



Mowat Middle School
Parent and Student Handbook
2025-2026

Mowat Middle School
1903 FL-390
Lynn Haven, FL 32444
850-767-4040

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MISSION & VISION

Mission: Mowat Middle School's mission is to cultivate a safe and inspiring learning environment where each student is empowered to achieve their full potential and prepared for a lifetime of success.

Vision: Mowat Middle School's vision is to positively impact and enhance 100% of the lives we touch.

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

School

Main Office	850-767-4040
Fax	850-265-2179
Cafeteria	850-767-4046

District

District Office	850-767-4100
Student Services	850-767-4311
Pre-K Office	850-767-4264
Transportation	850-767-4495
Safety and Security	850-767-4127

IMPORTANT LINKS

District Website:	www.bay.k12.fl.us
School Website:	mowat.bay.k12.fl.us
Parent Portal:	https://focus.bayschools.net/focus/
BDS Launchpad:	https://launchpad.classlink.com/bayschools
Facebook:	https://www.facebook.com/mowatmiddleschool
Code of Conduct:	https://www.bay.k12.fl.us/district-policies
BDS Policies:	https://bay.k12.fl.us/district-policies

DAILY SCHEDULE

8:25	Student Supervision Begins
8:55	First Bell Rings
9:00	Tardy Bell Rings
3:30	Student Dismissal

STUDENT ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

School is in session from 9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Student Drop-Off: Students may NOT arrive on campus before 8:25 a.m. There is NO supervision before this time. Please use the car loop and keep your child in the car until we open the doors at 8:25 a.m. Parents dropping off students must remain in their vehicles. **Only Mowat Middle School students are permitted to enter the campus during the morning drop-off.**

To ensure that our drop-off zone is both safe and efficient, please adhere to the following rules:

- ❖ Use only the designated student drop-off area.
- ❖ Pull forward as far as possible to allow the maximum number of cars to unload.
- ❖ Once your vehicle has reached the awning area, your child may exit the vehicle.
- ❖ Have your child prepared to exit on the school side of your vehicle as soon as all cars have pulled through and stopped.
- ❖ Keep the crosswalks clear.
- ❖ Stay in your vehicle.
- ❖ Stay alert. Please refrain from using your cell phone.
- ❖ All students should enter campus utilizing the arrival/dismissal area near the cafeteria.
- ❖ **ABSOLUTELY NO DROP-OFF OF STUDENTS IN THE PARKING LOT OR ON THE STREET.**

Student Pick-up at 3:30 p.m. Dismissal: Pick-up procedures are in place to ensure that all students are dismissed safely and efficiently. Please assist us in this endeavor by adhering to the following procedures:

- ❖ Use only the designated student pick-up area.
- ❖ Pull your car forward as far as possible to allow the maximum number of cars to load.
- ❖ Keep the crosswalk clear.
- ❖ Stay in your vehicle.
- ❖ Stay alert. Please refrain from using your cell phone.

Checking Out Students: Excessive check-outs are disruptive to the teachers and students. Please try to schedule appointments outside of school hours. Students will only be released to individuals listed in the Parent Portal with permission to pick up and who present a valid picture identification. Students will not be called to the office until an authorized adult with a valid picture ID arrives on campus to check them out.

Students may not check out after 2:45 p.m.

TRANSPORTATION

Bicycles: Bicycles must be parked in the designated bicycle storage area. Bicycle locks are highly recommended. The school is not responsible for the security of bicycles stored in the bicycle area.

Bus Stops and Procedures: The Bay District School Board provides buses and drivers for the transportation of students. Bus stops are set by the School Board, not by the bus drivers. Permission to ride school buses is granted based on the address listed in Parent Portal. Students may only ride the bus that they are registered to via their address in Parent Portal. Please discuss the following with your child: (1) arrive at the bus stop five minutes before the bus time, (2) stand off to the side of the roadway while awaiting the bus, and (3) obey the driver at all times. If you have questions or concerns regarding the transportation of your child, please feel free to call transportation at 767-4495.

