



FWCAA

**Parent Title I Policy & Parent/Student
Handbook**

“FIRST IN ARTS-FIRST IN EDUCATION”

2017-2018

First Ward Creative Arts Academy

CMS Before School Enrichment Program: 6:30 – 8:45 a.m.

Student Arrival: 8:45 -9:15 a.m.

Instructional Day: 9:15 – 4:15 p.m.

CMS After School Enrichment Program: 4:15 – 6:00 p.m.

Office Hours: 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

715 North Caldwell Street, Charlotte, NC 28202

Telephone: 980-343-5485

Fax: 980-343-5587

**Principal-Selestine Young Adams
Assistant Principal-Evetta Lawrence-Davis**

School Motto=First in Arts – First in Education

School Mascot=Firebird

First Ward Creative Arts Academy (FWCAA)

Type of School: Visual and Performing Arts Full Magnet School

Primary School Colors: Orange, Red and Yellow

A Message from the Principal:

It is a pleasure to introduce our school and serve as the principal of First Ward Creative Arts Academy (FWCAA); located in the heart of uptown Charlotte. FWCAA has a rich historical culture, currently serving 592 students. Our school has existed since the 1900s with the current facility opening in August 2003.

The urban setting of the school is within walking distance of many museums and cultural resources. FWCAA is pleased to partner with a host of supporters throughout uptown Charlotte and the surrounding Charlotte area. The staff and students will utilize these resources and engage in field trip experiences to extend classroom learning with authentic opportunities to maintain high levels of academic achievement for all students.

FWCAA is a full magnet school offering Visual and Performing Arts on a daily basis. We are committed to incorporating arts integration as we create a community of students who are prepared for the 21st century. During the 2012-2013 school year, we had the pleasure of opening a new bus lot and a new Sense and Science Garden. This learning area would not be possible without the support community partners. We strive to foster creative imagination, interdependence, independent thinking and the ability to become life-long learners.

Our school, like many CMS schools is committed to increasing educational opportunities for students. The creative arts magnet and other magnet programs are designed to offer a unique educational learning environment that enhances a student's abilities, interests and talents. Researchers have noted that magnet programs promote innovation in teaching and learning, increase parental involvement, foster greater student engagement, and encourage a diverse student body that can lead to higher student achievement.

FWCAA has dedicated staff and loyal parents who pride themselves on preparing our students for academic success.

After reading this handbook and our policies, you should have a full understanding of how we can work well as a team and support one another in our efforts toward attaining academic success for your child and all students. We also ask that you read, sign and return the ***FWCAA Magnet Learning Compact to your child's teacher*** by September 1st. If you have any questions or concerns after reviewing this guide, please feel free to contact your child's teacher or the school immediately at 980-343-5485. We look forward to working with you and your child(ren) during the 2015-16 school year.

Selestine Adams/ Principal

selestine.crowder@cms.k12.nc.us

Parent Title I Policy

First Ward is a Title I School. All Title I Schools have at least 75% economically disadvantaged students. Our school like all Title I schools must also communicate specific information to parents about their rights as a Title I family and follow Title I guidelines:

As a Title I Parent, your child will:

- Have a fair and equal educational opportunity
- Receive additional educational support through the use of Title I Tutors

As a Title I Parent, you will:

- Have flexible Parent Involvement Meetings
- Be notified if your child's teacher is not highly qualified
- Provide input into our Parent Policy and Parent Handbook
- Have opportunities to provide input on School Improvement Initiatives
- Have an opportunity to be an active member of the SLT (School Leadership Team)
- Receive your child's EOG (End-of-Grade) Student Summary Report each year and receive information about your child's progress

As a Title I Parent, your child's school will:

- Receive financial support for the School to conduct extra hiring of staff, purchase curriculum materials, purchase Smart boards, etc.

♦ Title I Parents will **receive a copy of the Parent-Magnet School Compact** - This is an agreement between the home and school outlining everyone's responsibility for supporting student learning. The compact is reviewed at the Annual Title I Meeting. This year's meeting will be held on **Thursday, September 14, 2017 at 6pm** for grades K-5. Teachers will also discuss the compact with parents during the parent teacher conference. Parents must sign the compact as an agreement between the parent and school.

♦ **A Title I Annual Parent meeting** is held yearly.

During this meeting:

- End of year data from the previous school years is shared.
- Parents are able to view the results and receive inputs on how they can support their child's success this school year.
- The SIP (School Improvement Plan) is discussed with parents and parents are encouraged to provide input on the plan and become a member of the SLT (School Leadership Team)-this committee consists of staff and parent representatives who begin planning for our school improvement initiatives.
- Parents receive information from their child's teacher about how they can best support their child academically this school year.
- Parents also receive information on any changes with assessments this year.
- Parents also receive information on how they can become actively involved in partnering with First Ward this year.
- The different levels of parent involvement are also shown and discussed with the parents.

