



# **John F. Kennedy Middle School**

***“Home of the Wolverines”***

## **2024-2025 STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**2325 EAST WASHINGTON STREET  
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**Denzel White, Asst. Principal**

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# **GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of John F. Kennedy Middle School is to jointly facilitate knowledge through excellence and innovation in teaching and learning.

### **AS A JOHN F. KENNEDY MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT, IT IS MY RESPONSIBILITY:**

- To attend school every day and to be on time to all classes.
- To come to school prepared with books, chromebooks, paper, pencil, and any other materials and/or assignments as directed by teachers.
- To obey the directions of all staff members.
- To respect myself and the rights and property of others.

### **THE STAFF OF JOHN F. KENNEDY MIDDLE SCHOOL ACCEPTS THE RESPONSIBILITY:**

- To provide the students with the knowledge and means necessary to become actively involved citizens in our global society.

### **AS THE PARENT/GUARDIAN OF A JOHN F. KENNEDY MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT, I WILL:**

- Make certain my child attends school.
- Make sure my child has the appropriate school supplies.
- Provide structure and support in my child's homework.
- Communicate with teachers and administrators.
- Support the faculty, staff, and administration of John F. Kennedy Middle School.

## **ABSENCES AND TARDINESS**

- Truancy often leads to academic failure, dropping out of school, crime in the community, and many other problems. For those reasons, Virginia law requires that school-age children attend school and it requires that parents make sure their children attend school. The law also requires that the school file legal proceedings against every parent and child who fails to comply with Virginia's compulsory attendance laws. In order to assist you in your parental and legal duties, and in order for us to comply with the laws, we are initiating a program and protocol to address truancy. A phone call to parents for any absence will be sent via the automated calling system.
- Written notes explaining an absence must be received within five (5) days of an absence. Every absence is considered unexcused until a written explanation for the absence is received in writing. The student suffering an infectious or contagious disease, a serious illness, the severe illness of an immediate family member, the student's exposure to a contagious disease, a death in the immediate family, fire or other serious damage to the home that requires the family to move and similar circumstances constitute excused absences.
- If a student accumulates five (5) unexcused absences, you will be contacted and a parent and the student must attend an "in person" conference with the school's Attendance Review Team to discuss the particular causes or issues surrounding your child's absences. The conference will ordinarily include a teacher, school administration, the school's social worker, and a school resource officer. At the conference, with your input, we will formulate a truancy plan to enable and facilitate attendance. Should these efforts fail and your child misses a total of seven (7) unexcused days, more serious steps will be taken: the child and you will either be referred to a Truancy Review Team and/or the school division will file legal proceedings against the child and/or you in the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court. The legal proceedings may include a criminal warrant against the parent(s) and/or a "child in need of supervision" petition.

## **ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE CHANGES**

Please notify the office immediately if there is any change in address, telephone number, guardian, emergency contacts, or other personal information.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE AVAILABILITY**

The administrators will be in the building from 7:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. daily. Any student or parent wishing to have a conference with any administrator is always welcome; however, it is recommended that the appointment be arranged ahead of time to ensure the availability of the appropriate administrator. Students may arrange appointments by their teacher or by requesting through office staff. Parents may arrange appointments personally, by phone, email, or by completing the *Administration Meeting Request Form* if an administrator is not available.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Morning and afternoon announcements will be read daily over the public address system. Additional announcements may be distributed to all teachers during the week to keep students informed of activities and other pertinent information. School Messenger, our school's webpage, and social media pages (Facebook & Twitter) will be used to notify parents/guardians of important school news and events.

## ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

### Arrival

School personnel cannot assume responsibility for students who are brought to school before 7:00 a.m. each morning. Students are not to arrive prior to that time. All students should arrive to school no later than 7:25 a.m. **Personal vehicles are prohibited in the bus ramp area at any time.** Student drop off/pick up is located towards the left of the building. Vehicles are also prohibited from parking on the tree islands.

