

Fruit Cove Middle School

2020-2021



7:10am	FCMS school building opens and students report to homeroom/1 st period
7:25am	Morning announcements
7:30am	School day begins
1:50pm	School day ends (12:50pm early release every Wednesday)

This information on the following pages is intended as a guide for information, policies and procedures that govern the basic operation of our school. It is essential that all students know the contents and use the handbook throughout the year. Administrators, counselors, and teachers will help answer questions about this guide and/or topics, which it does not address. Rules and/or procedures set forth in this planner are subject to change due to necessary circumstances that may arise throughout the school year. As we work our way through the 2020-2021 school year, we may make adjustments to policies and procedures due to Covid 19. We will communicate to students and parents if/when any changes occur. We appreciate your understanding, support, and flexibility as we work together as partners in learning, growing, and preparing our students for their next level of education.

Attendance

In accordance with the Florida Compulsory School Attendance Law, F.S.232.17, the St. Johns County School District will enforce an attendance policy. Please refer to your St. Johns County Code of Conduct for updated information regarding attendance and new truancy procedures.

- When a student has 5-10 unexcused absences within 90 calendar days, not including out of school suspension, contact will be made by the school to the parent/guardian by phone or letter.
- When a student has 15 unexcused absences within 90 calendar days, not including out of school suspension, contact will be made by email with the parent/guardian.
- Illness or other legitimate causes will be excused with the permission of the parent/guardian and the school principal, up to 15 days within the school year. After 15 total days of absences, **excused or unexcused, a student must have a doctor's verification for all subsequent absences due to illness.** The fact that the student's parent/guardian had knowledge of the absence does not, in and of itself, require school personnel to record the absence as an excused absence.
- Florida legislation also requires that minors who fail to satisfy attendance requirements will be ineligible for driving privileges.

Students are required by Florida State Law to attend school every day. Regular attendance plays a very important part in determining every student's success at school. If a student is unable to attend school, upon returning, he/she must bring a note from his/her parent/guardian **within 48 hours stating the date of the absence, the specific reason for the absence, and the parent/guardian's signature.** *An absence note form is available on the FCMS website.*

Brick & Mortar Students: Emails are not accepted for notes. Students should turn in the notes to the front desk or attendance window. Students must communicate with teachers about any class work that has been missed and assignments that need to be made-up. Classroom assignments will not be provided to students in advance of an absence. **Recording attendance and absence reporting procedures for distance learning students will be communicated at a later date.**

The following reasons for absences are valid: personal illness, serious illness or death in immediate family, emergency medical or dental attention, recognized religious holidays, and absences approved at least 5 days in advance by the principal, *The following are not excusable absences in accordance with state attendance laws:* truancy, suspension, missing the school bus, pleasure vacations, shopping, hunting, fishing, attendance at sports events, birthdays, or other celebrations. If a student becomes ill during the school day or finds it necessary to leave campus, the student must report to the office to be checked out. A student's parent or legal guardian must pick the student up and sign him/her out on the early dismissal sign out sheet.

Attendance and extracurricular events: Students must attend school the majority of the school day the day of an extracurricular event in order to attend the event.

Arrival and Dismissal/Checkout Procedures

Updated arrival/dismissal procedures are being developed and will be communicated soon.

Tardy to Class

It is important that students report to each class on time. Failure to do so will result in consequences according to the FCMS discipline plan.

Tardy to School

Students must be in their first period class by 7:30 a.m. or they will be considered tardy. Students are required to check in at the attendance window to receive a tardy pass when arriving after 7:30 a.m. Failure to bring a note with an acceptable excuse will result in an unexcused tardy. An acceptable excused tardy includes illness, doctor/dentist appointment. Oversleeping, cold or rainy weather, waiting in the student drop off line, or missing the bus is **NOT** considered an excused tardy. **Excessive tardiness to school will result in disciplinary action.**



Code of Conduct

The Student Code of Conduct outlines behavior standards for all students. Students are expected to behave in a manner that contributes to a positive school environment at all times- in classrooms, in the lunchroom, in the halls, on school grounds, on buses, and at all school functions. Students are responsible for the choices they make.

