

# Falls City Academy

Our mission is to provide a caring environment of high academic expectations in order to give students an opportunity to develop skills to lead successful, fulfilling lives.

**125 4th Avenue West  
Jerome, Idaho 83338  
Phone (208) 324-2392  
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**Principal: Sean Spagnolo  
Attendance Secretary/Registrar: Genevive Olivas  
Teacher: Ariel Newman  
Teacher: Nick Gonzales  
Teacher: Eric Whittekiend**

## Student Handbook:

The student handbook is not all-inclusive. It is supported by the rules and policies of the Jerome School District. School policies and rules are available at the school or the District Office.

The school administration and staff want to have an open relationship with parents/guardians and students. To that end, please feel free to contact the school at any time that you might have questions.

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**ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL ENROLLMENT QUALIFICATIONS** ([Back to Table of Contents](#))

An at-risk youth is any secondary student, grades 6-12, who meets any three (3) of the following criteria in Column A, or any one (1) item in Column B. Check the appropriate items in both column A and B. Record the total for each column.

<b>Column A</b>		<b>Column B</b>	
	Has repeated at least one grade.		Has a documented or pattern of substance abuse.
	Has absenteeism that is greater than 10% during the preceding semester.		Is pregnant or a parent.
	Has an overall grade point average that is less than 1.5 (4.0 scale) prior to enrolling in an alternative secondary program.		Is an emancipated or unaccompanied youth.
	Has failed one or more academic subjects in the past year.		Is a previous dropout.
	Is below proficient, based on local criteria and/or state standardized tests.		Has serious personal, emotional, or medical issue(s).
	Is two or more credits per year behind the rate required to graduate or for grade promotion.		Has a court or agency referral.
	Has attended three (3) or more schools within the previous two (2) years, not including dual enrollment.		Demonstrates behavior that is detrimental to their academic progress.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY** ([Back to Table of Contents](#))

**Philosophy:** The Board of Trustees recognizes that regular school attendance and punctuality is important to the educational process. Regular attendance helps ensure that students will achieve required academic, personal management, and teaming skills and assist students to achieve positive self-esteem. Regular attendance and punctuality are critical skills for achieving success in the workplace and must be part of the curriculum that is taught to all students.

Responsibilities regarding absences:

**Student** – for every single absence, the student needs to communicate (call/text/email) to their advisor that they will be absent and why. Failure to do so constitutes an unexcused absence (no show, no call). The only exception is a documented emergency that made contacting the advisor impossible.

**Parent/ guardian** – for every single absence, the parent/guardian/support person needs to call the school. This should be done before the absence but must be done within 24 hours of the absence.

An excused absence is defined as:

- Medically documented appointments
- Legally documented appointments
- Verified hardship including funerals (must be approved by principal)
- Pre-approved absence (must be approved by principal)

An unexcused absence is defined as:

- Undocumented illness
- Skipping school (Also a truancy)
- Arriving to school very late (over 15 min)
- Leaving school early or without permission (also may be considered a truancy)
- Parent excused

### **Excused Absences** (per term)

Excessive excused absences (4 or more) will result in an attendance meeting with parents and a possible attendance plan.

### **Unexcused Absences** (per term)

More than 4 unexcused absences in a term may result in loss of credit.

### **Tardiness**

All class time is valuable and students are expected to be on time to every class, every day.

**Checking Out of School** – If it becomes necessary for a student to leave school during the day, he/she must check out through the attendance office with parental/guardian permission

**BEFORE** leaving school grounds. Students who fail to follow this procedure will be considered truant.

**MAKE-UP WORK** – students are responsible for the timely completion of any assignments missed due to absences. Makeup time is generally one day to make up work for one day gone. Teachers will have the final discretion on makeup assignment rules for their individual classes.

### **CELL PHONES/ELECTRONIC DEVICES** ([Back to Table of Contents](#))

Students may possess cellular phones and other electronic devices at school with the permission of the teacher and principal. Student use of the phone (talking, texting, listening to music or playing games) during class time may result in confiscation of the phone by the principal. Electronic devices are not forbidden in the school; however, any use of electronic devices during class time is up to the discretion of the teacher. Students who bring electronic devices to school do so at their own risk, the school is not responsible for misplaced or stolen electronic devices.