Car and Bus Transportation Changes: If there is a change in a student's afternoon transportation routine, a parent must send a written note to the front office stating the change and its duration. Parent Portal messages are not an acceptable method to communicate transportation changes. Without appropriate communication from the parent, students will be sent home per their normal dismissal procedure. We understand that sometimes there are last-minute changes that cannot be helped, but it is disruptive to the students and teachers when we have to call them regularly about dismissal changes. If an **emergency** arises, please call the school office prior to 2:30 p.m. so that we have time to get the message to your child's teacher prior to dismissal. Students may only ride the bus that they are registered to via their address in Parent Portal.

Field Trips: Before a student may participate in a school-sponsored activity away from campus all eligibility requirements must be met. In addition, all required documents and fees must be submitted by the due date indicated. Students must be present at school, depart from school on the bus, and return to school on the bus with their assigned group. Students on field trips are subject to all school rules and policies. Money collected for school field trips is non-refundable.

Parent Chaperone procedures must comply with the Parent Rights Notification rules outlined by the Florida Department of Education and Bay District Schools Chaperone and Volunteer Procedures. To ensure the safety of our students and compliance with state regulations, Bay District Schools requires that all chaperones and volunteers undergo a Level 2 background screening and receive clearance **before** being approved to attend school events or travel with students.

Please note that not all field trips permit parents and/or chaperones to attend.

VISITING CAMPUS/VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Pets: No pets are allowed on campus.

Visitor's Badge Procedures: In order to ensure the safety of our students, we require all visitors to report to the front office for a visitor's badge prior to reporting to any location on campus. Visitors will be screened upon presenting any of the following forms of identification:

1. A state-issued driver's license or identification card (all 50 states)
2. A United States Military identification card
3. A consular identification card issued by the government of Mexico
4. A United States Permanent Resident Card

School Advisory Council (SAC): The School Advisory Council (SAC) is seeking new members. All parents of students at Mowat Middle School, and business and community representatives are eligible for membership. Partnerships with all stakeholders are highly valued and proven to improve student achievement. The SAC is responsible for assisting in the formulation and implementation of the school improvement plan, acting as an advisor to the principal, assisting in the development of the educational program and acting as a liaison between the school and community. If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a member, please call or send your name/phone number to the school's main office.

Elevate Bay Mentoring Program: Elevate Bay is a mentoring initiative by Bay District Schools that focuses on supporting and encouraging at-risk children. Volunteers can serve as classroom mentors, one-on-one

mentors or as a lunch buddy for an individual student. For more information, contact Stacey Legg at 850-767-4128 or leggs1@bay.k12.fl.us

Lunch Visitors Guidelines: There is limited seating during each lunch period. Visitors will not be permitted during lunch. No food deliveries unless there is an emergency situation **and** delivery has been pre-approved by the school principal. Deliveries from services such as Doordash and UberEats are not permitted - no exceptions.

PBIS AND DISCIPLINE

Discipline: Along with our school-wide L.I.F.E. expectations, each teacher has established classroom behavior expectations and a discipline plan with rules, consequences, rewards, and parental involvement.

Mustang LIFE Expectations L.I.F.E. – Live with Integrity, Focus, and Empathy

- ❖ **L – Live Respectfully;** Treat yourself, others, and the environment with care and kindness.
- ❖ **I – Integrity At All Times;** Do the right thing, even when no one is watching.
- ❖ **F – Focus on Learning;** Be punctual, present, participate, and strive for personal growth.
- ❖ **E – Empathize with Others;** Understand and respect others' feelings, perspectives, and differences.

In the event a student is referred to the office, the Bay District Discipline Matrix will be used as a guideline for behavior intervention by the administration. Please refer to [Bay District Schools Code of Student Conduct and Discipline](#) and [School Board Policy](#) for additional information.

