letter from the office will be sent to parents reminding them of the importance of being punctual.
- After the 11th tardy of either semester, parents will be required to meet with the principal and submit a written plan of action detailing what corrective actions are being taken.

DOCTOR APPOINTMENTS

If possible, doctor appointments should be made for after-school hours. If the appointment causes the student to be tardy, the student will need a note from the health care provider to receive an excused tardy. In addition, the student should inform the teacher in advance if possible. This allows the teacher to plan ahead for the absence/tardy. Students should return to school after their appointment if possible.

SAFETY - COMING TO AND LEAVING SCHOOL

The following guidelines have been adopted by Fort Caspar Academy through the Safe Schools Committee to ensure the safety of students and adults when they are on school property. Please respect these guidelines to keep our families safe.

1. Students and visitors must enter/exit the building through the middle front doors. Exception: At the end of the school day, Kindergartners may exit the building through the southeast doors (kindergarten hallway) to meet parents. Older students including siblings of kindergartners must still exit through the front doors.
2. If you do not have a handicap placard, you should not drop off or pick up in the designated handicapped parking areas. Access to the handicap parking areas may not be blocked at any time.
3. The right-hand lane is to be used for the **quick loading and unloading** of students. **If you need more time to unload, or your student(s) need assistance, PLEASE PARK IN THE LOT IN AN AVAILABLE PARKING SPACE.** The following rules apply **between the hours of 8:15-8:45 a.m. and 3:15-3:45 p.m.**
 - No vehicle should be left unattended for any amount of time during the times listed above. You **MUST** remain in your car during these times.
 - Students need to be *in the process* of loading or unloading when stopped in this area during these times.
 - Vehicles should pull forward, to the west set of doors when possible, to make room for other vehicles. Do not stop at the center doors if there is room to move forward.
 - Do not stop your vehicle in the crosswalk, in a handicap zone, or in the left-hand lane.
 - Do not load or unload students in the parking lot driving lanes.
4. The left-hand lane is a fire lane and is to be used for thru traffic only.
5. Children should only enter/exit vehicles on the passenger side. **DO NOT** allow children to enter/exit from the left-hand side of the vehicle, which puts children in the path of traffic and is not safe.
6. When dropping off in the parking lot you **MUST** be parked in a parking space.
7. When leaving school, vehicles in the left-hand lane **MUST TURN** left onto 38th street and vehicles in the right-hand lane **MUST TURN** right onto 38th street.
8. Use designated crosswalks while on school property.
9. Be Courteous.

GOING HOME AFTER SCHOOL

Students are to go home directly after school. Students being transported by parents should go directly to their assigned pickup area. Parents providing transportation should be at the school when school is dismissed. There is no adult supervision for students after school is dismissed. For the safety of students who ride the bus, parents must contact the office directly if a student is deviating from their normal bus schedule to be picked up after school.

PICKING UP YOUR CHILD DURING SCHOOL

The school day ends at 3:30 p.m. If a student must leave school early, please notify the office as early as possible.

If it is necessary to pick up a student during the school day, parents **MUST** come to the school office. All exterior doors are locked during the day. Please come in the front entryway and push the buzzer button for entry. Once the doors have been unlocked, proceed directly to the office. The office staff will then arrange for the student to come to the office to meet his/her parents. Teachers must receive verbal consent from the office before releasing a student. If you pick up a child at noon, during lunch, or during recess, the same procedure applies. **At the end of the school day, please do not go to the classroom and wait outside the door.** Rather, wait in the school lobby until the student comes to meet you. Waiting by a classroom door is disruptive for the class.

LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS

Students are never to leave the school grounds without permission from the school office. The District has a closed campus policy for elementary and middle schools. Students are only allowed to leave campus in the company of a parent, legal guardian, or staff member.

TRANSPORTATION

Fort Caspar Academy is a school of choice. It is the parent's responsibility to make certain that the student arrives at school at the specified time. School District bussing is available. The NCS D Transportation Department phone number is (307) 253-5283. Bussing information can also be found at www.natronaschools.org.

GENERAL INFORMATION

BELL SCHEDULE

First Bell	8:45 a.m.
Tardy Bell	8:50 a.m.
Dismissal Bell	3:30 p.m.

ENROLLMENT

Fort Caspar Academy is a school of choice within the public school system in Natrona County. There is no tuition, and no standards for entry are required of students. Any K-5 child residing in Natrona County may attend on a basis of availability of openings. As a school of choice, Fort Caspar Academy is unique in our school environment, expectations, and approach to instruction. Prior to initial enrollment, if possible, it is recommended that at least one parent attend an orientation session with the principal or designee.