Students will be provided with a copy of the **St. Johns County Code of Conduct**, which supports our goal for excellence at Fruit Cove Middle School. Students and parents should read this code carefully. Nothing in this section shall be constituted to pre-empt the authority of the principal to act contrary to statements contained herein in specific cases when, in her opinion, a student is attempting to use this code to disrupt the educational process of the order and discipline of this school. (A copy of the Student Code of Conduct is, also, available on the FCMS website homepage.) Twice per year (at the beginning of each semester), all students will attend a behavior expectations assembly. Students will be reminded of our behavior expectations and will be encouraged to make good decisions. We will also review how to be a successful middle school student.

Behavior Expectations

FCMS Flight Plan

Students are expected to follow the school-wide expectations:

Focus on Responsibility

Come Prepared

Model Respect

Show Self Control

These four behavior expectations encompass all the rules at school and serve as a reminder for students to:

- Be respectful of adults, other students, and property.
- Be in the right place at the right time.
- Walk in the building and keep hands and feet to oneself.
- Be honest at all times.
- Eat food in appropriate locations.
- Be on task.
- Follow all classroom rules.
- Exhibit positive/appropriate behavior.
- Follow the above rules in all areas of the school, both indoors and out.

Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS)

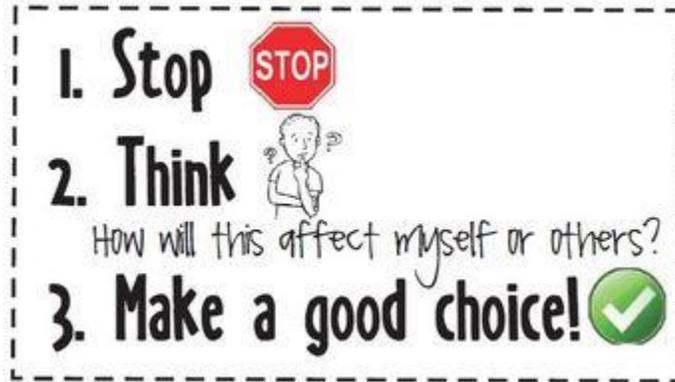
FCMS utilizes **Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS)**. PBIS aims to build effective environments in which positive and appropriate behavior is recognized and rewarded. Students have the opportunity to earn **digital Pilot Points** that can be used to “purchase” rewards throughout the year.



Discipline Plan

The vision of the *Discipline Plan* is to help students learn from their mistakes by utilizing restorative practices. *Clean Slate Policy* The progression of the *Discipline Plan* starts over at the beginning of the second semester.

EXCEPTIONS: The *Clean Slate Policy* does not apply to *Honor Code* violations or students attending the **Washington DC** trip during the second semester. Students wishing to attend this out of state field trip are expected to have positive behavior starting on the first day of school.



Warning System

1. Teacher documents **first** warning, speaks to the student individually, and parent contact is made by email or phone.
2. Teacher documents **second** warning, speaks to the student individually, and parent contact is made by phone.
3. Teacher documents **third** warning. The teacher issues a detention notice to the student to be signed by a parent/or guardian and returned to the assigning teacher the next day. The teacher will email the parent re: the assigned detention.
4. If a student earns a **fourth** warning in class, the teacher will assign a **Dean Referral**. The dean will contact the parent with the details and earned consequences.

Students who receive two or more dean referrals, two or more in-school suspension days, or a referral which results in out of school suspension, will not be eligible for positive behavior reward field trips. This policy starts on the first day of school. *Administration reserves the right to revoke field trip privileges and deny refunds.

EXCEPTIONS: Fighting, obscenity, defiance toward administration/teacher/staff or participation in any activity that is deemed dangerous to any student or any other serious violation will result in automatic referral to the Dean.

Bullying

The St. Johns County's Student Code of Conduct defines "bullying" as: "...systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or employees and may involve: teasing, social exclusion, threat, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, theft, sexual/religious/racial/ethnic harassment, public humiliation, destruction of property. Bullying can be further defined as unwanted and repeated written, verbal, or physical behavior, including any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, by an adult or student that is severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment; cause discomfort or humiliation; or unreasonably interferes with the individual's school performance or participation; is often characterized by an imbalance of power."

ALL students, whether they are victims or bystanders, are encouraged to report bullying incidents. Students should report incidents to any FCMS faculty or staff member or through our bullying incident form located in the Media Center. All cases of bullying should be reported immediately and will be handled in accordance with school district policy.