Care of School and Personal Property: We try to instill student pride in the appearance of their school. Students must not mark on school furniture, walls, ceilings, floors, or equipment with pens, pencils, markers, or any other instruments. Students must not tamper with fire alarms, fire extinguishers, plants, trees, or any other electrical system in the school. Anyone who willfully destroys school property through vandalism, arson, or larceny, or who creates a hazard to the safety of our students will be referred to the proper law enforcement agency.

Students are cautioned not to bring large amounts of money, electronic items, or cell phones to school. Personal items such as toys, stuffed animals, etc., are not permitted at school unless they are part of a special event or project that has been pre-approved by the classroom teacher. If a student wears glasses or watches, we ask that the student take responsibility for their care. If it is necessary to bring more money than needed to pay for lunch, they are responsible for their own money. Students should not leave money or other valuables in their desks. We are not responsible for any damaged or lost items.

Students should have their names labeled on jackets, backpacks, lunch boxes, etc. Items left in lost and found are donated to charity periodically throughout the year.

SCHOOL MEALS

School meals are provided by Chartwells School Dining Services. For information on school meals, including

prices, menus, payment options, and applying for free/reduced meals, visit <http://www.bay.k12.fl.us/parent-lunch>.

COMMUNICATION

Parent Portal (Focus): Florida School Law requires that we have accurate information on all of our students. **It is the responsibility of the Parent or Guardian to maintain an updated mailing address, residence address, and current emergency phone numbers in Parent Portal.** Any changes and updates throughout the school year can be made through your Parent Portal account. The office staff cannot make changes to information in Parent Portal. You must come to the front office with a valid picture identification card if you are unable to access Parent Portal. A request to change a student's address will be approved once two proofs of residence are provided to the school office.

School-wide and class announcements will be uploaded through Parent Portal. Parent Portal can also be used by staff and parents/guardians regarding student educational records (grades, attendance, behavior, scheduling meetings, etc.). Your child's grades, attendance, and discipline records are available for your review at any time through Parent Portal.

BDS Grading Scale

A	90-100 Outstanding Progress	S	Satisfactory
B	80-89 Above Average Progress	N	Needs Improvement
C	70-79 Average Progress	U	Unsatisfactory
D	60-69 Lowest Acceptable Progress		
F	0-59 Failing		

Phone Calls: You may call to speak to your child's teacher before and after school. We do not put calls through to the classroom during the instructional day. Only emergency messages will be relayed to teachers during the school day. If you receive a call from the school, the caller should leave a message. Please listen to your voicemail to see who called prior to calling the school back.

Email: Individual, school, and district-wide information is often sent via email. Parents should have a valid email address listed in Parent Portal.

Facebook: School and district announcements, information, and special events are often posted on social media. Parents are encouraged to follow the Bay District Schools and Mowat Middle School's Facebook Pages.

Parent-Teacher Conferences: If you have questions or concerns about your child's progress, please contact the teacher or school counselor to schedule a conference. Requests for conferences must be made in advance.

Deliveries: Academic instruction will not be interrupted for deliveries. This includes homework, library books, snacks, and **lunches**. Deliveries of flowers, balloons, and gifts are not permitted. No food deliveries unless there is an emergency situation and delivery has been pre-approved by the school principal. Deliveries from services such as Doordash and UberEats are not permitted - no exceptions.

Parent Resource Guide: The Bay District Schools Parent Resource Guide may be accessed on the school website and at the Bay District Schools website, www.bay.k12.fl.us. Paper copies of the Bay District Schools

Parent Resource Guide are available upon request at schools or by calling 850-767-4311. Parents and students should read this guide carefully. Note: The electronic edition of the Parent Resource Guide is the latest edition. It replaces earlier electronic and printed editions.

School Counselor/Guidance: The school counselor is available to (1) answer questions about the programs at the school, (2) review your child's progress, (3) interpret standardized test scores, (4) discuss special programs, or (5) meet with you about other concerns regarding your child. If you have any questions or concerns, contact the counselor at 767-4040.