BACK-TO-SCHOOL NIGHT

At the beginning of each school year, at least one parent will attend the annual Back-to-School Night where parents receive specific information from their child's teacher about what they may expect from school in the upcoming year. This is also an important opportunity to ask clarifying questions. While attending Back-to-School Night, parents and teachers will sign a Contract of Mutual Responsibilities (see Appendix A.).

CLASS PLACEMENT

Students will be grouped heterogeneously at all grade levels. All teachers are expected to provide academic instruction that challenges their students. Parents may request a specific teacher if they can show a compelling reason for the requested assignment. Letters requesting a specific teacher and reasons for the request will be accepted during the spring of each school year. The office will announce the window for acceptance of teacher requests. Before requesting a teacher, a parent must have come to visit classrooms and observe. Every effort will be made to honor teacher requests. Assigning students to individual classes is the prerogative of the principal and sometimes conflicts arise with balancing classrooms that may preclude honoring a request.

DISTRICT WAITING LIST

At the conclusion of the District's open enrollment process, parents will be informed of their student's placement. Parents who desire for their student to attend FCA, but were placed in other schools by the District due to lack of capacity, may call the District Enrollment Office to be placed on the District waiting list for Fort Caspar Academy. Please call the Enrollment Office (253-5322) for more information regarding current District Wait List policy and procedures.

FORT CASPAR ACADEMY PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION

The Fort Caspar Academy Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) is an essential element of Fort Caspar Academy's parent-teacher partnership. All parents are members of the PTO. A Governing Council, made up of elected voting members, meets regularly to act on matters of policy and concern. The Governing Council represents the general membership and promotes the policies and stated purposes of the PTO. All parents are invited and encouraged to attend these meetings as a part of their volunteer commitment to the school. Meeting dates are generally scheduled for the second Tuesday of each academic month and will be published in the school newsletter. Please feel free to contact members of the Governing Council at any time.

VISITS TO SCHOOL

Fort Caspar Academy has an open-door policy, and we welcome and encourage parents to come to school frequently to visit their student's classroom and to take an active part in the education of their student. Please check with the office and/or classroom teacher for the best time(s) to visit the classroom. **Visitors to the school are required to stop by the school office to pick up a visitor's badge and sign in before proceeding into other areas of the building.** If visiting a classroom during instruction time, please do not bring non-school age children, and turn off your cell phones. Make sure your visit does not disrupt classroom learning. Please sign out upon leaving the building.

SCHOOL CLOSURE AND EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS

If a decision is made by District administration to close the school, notice of such will be forthcoming on any of the major local radio and TV stations and/or social media. Notifications to parents will also be sent via automated phone calls, email, and sometimes text messages. It is important for all parents to provide a minimum of one emergency phone number at the time of enrollment. This emergency number can be a work number, a friend, or a neighbor who may know how to contact you in case of an emergency at school. Please make sure that the phone number the school has for you is current as you will be notified by the NCS D Infinite Campus system about school emergencies or announcements.

FOOD SERVICE AND MEAL PLANS

A breakfast program is in place at Fort Caspar Academy. The cost of breakfast is indicated on the breakfast menu that is sent home each month. Hot breakfast is available starting at 8:00 a.m. and ending at 8:30 a.m. Beginning at 8:30 a.m., a portable breakfast will be served. All students must leave the cafeteria by 8:45 a.m.

A lunch program is in place at Fort Caspar Academy. Students may purchase a school lunch, or they may choose to bring a sack lunch. If bringing a sack lunch, no glass is allowed in the cafeteria. Milk may be purchased for students bringing sack lunches to school. The cost of lunch is indicated on the lunch menu that is sent home each month. Financial assistance is available for school lunches. If you are initially denied financial assistance, you may reapply throughout the year if your situation changes.

Parents are invited to join their children for lunch. Adult lunch fees apply. If your child is to leave school for lunch, the office needs to be notified of such by the student's parent before the student can be released from school. District policy dictates that if your child is going to lunch with another child or another adult, we must have a note from the parent stating this is approved.

Please refer to the NCS D Student/Parent Handbook, Student Services & Programs section for complete information.

NURSE

A school nurse is provided for FCA three days per week. The other two days per week, the office staff will address immediate student health needs. A nurse is always on call and available to provide medical care for students as necessary.

The school nurse will complete health screenings, health assessments, review immunizations, and provide health education as needed for students and families. When necessary, the nurse will provide care for injury and illness and may also make referrals to doctors, counselors, or other healthcare providers. If needed during school hours, the nurse can give medications to students with a written doctor's order.

The nurse is available if parents need assistance with any health problem their student is experiencing. The nurse may also communicate with physicians, counselors, or another healthcare provider to ensure continuity of care, as requested by the parent.