♦ An **annual Title I review meeting** is held before the end of the school year to review the Title I Schoolwide program. All parents are encouraged to attend. The results from the parent survey as well as teacher input will be considered when planning for the next year. The minutes from the annual review meeting will be shared with parents at the annual parent meeting in the fall.

Many guidelines and parent policies are embedded in this handbook. Therefore, we ask all parents to thoroughly review and let the principal or your child's teacher know if you have any questions.

General Information, including Key Procedures and Routines

ARRIVAL AT SCHOOL

The instructional day begins at 9:15 a.m. each day. Therefore, all students should plan to arrive by 9:00 a.m. so that they are in class and prepared to begin their instructional day promptly by 9:15 a.m. Students may enter the building beginning at 8:45 a.m. Car riders must use the front main entrance of the school building along Caldwell Street.

Please note that the staff cannot supervise students prior to 8:45 a.m. (Staff arrival time is at 8:40am) Car riders may not exit their vehicle or be dropped off before 8:45 am unless they are enrolled in the CMS Before School Enrichment Program. Parents who leave their students waiting at the front door before 8:45 a.m. are risking their child's safety and will be immediately contacted. Parents who need to drop off students before 8:45 a.m. have the option of enrolling their student in the CMS Before School program or using CMS bus transportation.

Students who arrive at or after the 9:15 a.m. tardy bell are considered late and parents must park and come into the office to sign their child(ren) in for the school day.

Again this year, First Ward and all CMS schools are offering a free breakfast to all students. Car riders who choose to eat breakfast should arrive before 9:00 a.m. in order to eat breakfast and be in class for the start of the instructional day which is 9:15 a.m. Car riders who arrive after 9:00 a.m. should have already received breakfast and will be directed to class.

ATTENDANCE

All students are expected to be in attendance each day school is in session. Please schedule routine appointments after school hours, and plan family vacations when school is not in session. Students who arrive after 12:30 or leave school before 12:30 p.m. will be counted absent for the day. If a student is absent, the **parent must send a written note to the teacher the day the student returns to school to explain the absence.** The absence will be coded unexcused without an acceptable excuse.

We strongly value and protect instructional time. With this in mind, we ask that you not dismiss your child/ren from school early unless there is an emergency or unless your child has an appointment.

CAR POOL LINE

In order for the car pool line to operate efficiently, we need your help in following these procedures:

1. **During Arrival and Dismissal times, all cars will enter the car pool line from Brevard Street and exit from Caldwell Street.**
2. **Please remain in the car pool line and stay in your car.** During morning arrival First Ward staff will be outside to supervise car pool dismissal. Please note that the morning staff are not required to open doors for students. We want students to exit from the passenger side and enter the building safely. During afternoon dismissal, your child will remain on the inside of the building. Parents must remain in the vehicle. As the parent pulls up in the car pool line, students will be called by their assigned number before being dismissed from the car pool room.
3. **Parking is not permitted in the car pool lane.** If you are choosing to park to deliver your child in the morning, please park in a visitor space or you may park in front of the Drama Building at the corner of 9th and Caldwell Street and enter the building through the main entrance. Please adhere to this request and do not park on the street.
4. **Parking is not permitted on Caldwell or Brevard Street.** The police department periodically issues tickets if this is done.
5. **Parents who drop off students at the curb and leave are putting their child at risk and are not following school safety procedures.**

When traffic is congested on Brevard Street, please remain calm and stay in your car.

For student safety and to avoid traffic congestion, please cooperate with ALL staff.

Daily Schedule

6:45 a.m.	Before School Program Accepts Students
8:45 a.m.	School Office Opens
8:45 a.m. - 9:10 a.m.	Students enter the building
8:45 a.m. – 9:10 a.m.	Breakfast is served (If car riders would like to eat breakfast upon their arrival, they should plan to arrive to school no later than 9:00 a.m.)
9:15 a.m.	The tardy bell rings, hallways are cleared and the instructional day begins.
3:30 p.m.	Early Dismissal Ends-If you need to pick your child up early from school, he/she should be picked up before 3:30pm.
4:15 p.m.	Student Dismissal
4:30 p.m.	All car riders must be picked up from school by a designated parent and/or an approved adult over the age of 18.
5:00 p.m.	School Office Closes
6:00 p.m.	After School Enrichment Program Closes

Early Dismissal

When a student has a need to leave school during the day for an appointment, a note should be sent with the child to the teacher. Please do not email the teacher during the school day as the teacher may not see the message. The note should include:

- Date
- Name of the student
- Reason for the early dismissal
- Time of the early dismissal
- Name of the person picking up the child. (This person must be a parent/.guardian or a person listed on the child's Emergency Contact Card.)
- Teacher's Name

Upon arrival at school, the parent/guardian must report to the Main Office in order to sign the child out of school. Parents/Guardians are asked to present picture identification. The child will be called to the office upon your arrival to school. **Parents may not pick up their student from the classroom.** Parents will be asked to be seated and to wait for the child to arrive in the office.