Students are not allowed to possess photographic phones or devices in or around the locker rooms or restrooms. Students are not allowed to use photographic phones or devices to take inappropriate pictures of any type during any school function or activity. Violations of this rule will result in a minimum of suspension and may include consequences up to and including expulsion.

**Students are not to take any pictures of other students or staff without permission of the person in the photograph this includes all videos and photos including Snapchat.** Violations of this rule may include the loss of time, confiscation of cell phone, and/or suspension. Repeated or extreme offenses may result in expulsion.

### **GRADE POLICY** ([Back to Table of Contents](#))

Students are expected to finish classes with a grade of C or better. Students who do not earn at least 2 credits (with a C or better) in a term may be dropped from the school and will have to reapply for admission.

### **DRESS CODE** ([Back to Table of Contents](#))

Students dress and grooming shall be in keeping with accepted health, sanitary, safety practices and community standards. Dress should not disrupt the educational process.

Students are reminded that their appearance, clothing, and grooming, significantly affect the way others respond to them. All students will adhere to the following certain minimum

standards of dress when the student is on any school premises or at any school sponsored activity, regardless of location.

1. Students are not to wear or carry items of apparel (clothing, accessories, cosmetics, tattoos, jewelry— including body piercing) which depict or allude to, by picture, symbol or word, drugs, including alcohol and tobacco, controlled substances, drug paraphernalia, gangs, violence, sexually explicit, lewd, indecent or offensive material, or illegal acts. The wearing, using, or displaying of any gang clothing or attire (based upon the principal/designee's reasonable belief that gangs may be present in a school) jewelry, emblem, badge, symbol, sign, codes or other things which evidence membership or affiliation in any gang is prohibited on any school premises or at any school sponsored activity, regardless of location.
2. Students will wear footwear at all times.
3. Clothing exposing bare midriffs, undergarments, or skin above mid-thigh will not be allowed.
4. All students should dress comfortably for school in a way that allows them to participate in all activities while continuing to allow for modesty in line with community standards.

If the administration determines that a student's attire is disruptive of the educational atmosphere or is detrimental to the health and safety of the student or other students, or otherwise violates this policy, that student will be asked to change their clothes (if possible) at school, or they will be sent home to change into suitable clothing before coming back to school. All time missed from classes for failure to adhere to this policy will be deemed unexcused absences.

### **BEHAVIOR POLICY** ([Back to Table of Contents](#))

It is expected that students make their own choices about the behavior they display. They will also learn that there are consequences for both appropriate and inappropriate behavior.

*"Appropriate behavior"* Our goal is to recognize all students who demonstrate that they are mature enough to use appropriate behavior in their day to day lives. Our winners will be recognized in many ways throughout the year such as: *"Positive notes home; phone calls home; verbal praise; special treats; extra or special privileges, for good citizenship, etc."*

Teachers will deal with consequences for inappropriate behavior in the classroom. Teachers will teach their rules to their classes. These rules will be enforced by the teacher, who has the right to punish according to the age of the student and the severity of the misbehavior.

- I. The following acts may get an office referral. The consequences may be, but are not limited to: loss of privileges, police citation, parent conferences, loss of time and suspension or recommendation for expulsion for repeated violations of these rules (for more specifics, see V below):

Insubordination	Dress code violations
Disruptive behavior	Inappropriate/obscene language or gestures
Cheating/Plagiarism	Obscene, slanderous, or threatening notes
Illegal behavior	Physical violence
Harassment/Bullying	Behaviors that places others at risk
Damage to school property	Overt displays of affection
Unprepared for class	

- II. The following may result in loss of time, suspension and, in some cases, law enforcement referral and/or a recommendation for expulsion:

Repeated major violations	Fighting (zero tolerance)
Gang behavior	Defiance of authority
Failure to serve detention	Cheating on final exam/major project
Stealing	Use or possession of tobacco/drugs/alcohol
Sale or supply of tobacco/drugs/alcohol	Making False Allegations
Any major violation aggravated by racially/sexually derogatory behavior	Possession of a weapon (law requires 1 year expulsion in most cases)

