

JAMES FENIMORE COOPER MIDDLE SCHOOL



977 Balls Hill Road
McLean, Virginia 22101

Student Handbook

www.fcps.edu/CooperMS

COOPER MIDDLE SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

The Cooper Middle School mission focuses on the nurturing and preparation of our students, helping them to function in the 21st century as informed, productive, and responsible citizens. The Cooper staff believes that every student has a unique range of talents and interests that can and should be challenged and enriched in a stimulating learning environment. High expectations for excellence in character, academics and leadership are vital in creating this environment.

Our school embodies the middle school philosophy affirming the emotional, physical, and intellectual needs of students. Teachers, parents, and community collaborate with each other and with the students to plan learning experiences where each child's talents and abilities can flourish. Cooper will continue to "Raise the Bar" for all students and leave no child behind.

COOPER MIDDLE SCHOOL LOGO AND COLORS

The logo was designed to transmit the spirit of James Fenimore Cooper Middle School. It features Cooper's school colors, blue and white, and the Cooper Cougar, the school mascot. The slogan "A Tradition of Excellence" transcends all aspects of school life, not only academics or athletics but also in striving for the best possible instructional program and learning environment for Cooper students.

Main Office
703-442-5800

Attendance
703-442-5858

Guidance Office
703-442-5812

FAX
703-442-5856

Keep In Touch - Join now and update your subscription;
<https://signup.blackboardconnect.com/fcps/Default.aspx>

THE SCHOOL HOURS

The school day begins at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 2:50 p.m. **NO STUDENTS ARE ALLOWED IN THE BUILDING BEFORE 7:30 A.M.** Late activities are held on designated afternoons with late buses taking students home. Students must **prearrange with the supervising teacher and their parent** at least one day in advance of staying after school. Students are required to sign in with their supervising teacher.

Delayed openings and early closings are announced on major radio and television stations. Also, announcements are made through FCPS *Keep In Touch*. This program sends messages to parents through their email. Please go to the FCPS website to subscribe. Please **do not** call the school. Information is also posted on the FCPS web site. (www.fcps.edu)

Parents must report student absences and tardies by calling the attendance telephone number and leaving a message. This service is available for use 24 hours a day.

THE ATTENDANCE TELEPHONE NUMBER IS 703-442-5858.

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Principal - Ms. Arlene Randall

Assistant Principal - Anthony Terrell - 7th Grade

Assistant Principal - Todd Franklin, 8th Grade

Director of Student Services - Ms. Michele Boak

Counselors

Ms. Fisher

Ms. Skrabut

Ms. Colgan

Attendance Secretary - Ms. Smith

Building Supervisor - Ms. Miller

Cafeteria Manager - Ms. Romeo

Clinic Aide - Ms. McAllister

Finance Secretary - Ms. Holmes

Guidance Secretary - Ms. O'Banion

Librarian - Ms. Psaltis

Part time office assistant - Ms. Ahearn

Principal's Administrative Assistant - Ms. Herb

Psychologist - Ms. Caldwell

Social Worker - Ms. Stemetzki

Speech Clinician - Dr. Saferstein

After School Specialist - Mr. Frengel

COOPER QUICK FACTS

Name: James Fenimore Cooper Middle School
System: Fairfax County Public Schools
Address: 977 Balls Hill Road, McLean, VA 22101
Phone: (703) 442-5800 Main Office
(703) 442-5812 Guidance Office
(703) 442-5858 Attendance Line

GOT A QUESTION? PROBLEM? WHOM TO SEE...

Bus problems – Mr. Franklin, Grade 8- & Mr. Terrell, grade 7
Checkout of school - Front Office
Discuss class problems - Teacher/Counselor
Discuss personal problem - Counselor
Join a club - Club Sponsor or Mr. Frengel
Locker problem – Mr. Fatherree
Pre-arranged absences – Ms. O'Banion, Guidance Secretary
Schedule concerns - Guidance Counselor
Set-up parent/teacher conference – Guidance Counselor

Fairfax County Public Schools Tip Line – 703-658-3636

Website: <http://98.172.20.7/FCPSTIPS/>

(Confidential and Anonymous)