Early Dismissal ends each day at 3:30 p.m. Parents/guardians arriving to school after 3:30 p.m. for early dismissal purposes will need to return to their cars, enter the carpool lane, and wait for afternoon dismissal beginning at 4:15 p.m. In an effort to prepare for the closing of the school day, to account for each child and to routinely ensure that we create a safe and orderly dismissal, early dismissal ends at 3:30 p.m. each day.

No student can be picked up early from school every day of the week. If this occurs, the parent will be scheduled to meet with the principal to discuss a plan of support. Consistent unexcused early dismissals could be the cause for a student to exit the magnet program.

Alternate Transportation Home

Effective immediately: Parents must notify the teacher and child of transportation changes by sending a note with the child about the transportation change. If the parent forgets to send a handwritten note, only a faxed note is acceptable. If a faxed note is sent then the parent should call the school to confirm that the fax was successfully delivered. The change in transportation note should include:

- Date
- Name of the student
- Regular mode of transportation
- Change of transportation
- Name of person picking up the child.
- Teacher's Name

Parents must send a note to the teacher if there is a transportation change for the day. Since the teacher is teaching throughout the school day, please do not email this request to the teacher.

TARDY POLICY

Student arrival time is 8:45 a.m. – 9:10 a.m. Our hope is that every child arrives to school each day by 9:10 a.m. so that students can enter their classrooms and be settled by the beginning of the instructional day. When a child enters a classroom late, it disrupts the classroom environment. Please help your child to be successful by establishing daily morning routines and procedures which ensure a prompt and on time arrival to school.

A student is considered tardy if he/she is not in their classroom by **9:15 a.m.** **When a student is tardy, he/she must report to the front office- along with their parent or guardian- so that they can be signed in to the school and receive a tardy slip.** Excessive tardies could result in the student being returned to his or her home school. *(Reference Guidelines for Revoking Assignments to Schools other than Home School, CMS Board Policy JCA, Section VII.)*

EARLY DISMISSALS OR LATE PICK UP TIMES AFTER DISMISSAL

4:15 p.m. CMS After School Enrichment Program Students report to the cafeteria

4:15 p.m. Car/Van Riders dismissed

4:15 p.m. Bus Riders dismissed

No student is to remain after school unless the student has written permission to do so and is staying with a teacher or participating in an approved club or after school activity. Any student who remains after 4:30 p.m. will wait in the main office. If students are continuously late being picked up from school or are being dismissed early before the school day ends, the administration will contact the parent/guardian. Ongoing late pick-ups from school or early dismissals from school could result in the student being returned to his or her home school. *(Reference Guidelines for Revoking Assignments to Schools other than Home School, CMS Board Policy JCA, Section VII.)* Parents who have difficulty in arriving on time to pick-up their children at the designated 4:15pm dismissal time --do have the option of enrolling their child in the CMS After School Enrichment Program which is available until 6:00 p.m. CMS transportation is also available to parents-provided your child is eligible for CMS bus transportation. Please be aware that staff are not available to supervise students after dismissal time.

First Ward Creative Arts Academy (FWCAA) School wide Success Expectations

- ✓ **I am Safe and Orderly**
- ✓ **I am Respectful**
- ✓ **I am Responsible**

Safe Orderly and Act Respectful and Responsible (SOAR) in all areas of our school.

SCHOOL BEHAVIOR PROCEDURES

At First Ward Creative Arts Academy, we model and expect students to learn patterns of acceptable behavior. Students are required to accept and follow the leadership and authority of the principals, teachers, and other staff members. Parents are required to review the Student Code of Conduct Handbook with their child. This handbook is online and copy is in the front office if parents want to visit the school to review. Students are expected to follow CMS policies and regulations along with school rules and procedures regarding acceptable behavior.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Students are to assume the following responsibilities:

1. Go directly to their classrooms when they arrive at school (if they are not going to breakfast).
2. Be punctual and in attendance at school each day. Students are expected to be in the classroom by 9:15 a.m.
3. Be prepared to learn with a positive attitude and put forth their best effort at all times.
4. Bring their Student Agenda with parent's signature (s) (2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students only) to school and home each day.
5. Bring their communication folder (K and 1st) to school and home each day.
6. Be prepared each day with the necessary materials - pencils, notebook paper, homework, etc.
7. Return their emergency contact card to the office as soon as possible. In case of an emergency, this card is needed so school personnel will be able to locate the parent and/or guardian. **We plead with parents to please ensure that you update the office and your child's teacher anytime your phone number and/or address changes. We never know when emergencies might occur.**
8. Complete all class work and homework assignments.

Consequences for students not meeting academic and behavior expectations for behavior will be determined by the staff and administrators as outlined in the CMS Code of Conduct Handbook and the CMS Grading Practices. In order to maintain an appropriate learning environment, we (administration, teachers, and staff) agree that receiving parent assistance in dealing with disciplinary problems is our most valuable resource.

NOTE: Students are asked to leave all toys, fidget spinners, electronic gaming units, IPODs, water guns, weapons, Silly Bands, *cell phones, along with other items which could potentially cause or create a disturbance or lack of focus in the classroom or school at home. In addition, the school will not and cannot assume any responsibility or liability for the damage or loss of any of these devices. * If your child brings a cell phone to school, it must be turned off at all times.