Please refer to the NCS D Student/Parent Handbook for information on illness in the school setting, immunizations, and medication options.

LOST AND FOUND

If your child has lost an article at school, please check the lost and found box. Much confusion will be eliminated if names are placed on all articles of clothing, notebooks, etc., before they are brought to school. Items will be displayed in front of the main office at the end of each quarter for one week, after which all remaining unclaimed items will be donated to a local charity.

CELLULAR PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Students are welcome to use the hall phone or office phone with a permission slip from his/her classroom teacher. Students may not use personal mobile phones, or other electronic devices, while in the school building during school hours or while under the supervision of staff (e.g. bus students). Mobile phones, and other electronic devices, must be turned off and placed in the student's backpack. Should a parent need to contact his/her child, please call the office and a message will be sent to your student. Any change in transportation plans need to be coordinated through the office, including bus students.

PARENT CONCERNS

Parents who have concerns about any matter involving a student should personally speak to the staff member involved. If unable to come to a resolution with that staff member, the parent should contact the school's principal. If necessary, a meeting will be held. Appointments should be scheduled in advance.

LIBRARY AND BOOK FINES

The library is a center of instruction at Fort Caspar Academy. Students are taught basic library skills at each grade level. The librarian is aware of the classroom activities that relate to specific information in the library, and works cooperatively with classroom teachers to support various academic subjects. Students are expected to be quiet in the library, and all regular classroom rules apply. Students may choose to go to the library and read, rather than go outside for recess.

School District Policy states that a student shall be held responsible for damage to, loss of, or failure to return books. Students may be assessed a fine for books that have been lost, damaged by water, torn or damaged in other ways. Money will be returned if a book is found.

GRADES

Letter grades are given to reflect actual achievement in the academic areas.

- A - Excellent (93-100%)
- B - Above Average (85-92%)
- C - Average (77-84%)
- D - Below Average (70-76%)
- F - Unsatisfactory (Below 70%)

Behavior, art, music, and PE are graded as follows:

- E – Excellent

- S – Satisfactory
- N – Needs Improvement
- U – Unsatisfactory
- I – Incomplete
- IMP – Improving

HONOR ROLL

To be on the honor roll, students may not have a D or an F. Honor roll lists are posted at the end of each quarter in the glass case in front of the library. The honor roll criteria are:

- Principal's Honor Roll: 4.0 GPA
- First Honor Roll: 3.5 - 3.99 GPA
- Second Honor Roll: 3.0 - 3.49 GPA

REPORT CARDS AND PROGRESS REPORTS

Report cards are issued at the end of every quarter and are taken home by students, examined, and the report card envelope is signed by parent and returned to the teacher. At the midpoint of each quarter (excluding the 1st quarter), the teacher will issue individual student progress reports.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences take place twice per school year. Conferences are usually held at the end of the first quarter and during the third quarter but will be scheduled each year in accordance with the school district schedule. Parents will be notified of the specific schedules for the conferences. These conferences are beneficial to the students, parents, and teacher.

GUEST SPEAKERS AND ASSEMBLY PROGRAMS

The teacher and the principal will approve all guest speakers and assemblies. Each speaker or program must be evaluated for grade-level merit.

WHOLE GROUP INSTRUCTION

At Fort Caspar Academy, students are taught by the teacher as a whole group. If a child needs extra help, this may be received before and after school, during free times and independent work times in the classroom, or practice time in the classroom, or through tutoring when required by the teacher.

ACADEMIC AND BEHAVIOR SUPPORT SERVICES AND TUTORING

Academic and behavior support services with NCSD-certified teachers and tutors are provided for qualifying students currently significantly below grade level in reading and/or math, or for those students that need behavior support. Tutoring is offered free of charge during the regular school day as additional support to classroom academics and individual learning goals. Tutoring support may be short term targeting a specific skill or concept or a longer-term intervention with more intensive support for each student. Students may be identified for tutoring through the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support Team (MTSS).

Tutoring is also offered for qualifying English Language Learners (ELL) with certified ESL teachers per district policy.

SPALDING TUTORING

New students to Fort Caspar Academy (other than kindergarten) are expected to attend a one-week summer class sponsored by the school. It is also recommended that parents attend a Spalding mini-course

in order to assist their student at home. These mini courses will be offered at the school on an as-needed basis.

STUDENT RETENTION

Moving automatically from one grade to the next is not always the best option for a child. Occasionally, some children have a better chance for success if they remain at a grade level for an extra year. Retention is a very serious decision with a far-ranging impact on a student's academic future.

