



**Parent Handbook  
2021-2022**

1137 Cleveland Street  
Jacksonville, Florida 32209  
(904) 630-6540 (phone)  
(904) 630-6548 (fax)

## School Administration

Principal Tina Bennett  
Assistant Principal Shana Ingram

### Dean of Discipline

Dwayne Thomas

### Important Telephone Numbers

Office ..... (904) 630-6540

Fax ..... (904) 630-6548

### 2021-2022 Motto

“We are World Changers”

#This is Where Amazing Happens....”

### Principal’s Message

Welcome to John E. Ford PK-8 English/Spanish Montessori School. We hope that you find this handbook to be a helpful resource in answering questions that you may have. Please find a convenient place to keep this handbook for future reference throughout the school year.

At John E. Ford, we aim to know your children well. We work with families to offer an educational philosophy that nurtures a love of learning in an environment that promotes independence, self-discipline and mutual respect. We strive to create a classroom culture that balances freedom with responsibility while encouraging cooperation, critical thinking, resourcefulness and compassion.

Taken from Maria Montessori, “**Establishing lasting peace is the work of education.**” The Montessori movement is also about peace. The prepared environment and the curriculum in a Montessori School supports each child in their development of awareness of self and their tolerance of difference. It is those qualities that allow a child to develop their own sense of inner peace and as they mature into adults, this peace forms part of who they are and the world they live in.

In partnership,

Tina Bennett, Principal

### Mission Statement

The mission of John E. Ford PK-8 English/Spanish Montessori School is to provide educational excellence in every classroom, for every student, every day.

### Vision

John E. Ford teachers and staff will work cooperatively in a nurturing, challenging, multi-cultural environment to create productive, life-long learners. We will provide a safe and civil environment fostering cultural consciousness; challenging each of our students to develop socially, emotionally, and intellectually to their highest potential prepared for college and career.

### Arrival and Dismissal

School starts at 8:30. The doors to the building will open to all students at 8:00. Students are not allowed to arrive prior to that time unless they are enrolled in Extended Day. Car riders are to be dropped off in front of the school. Upon arrival, please have your child unbuckled and ready to exit the car. Your child’s temperature will be checked by a staff member. Please do not allow your student to exit the vehicle before their temperature has been checked.

If students are not enrolled in the Extended Day Program, they should not arrive to school prior to 8:00 as there is not enough supervision.

If your child's normal way of dismissal changes, PLEASE send a note to school. If you are unable to send a note, please contact the school as soon as possible. All other students should report to their classrooms upon arrival. Please plan accordingly so that your child can be present and ready to learn promptly at 8:30. Our goal is to decrease our tardies and increase our learning time for all students. Thanks for your help in meeting this goal!

Car rider dismissal begins at 2:50 p.m. All parents/guardians are encouraged to drive through the car loop. Please place your car rider sign (that you received during orientation) on your dash. Please

contact the front office if you need additional car rider dismissal signs. Car riders will be called out to the car rider circle from the cafe by a staff member. We ask that parents remain in the cars and a staff member will bring your child to you. Walkers and walk-up parent pickup will be dismissed at 2:50 from the back door at the rear of the building east of the bus loop. Parents are not allowed to wait for students in the hallways. Please share "rainy day" arrangements with your child if they routinely walk to school. This will prevent office and classroom disruptions. **Supervision ends at 3:10 p.m. for students who are not enrolled in Extended Day.**

### **Early Dismissal**

The early release of students causes disruption to the academic performance of all students and may create safety and security concerns. NO STUDENT SHALL BE DISMISSED between 2:15-2:50 or between 12:15-1:05 on early dismissal Wednesday.

### **School Hours**

Main Office	7:30 a.m.- 3:30 p.m.
Pre-K	8:30 a.m.- 1:30 p.m.
K-8 <sup>th</sup>	8:30 a.m.- 3:00 p.m.
Morning Extended Day	7:00 am – 8:00 am
Extended Day Pre-K	1:30 a.m. -3:00 p.m.
Extended Day K-8 <sup>th</sup>	3:00 p.m. -6:00 p.m.

### **Attendance and Tardies**

Students arriving after 8:30 a.m. are considered tardy and will be marked tardy in class. An excused tardy includes a doctor's appointment (note from the doctor's office is required), extreme weather, late bus, etc.

When your child is absent from school, a note from the parent/ guardian must be written that describes the reason or the absence will be marked as an unexcused absence.

### **Bus Regulations**

During the time in which students are being transported to/from school, they are under the authority of the principal. Every effort is made to secure the cooperation of the bus driver, parents and students to ensure that transportation is safe and orderly for all students. A bus student must ride his/her assigned bus each day unless written notification is given to the principal.

Afternoon drop off times may vary due to traffic and/or weather. Parents of kindergarten students must wait at the bust stop in the afternoon in order to receive their student off of the bus.

The following rules and expectations for bus transportation have been outlined by Duval County Public Schools:

- Remain seated at all times.
- Quiet conversation is permitted while riding the bus.
- The driver has the authority to assign seats.
- Obey the driver while riding the bus.
- Do **not** distract the driver.
- No food or drinks are allowed on the bus.