School BUS Behavior

The responsibility for safe transportation of students is shared by administrators, parents, bus drivers, and students. **Riding a bus is a privilege and must not be abused-or the privilege can be taken away.** Necessary actions will be taken by school officials to ensure that all students conduct themselves properly at all times. Where there is evidence of misconduct by any student, immediate action will be taken to correct the situation. The CMS Code of Conduct Handbook also addresses bus safety and consequences when bus rules are not followed.

Parents are reminded that the bus rules and consequences also apply when students are at the bus stop.

Standards for student conduct and disciplinary procedures have been established district wide and will be administered by school officials. Any disruptive behavior could result in a verbal warning, an official written letter with parent contact, the child losing the privilege to ride the school bus, or an in or out of school suspension. If you have a question or concern about bus transportation, please contact the Assistant Principal at 980-343-5485.

CAFETERIA

Our child nutrition staff provides balanced nutritious meals that comply with state and federal regulations. It is school policy that no carbonated beverages be consumed in the lunchroom. Lunch schedules are posted in your child's classroom and in the office and cafeteria. Menus are available on the CMS website.

Dining in the cafeteria should be a wonderful experience for all. To ensure that this is an enjoyable experience, students are expected to adhere to the following procedures:

1. Enter and Exit the cafeteria in an orderly manner.
2. Use quiet voices in the cafeteria.
3. Choose food as quickly as possible.
4. Do not throw away any dishes or silverware.
5. Glass juice and soda bottles are not permitted.
6. One visit through the serving line is permitted, along with the selection of one dessert per student.
7. Clean your eating space before you leave the cafeteria.
8. Book bags and large jackets are not permitted in the lunch line.

Parents are invited and encouraged to join us for lunch. (Kindergarten parents must wait until October 2nd to eat lunch with their child.)

MEAL PRICES

Student Breakfast	Free for all students-regardless of parent income
Student Lunch	Free for all students-regardless of parent income
Milk	Free for all students-regardless of parent income
Adults	All items a la carte

Textbooks

Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) furnishes student textbooks. Schools provide textbooks on loan to students. Textbooks are issued to students at the beginning of the school year. Each student is responsible for the textbooks issued to him/her. Students are expected to return textbooks in good condition, allowing for wear occurring from normal use at the end of the school year. Textbooks are to be returned at the end of the school year or when a student withdraws from school. Fees will be charged for books not returned, lost and/or damaged. All delinquent accounts will be monitored and tracked throughout a student's academic career. Additionally, please note that delinquent accounts are subject to the following:

1. Letter to be mailed to parents indicating fees owed.
2. Information regarding fees owed will be placed in the student's record.
3. High School Diplomas will be held for students owing fees.
4. Delinquent fee information for students who withdraw from one school site will be forwarded to the new CMS school site.

If you have questions about the fee schedule for lost or damaged textbooks, please contact the Assistant Principal.

SOAR Quarterly Assemblies & other Achievement Celebrations

Quarterly achievement programs will be held to recognize students who achieve high standards in academic and arts related areas. Our desire is to have each child recognized for their accomplishments throughout the school year. All celebrations are announced in advance and will be held in the multi-purpose room or drama room.

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL ENRICHMENT PROGRAM (ASEP Program)

First Ward offers a five star licensed CMS Before School Enrichment Program beginning at 6:45 a.m. and an After School Enrichment Program that closes at 6:00 p.m. The program serves as a safe and nurturing transition between the regular school day and home. Parents interested in the before or after school ASEP programs should contact the ASEP office at 980-343-5567 for enrollment information.

ASSEMBLIES

School and grade level assemblies are part of the instructional program. They are provided to extend, deepen and enrich the learning experiences beyond the classroom level. Many of the assemblies are related to our magnet theme for Visual and Performing Arts. An emphasis on appropriate audience behavior is also taught so that students are able to practice good audience manners and the art of listening.

FWCAA Appropriate Audience Behavior

1. Enter and exit in a quiet, orderly manner.
2. Sit flat on the floor.
3. Wait quietly for the program to begin. No talking during this wait time!
4. Do not talk during the performance.
5. If the performer asks for volunteers, raise your hand only – do not shout out or make sounds.
6. Show appreciation by applause only – no voices.
7. Use the restroom before the performance.
8. Do not sit in the fire walkway. Middle and side aisles must be clear.
9. Show our guests that First Ward students are respectful, appreciative audience members!