### Early Dismissal

For children's safety and well-being, it is necessary to require the following procedures. Students needing an early dismissal from school are to present a written statement to the main office prior to the beginning of the first class period. **This note must contain the following information: date, student's name, time of dismissal, reason for dismissal, who will be picking up the student and their relationship to the student, signature of parent/guardian, and phone number where the parent may be reached.** Students will not be given an early dismissal without written and verbal confirmation from the parent. An authorized adult must provide picture identification and sign the Record of Early Dismissal ledger in the main office before any student is dismissed from our care. In order to prevent interruptions to the instructional process for all students, parents are asked to please make every effort not to take their children from school early.

### Dismissal

School will dismiss at 2:00 p.m. each day. On those days that early dismissal is necessary, the school will dismiss at 11:25 a.m. Breakfast and lunch will be served on early dismissal days.

## ASSEMBLY PROGRAMS

Assembly programs are planned to enrich the classroom experiences. Assemblies also provide an opportunity for students to learn the following formal audience behavior:

1. Enter the activity quietly and have a seat in assigned sections.
2. Pay strict attention to the person or people on the stage immediately.
3. Be courteous to one another and to the speaker or performer(s) throughout the program.
4. Applaud generously and courteously in keeping with the occasion. Under no circumstances is there to be any booing, screaming, whistling, chanting, or stomping.
5. Remain seated until dismissed, departing in the same manner used to enter.

## Bell Schedule

<b>Advisory Block 1 7:00 – 7:30 a.m.</b>	
<b>Block 2</b> 7:33 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	<b>Block 3</b> 7:33 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.
<b>Block 4</b> 9:03 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	<b>Block 5</b> 9:03 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
<b>Block 6</b> 10:33 a.m. – 12:20 p.m. <b>LUNCH BLOCK</b>	<b>Block 7</b> 10:33 a.m. – 12:20 p.m. <b>LUNCH BLOCK</b>
<b>Block 8</b> 12:23 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	<b>Block 9</b> 12:23 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

### BULLYING

Bullying may come in a variety of forms and is a “repeated” action. Bullying occurs to intimidate someone, to feel powerful over a person, or to harass someone. Bullying “is not” responding with verbal, non-verbal, or physical threats. If you feel bullied, please notify your teacher, counselor, administration, and your parents. Please refer to pages 106-110 of the main student handbook for additional information on bullying. **BULLYING HOTLINE-(757) 538-5483**

### **Bullying/Cyberbullying Report Form**



### **BUS PASSES**

Bus drivers are instructed not to pick up or take an additional student without permission from the principal. Any time a student needs to ride a different bus or get on/off their regularly scheduled bus at a different stop, they must have a bus pass approved by our district's Transportation Department. To obtain a pass, students are to bring a parental note to the front office upon their arrival to school. Complete notes include the following information: date, student's name, destination, bus number to ride, parent signature and phone number where parent may be contacted during the school day. *Students will not be given a bus pass without verbal confirmation from the parent/guardian.* Seating on the requested bus must be available in order for a bus pass to be approved.

### **BUS REGULATIONS**

School buses are provided for the convenience of the students. This privilege may be taken away from a student who endangers his/her safety or the safety of others. Please review the following regulations with your child:

- All riders shall remain seated when the bus is in motion.
- Keep hands, arms and head inside the bus. Gestures at cars or persons in the public are prohibited.
- Each rider shall remain in the seat assigned to him/her. Touching, fighting, and obscene language are forbidden.
- The consumption of food and beverages is prohibited on the school bus. Students are to have food and beverages properly sealed and put away in their designated container(s).
- The bus driver shall report any misconduct to the office.
- The bus driver is in complete charge at all times. Parents shall be notified of a student's misconduct.
- The rider or his/her parents will pay for damage to the bus, other than from regular usage.
- Students must be at their assigned bus stops at the scheduled time, both in the morning and the afternoon.
- Students must report directly to their assigned buses at dismissal.
- Students should inform the driver, if possible, when the rider will be absent from school.
- Students must cooperate with the driver at all times.
- Students shall be prohibited from bringing unnecessary items or dangerous objects on the school bus.