- III. Out-of-class referrals: when a particular student continues to cause disturbances or is having to be reprimanded often, he or she may be referred directly to the principal, based upon the adult's judgment as to what would be best for the student. The principal will apply one or more of the consequences listed in V.
- IV. In case of need, "reasonable" physical force may be used to control a student and/or to prevent a student from injuring him/herself or another person.
- V. **PRINCIPAL'S ALTERNATIVES FOR INAPPROPRIATE STUDENT BEHAVIOR:** The corrective actions to be taken will be determined by the principal, using best professional judgment, based upon knowledge of the student's age and maturity, the seriousness of the behavior, the Jerome School District School Board Policy, and the State of Idaho School Laws. The decisions shall be based on a careful and reasoned investigation of the facts as best can be determine them to be. In rare cases, make exceptions to the guidelines or add alternative consequences, if necessary, based upon professional judgment as to what is best for the student and/or the school. Some of the consequences for inappropriate behaviors are: Verbal correction, problem solving form,

parent letter or conference, behavior contract, counseling, cooling-off or time out, assigned work/duties, withdrawal of privileges, removal or ban from extracurricular activities, detention, probation, notification to or referral to an outside agency or authority, confiscation of an item, out-of-school or in-school suspension, and/or recommendation to the board for expulsion. From time to time, the severity of the act may be such that it will be treated as a second or third offense even if it is the first time a student has committed the error in judgment. If a student continues to violate the code beyond the number of offenses listed in the handbook, it may lead to a recommendation for expulsion.

Students on IEP plans and/or 504 plans must be disciplined according to regulations contained in the IDEA act of 1997.

Students may not attend any school function that day or days that they have been suspended from school for disciplinary reasons, in addition to any other consequences.

**NOTE:** School rules apply while traveling to or from school, at school and when going to or from and while attending any authorized school function.

## **HAZING, HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, BULLYING, CYBER BULLYING, THREATS**

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The Board is committed to providing a positive and productive learning and working environment. Hazing, harassment, intimidation, cyber bullying, or bullying by students, or third parties is strictly prohibited and shall not be tolerated. This includes actions on school grounds, school property, school buses, at school bus stops, at school sponsored events and activities, and through the use of electronic technology or electronic communication equipment on school computers, networks, forums, or mailing lists and actions at locations outside of those listed above that can be reasonably expected to materially and substantially interfere with or disrupt the educational environment of the school or impinge on the rights of other students at school. Students are expected to treat each other with civility and respect and not to engage in behavior that is harmful to another student or the property of another student. Students are to conduct themselves in keeping with their level of maturity, with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, for school personnel, and for the educational purpose underlying all school activities.

*Idaho Code 18-33021*

*Any person, including a student, who willfully threatens by word, electronic means or act to use a firearm or other deadly or dangerous weapon to do violence to any person on school grounds or to disrupt the normal operations of an educational institution by making a threat of violence is guilty of a misdemeanor.*

*Any person, including a student, who knowingly has in his possession a firearm or other deadly or dangerous weapon, or who makes, alters or repairs any firearm or other deadly or dangerous weapon, in the furtherance of carrying out a threat made by word, electronic means or act to do violence to any person on school grounds or to disrupt the normal operations of an educational institution by making a threat of violence is guilty of a felony.*

## **CHEATING and PLAGIARISM** ([Back to Table of Contents](#))

As an expression of the value we place on the integrity of a student's work, we will not accept plagiarizing, copying the work of others, doing another student's work for him/her, giving another student answers to tests or assignments, nor doing any other activity which falls into the classification of cheating.

The consequence for such action will be determined by the principal and may include; confiscation of materials, notification of parents, alternative assignments and/or assessments, etc. Additional disciplinary actions may include but are not limited to detention, ISS, suspension, or expulsion.

## **DUE PROCESS** ([Back to Table of Contents](#))

All students are entitled to due process under district policy and state and federal standards. Students involved in disciplinary action will be afforded the formal and informal hearings outlined in district policy.

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES & CLOSURES** ([Back to Table of Contents](#))

An Emergency Preparedness Plan is in use at the Jerome School District. Evacuation drills will be conducted periodically.