A parent-teacher conference with the principal teacher meeting will be required before a decision to retain a student is made. A child's suitability for retention success will be assessed prior to a retention decision. Parent support for a retention decision is essential to any potential success for the child. The decision to retain or not ultimately remains with the principal.

FIELD TRIPS

The school classroom can be enriched by taking advantage of places in and around our community. All field trips will correspond with grade-level curriculum. All field trips must receive prior permission from the principal. Written permission from a parent is required before students are allowed to participate with the groups in these experiences and is completed on Infinite Campus through the registration/enrollment process. A notice will be sent home to the parents listing the event, the time and place, and the mode of transportation, prior to each event. The discipline policy is active and enforceable while on field trips or school-sponsored activities.

AUDIO-VISUAL

Audio-visual aids should be used only if they relate directly to what is being taught. Films and other AV material which are primarily entertainment should be limited to two viewings per year per class. Unless special permission is granted by the principal and parents are notified, only "G" rated videos may be shown. If a PG film is considered, notification goes home, with an option for the student to opt out.

INTERNET ACCESS

Natrona County School District, Fort Caspar Academy, and the Governing Council require strict supervision of any student using the internet. No student will be allowed to randomly use ("surf") the internet. Students may not use the internet without a teacher or teacher assistant present. Students are only allowed to go to certain websites at the direction of the teacher. Students will not be given access to the internet until a permission form signed by a parent is on file at FCA.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Students have an opportunity to participate in a variety of extra-curricular activities, which may be offered providing there is adequate volunteer support to staff these programs and sufficient interest from students. Extra-curricular activities occur before and after normal school hours and may be run by parents or staff members. Such activities may include the following: Lego Robotics, Spelling Bee, Young Engineers and Scientists, Science Club, Good News Club, band and orchestra, chorus, arts and crafts, drama, foreign languages, etc.

AFTER-SCHOOL SPORTS PROGRAM

A variety of after-school sports programs are offered throughout the year. Information on sponsored sports programs are regularly sent home with your student(s). Please check your student(s) homework

folders and the electronic District newsletter for this information. Fourth and fifth grade basketball and volleyball are provided through the Casper Recreation Center.

STUDENT DIRECTORY

Because of the federal mandate regarding privacy, a schoolwide student directory will not be published.

BICYCLES, SCOOTERS, AND SKATEBOARDS

Students may ride bicycles, scooters, or skateboards to school. We ask, however, that they NOT ride them once they are on school property. The student should walk the bicycle or scooter (or carry the skateboard) from the street to the bike racks/hand rail located in the front of the building. Students are responsible for the security of these items, and we strongly encourage that they be locked to the rack. All students who ride their bike, scooter, or skateboard to school are encouraged to wear a helmet.

SCHOOL PARTIES

Each classroom has two parties per year (Holiday and Valentine's Day). The format will be at the discretion of the teacher and the approval of the principal. Parties are planned and run by parent volunteers. Please contact the teacher to learn how you can help. There is also an all-school activity day (Last Blast) on the last day of school.

BIRTHDAYS

Teachers recognize children on their birthdays; however, during class time no other birthday recognitions (including balloons, flowers, presents, stuffed animals, etc.) are permitted. Students may supply birthday treats for the class, and parents of students may hand out birthday treats at a time determined by the teacher. Birthday invitations may be distributed at school only if there is an invitation for every student in the class. Otherwise, invitations need to be mailed or distributed when not at school.

CONTACTING TEACHERS

Fort Caspar Academy encourages and welcomes open communication between parents and teachers. However, in order to have adequate time to address your concerns, please refrain from impromptu, drop-in meetings with teachers. You are encouraged to contact teachers during normal school hours (8:00 a.m.-3:45 p.m.), by a note on their student's homework sheet, phone calls, email, or class messaging to set up a meeting time.

FINGERPRINTING

Natrona County School District (NCSD) requires chaperones, sponsors, and volunteers to complete a background check by completing the fingerprint process before participating in school-sponsored events that take place away from the school building (e.g. field trips). There is not a charge to the non-employee chaperone (i.e. parent), sponsor, or volunteer. Please call the Human Resources office at 253-5225 to schedule an appointment to have your fingerprints taken. Fingerprint processing is done through the Division of Criminal Investigation, and the results can take up to eight weeks. Once a background check has been completed, the non-employee chaperone, sponsor, or volunteer will only need to complete the process again if he/she does not volunteer from one academic year to the next. In other words, a non-employee chaperone, sponsor, or volunteer will need to serve in the volunteer capacity continuously, from one academic year to the next.

Within the confines of school premises and under the supervision of staff, parent volunteers do not need to be fingerprinted. However, if a parent is volunteering to coordinate extra-curricular activities (i.e. Lego Robotics, basketball coach, etc.), fingerprinting is required.