Rumors

Threats

Drugs

Violence

Bombs

Gangs

Guns

Arson

Knives

Sexual Harassment

Suicide

Cooper Middle School Calendar 2009-2010

September 8	School Begins
September 9	Principal's Coffee, library
September 15	PTA Meeting, 9:30 am, library
September 17	Back to School Night - 7th grade - 7:00 pm
September 21	Late buses start
September 24	Back to School Night - 8th grade - 7:00 pm
October 8	Fall Pictures
October 12	Columbus Day Holiday
October 13	PTA Executive Board Meeting, 9:30 am
October 19 - 23	Coat Drive
October 20	PTA meeting, 9:30 am, library
October 21	Coopers' late buses begin
October 22	Early Closing for Cooper
October 29	Chorus Fall Concert
October 30	End of first quarter
October 30	Gathering Day
November 2 & 3	Student Holidays
November 4	Second grading period begins
November 10	PTA Executive Board meeting, 9:30 am
November 10	Chorus Concert
November 17	PTA Meeting, 9:30 am, library
November 16 - 20	Food Drive
November 18 - 21	Play
November 19	Picture retakes
November 25	Students released 2 hours early
November 26-27	Thanksgiving Holidays
December 3	Winter Band Concert
December 8	PTA Executive Board Meeting, 9:30 am
December 15	PTA Meeting, 9:30 am, library
December 23	Students released 2 hours early
December 24 - Jan.4	Winter Break
January 12	PTA Executive Board meeting, 9:30 am
January 18	Martin Luther King Holiday
January 19	PTA Meeting, 9:30 am, library
January 28	Second Grading Period ends
January 29& Feb 1	Student Holidays/Teacher workdays
February 2	Third Grading period begins
February 9	PTA Executive Board meeting, 9:30 am
February 15	President's Day Holiday
February 16	PTA Meeting, 9:30 am, library
February 18	Elective Fair
February 23	Rising 8th grade parents curriculum meeting
March 9	PTA Executive Board Meeting, 9:30 am
March 16	PTA General Meeting, Library, 9:30 a.m.
March 26	Spring Pictures

March 29-April 2	Spring Break
April 9	Third grading period ends
April 12	Student Holiday/Teacher Workday
April 13	Fourth grading period begins
April 13	PTA Executive Board Meeting, 9:30 a.m.
April 20	PTA Meeting, library, 9:30 a.m.
April 22	Out to Work Day/Career Day
May 11	PTA Executive Board Meeting 9:30, a.m.
May 17 - June 4	SOL Window testing
May 18	PTA meeting, 9:30 am, library
May 27 - 28	Music Department field trip
May 28	Students released 2 hours early
May 31	Memorial Day Holiday
June 14 - 17	Coopers' final test window
June 10	Last Day for late buses
June 18	FIELD DAY
June 21	Awards Ceremonies during morning
June 22	Early Last Day dismissal

Days Missed	Makeup Days**
1-3	Will not be made up
4	February 15
5	April 12
6	Will not be made up
7	June 23
8	Will not be made up
9	June 24
10	Will not be made up

BUS REGULATIONS

Bus service is provided for middle school students living more than 1.5 miles from school. Stops and times are designated and adjusted as needed for maximum overall efficiency. To provide the safest possible situation on the bus, it is necessary that all students follow reasonable and sensible safety procedures.

1. Students will have assigned seats.
2. Remain seated while bus is in motion.
2. Follow the directions of the driver and safety assistants to improve bus safety at all times.
3. No shouting or screaming which may distract the driver.
4. Keep heads, hands and limbs inside bus windows.
5. Report all safety violations to driver and/or assistant principal.
6. In addition, the following is not permitted at any time on the bus:
 - Throwing objects on the bus or out the windows
 - Possession of water projectiles, weapons or live animals
 - Operation of doors or standing in the door well
 - Bullying, fighting, rowdiness, harassment or smoking

In addition, any acts of vandalism, profane language, and/or obscenities will be reported to the office. Parents will be notified when the safety of a bus is being jeopardized by the actions of their children. Bus service may be suspended/denied to students with repeated safety violations.

*For students requiring special permission to ride a FCPS bus (other than the assigned bus). Transportation will inform Cooper at the beginning of the school year if they will allow students to ride home with other friends when not riding their assigned buses. Cooper will inform parents/students via email and newsletters when this decision has been made.

LATE BUSES

Late bus service is provided for pre-arranged, after-school activities. **STUDENTS MUST NOTIFY THEIR PARENTS THE NIGHT BEFORE AND MAY REMAIN ONLY IF THEY ARE UNDER A TEACHER'S SUPERVISION.**

Late bus times will be announced after the opening of school. These buses are for students who wish to stay after school to receive help from a teacher or to participate in club or intramural activities.

ALL STUDENTS USING THE LATE BUSES MUST BE UNDER THE DIRECT SUPERVISION OF A TEACHER-SPONSOR UNTIL THE BUSES LEAVE THE SCHOOL GROUNDS.

Students staying after school may not leave the school grounds and return to ride the late bus. A list of late bus routes is posted on the wall in the main foyer and cafeteria.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

All students are expected to be in school each day. ***If the student is arriving late or is absent from school, his/her parent or guardian should call 703-442-5858 to record a message on our 24-hour Attendance Line.*** If a parent or guardian does not call the school, ***a written excuse is required.*** The written excuse must be submitted to the main office on the first day of the student's return to school. **All students arriving late and/or leaving early must sign in/out** in the main office. If someone else (sister, brother, aunt, neighbor, etc.) picks up a student, they must have a note from the parent/guardian and present a picture ID.

Excused absences include:

illness of a student, death in the family, doctor/dental appointment, observance of religious holiday, suspension (except for certain substance abuse violations,) approved pre-arranged absence, or other reasons acceptable to the principal.

Unexcused absences include:

all-day truancy, class truancy, missing a ride on the bus, alarm not working, heavy traffic..