Cell Phones/Smart Watches

Students may **not** use technology (cell phones/Smart Watches etc.) to talk, text, record, access apps, search the internet, email, take and/or send photos or videos, read books, or listen to music while on campus. **Unauthorized technology** (cell phone/Smart Watch etc.) use will result in confiscation by a school employee. Confiscated technology is subject to search. Students may receive behavior consequences for not following these guidelines. **Cell phones must be turned off during the school day and put away.** **Earbuds/AirPods:** Earbuds/AirPods should not be used at school for entertainment activities. Ex. Listening to music.

Exceptions

- Students may use their cell phones to text or talk after they are dismissed from the last period of the day.
- Students may use cell phones in the classroom, under the direction and supervision of the teacher, for educational activities connected to the curriculum.
- Earbuds/AirPods may only be used, with teacher permission, when accessing technology in the classroom for educational activities connected to the curriculum.

Contraband

Video cameras, recording devices, toys, laser pointers, video games and/or players, playing or trading cards, magazines (nonacademic), and TV's are not to be brought to school for any reason. **Personal cameras are not allowed on campus unless approved by administration.** Administration reserves the right to prohibit any items deemed unnecessary or distracting to the academic environment.

Profanity/Abusive Language/Materials

Profanity, including racial slurs, is not permitted at Fruit Cove Middle School. Also, prohibited are the use of words, gestures, pictures, or objects that are otherwise not acceptable at school and/or upset the normal day or any school activity. The use of profanity or racial slurs will result in disciplinary action.



Respect

School-based Behavioral Consequences

Detention

It may be necessary to keep students after school for disciplinary reasons. If this occurs, parents will be given a 24 hour notice either by phone or in writing. Students will not be kept after school for more than one hour. The teacher, dean of students, or administration will assign the day and time for detention. The detention will be held in a designated room. Parents are responsible for providing transportation from detention.

In-School Suspension (ISS)

When a student is assigned ISS, he or she is removed from the traditional classroom environment and reports to the ISS room. Parents will be notified. The student is expected to complete class assignments in the ISS room.

Suspension

The principal or a designated representative may suspend a student from school for willful disobedience, open defiance of authority, profane or obscene language, or other serious misconduct, and for repeated misconduct of a less serious nature. The suspension shall be reported immediately in writing to the parent/guardian of the student. Each day a student is suspended the absence is unexcused. Suspended students will be given the opportunity to make up all work as specified in the Student Code of Conduct.

*****The SJCS D Student Code of Conduct is followed re: all behavioral incidents.*****



Dress Code

Cleanliness, good grooming, neatness, and modesty are important standards of appearance. **Administration/deans have the discretion to determine whether attire is appropriate or inappropriate. Students shall adhere to the following:**

- Hats, caps, visors, bandannas, or other headgear worn to school must be placed in your backpack before entering the school building and is not to be removed from the backpack until the end of the day.
- Hair shall be clean and well-combed or brushed. Extreme hairstyles will not be allowed.
- Muscle shirts, tank tops, mini tees, backless/cutout dresses, and transparent clothing are not allowed.
- Tops/shirts must cover the entire shoulder.
- Shirts with profanity or inappropriate slogans/advertising alcohol, drugs, sex, weapons, racial/and or ethnic slurs, sadistic, or violent themes are not allowed.
- Midriff or "cut-out" dresses and "cut out" tops may not be worn. Revealing clothing, pajamas and lingerie are not acceptable. Underwear must not be exposed.
- Shoes must be worn at all times. Shoes must have backs, or a back strap. Flip-flops, shower shoes, slippers, or steel-toed boots are not allowed.
- Sunglasses, heavy chains worn as jewelry or on other clothing, or rings with sharp points are not allowed.
- All dresses, skirts, shorts must be worn no shorter than 4 inches above the top of the knee.
- All pants must be worn at waist level. Belts, overalls, and suspender straps must be fastened and tucked away at all times.
- Pants may have holes only at the knee or below. Pants with holes above the knee will require a change of clothes.
- Pants must be the appropriate length and not drag the floor. No holes in pants above the knee.
- Glitter, stickers, body graffiti, and/or distracting jewelry/piercings are not to be placed on any part of the body.