Parents attending assembly programs, concerts and events are asked to silence their cell phones, supervise younger siblings and to observe the Copyright Laws regarding taking pictures or videotaping the event. While we value the time our parents give to our school in support of all children, we ask that parents remain in the audience for the duration of the program. We ask that parents not remove their children from the performance area prior to the end of the entire performance. Our students and staff have worked long hours rehearsing and preparing for each event. We want everyone to enjoy each event in its entirety. Your cooperation with this request is appreciated.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS/TELEPHONE

The school must have the correct contact information for all students enrolled in our school at all times. You are asked to immediately notify the Main Office Secretary and your child's teacher when you need to change your address, phone numbers, or emergency contact numbers. Proper paperwork is required for all address changes. Without accurate phone contact information, the school may not be able to communicate with parents or guardians in a timely manner when a need arises. In the event that it becomes apparent that a child needs immediate medical attention and the parents or emergency contacts cannot be reached, the Principal or designee is permitted to make a decision on behalf of the child to send the child to an emergency room by Emergency Medical Service (EMS). The parent or guardian must bear the financial responsibility for transportation and treatment in this situation.

COMMUNICATION

Home and school communication is paramount to building effective partnerships to support student success at school! Positive lines of communication can be established when parents, teachers, and the administration work together as a team.

- Newsletters will be published monthly. Newsletters will be informative and feature special activities, curriculum matters, and important information that parents will want to read.
- Staff will use multiple forms of communication with parents and the home. You may receive communications from your child's teacher or the school in your child's planner or folder, email, Connect-Ed Messaging, and telephone calls on a regular basis.
- Parents may call or leave a message for the classroom teacher between 8:30 a.m. and after 5:00 p.m. We cannot interrupt classroom instruction with phone calls during the instructional day. Staff members are asked to return all phone calls within 24 hours.

In an effort to keep our parents informed of student progress and updated with school information, every student at First Ward will receive handouts, flyers and on-going communication.

1. Thursday is our school wide communication day.
2. Parents are to review all handouts and **sign and return any items that need to be returned.**

Please help your child assume responsibility for returning any communication that has been sent from the school.

CONNECT-ED MESSAGING

Connect-Ed is a system wide dial-in messaging system. Connect-ed messages are sent to one number per family. First Ward routinely uses the Connect-Ed system to send key information to parents and staff in a timely manner. To ensure receipt of these key messages, please maintain **current** contact information (telephone numbers, e-mail address). Report all changes to your child's teacher and the main office.

PARENT VISITORS DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

It is important that conferences be scheduled in advance. Conferences may be scheduled before or after the academic day. Only in cases of an emergency will conferences be scheduled between 8:30 a.m. – 4:15 p.m. on regular student days. Please do not “drop in” on the teacher during morning arrival and expect the teacher to hold a parent/teacher conference. During morning arrival the teacher has supervisory duties and may be engaged in taking attendance and instructional activities which would prevent him/her from being able to devote the appropriate attention to the parent's concern. **Beginning this school year, all visitors must sign-in using the new computer sign-in system. Please have your ID or Driver's License ready when visiting the school. Name badges will be computer generated. Visitors must wear a name badge before they are free to move to their designated location, i.e., child's classroom, cafeteria, etc.** If anyone is found not wearing a name badge, you will be asked to report to the office. Note: Parents, who walk their children to class after the tardy bell, must also sign-in first and wear a name badge.

Visitors to Classrooms During the Instructional School Day

In order to minimize interruptions and maximize learning for our children; parents or visitors are not allowed to ‘pop in’ for unannounced visits to the classroom. This expectation was in place last school year, but we realize that some parents are new and some have forgotten. Access to classrooms for any visitors (including parents) needs prior approval from the teacher or the principal. Kindly note that-parents ARE allowed to join their child's class for lunch on any day of the week.

Parent/teacher conferences are REQUIRED for all students before the end of first quarter. We ask every parent/guardian to make an effort to attend this conference with your child's teacher. Parents may request a conference at any time they have concerns. NOTE: Conferences will **only** be held with the parents or the legal guardians of the child.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES AT SCHOOL

We **DO NOT** allow students to have birthday parties at First Ward. We will allow parents to bring store bought cupcakes to share during their child's lunch time. Parents will not be permitted to take "birthday treats" to the classroom.

Exception: Kindergarten parents will not be allowed to eat lunch with their child for the first month of school. Kindergarten teachers will communicate this information and specific dates at the start of the school year. We appreciate your support in understanding that teachers need this time to establish rules and procedures and appreciate the cooperation and support of parents.

DRESS CODE

The CMS Code of Conduct states that the dress and grooming standards of students shall contribute to the health, safety and social conduct of the individual and promote an orderly educational environment. It is important that students wear appropriate, comfortable clothing to school. It is suggested that sweatshirts/jackets be worn to accommodate the changes in temperature and the air conditioning. Caps, headgear beyond the width of a girl's headband, and sunglasses are not to be worn in the building. **All student are required to wear –closed toe shoes (preferably tennis shoes) each day- no flip flops, jelly shoes, sandals, shoes with the heel out, etc are permitted.** Short shorts, spaghetti straps, halter tops, crop tops, and T-shirts with derogatory messages or messages that promote cigarette, alcohol, or illegal drug use are considered inappropriate attire. The CMS handbook outlines other specific dress code details. Rubber soled shoes are needed for physical education classes and closed toe shoes should be worn daily. Students that come to school inappropriately dressed will be asked to change their clothing. Parents could be contacted and asked to bring appropriate clothing to school for their child. Boys are asked to wear belts. No sagging pants will be tolerated. Students must remove socks and shoes for Dance class.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are valuable learning experiences. Teachers plan trips away from the building that directly relate to your child's curriculum. Written parent permission must be received for a child to leave the school campus. Costs for field trips are kept to a minimal amount. No student is denied participation because of cost. However, students will always be expected to pay something toward a "non-required" field trip and a student might be denied the opportunity to participate in a field trip due to his/her inappropriate behavior.