### **CAFETERIA**

All students breakfast and lunch will be free of charge for 2023-2024 school year. We will continue the bag-and-go breakfast. The cafeteria will take cash, **HOWEVER**; No change will be provided. Any excess money will be put on the student account. Parents can also go to the Titan Link website to put money on their child's account. The following rules and procedures apply in the cafeteria:

- All students are to enter the cafeteria in a quiet and orderly manner. Students will not cut in line in front of others.
- Students will talk in conversational tones. No yelling is allowed.
- Students will use good manners.

### **CELL PHONES**

Cell phones must be **turned off** and kept in book bags. **They are not to be kept in clothing pockets.** Any cell phones found turned on or visible by school staff will be confiscated. For a first offense, the student can retrieve their cell phone at the end of the school day from the main office. For the second offense, the cell phone will have to be picked up by a parent. For the third offense, the student will receive a disciplinary referral with possible consequences. Habitual offenses will result in a student being prohibited from bringing a cell phone to school.

### **CHROMEBOOKS**

All students are responsible for bringing their chromebooks “fully charged” daily. Please leave chromebook chargers at home. Proper care of chromebooks is the responsibility of the student. Operating issues with chromebooks are to be reported to the Media Specialist.

### **CLINIC/SCHOOL NURSE**

A full time nurse is available in the clinic for students who become too ill to remain in class, require first aid, or have other health concerns. Students who are injured or ill are to report to the clinic. The school nurse will determine if the parent/guardian is to be contacted and if the student should be sent home. Parental permission must be secured prior to releasing the student. The school nurse will conduct vision, hearing, and dental screenings through the physical education classes during the school year.

### **Medication**

State law prohibits the school from dispensing any kind of medication to students unless the nurse has on file written permission from the child's doctor. The medication must be brought to school in a container appropriately labeled by the pharmacy or physician. All students taking medication (including inhalers) at school must have a doctor's note on file in the clinic at the beginning of each school year. NO medication (including Tylenol) will be given unless there is an order from the doctor on file in the clinic and medication is in its original prescription container. Failure to comply will be a violation of the School Board's policy on drugs.

### **CLUBS**

School club organizations are recognized as authorized school organizations if they: are organized with the approval of the school administration; are composed completely of current student body members; hold their meetings at school; have an approved plan for the selection of members; establish aims which are educational, are of school interest or community interest; and, meet all other conditions established by school officials for recognized, sponsored organizations.

### **CONCERNS OR CONFLICTS**

If a student or parent has a concern about an individual or a school practice/policy, the following pathway of assistance is available and should be used in order to resolve the problem as quickly as possible.

1. Notify the supervising teacher, bus driver, or other school staff of the problem.
2. Make an appointment with the guidance counselor.
3. If the problem is still unresolved, contact an administrator.

### **DISTRIBUTION OF LITERATURE, POSTER DISPLAY, AND SALES**

Posters, leaflets, flyers, or the like may not be distributed or displayed without the principal's approval. All sales of goods must be approved by the administration. Failure to comply may lead to disciplinary action.

## **DRESS CODE**

Section 6-9.2. An appropriate environment for learning required; appropriate dress required; prohibited clothing. — A. The School Board and Suffolk Public Schools Staff rely heavily on parents and students to support the division's policies. One of the fundamental purposes of school is to provide an appropriate environment for learning. A student will maintain personal attire and grooming standards that promote safety, health, and avoid unnecessary disruptions.