Violation of Dress Code

Dress code violations must be corrected before attending class. Repeated dress code violations will result in consequences for repeated misconduct.

Honor Code/Cheating

In an academic institution, dishonesty serves to undermine the academic and intellectual integrity of the school. Cheating prepares a student for failure, and not success. By establishing the honor code, the faculty and administration of Fruit Cove Middle School indicate their commitment to work to eliminate such acts as cheating and to deal with offenses in a firm and decisive manner. Cheating involves one or more of the following:

1. Using the work of another person as your own.
2. Copying from or providing information to another student for test, examination, theme, book report, homework, class work, or term paper.
3. Preparing for cheating in advance. Such action involves:
 - a. having in your possession a copy of the test to be given or that has been given by a teacher before you take it;
 - b. having in your possession and using previously prepared answers to a test or quiz (this includes information written directly upon your person);
 - c. unauthorized use of text or notes during a test or examination;
 - d. asking or giving test information to or from another student during the test, quiz, or examination.
4. The digital transmission of a test, test prep materials, or any other school work without the permission of the teacher.
5. Plagiarism: Using another person's ideas, expressions or work without giving the original author credit.
6. Forging parental and/or guardian signatures.

It is not our intention to place students in a position where they can easily, and without intent, violate the honor code. Therefore, teachers will be careful to communicate to their respective classes what they expect of them while taking quizzes and tests, in completing class work, and other assignments.

Cheating may be proven against a student only under one of the following conditions:

1. A teacher or administrator personally observes an act of cheating as defined above.
2. A student admits to a teacher or administrator that he/she has committed an act of cheating.
3. Investigation by a teacher, dean, or administrator proves positive.

When a teacher determines to his/her satisfaction that an honor code violation has taken place, the following consequences will be issued:

First Offense/Level One: The student will receive a dean referral and the teacher will call the parent. The dean referral may result in a detention or ISS and parent notification of consequences by the dean.

Second Offense: The student will receive a dean referral and the teacher will call the parent. The dean referral may result in a detention or ISS and parent notification of consequences by the dean.

***** The "Clean Slate" policy does not apply to Honor Code violations. *****



Grades

Home Access Center (HAC)

Parents may view their child's grades and educational information via a secure password protected website. A link to the HAC website can be found on the homepage of the FCMS website.

Report Cards and Interims

As a measure of student progress, report cards are posted in HAC four times during the school year. An interim report will also be available online through HAC (Home Access Center) halfway through each nine-week grading period, as shown on the master calendar. Parents are encouraged to contact the teacher or call the Guidance Department if there are questions regarding these reports.

Promotion

The criteria for promotion are based on the Pupil Progression Plan set forth by the St. Johns County School Board. This plan is available on our school and district website. Academic progress will be reported as follows.

A	90-100	Excellent
B	80-89	Good
C	70-79	Average
D	60-69	Needs Improvement
F	0-59	Failure

Athletic Requirement for Fruit Cove Middle School

Being on an athletic team is a privilege. Athletes are expected to set an example of maturity, respect, and dedication. The student must follow the guidelines set by the coaches and behave appropriately at all times.

- Maintain a minimum GPA, as set by the county policy, and all passing grades.
- If a student receives detention, it is an automatic suspension of one game. Student is required to attend all games and practices during suspensions.
- If a student receives ISS, it is an automatic suspension of two games. The student will still be required to attend all the games and practices during the suspension period.
- Out of school suspension means that the student is no longer able to participate for the remainder of the season.
- On game day, every athlete must attend school at least half the school day.



Guidance/Communication

Guidance Department

The guidance program at Fruit Cove Middle School is an educationally based developmental guidance program that centers on helping students develop positive self-concepts so they can learn more effectively and efficiently. Counselors facilitate parent conferences for ELL, 504 meetings and assist in scheduling students. It is the objective of the guidance department to enhance the quality of Fruit Cove Middle School and provide a balanced guidance counselor program for all students. Students may ask a teacher to see a guidance counselor or come to the front office. Any student desiring to see the guidance counselors must first secure a written pass from his/her classroom teacher.