HOMework AND MAKE-UP WORK

PLEASE READ AND DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING POLICIES WITH YOUR CHILD BEFORE THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

HOMework

Homework is an essential element of the educational experience at Fort Caspar Academy. Students benefit when parents and teachers follow through and set consistent routines for completion of homework.

Homework has three major purposes:

1. To teach personal responsibility and time management skills.
2. To keep parents informed about what their students are studying.
3. To provide opportunity to practice academic concepts learned in class.

****Please provide a time, place, and quiet environment free from electronics and other distractions for students to complete homework.**

Teachers will provide a homework sheet for each child, which lists the homework for that day. Parents agree to sign the homework sheet indicating that they have seen and reviewed the assignments, and the homework sheet is returned the next day. Homework activities could include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Reading books, magazines, newspapers, etc.
2. Working on book reports.
3. Writing experiences, such as creative writing, etc.
4. Math lessons and facts practice.
5. Memorization of recitations.
6. Completion of language worksheets or reviewing daily notes.
7. Take-home activities for science, social studies, etc.
8. Practicing spelling words and phonograms.

All students in kindergarten through fifth grades receive homework four nights per week, Monday through Thursday, except before holidays. Following are the minimum and maximum guidelines for planning time for homework:

	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Maximum</u>
KDG	10 min.	15 min.
1st	15 min.	20 min.
2nd	20 min.	30 min.
3rd	30 min.	45 min.
4th	30 min.	45 min.
5th	30 min.	60 min.

These guidelines are meant to estimate the amount of time the average student will need to complete all daily and long-term assignments. **These guidelines reflect time on task.** All assigned homework must be completed each evening. **If a child consistently spends over the maximum amount of time per day on homework, parents should indicate on the homework sheet the amount of time spent and follow up with the teacher.** Standards of neatness and accuracy are to be maintained regardless of the subject matter area.

If a child has difficulty with a particular concept, parents should indicate such on the homework sheet that accompanies the child home each night. Please do not hesitate to contact the teacher as soon as questions or concerns arise. Teachers welcome the opportunity to provide assistance to you and your student.

If students do not finish their daily work in class, that work needs to be completed at home and returned the next day. This work is in addition to the regular homework, and is not considered a part of the actual homework time.

(LATE WORK AND INCOMPLETE ASSIGNMENTS)

20% will be deducted from the grade of any assignment that is turned in late, as indicated by the 8:50 a.m. bell. Graded assignments that are two or more days late will receive a grade of zero (no credit). However, all assignments are expected to be completed. Refer to the Discipline Section for tickets taken in regard to incomplete or late homework.)

MAKE-UP WORK

Homework must be requested by a parent when the parent calls to notify the school of a student's absence. Homework requested prior to 9:00 a.m. will be available at the office for the parent to pick up at 3:30 p.m. The teacher will not interrupt class time to give homework assignments for the day.

A student who is absent has one day for each day missed to complete classwork and homework without having a penalty, unless other arrangements are made with the teacher. Long-term assignments, such as recitations and book reports, are due on the day the student returns if he/she is gone on the day the long-term assignment is due.

DISCIPLINE

Fort Caspar Academy is characterized by a very structured and consistent learning environment. The program operates on the concept of mutual respect between students and faculty, common courtesy, friendliness, and cheerfulness. Its purpose is to create a calm and orderly atmosphere in which teachers can teach and students can learn. There are specific consequences for inappropriate behavior, which will be enforced by the staff.

SCHOOL RULES AND EXPECTATIONS

School rules are established by parents and teachers. The following rules apply while students are attending Fort Caspar Academy, during any school-sponsored activities, and while on school property:

1. Follow directions.
2. Stay in your seat unless given permission to leave. (Permission includes pre-established procedures as outlined by individual teachers).
3. Raise hand to speak and wait to be called upon.
4. Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
5. Bring necessary homework, books, notebooks, paper, and pencils to class.

The following expectations, although not a comprehensive list, also apply:

- Settle disagreements without fighting or threatening to fight.
- Use only wholesome and courteous language, gestures, and mannerisms.
- Show respect to adults and fellow students.
- Be accepting of physical, mental, and cultural differences among others.
- Show consideration to property and others by not throwing rocks, snowballs, or any other objects, other than when using playground equipment, in an appropriate manner.
- Play games which do not require grabbing, pulling, or hitting other students. Playing tag on the playground equipment and tackle football are not permitted.
- Students must remain on the school grounds, unless they have been checked out by a parent at the office.
- Leave all personal play items at home.
- Student's cell phones and other electronic devices must be turned off during school hours.
- Play only in designated play areas.
- Respect other's possessions and do not take items belonging to others.
- Do not run or talk loudly indoors.
- Observe the specific rules for various playground equipment as given by the playground supervisor.
- No gum, sunflower seeds, or other food or candy is allowed in the classroom, the hall, or on the playground unless special permission is given by the teacher or staff.
- Act mannerly in the lunchroom. Do not throw food or touch other students' food. Do not share or trade food.
- When the bell rings to come in from the playground, stop play immediately and report to the designated area.
- Do not write on or deface school property.
- Students are not allowed in the teacher workrooms, supply rooms, faculty bathrooms, offices, and teacher's lounge, unless under the direct supervision by an adult..
- Students and parents must not enter the classrooms unless the teacher is present.

TICKET SYSTEM

Fort Caspar Academy utilizes a ticket system as part of the discipline program. Students each have five “tickets” that they will receive if they engage in improper behavior at school. The number of tickets starts over each day. When a teacher or staff member observes the improper behavior, the student will “pull a ticket” and that ticket is recorded. Except for unusual circumstances, the following consequences, which begin over each day, will be adhered to within the school building during normal school hours, and on all school-sponsored activities (e.g. field trips):

Ticket Number	Color	Consequence
1	Green	Warning from teacher or staff
2	Blue	Five-minute detention during a designated recess
3	Pink	15-minute detention during a designated recess and a call to the parent by the teacher
4	Red	A visit to the office followed by a conference with the student, parent, teacher, and principal or designee. A plan will be made to improve the student’s behavior and prevent additional tickets and return visits to the office. This will be followed up by a conference with the student, parent, teacher, and principal or administrative manager as soon as possible.
5	Purple	The student is sent immediately to the office. The student’s parents will be contacted immediately. Due process will be provided to the student. A conference will be held with the student and parent, teacher, and an administrator. Consequences will be determined by the principal. Often this will be a suspension or detention due to the seriousness of five repeat offenses in one school day.

TICKETS FOR HOMEWORK

In kindergarten through second grade, one ticket is pulled for incomplete or late homework. In third through fifth grades, there will be one ticket pulled for each incomplete or late homework assignment, up to three tickets. There is a maximum of three tickets pulled in one day for matters related to homework. (See SCHOOL RULES AND EXPECTATIONS, number 5.)

POINT SYSTEM

To prevent frequent repeat offenses of minor infractions, and to address more serious offenses that may take place anywhere on the school grounds, a point system is in place. Students will receive points for tickets pulled each day, as follows:

Ticket Number	Color	Points
3	Pink	1
4	Red	2
5	Purple	3

Points are only given for the highest ticket received; points are not cumulative. For example, if a student pulls four tickets in one day and receives his/her red ticket, that will equal two points for that day. The accrued points for the first semester start over at zero at the beginning of the second semester.

There are consequences for accumulating points, as follows:

- 6 points = The parent(s), student, teacher, and principal or designee will have a conference prior to the student attending class on the following day.
- 10 points = Conference with the principal or designee. Due process will be given to the student. Consequences will be determined at the principal's discretion. Due to the serious nature of repeat offenses, consequences will often be detention and/or suspension from school.
- 14+ points (and every four points following within one semester) = An additional conference with the principal or designee. Due process will be given to the student. Consequences are determined at principal's discretion - may include additional days of suspension or other appropriate action.

The principal, administrative manager, teachers, and staff may administer other consequences for disciplinary infractions when necessary. **All infractions six points and above will be recorded on the student's permanent record in Infinite Campus.**

CITATIONS

Citations are worth one to three points, depending on the severity of the action. The NCS D Student/Parent Handbook outlines the framework for the three levels of progressive discipline, and states that, "The level of discipline imposed shall be based on the severity of the misbehavior."

Following are examples of the behaviors that qualify for each citation level. **This is not an all-inclusive list.**

Level 1 Citation (1 point)

These behaviors are considered "minor acts of misconduct", which include things like poor language choice, minor rough-housing, giving "attitude", hallway misconduct, and public display of affection.

Level 2 Citation (2 points and recorded into Infinite Campus on the student's permanent record)

These behaviors are considered "patterns of repeated infraction", which include things like bathroom misconduct, rough-housing causing property damage/personal harm, taking the belongings of others, bullying, harassment, disrespect, physical confrontations, lunch misconduct, serious technology misuse, etc.

Level 3 Citation (3 points and recorded into Infinite Campus on the student's permanent record)

These behaviors are considered a "required office referral" and are to be handled by the principal's office. Level 3 behaviors are things like possession of weapons, fighting, bullying, sexual harassment, battery, profanity, vandalism, habitual disruption, constant insubordination, etc.