FIRE DRILLS

Fire Drills are held once a month as part of an overall school safety plan and to adhere to state law. Procedures are explained to students during the first week of school. The signal for a fire drill is the repeated ringing of a single bell until all students, staff and visitors have exited the building.

CMS STUDENT FORMS AND NOTICES

All CMS students will receive forms and notices at the beginning of the year and periodically throughout the school year. The forms are now online for your access. Some examples of forms that can be accessed online are the following: CMS Student Textbook Accountability Standards, Photo and Video Release Form, Medication Authorization for CMS Students, Diet Order Form, Parent Revocation of Student Internet Access, and the CMS Bullying Policy. Parents should complete all necessary forms and return them to the school at the beginning of the school year.

SOAR TICKETS!

The school-wide discipline plan involves a "stop sign" in each learning area. Students begin the day with their clip in the green area of the "stop sign". They are moved to yellow, orange and then red if they continue to break classroom rules. If a student's clip is moved to orange then the student is given a "Citation". If the student's clip is moved to red, then the student receives an office referral.

Please note that some teachers are using additional discipline plans in the classroom. Therefore, parents are encouraged to read all beginning of the year handouts in order to best understand how to support their child at school.

Students who follow rules and are caught doing the right thing can earn a SOAR TICKET from any staff member.

GRADING SCALE

**Grading codes for grades Kindergarten and 2nd are printed directly on the report card.
K-2 will have a new report card for the 2017-2018 school year. Please plan to attend a meeting to better understand the new report card.**

Below are grading codes for grades 3rd – 5th:

A	100-90	Excellent
B	89-80	Very good
C	79-70	Satisfactory
D	69-60	Inconsistent
F	Below 60	Unsatisfactory

GUIDELINES for REVOKING ASSIGNMENTS to SCHOOLS other than HOME SCHOOL

Policy JCA, Section VII

Students assigned to a school other than the home will comply with the conditions set forth in Policy JCA. All parents are encouraged to read the entire policy and the possible impact that it could have on some students who do not comply with the following:

- **Behavioral Concern: Violates the Code of Student Conduct**
- **Has an excessive number of absences or tardiness, and/or**
- **Is not transported from campus in a timely manner after the end of the school day or after-school activities.**

In addition, students assigned to magnet schools may be reassigned to the home school if they do not fulfill all requirements of the Magnet Compact for their particular magnet program.

HEALTH SERVICES

The health room provides emergency first-aid and special services for students who become ill or are involved in minor accidents. If a problem warrants medical attention, the parent is contacted immediately. Students who have a temperature above 100 degrees, have been sick on their stomach, or have what appears to be an untreated, communicable condition must be picked up from school. Current phone numbers to contact you or a responsible adult at all times are essential. Parents are to make the school aware of any medical problems/conditions that warrant special care. Do not send children to school if they have fever, nausea, or other symptoms of illness. The school nurse is scheduled to work at FWCAA each day. Although we have a full time nurse, at no time should parents send students to school with medications (allergy medicines, cough drops, etc...). Students are not allowed to bring any types of medicine to school without a completed online Medical Form.

HOMEWORK

Homework is an extension of classroom instruction and a valuable part of the learning process. Parents are asked to work with their child to ensure that all assignments are completed. Reading is expected to be a part of every night's assignment. Math facts should also be practiced nightly. (K-2 should work to master their addition and subtraction facts each night) (3rd-5th should work to master their multiplication and division facts each night) Major projects and book reports are assigned over a period of time, requiring students to plan ahead. Questions regarding homework should be addressed directly with your child's teacher.

REQUIRED IMMUNIZATION & HEALTH ASSESSMENTS for KINDERGARTNERS & RISING SIXTH (6th) GRADERS

Health Assessments: In compliance with North Carolina law, all students entering kindergarten must present a health assessment (physical exam report) by the first day of school entry. The assessment must have been completed with 12 months of school entry.

Immunizations: In compliance with North Carolina law, parents/guardian must present certification of immunizations on the first day of school entry. If documentation is not presented, parents and/or guardians have 30 calendar days to provide documentation or the student shall be excluded from school until proof is presented.

Rising Sixth Grade Students: In compliance with North Carolina law, rising 6th grade students are required to have one dose of Tdap if five years or more have passed since the last tetanus-diphtheria toxoid (DPT/DTaP/DT/Td) immunization was taken. Rising 6th graders must meet this immunization requirement before entering 6th grade.