Parent Conferences

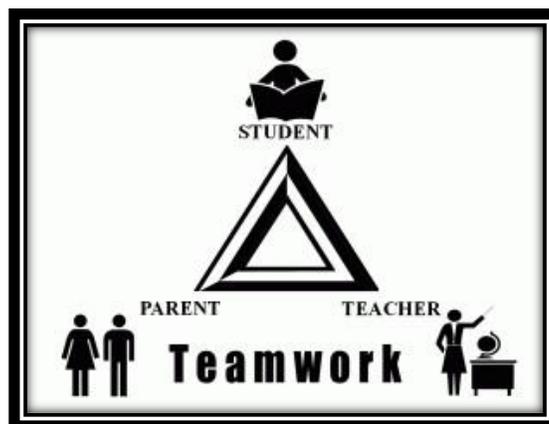
Parent-Teacher-Student conferences are encouraged and are scheduled through the student's teachers or the guidance department. For individual teacher conferences, contact the teacher. Contact the guidance department to schedule team conferences. Conferences are scheduled between 1:50 p.m. and 2:40 p.m. Parent conferences will be held virtually for the first semester.

Communication

Communication is vital between school and home. The FCMS website (www-fcs.stjohns.k12.fl.us) contains valuable information. "The Pilot" newsletter is emailed to families twice a month. The newsletter provides Fruit Cove families with knowledge of upcoming school, as well as, district events and community outreach programs. Morning announcements are posted on the FCMS Web page. We encourage parents to read the announcements every day.

Schoology

Parents may view their child's educational information, including instructional resources and important dates via a secure password protected website. Student username and password are required any time a student is asked to log on to software programs at school (HAC, Schoology and Clever).



Policies and Procedures

Bicycles

Students may ride their bikes to school under two very important conditions; (1) All bikes must be parked and **locked up in** the racks provided (2) Students may only ride their bikes through designated riding areas. Bicycles should not be left in the bike racks when school is not in session. All students are required by law to wear a bike helmet when riding bikes. Roller blades and motorized scooters are not allowed on campus.

Backpacks

Students may bring standard size backpacks to school. Backpacks will be carried from class to class. Backpacks with wheels are prohibited for safety reasons due to the large number of students in the hallway.

Buses

The St Johns County School District Provisional Transportation Waiver Program (PTWP) extends transportation services to students assigned to district schools based on space availability and criteria.

Applying for a Bus Waiver:

- Only the Transportation Department may approve waivers
- Parents/guardians may apply for waivers
- Principals may apply for waivers on behalf of students and parents/guardians on an as needed basis
- Parents/guardians and/or principals may apply for waivers at any time
- Waiver applications are available at www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/transportation
- For emergency waivers, see the emergency waiver paragraph below

Criteria for a Bus Waiver:

- Only the Transportation Department may approve waivers
- Parents/guardians substantiate extenuating circumstances for the student, parent/guardian, and/or family
- Bus and/or buses have space availability for the student
- Student utilizes existing buses, routes, stops, and schedules only
- Student may not transfer from bus to bus
- Waivers are approved for the period requested not to exceed the school year
- For applications submitted in advance of a school year, the Transportation Department will inform parents/guardians and/or principals of approved/disapproved waivers by the start of the third full week of school
- Approved waivers are effective at the beginning of the fourth (4th) full week of school once eligible ridership is established for buses
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to make alternative transportation arrangements until when/if waiver applications are approved
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to develop contingency plans for transportation services in the event waiver applications are not approved
- The Transportation Department may suspend waivers with two (2) weeks' notice to parents/guardians due to space availability reasons
- The Transportation Department may revoke waivers for reasons outlined in the Student Code of Conduct
- The Transportation Department will register a student with approved waivers as an eligible rider for the bus or buses in Bus Planner (routing system) to ensure accountability of the student and effective communications with parents/guardians
- Parents/guardians may suspend waivers by contacting Transportation
- Waivers are applicable only for the approved student, buses, routes, schedules, and stops
- "Bus passes" generated by students, parents/guardians, and/or school staff are not authorized for use on district school buses at any time

Cafeteria

- Lunch is available in the cafeteria on a daily basis.
- Students will wear their masks to and from the lunch room and may remove their masks when they are eating.
- Designated lunch time student eating areas for the 2020-2021 school year will be the cafeteria, patio, and multipurpose room.
- All food and drink must be consumed in the cafeteria, on the patio or in the multipurpose room. At no time is food or drink to leave the lunchroom, patio or the multipurpose room.
- Students may not leave campus for lunch or have food delivered to the school (i.e. pizza, McDonalds).
- Free and reduced price lunches are available to eligible students.
- Parents with concerns, please contact the cafeteria manager at 546-7886
- Parents may deposit money into their child's account. They may pre-pay for school meals at www.paypams.com. The student's personal identification number is needed.
- If a student forgets his/her lunch, it may be delivered to the school by a parent/guardian. If parents drop off lunch money, it will be deposited into the student's lunch account and the student will be notified.