**Any violation of these rules will be reported by the driver to the principal. The principal has the authority to suspend a student temporarily or permanently from the bus.**

### **Extended Day**

Extended Day begins at 7:00 a.m. in the cafeteria. When dropping off and picking up your child, you will need to sign him/her in and out in the car loop/near the back door to the cafeteria.

### Breakfast and Lunch

All students receive free breakfast and lunch. Breakfast begins at 8:00a.m and ends at 8:45 a.m. Breakfast is the most important meal of the day so please make sure that your child is present and arrives before 8:30.

### Behavior

The Duval County Code of Student Conduct and John E. Ford Guidelines for Success are our guides for discipline procedures and behavioral standards. Students are expected to show respect for themselves, others, and the environment.

### Homework/Make-Up Assignments

Teachers are required to provide students with make-up assignments once the absence has been excused.

### Birthday Parties

Birthday parties for individual students are not permitted at school so that the instructional process is not interrupted. **Please do not bring cakes, cupcakes, balloons, etc. to the school, however, feel free to bring a healthy snack.** Instead, your child may participate in The Birthday Walk, an international Montessori tradition. Parents share in this important occasion by helping their child select photographs from each year of his/ her life and by helping him/her prepare a written history of milestones reached and fun times had during each year. Parents recite these milestones as they accompany their child on their walk around the "sun," once for each year celebrated. Following the birthday song, classmates are invited to give a special message to the birthday child. Parents should make every effort to participate in this beautiful ceremony with their child.

### Change of Address/Emergency Information

It is very important, for emergency and administrative reasons, that every student maintains an up-to-date address and telephone number in the school's office. Please notify the school immediately if you have a change of address or telephone number during the school year.

### Conferences

We appreciate the keen interest you show in the progress of your child/children. When you wish to arrange a conference with your child's teacher, please contact the teacher to indicate a date and time that is convenient for you. Teachers are not allowed to hold parent conferences during instructional time or during dismissal. Please give teachers a 24-hour notice for conferences unless contacted by the teacher.

### Fieldtrips and Special Activities

Participation in fieldtrips requires that students present a fieldtrip form signed by the parent/guardian to his/her teacher in advance. At this time, parents are not allowed to chaperone field trips. Once parents are allowed to chaperone, a volunteer application should be submitted/completed, and you need to pass a criminal background screening.

### Progress Reports

Progress Reports will be sent home six weeks into the grading period. Unsatisfactory progress reports will be sent home if students are failing after progress reports have been distributed. This will alert parents/guardians of possible failure. It is recommended that parents/guardians confer with teachers in order to help students improve.

### **Home Learning**

Parents/guardians are reminded that developing in children a good sense of responsibility is most important. To this end, making sure that students complete home learning assignments at home is the responsibility of the parent/guardian. Teachers will assign objectives that students can complete independently and will reinforce important aspects of the instructional program. Home learning assignments should take no longer than 30 minutes for primary grades and 60 to 90 minutes for upper elementary/middle school.

### **FOCUS Account**

Stay informed of your child's education with the convenience of home or office access. FOCUS offers a simple dashboard approach regarding your child's academic progress, school and district updates. It is a means of parent-teacher-student communication from home to school and school to home. If you have a Focus account, you use the same login info. To sign up, please click the following link:  
<https://dcps.duvalschools.org/Page/15745>

### **Textbooks**

Textbooks are assigned to each student by number. Lost or damaged books must be paid for. A lost book should be replaced as soon as possible. The student can be refused further issuance of textbooks until the charges have been paid.

### **Lost and Found**

Students who lose or find articles should inform the front office. All recovered items are kept in a central place for a reasonable length of time. Unclaimed items are donated to a charitable organization. Parents are encouraged to write student names on all personal items.

### **Parent/Teacher Association (PTA)**

The PTA supports the faculty and administration in their efforts to improve educational and extracurricular activities in the school. Parents are encouraged to become involved in the PTA. All parents/guardians will receive notices from the PTA concerning meetings, special projects, and fund-raising events. Suggestions from parents/guardians and community members are always welcomed.

Each year the PTA sponsors several fund-raising activities with the help of all parents. These projects can be very successful, and allow the PTA to fund many important activities at the school.

### **Visitors**

We are not allowing visitors on campus at this time. Once visitors are allowed, visitors must sign-in at the main office. Anyone who fails to follow these procedures will be considered a trespasser. All visitors must pick-up a visitors pass from the main office.

### **Parent Link/E-Mail**

Each week, the principal sends out school news, updates, and other important information by e-mail and by phone through the Parent Link. Please make sure that we have a current phone number and e-mail address on file so that you will receive all important information.

Each teacher uses Class Dojo and sends messages weekly so that you will be keenly aware of what topics are being taught, instructional deadlines and class news. This is a terrific way to stay connected to your child's world during the school year. ☺

### **Volunteers (not allowed during pandemic)**

Volunteers are a vital part of student success in Duval County Public Schools. To ensure the safety of our students, volunteers who will be at the school more than once or would like to chaperone a field trip, must complete an application (online) and undergo a criminal

background screening. Please check with the front office staff to check the status of the application.

You can apply to become a volunteer by clicking on the link below to go to the Volunteer area of the Family and Community Engagement Department

<https://dcps.duvalschools.org/Page/29120>

“APPLY TO VOLUNTEER” will be visible when volunteers are allowed.