B. Suffolk Public Schools has established the following guidelines for student dress while in the classroom or participating in school-sponsored activities:

1. Shirts and blouses must include at least 3" width on shoulders, garments. Spaghetti straps, strapless tops, muscle shirts, off-shoulder shirts, and tank tops are not allowed. The appropriate length of skirts, dresses and shorts will be determined by the "fingertip rule." The length of skirts, dresses and shorts, must extend below the student's fingertips when the student's arms are extended at his/her sides. Only leggings, jeggings, and yoga pants that are opaque (i.e., not able to be seen through) are allowed. Rips and holes in clothing are prohibited.
2. Clothing must not reveal undergarments such as underwear and bras. This includes any article of clothing that does not cover the midriff, back, reveals cleavage, sags below the beltline, or is sheer.
3. Clothing and accessories may not advertise alcohol, tobacco, vaping, cannabis, or any illegal substances, depict lewd graphics, display offensive or obscene language, promote violence, or are gang related. Apparel that depict sexually suggestive expressions or actions, profanity, obscenity, drugs, alcohol, or tobacco, or which degrade the integrity of individual groups are prohibited. Slogans and graphics are prohibited across the buttocks.
4. Sunglasses may not be worn within the building, unless prescribed by a doctor for a legitimate reason. Wallet chains are not permitted.
5. Unless worn for religious or medical reasons, head coverings are not permitted. This includes hats, hoods, bandanas, combs, and picks. Headbands, headwraps and/or scarves as they relate to a student's customary country of origin, religious attire or ethnic affinity are allowed.
6. All shoes worn should not pose a safety concern. Slides, flip flops, and slippers are permitted. Sandals with a back strap are permitted.
7. Sleepwear may be worn only during designated school functions.
8. Clothing worn by a student must not cause a disruption and/or distract others from the educational process or pose a health or safety concern.

(Issued Date: March 18, 2012; Effective Date: July 1, 2012; Revised July 12, 2018; Revised January 13, 2022)

**Legal Authority** - School Board Policy §9-11.8.

## **EMERGENCY DRILLS**

Teachers will direct students in the proper procedures to follow during regularly scheduled fire, weather, and emergency code drills.



### **FOOD AND DRINKS AT SCHOOL**

Everyone must work together to keep the school clean and attractive. Food and drink must remain in the cafeteria unless authorized by the administration. No open drink bottles/containers may be brought to school or carried around in the school. Water filling stations are available throughout the building for students to fill individual water bottles. Glass bottles are strictly prohibited.

### **GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT AND SERVICES**

Each student is assigned a counselor. Students who wish to make an appointment with their counselor should go to the guidance office for an appointment slip before school, after school, or with permission from their teacher during their lunch period. The guidance department offers academic, career and personal/social counseling which includes some of the following services: individual inventory, informational services, group guidance, individual counseling, peer mediation, testing, and assistance in planning schedule of courses for students, maintenance of student's permanent records, career counseling and summer job opportunities.

Parents who do not wish to have their child participate in the Personal/Social Counseling program should complete the Opt-Out form that is available in the student handbook.

### **HALL PASSES/RESTROOM PASSES**

Students are not permitted to be anywhere in the building other than their scheduled class/activity unless accompanied by an authorized staff member or issued an agenda signed by an authorized staff member. Students are discouraged from using the restrooms during instructional time, but may do so with the teacher's permission if an emergency should arise. If a health condition exists, a physician's note is required by the nurse. Leaving class without permission to use the restroom is prohibited and will be treated with disciplinary consequences.

### **HONOR ROLL/RECOGNITION ASSEMBLIES**

The honor roll is afforded to any student earning all A's, B's, or a combination A's and B's. Quarterly student recognition assemblies are held to recognize students for academic and other honors.

### **IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENT**

Effective July 1, 2014, state law requires all students who have not received a complete series of Hepatitis B vaccine to receive such immunization prior to entering sixth grade. This immunization consists of three injections given over a four to five month period. Additionally, The Virginia Assembly passed a law requiring **all rising 7<sup>th</sup> graders** to have a tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis (Tdap) booster shot prior to entry into school this fall.

### **INSURANCE**

Dental and accident insurance may be purchased through the insurance companies approved by the School Board. The homeroom teachers will distribute insurance forms during the first week of school.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

Articles which are found by someone other than the owner should be taken to the office immediately. The school is not responsible for any losses of property by students. Lost and Found is located in the Main Office. Students losing articles should check the Lost and Found. Items not claimed by January 15th and June 30th of each year will be discarded.