Clinic First Aid

- The clinic is for temporary first aid only.
- Students must have written permission in their planner to go to the clinic.
- Students may not remain in the restroom when ill; they must report to the clinic or send for assistance.
- For safety reasons, students should not use their cell phone to contact a parent when feeling ill. Students have permission to call their parent(s) using the phone in the clinic.
- Administration of medications during school hours is discouraged. The term "medication" includes both prescription and non-prescription medication (over the counter). All prescription and non-prescription medication administered by the nurse must be directed by a physician who has determined that a student's health and well-being requires medication during school hours. All non-prescription medication in the possession of students, not administered by the school nurse, requires written permission from the parent to the school for self-medication.
- All medication must be in the original container in which it was purchased and must be accompanied by a medication authorization form. The form is available on the FCMS website, front office, and clinic. **No medication will be administered without parent authorization.** If a student does not have an authorized form, a hand written note will be accepted for 24 hours and the student will be given a form to return to the next school day.

Forgotten Projects/Homework

The front office will NOT accept and deliver forgotten homework, band instruments, school supplies, or projects after 7:45 a.m. Students are responsible for bringing these items to school. Students are responsible for their own work and supplies. The only exception to this policy is lunch or lunch money.

Hall Passes

It is the student's responsibility to have a hall pass when in the hallway. Students must have their planners with them and have the following information written in the planner:

- Date and specific time
- Destination
- Teacher's signature

Internet Access

All students are required to read and understand the St. Johns County Internet Acceptable Use Policy. This policy can be found in the Student Code of Conduct and on the FCMS Website. Both the parent and the student will be required to sign an Internet Access Procedure Agreement form that will be kept on file at the school. Violation of this policy is unethical and may result in the student's internet access privileges being revoked, district disciplinary action, and/or appropriate legal action.

Lost & Found

Lost and found items, such as watches, jewelry, keys, and purses will be kept at the front office. All other items will remain in the classrooms. After 30 days, unclaimed items will be donated to charity. All student belongings should be labeled with the student's name.

Make-up work

Students are responsible for obtaining and competing their make-up work. Make up work can be found on Schoology and by students communicating with their teachers. Students have 1 day for every day they are absent to make up work.

Masks

Students are required to wear a mask when social distancing is not available.

Parent Volunteers

FCMS loves parent volunteers. All volunteers must be approved as volunteers through the school district.

Pupil Detention, Search and Seizure

The principal, assistant principal, dean, teacher, or any other member of the staff is authorized to temporarily detain and question a student when circumstances indicate that such student has committed, is committing, or is about to commit a violation of law or a regulation of the school board.

1. If at any time reasonable suspicion arises that the student is unlawfully concealing any stolen or illegal property, an alcoholic beverage, illegal drugs, or any weapons as prohibited in these regulations, a member of the instructional staff, deans, or administration may search for the presence of these items.
2. If a search of a student of his/her locker or other property reveals stolen or illegal items as prohibited by law or school board regulations, such items or items may be seized and such action taken as provided for by law and/or school board regulations.

Skateboards

Students may ride their skateboards to school. All skateboards must be stored and locked in the racks on the cafeteria patio. Students must provide their own locks. Skateboards may not be brought into the school building.

Student Accident Coverage

SJCSD provides student accident coverage for students while they are in attendance during the regular school day.

Telephone Use

Students are not allowed to use classroom telephones, personal cell phones, or any other communicating device during the school day. Students may request to use the telephone in the main office to call home if they are ill, need lunch money, or need to contact home because an after school activity has been cancelled.

Temperature Check

First period/homeroom teachers will take each student's temperature before entering class. Students with a temperature of 100.4 or higher will be sent to the clinic to be picked up by a parent.

stay tuned...

More to Come!