If a citation is received, the citation form MUST be signed and returned by the student's parent by the end of the third day, or the child will receive one day of out-of-school suspension. For comprehensive information regarding the school district's discipline policy, please refer to the NCS D Student/Parent Handbook, Student Conduct section.

DRESS CODE

The Fort Caspar Academy dress code is in accordance with or more rigorous than the Natrona County School District Administrative Regulation 5375. The information in this section is a combination of the district policy and the additional requirements at Fort Caspar Academy.

Primary responsibility for appropriate dress and appearance rests with the student and his/her parent. **Students shall not wear clothing that, in the judgment of the school personnel, constitutes a health or safety hazard, is destructive to school property, or is distracting or disruptive to the educational process.** Student dress that is obscene, immodest, indecent, or lewd shall not be tolerated.

Appropriate and reasonable accommodations are allowable based on individual student needs as determined by the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Team. The reasonable and appropriate accommodations must be documented in said plans. Special exceptions will be reviewed for religious reasons per board policy and/or state and federal laws.

Teachers may need to make a decision on the spot regarding whether clothing meets dress code. If a teacher asks for an item of clothing to be tucked in or changed to comply with the dress code, students need to comply with the teacher request. If there is a question about the dress code, it may be addressed later. **The principal or administrative manager will make the final determination as to appropriate apparel in a questionable circumstance.**

DRESS CODE AND PERSONAL APPEARANCE

In the interest of maintaining a positive learning environment, the following regulations of student dress shall be in effect:

General

1. Shirts and pants are to be normal-fitting, not being over or under-sized for the student so as not to interfere with academic activities such as writing, hearing, etc.
2. Garments must not be distracting during class activities. For example, garments which make noise during movement in the classroom are not permitted to ensure all students can hear and be heard.
3. Clothing with holes or those that are frayed or ripped are not allowed.
4. Sleepwear shall not be worn.
5. Hats, caps, bandannas, sweatbands, sunglasses, chains, dog collars, and sharp objects are not to be worn in school.
6. Costumes are not worn at school on Halloween or on any other days, unless they are permitted for a specific purpose or event.

Outerwear/Footwear

1. Coats, jackets, snow pants, or gloves shall not be worn inside school classrooms without the consent of school personnel.
2. Appropriate footwear shall be worn at all times for health and safety reasons. Footwear that is unsafe, disruptive, or destructive to school property is not allowed. Students may be asked to bring a change of shoes on days with inclement weather.
3. Footwear such as slippers, wheeled shoes, and cleats are not allowed. Students shall not wear high-heeled shoes, flip-flops, or sandals that are unsecured at the ankle.

Shirts/Tops

1. The top of the shoulder, back, and stomach must be covered.

2. Tube tops, halter-tops, see-through/sheer garments, spaghetti strap shirts, tank tops, fishnet tops, low-cut tops, and clothing allowing a bare midriff shall not be worn.
3. Shirts must be tucked into pants, shorts, and skirts. T-shirts must always be tucked in.
4. Sports jerseys are required to be tucked in.
5. Sweatshirts and sweaters are not required to be tucked in.
6. Tops specifically styled to be worn untucked, such as those with a banded or decorative hem, or a tunic-type shirt, are not required to be tucked in.
7. Collared shirts, such as button-down dress shirts and polo shirts may be worn untucked with jeans, khaki pants/shorts, or dress pants/shorts/skirts. This includes shirts with a “Mandarin collar” but does not include turtle necks or mock turtle necks. Excessively long shirts, regardless of collar, will be required to be tucked in.
8. A button-down shirt with a collar may be worn unbuttoned and untucked with a shirt underneath, as long as the shirt underneath is tucked in.
9. Garments such as sweaters, sweatshirts, zip-up sweatshirts, and vests may be worn in the classroom over regular clothing.

Pants/Bottoms

1. A belt must be worn with all pants, shorts, and skirts that have belt loops.
2. Shorts and skirts must be no shorter than mid-thigh.
3. Shorts in poor repair, short shorts, and tight-fitting shorts shall not be worn. Cut-off jeans, cut-off sweat pants, and boxer-type shorts are not permitted.
4. Wording on the seat of pants is not allowed.
5. All pants, shorts, and skirts must be worn no lower than the hips. Sagging pants or those exposing one’s undergarments or behind are not allowed.
6. Tight-fitting leggings/jeggings must be worn with a shirt, blouse, or tunic that is long enough to cover one’s behind. T-shirts may not be worn with tight-fitting leggings/jeggings because t-shirts must be tucked in.