The Superintendent may order the closure of schools in the event of extreme weather, facility failures, or other emergency, in compliance with established procedures for notifying parents, students, and staff.

All students, parents, and school employees should assume that school will be in session and buses running as scheduled, unless there is official notification from the Superintendent to the contrary. Such notice will be given via public media.

In the event that extremely cold temperatures, wind chill factors, snow, wind or other circumstances require a modification of the normal routine, the Superintendent will make the modification decision prior to 6:00 a.m. and contact the public radio stations for broadcast to the community and will initiate the emergency fan-out communication procedure to all administrators.

## **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS** ([Back to Table of Contents](#))

Falls City Academy operates on a flexible schedule to meet the needs of students. To graduate from the alternative high school students must meet the credit requirements listed below. Students who are taking dual credit courses on the CSI campus must get administrative approval. Students must accumulate a minimum of forty-six credits, take the

10<sup>th</sup> grade ISAT, complete a college entrance exam, complete a senior project, and pass the basic civics test to qualify for a Falls City Academy diploma. Any deviation from this schedule must be approved by the board of trustees or high school administration.

A unit of credit is earned when a student satisfactorily completes an approved subject in the curriculum for one semester.

Units of credits required for graduation are as follows:

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Required Semester Credits</b>
English	8
Mathematics	6 6 credits including Algebra 1 and Geometry Standards *2 credits must be taken in the last year of high school
Science	6 4 credits must be laboratory based
American Government	2
United States History	2
Economics	1
Physical Education	2
Health	1 includes a CPR component
Technology	2
Communications (speech or debate)	1
Humanities	2
Electives	13
<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>46</b>

Falls City Academy operates a 3 course per day schedule. Each student will have an academic plan that is designed when entering the program which is reviewed by the counselor or administrator and parents/guardians each year.

## **SCHOOL HOURS** ([Back to Table of Contents](#))

Students will attend school on a five-day schedule. Students are required to attend 8:30 am to 2:30 pm daily.

<b>Monday – Thursday</b>		<b>Friday</b>	
8:30 – 9:00	Leadership/Mentoring	8:30 – 9:00	Leadership/Mentoring
9:00 – 10:30	1 <sup>st</sup> Period	9:00 – 10:20	1 <sup>st</sup> Period
10:30 – 12:00	2 <sup>nd</sup> Period	10:20 – 11:40	2 <sup>nd</sup> Period
12:00 – 12:30	Lunch	11:40 – 12:10	Lunch
12:30 – 1:00	Leadership/Mentoring	12:10 – 12:40	Leadership/Mentoring
1:00 – 2:30	3 <sup>rd</sup> Period	12:40 – 2:00	3 <sup>rd</sup> Period

\*\*\*Students that have earned at least 30 credits will be able to leave campus for lunch. All other students must remain at school during lunch time.

## **SEARCH AND SEIZURE** ([Back to Table of Contents](#))

To maintain order and security in the schools, school authorities are authorized to conduct reasonable searches of school property and equipment, as well as of students and their personal effects.

The Board of Trustees of Jerome Joint School District No.261 is committed to providing students and employees with schools and work places that are free of drugs and weapons. To that end the Board prohibits the presence of drugs, controlled substances, weapons of any type, explosive devices, alcohol, non-authorized medication or any other intoxicate (as those terms are defined by state or federal law or District policy) on District property or at any District sponsored event. This prohibition applies to employees, students, patrons, visitors and any other person on District property.

All persons are responsible for the security of any vehicle, locker, desk, bag or other item they possess or bring on to District property or to a District sponsored event. No person shall possess, place, keep or maintain any article or material that is prohibited by law or District policy in items, lockers, vehicle, desks or bags assigned to them or under their control while on District property or at a District sponsored event.

In conjunction with other District security measures, a dog may be used to sniff the air around lockers, desks, bags, items or vehicles that are on District property or at a District sponsored event. A dog's alert constitutes reasonable suspicion and only the dog's official handler will determine what constitutes an alert by the dog. If the dog alerts on a particular item or place, the person having the use of, bringing onto District property or responsible for that place or item will be called to the scene to witness the inspection. The inspections shall be unannounced and may be made at the discretion of the Superintendent or his designee.