Students may make up work for excused absences. However, it is the student's responsibility to make arrangements with a teacher for make-up work.

LATE ARRIVAL/EARLY DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Students arriving tardy to school must check-in and receive a tardy pass (excused or unexcused) from the office to be admitted to class. Tardy students must have a written excuse from their parent/guardian.

If a student wishes to be dismissed during the school day for a doctor or dental appointment, etc., he/she must bring a written note from the parent/guardian stating the reason and time of the dismissal. **THIS NOTE MUST BE PRESENTED TO THE ATTENDANCE SECRETARY (FRONT OFFICE) BEFORE SCHOOL** on the day of early dismissal. **AT THE DESIGNATED DISMISSAL TIME, THE STUDENT IS TO REPORT TO THE OFFICE FOR SIGN-OUT.** A parent/guardian or person designated by the parent **MUST** present a picture ID in order to sign the student out of school.

PRE-ARRANGED ABSENCE

If a student knows in advance that he/she is going to be absent for an extended period of days, he/she **MUST** notify the ATTENDANCE SECRETARY in the front office and obtain a pre-arranged absence form from the GUIDANCE SECRETARY by bringing a note signed by a parent/guardian requesting the absence. This should be done before FIRST period in the morning and 5 school days prior to the first day of absence. The pre-arranged absence form will then be carried by the student to the student's teachers for their comments and assignments. The completed form is taken home for parent signature; the bottom portion is returned to the guidance office secretary.

GRADING AND REPORT CARDS

Each student will be evaluated in seven subjects each nine-week grading period. The Fairfax County Public Schools' grading scale is as follows:

Symbols	Scale	Quality Points
A	93-100	4.0
A-	90-92	3.7
B+	87-89	3.3
B	83-86	3.0
B-	80-82	2.7
C+	77-79	2.3
C	73-76	2.0
C-	70-72	1.7
D+	67-69	1.3
D	64-66	1.0
F	BELOW 64	0.0

Interim reports are issued during the fifth week of a nine-week grading period. At any time prior to the end of the quarter when a student receives a D or F or the student's performance declines two letter grades from the previous nine-week mark, the parent will be notified. Students, whose grades are C or above, receive a progress report from each teacher at the same time interims are issued. Each teacher has developed a design for arriving at grades. This design indicates how quarter grades and final grades are determined. In order to be promoted, a student must pass English, math, science, and social studies.

COOPER MIDDLE SCHOOL HONOR CODE

Caring, honesty, fairness, responsibility, and respect form the basis for good character. At Cooper, we are committed to a school that promotes and embraces these qualities. We provide a school environment that enhances character-building experiences, so the students can gain a full understanding of the Honor Code. Students are encouraged to demonstrate the personal qualities associated with character building and good citizenship while doing their best and behaving in an honorable manner. We believe the effort each student makes in meeting academic challenges is more important than achieving high academic marks. The Honor Code at Cooper addresses cheating, plagiarizing, lying, and stealing.

Cheating is...

- copying someone else's work.
- allowing someone else to copy your work.
- using notes, aids, or written materials in any form during a test.
- talking, copying from someone else's paper, giving or receiving information by signs, gestures, or deception during a test.
- sharing information from a previously taken test.

Plagiarizing is...

- presenting someone else's work as your own without proper citations or acknowledgement.
- copying word for word, without using quotation marks or giving credit to the source of the material.
- failing to use proper documentation and bibliography.
- having your parent or friend do a project which is then submitted as one's own work

Lying is...

- making an untrue statement with intent to deceive.
- creating false or misleading impressions.

Stealing is...

- taking or appropriating without the right or permission to do so and with the intent to keep or make use of wrongfully.

RESPONSIBILITIES**Students will...**

- prepare sufficiently for all types of assessments.
- seek extra help from teachers.
- avoid situations that might contribute to cheating, plagiarizing, lying, and stealing.
- use sources in the prescribed manner.
- report any violations of the Honor Code.

Parents will...

- have knowledge of the Cooper Middle School Honor Code.
- support faculty and administration in enforcing the Honor Code.

Teachers will...

- conference with the student.
- report the violation to the student's counselor and administrator.
- record a failing grade for the assignment.
- contact the student's parent or guardian.

Counselors will...

- arrange for a conference.

Administrator will...

- facilitate Honor Code violation conferences.

Course of Action

1. For the first infraction, a meeting will be held with an administrator, teacher, counselor and student. At this meeting, the incident will be presented by the teacher who reported the violation. The student will have an opportunity to respond and explain. The parent will be notified of the violation by the teacher when the referral is made to the administrator and the administrator will follow up with the parent after the honor code violation meeting. The student may be required to redo the assignment at the discretion of the teacher and administrator. The record of this meeting will be sealed and destroyed at the end of 8th grade if no further infractions occur.
2. For the second infraction, there will be a parent conference, alternative service assignment for the student and a letter will be written. A letter will be placed in the student's file and forwarded to the high school.
3. For the third infraction, the administrator will enforce appropriate disciplinary actions in accordance with the Fairfax County School's Student Responsibilities and Rights handbook guidelines.