Immunizations may be received through your private doctor or through the Mecklenburg County Health Department. For an appointment at the Health Department, call 704-336-6500. Be sure to bring your child's immunization record with you to the Health Department. Contact your health care provider to make arrangements for this examination and take the Kindergarten Health Assessment form with you to the appointment.

A certificate of immunization must include the following:

- name and date of child's birth
- name of the parent(s) or guardian
- address of the parent(s) or guardian
- sex of the child

For more information, please speak with your child's doctor, or visit www.cms.k12.nc. Reference the link regarding the Coordinated School Health Program.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Media announcements (CMS website <http://www.cms.k12.nc.us>) will be made to announce the closing of school. If school will be closed for the day, all announcements will be made by 5:30 a.m. Be sure to listen closely if inclement weather is expected. Each year, make-up days for students and staff are built into the school calendar. Students are expected to attend school on those designated make-up days.

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM/ ARTS MAGNET FOCUS

The Common Core State Standard is the foundation of our school-wide instructional program. Each teacher uses this document to design and implement creative lessons that promote high student engagement and advance student achievement. At our annual Grade level Curriculum nights, teachers will provide an overview of the content provided at each grade level. You will also receive information about upcoming events and your child's daily and weekly schedule. As a Visual and Performing Arts Magnet School, we focus on integrating the core curriculum with visual art, dance, theater arts, music, media, physical education, and technology. Your child will receive weekly or bi-weekly

instruction from an arts specialist in each of the areas named above. In addition to an extensive variety of arts integrated lessons taught by our staff, students benefit from guest artists in the classroom provided by local partnerships within our community. Our staff also organizes and plans club opportunities for students to become more involved in the Arts.

LOST AND FOUND

A Lost and Found metal crate located in the right corner of the cafeteria is used to hold items for at least one month before donating them to a charity. **To help minimize lost articles, please write your child's name in all of their belongings.**

MAKE-UP WORK

Assignments and class work missed due to a student's absence may be made up. This is the responsibility of the student and parent. If the work is not made up, it may affect the student's grade. The parent/student should contact the teacher to make arrangements to make-up missed assignments. The recommended time frame to make-up all work is 2 days following the return to school. All missed assignments must be completed prior to the end of each quarter.

MEDIA CENTER

The Media Center is open each day from 8:45 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. Students may check out books each week before the tardy bell, or during scheduled open check-out times. Students must always have a pass before coming to the Media Center with a buddy or alone. Kindergarten and 1st grade students are permitted to check out one book at a time, while 2nd through 5th grade students may have two books checked out at any one time. **Please note:** Students are financially responsible for any media materials checked out in their name. If books are lost or damaged, students must pay for the books in order to continue their media privileges. If fees remain unpaid, students will no longer be able to check out books and will have their report cards held at the end of the school year. We will send updates about missing books to parents each quarter.

MEDICATION

When medication must be dispensed at school, a medical release form signed by the parent AND physician is required to be on file in the office. (Please reference the CMS Forms and Notices Handbook and complete the form called Medical Authorization for CMS Students or access the CMS Web site: www.cms.k12.nc.us. Students are responsible for coming to the office where a secretary will give the medication. All medicine is stored in a locked area and records are kept of all medication that is administered. We dispense no medication without proper documentation from your child's physician, including over-the-counter medications such as aspirin, Tylenol, etc.

If a student brings medicine to school, the following requirements **MUST** be met.

Prescription/Over the Counter

1. It must be clearly marked as to the name and type of medicine.
2. It must be in its ORIGINAL CONTAINER. (Ask your pharmacist for an extra bottle in order to divide the prescription between home and school).
3. Tablets that need to be halved or quartered should be done so by the parent before sending the medication to school.
4. **The medication must carry a prescription label with the child's name, drug identity, dosage instructions, doctor's name/signature, and current prescription date.**
5. A form is provided and **MUST** be signed by a parent and the doctor.
6. Medication will be kept in a secured cabinet at all times.
7. Medication will be given by school personnel only with written permission from the doctor and parent.
8. Medication must be brought to school by the parent - **NOT** the child.

If your child is authorized to carry an inhaler for asthma, please ensure that he/she understands that this medication cannot be shared with other students.

NAMETAGS AND VISITOR BADGES

Students, staff, parents, and visitors are to wear nametags or a visitor's badge at all times when on campus. This serves to create a sense of community within our school and staff may call students by name.

