

FAQ's about FCMS

1. What is a charter school?

Charter schools are public schools designed to meet needs that may not be met in the regular school system. They are free and get their funding from the same sources as regular public schools. They vary in organization. FCMS is a school-based charter school.

2. What are the major differences between FCMS and local junior highs?

- a. *FCMS is small – no more than two classes, one 7th and one 8th.*
- b. *FCMS has block scheduling – science/math and social studies/English. Kids don't have to change classes every 55 minutes. Further, the teachers can change the schedule if they need to complete a special project.*
- c. *FCMS encourages big projects rather than incremental learning.*
- d. *FCMS is an integral part of the school district. Each class has a lower grade “buddy” class. The students are expected to look out for the little kids and do service at the school.*
- e. *FCMS has an emphasis on the “World of Work”. Students have four opportunities during the year to explore career choices.*

3. What is the discipline like in FCMS?

The FCMS faculty adopted a new discipline program in the 2006/07 school year which encourages students to take responsibility for their own behavior. We encourage parents to become familiar with this program and to support it at home and school. Students are given chances to follow the rules and immediate consequences if they choose not to follow the rules. The decision to leave the school is made by the student and parent when repeated violations occur and disciplinary action fails to change behavior. Since FCMS is an alternative setting, students who choose to break the rules will have their charter enrollment terminated and will have to make another choice for middle school.

4. Is everything provided for the students? Do they need to pay for books or supplies?

FCMS is a public school. All books and materials are provided. For big events, the students are asked to fund-raise. However, no student is denied the opportunity to participate in any event because of financial hardship.

5. What is the FCMS Council?

The FCMS Council functions just like a school site council except that students also participate. Decisions about events, curriculum, and other choices are made by the Council. The Council meets four times a year. The Board of Trustees hires all employees, directs the budget process, and oversees the success of the Charter.

6. How can I be involved?

*This age is sometimes difficult, but also a very interesting and rewarding stage of development. Students need the support of their parents/families even more at this stage than during some of the younger grades **if they are to make good choices for their futures.***

Here is a short list of how to be involved and stay involved:

- a. Come to all the parent/teacher conferences, to the Back-to-School potluck, to Open House, and to the concerts/events.
- b. Join the FCMS Council.
- c. Help your student with fund-raising projects.
- d. Listen to your student's concerns. If necessary, bring matters up with the teachers. Help your student problem-solve.
- e. Don't wait for the grade card or progress report if you think your son/daughter is in academic trouble. Engage your child in discussions about class and progress. Call the teacher.
- f. Make sure your student has a comfortable, well-lit place to complete homework. If you cannot help with things like higher math, make sure your student brings home the text and asks the teacher for help the next day.
- g. Come to the Parent Preview night for the Family Life Education.
- h. Volunteer to go on any trips. Volunteer your business for the World of Work.
- i. Back up the school on discipline issues. If your child gets an immediate detention, be ready to pick him/her up that day at 4:00. If you question the violation, talk to the teacher in private. If you still question the violation, call the principal.
- j. Chaperone socials.
- k. Read the website. Homework and big projects are posted.
- l. Gather materials for the teachers, as needed.
- m. Stay in tune with the school calendar. Make sure you sign all *permission slips for field trips. Join a field trip as a volunteer.*