Logos

Logos, printed statements, or pictures upon student attire which are, immoral, sexually suggestive, disruptive, obscene, or that encourage defiance or disrespect of authority are prohibited. Attire advertising drug, alcohol, or tobacco products are also prohibited.

Special Activities

Designated dress may be required for students participating in special activities. The sponsor of the activity shall meet with the administrator to determine appropriate dress for participants.

DRESS CODE ENFORCEMENT

When a student wears clothing that does not comply with expectations he/she will be directed to take corrective actions including:

1. Removing the unacceptable item;
2. Changing into acceptable clothing;
3. Reversing the article so that the offensive logo does not appear;
4. Covering unacceptable garment with acceptable clothing;
5. Adjusting garment so clothing meets regulation.

If the student fails to remedy the problem, the parent shall be notified to bring appropriate clothing or to take the student home. The student shall not be allowed to return to school until the student's attire and/or hair has returned to a non-distractive state, as determined by the principal or administrative manager.

For minor violations in the dress code, a dress code violation will be issued for each violation with the following consequences:

First and Second Offenses	A written dress code violation will be issued for each offense.
Third Offense	A dress code point will be issued, and a phone call will be made to the parent.
Fourth and Subsequent Offenses	A letter will be sent home for a parent signature and a dress code point will be issued.

The accrued dress code violations and behavior points for the first semester start over at zero at the beginning of the second semester.

Appendix A
FORT CASPAR ACADEMY
CONTRACT OF MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITY

STUDENT

As a student at Fort Caspar Academy, I agree to:

1. Contribute to making the school a safe and orderly environment in which my fellow students and I improve our academic achievement.
2. Arrive at school on time and attend all my classes prepared to work.
3. Participate in class discussions and school activities on a regular basis.
4. Seek help when I do not understand what is taught or what is required of me.
5. Complete my homework assignment thoroughly and on time.
6. Behave appropriately in school by being respectful and courteous.
7. Support the school community by setting an example of good citizenship for myself and encouraging my fellow students to do the same.
8. Read and abide by the guidelines and regulations listed in the Parent/Student/Staff Handbook.
9. Recognize that as a student at Fort Caspar Academy, it is my work and actions that will make this school a success now and in the future.
10. Be held accountable as a student at the school by accepting responsibility for my actions.

Student Signature: _____

PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN

As a parent /legal guardian at Fort Caspar Academy, I agree to:

1. Contribute to making the school a safe and orderly environment in which my child and his/her classmates improve their academic achievement.
2. Make sure my child arrives at school on time and attends all of his/her classes prepared to work.
3. Take an active role in my child's education by ensuring that school homework is completed and on time.
4. Maintain high standards of academic excellence and expectations for my child and communicate them to my child on a regular basis.
5. Communicate regularly with my child's teachers regarding my child's academic and behavioral performance.
6. Attend the fall Orientation/Back-to-School Night, parent-teacher conferences, and other scheduled conferences.
7. Partner with the school in instilling in my child a lifelong understanding of the importance of education.
8. Read and abide by the guidelines and regulations listed in the Parent/Student/Staff Handbook.
9. Recognize that as a parent/legal guardian at Fort Caspar Academy, it is my work and actions that will make this school a success now and in the future (parent(s) is/are required to volunteer 10 hours per semester at the school).
10. Be held accountable as a parent/legal guardian at the school by accepting responsibility for my actions.

Parent/Legal Guardian Signature: _____

TEACHER

As a teacher at Fort Caspar Academy, I agree to:

1. Contribute to making the school a safe and orderly environment in which all of my students improve their academic achievement.
2. Arrive at school on time and prepared to teach.
3. Provide an academically rigorous learning environment which appropriately challenges the students.
4. Inspire my students to have a knowledge and appreciation for the various disciplines.
5. Communicate regularly with parent(s)/legal guardian(s) regarding student's behavioral/academic performance.
6. Assess regularly, fairly, and constructively the efforts and work of my students.
7. Model and teach character development as outlined in the Parent/Student/Staff Handbook.
8. Serve as a role model for students by conveying to them a lifelong understanding of the importance of education.
9. Recognize that as a teacher at Fort Caspar Academy, it is my work ethic and my positive attitude that will make this school a success now and in the future.
10. Be held accountable as a teacher at the school by accepting responsibility for my actions, and to abide by all guidelines and board policies as stated in the Staff Handbook and the Parent/Student/Staff Handbook.

Teacher Signature: _____

ADMINISTRATOR

As an administrator at Fort Caspar Academy, I agree to:

1. Uphold the guidelines and board policies as set forth in the Staff Handbook and in the Parent/Student/Staff Handbook.
2. Encourage parents/legal guardians, students, and teachers to fulfill their respective commitments.

Administrator Signature: _____