PARTIES

Class parties are held at specific times during the year and do not begin before 2:45 p.m. (unless permission is granted by the principal) The Classroom Teacher and Room Parents assist with planning and hosting classroom parties. These celebrations are theme-related, i.e., winter celebration, end-of-year celebration, not religious-based. **The three parties First Ward will have are 1) Winter Celebration, 2) Friendship Celebration and 3) End-of-Year Party.** Treats such as store bought cupcakes to celebrate a child's birthday may be served during lunch. According to CMS policy, any baked goods must be purchased from a store with ingredients displayed. Parents may also arrange to purchase baked goods through our cafeteria for a fee. Parents will need to contact our Cafeteria Manager three (3) weeks in advance and pay for products ordered at the time of pick-up. Class parties cannot substitute or replace a students' ability to have and eat lunch in the cafeteria. Party invitations may not be distributed at school. *We strongly encourage parents and teachers to adhere to these guidelines throughout the year.*

Parent Involvement Opportunities

PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION (PTA)

First Ward Creative Arts Academy has an active PTA, which welcomes every parent's participation. The goal of the PTA is to support and enrich the school's academic goals and provide opportunities for FWCAA's families, students and staff to build a strong school and community.

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM (SLT)

The School Leadership Team (SLT) is comprised of parents, staff members, the principal, and a PTA representative that meet to discuss ways to improve our school. The SLT plays a key role in the School Improvement Process. All interested parents/guardians are welcome to participate in the School Leadership Team meetings and should communicate their interest to administration.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are welcome and needed at FWCAA! You will find many opportunities to volunteer at our school - in your child's classroom, book fairs, concerts, etc. Please ask how you may volunteer at FWCAA. The Board of Education has approved a Volunteer Screening Policy. You can fill out the CMS Volunteer Profile form online by selecting the link on our school website: <http://schools.cms.k12.nc.us/firstwardES>. Our volunteer contact at First Ward is Ms. Hines.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The state of North Carolina requires that all students receive 150 minutes of physical activity each week. Students will participate in physical activity on a daily basis. Physical education is required by the state for all students unless the student has an excuse from a physician due to a physical ailment or disability. If a child must be excused from Physical Education due to an illness or injury, a note from the parent or doctor must be sent to school. (Dance and your child's physical education time with a certified physical education teacher counts towards the 150 minutes of required physical education time.)

Students are encouraged to dress appropriately for Physical Education. Tennis shoes help students to be safe and more successful during physical activity.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

CD players and electronic games are not to be brought to school. Toys and games should only be brought to school when they are part of class instruction. Students may carry cellular phones. However, students may not display the phone, use the phone, or receive phone calls on their cell phone during the school day. **The phone must be “out of sight” and “turned off” during the school day.** Students are not allowed to bring items to school to sell for other organizations. Please label your child’s coats, caps, and sweaters to help identify them if they are lost. Students are discouraged from bringing money to school except for specific purposes. Neither the teacher nor the school can be held responsible when money or personal items are lost.

REPORT CARD & Mid-quarter Progress Distribution DATES

Report cards and Mid-quarter Progress Reports are issued each quarter. Please sign and return all report cards and mid-quarter progress reports to your child’s teacher. Note the distribution schedule for mid-quarter progress reports is on the CMS calendar and will be followed by our FWCAA staff

SCHOOL SPIRIT

Students are encouraged to wear a First Ward t-shirt every Friday to promote school spirit.

LOCK DOWN DRILLS

Safe and orderly schools are essential to student success. To make sure that all of our campuses are safe and orderly, all Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools practice regular safety lockdowns.

Lockdown drills are conducted periodically throughout the school year. During these drill practices, students, staff and any parents in the building are expected to be behind a “locked door”. Therefore, if the school is conducting a lock down drill or if the school has been instructed by higher authorities that we must “lock down” our school, then there will be a sign posted on the front main entrance informing parents that the school is having a “lock down” and parents must return to their car until the lock down is over

SCHOOL TELEPHONES

School telephones are business phones and student usage is restricted to calls of an urgent nature.

CMS STUDENTS RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES HANDBOOK

At the beginning of the school year, all CMS students are provided with the CMS Students Rights and Responsibilities Handbook which describes in specific language what we expect from each student. This handbook informs all members of the CMS school family of the policies and procedures to ensure a safe and orderly school. Parents are key partners in keeping CMS schools safe and orderly. Therefore, parents are expected to review and discuss this handbook with their child(ren). Failure to return this acknowledgement will not relieve a student or the parent/guardian from being responsible for knowing or complying with the rules contained within the Code of Student Conduct. Should you have questions or concerns regarding any of the CMS policies and procedures, please feel free to speak with school administrators.

TORNADO DRILL

REMEMBER: A tornado **WATCH** means there is a possibility of one or more tornadoes in the area. A tornado **WARNING** means that a tornado has been sighted or detected by radar and it may be approaching. **SEEK SHELTER IMMEDIATELY!**

Students and staff follow these guidelines:

1. Stay away from windows.
2. Each person stays low to the floor and protects his/her head.
3. Stay in this position until the ALL clear signal is heard.
4. If you are on a school bus, in a car, or outside you should:
 - get off the bus or out of the car
 - get in a shallow ravine and get in a crouched position
 - protect the head & stay away from the bus or car and trees

5. The S.O.S. signal will be given twice over the intercom. Stay in the drill position until the ALL CLEAR signal is announced.

We look forward to a great year and ask that you contact the school if you have any questions or suggestions on how to improve this parent handbook.