### **METAL DETECTIONS**

Upon entry into the building, students will go through school metal detectors. Students will enter the building through their designated entrances and go through the metal detectors, which will be monitored by school personnel.

### **PARENT CONFERENCES**

Parents who desire to have conferences with teachers should make arrangements in advance by contacting the teacher(s) directly, the guidance office, or the main office. *Teachers will not be interrupted during instructional time or when meetings are taking place.* To ensure continuation of instruction for students, teachers are available to meet with parents before school, during their designated planning period, after school, and virtually.

### **PARKING**

Parents and visitors are to park in the designated parking spaces. **Please do not park or leave unattended cars in the front of the school building as this is a fire lane.** This area is for buses and shall be restricted to their use.

### **PBIS**

As part of our PBIS program, John F. Kennedy Middle School has embraced the acronym **Positive Attitudes Will Succeed** to foster a positive school culture for our students and staff.

### **SUPPLIES**

Teachers and grade levels require specific supplies. Supply lists are available in the main office prior to the start of school as well as on our school's web page. Our school also has a supply room where supplies are available for students to use.

### **TELEPHONE USE**

Students are beginning to take on more responsibility, including remembering to bring all necessary items to school. Students are not permitted to use telephones for personal business, except in situations deemed urgent by school officials. Emergency messages from parents will be delivered to students. Students will not be called from class for a phone call.

### **WELLNESS POLICY**

Suffolk Public Schools shall adopt the following nutritional standards for all foods and beverages provided to students on campus during the school day as (i) a school party or (ii) a classroom celebration, excluding food preparation as a part of the instructional curriculum:

- It must contain 5 percent of the Daily Value, per serving or per 100 calories, of at least one of these eight essential nutrients: iron, calcium, protein, vitamin A, vitamin C, niacin, thiamine, or riboflavin.
- It must contain no more than 300 calories per item.
- All beverages must be 100 percent fruit juices or fruit juice drinks with a minimum of 25 percent fruit juice, water and flavored water with zero calories.
- All foods must contain no more than 35 percent of calories from fat (except nuts and seeds).
- All snacks must have no more than 35 percent weight sugar per serving.
- Only prepackaged foods with nutritional labeling may be accepted. Home prepared foods are not allowed or sold to students during the school day.
- The District will provide parents information on safe and healthy foods that would be acceptable for special events (i.e. classroom parties). Suggested snacks are listed below:

Fantastix, Original (Frito-Lay)	Baked Doritos, Nacho
Fresh Fruit	Fruit Cups (no sugar added)
Frozen Yogurt	Honey Maid Cinnamon Sticks
Baked Cheetos	Baked Cheetos (Flamin' Hot)
Oatmeal Pies (Little Debbie)	Baked Chips Lays/Ruffles
Snack Mix Cheddar Cheese (Quaker)	Granola Bar, Oat & Honey
Pretzels	Reduced Fat Graham Crackers
Animal Crackers, un-iced	Combos, Nacho Cheese Snack
Ginger Snaps by Murray	KIX and Cheerios Cereals
Pecan Rings (Little Debbie)	Doritos, Nacho-Reduced Fat
Scooby Doo Snacks (Kellogg's)	Marshmallow Pie Chocolate (Lit. Debbie)
Strawberry Pop Tarts Un-iced (Kellogg's)	Brn Sugar & Cinn. Pop Tart
Reduced Fat Ritz Crackers	Chex Mix, Traditional (General Mills)
Chex Mix Cheddar Baked	Gold Fish, Cheddar (Pepperidge Farm)
Reduced Sugar Fruit Snacks (Welch's)	Nabisco 100 calorie Pack Oreos
Dole Fruit Bowls	Fat Free Fig Newtons
Baked Potato Crisps, (Frito Lay)	Apple Cinn. Fruit Crisps (Flat Earth)
Munchies Mix for Kids, (Frito Lay)	Cinnamania Snacks (Kellogg's)
Butter, Chocolate Chip, and Lemon Cookies (Murray's)	