In the event the dog alerts on a locked vehicle the owner or person bringing it onto District property shall be asked to open it for inspection. Refusal to open the item for inspection may result in referring the matter to law enforcement officials, disciplinary action, including but not limited to suspension or termination of employment for employees and suspension or expulsion for students and loss of parking privileges on District property for students. Visitors or patrons may be banned from District property.

For health and safety reasons, a general inspection of school properties such as lockers and desks may be conducted on a regular basis or when reasonable suspicion reveals that the search will disclose evidence of illegal possession or activity. Any items contained in a locker shall be considered to be the property of the student to whom the locker was assigned. Notice of this policy shall be given to all students.

School officials may search individual students and their property when there is a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover evidence that the student is violating the law or the rules of the district or the school.

If a search produces evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the District's policies or rules, such evidence may be seized and impounded by school authorities, and disciplinary action may be taken. When appropriate, such evidence may be transferred to law enforcement authorities.

## **VIDEO SURVEILLANCE** ([Back to Table of Contents](#))

Having carefully weighed and balanced the rights of privacy of students, staff and visitors against the District's goal of ensuring the safety of every student, employee and visitor while they are on school district property and also accomplish the goal of safeguarding District facilities and equipment, the Board hereby authorizes the use of video cameras on property owned by the District or property owned by a contracted service as follows:

Video surveillance shall be used to promote order, to maintain the security, health, welfare, and safety of all staff, students and visitors on District property, and to safeguard District facilities and equipment.

Review of any video recordings is restricted to those who have a security, safety or a legitimate educational interest.

Video surveillance may be used for investigations of criminal activity by appropriate law enforcement agencies and may be used by the School District to investigate violations of School District policy.

Students or staff in violation of Board policies, administrative regulations, building rules, or law shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. Others may be referred to law enforcement agencies.

Video cameras may be installed in public locations as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent, and shall not be installed in areas with a reasonable expectation of privacy.

## **STUDENT VEHICLE PARKING** ([Back to Table of Contents](#))

Students are permitted to park on school premises as a matter of privilege, not of right. Patrols and inspections may be conducted without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant. Students are required to unlock vehicles for reasonable inspection when instructed to do so by an administrator. Failure to cooperate may result in the loss of permission to drive a vehicle onto campus, in-school suspension, or short-term suspension from school. In cases involving drugs, alcohol, or firearms the local sheriff or police may be called.

Students will be permitted to park their vehicle in the school parking lot provided they have:

- a. Current vehicle insurance policy;
- b. Driver's license;
- c. Vehicle registration; and
- d. Completed the school vehicle registration process.

Failure to comply with parking guidelines may result in:

1. The vehicle being towed at the owner's expense.
2. Temporary or permanent loss of parking privileges.

## **SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY** ([Back to Table of Contents](#))

Jerome Jt. School District No. 261 recognizes that substance abuse, the harmful use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco, and the problem associated with the use and abuse of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco are becoming increasingly commonplace in our society. We recognize that a student's involvement with drugs, alcohol, and tobacco may cause problems in their daily lives and recognize that in many instances a student's involvement can lead to the illness of chemical dependency. We support prevention, early intervention, and appropriate referral. Our intent is to identify and document behaviors that would be considered detrimental to the student. We will be involved in disciplinary action when a violation of this policy occurs so that we convey the message that drugs, alcohol, tobacco and controlled substance abuse will not be tolerated in our schools.

The use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs while in school or attending any school-sponsored event is expressly forbidden. Any student grades 9-12 found using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs will be subject to disciplinary actions under the guidelines of the District Policy Manual.

**Signature Sheet of Understanding  
Falls City Academy**

**Parent/Student signature – Each parent/guardian and student is required to sign this after reading the material in this handbook. The student will return this page to their teacher one day after receiving the handbook to be enrolled in school.**

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***I have read the material of this handbook and understand the handbook. I/my student is willing and able to follow the rules of this handbook and policy of the Jerome School District.***

***Parent/Guardian Signature*** \_\_\_\_\_ ***Date*** \_\_\_\_\_

***Student Signature*** \_\_\_\_\_ ***Date*** \_\_\_\_\_