MEDICAL NEEDS / ILLNESS

Illness of Students at School: It is extremely important that we have a phone number where you can be reached in case of illness of your child. Please keep the school office personnel informed by updating your parent portal for your child's safety.

Medication: Medication may not be on campus or administered to a student without a completed "Permission to Administer Medication" form. This form must be completed by a parent and a physician. The completed form and medication must be delivered to the health room by an adult. Medication must be received, counted, and stored in its original container in the school health room.

Allergies: If your child has food or life-threatening allergies, please provide the office (and cafeteria manager if food allergies) with a signed statement from the physician listing allergies and procedures for emergency treatment.

Head Lice, Bed Bugs, and Other Pests: See Bay District Schools Policy

TEXTBOOKS / TECHNOLOGY

Textbooks and Media/Technology Material: Textbooks, library books, and other school materials are loaned to students by the Bay District School Board. If these articles are lost or damaged, students will be required to pay for them.

GoConnect! Chromebook Contract: Students and their parents/guardians are reminded that use of District Technology is a privilege and not a right and that everything done on any District owned computer, network, or electronic communication device may be monitored by school authorities or subject to disciplinary action.

To understand the expectations of Bay District Schools' Go Connect 1:1 initiative and other Chromebook checkouts, parents and students must review and sign the GoConnect! Chromebook Contract found in Parent Portal. The student must abide by the Student Acceptable Use Policy at all times.

Wireless Communication Devices (WCDs): WCDs include, but are not limited to, cell phones, tablets, and auxiliary/ancillary devices such as watches and earbuds. WCDs must be powered off and stored in the student's backpack or purse during the school day, from 8:55 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. WCDs that are not turned off and stored in the student's backpack or purse will be confiscated, and disciplinary consequences will be assigned according to Bay District Schools Policy. **STUDENTS BRING THEIR DEVICES AT THEIR OWN RISK. THE DISTRICT WILL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR LOST, DAMAGED, STOLEN, or MISPLACED DEVICES.**

ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to be in school, to be on time, and to stay all day unless prohibited by illness or other serious crisis. Florida Law requires children ages 6-16 to be in regular attendance in school and holds parents accountable for meeting this requirement. Your child is in jeopardy of violating these statutes as indicated below:

- ❖ 5 or more absences (excused or unexcused) in a month
- ❖ 10 or more absences (excused or unexcused) in the past 90 days.

Excused Absences, Tardies, or Early Departures: For an absence to be considered as excused, **documentation** must be filed with the principal's office within three (3) days of the absence. Excused absences, Tardies, or Early Departures may be given for the following reasons:

- ❖ 1. Death in the family or other bona fide family emergency.
- ❖ 2. Illness of student. A written statement from a physician that the student is under the supervision of the physician and that the student's condition justifies the number of days absent may be required after a total of **five (5) days** of absences (**absences do not have to be consecutive**).
- ❖ 3. Appointments for medical or dental care (physician's statement required.)
- ❖ 4. Visits to a licensed therapist.
- ❖ 5. Legal reasons.

Unexcused Absences: Unexcused absences are those absences that are not justified according to School Board Policy. In addition, truancy, out-of-school suspension, expulsion, and/or skipping are considered unexcused absences. Please refer to School Board Policy.

Pre-Approved Family Leave: Students may be granted up to 5 excused absences for family leave per school year. A completed Request for Family Leave Form must be turned in to the school office prior to the student being absent, and all School Board Policy criteria must be met for approval.

Makeup Work – Excused Absences: Students are expected to make up all work missed during absences. Full credit will be awarded for the makeup work missed during excused absences. It is the student's responsibility to contact the teacher within five (5) school days of the first day back to obtain make-up work. All assignments announced in advance of the student's absence (including tests and exams) must be made up on the day the student returns to school. Teachers may choose to require a student on school or administrative leave to complete work assigned in advance of the leave.

Makeup Work – Unexcused Absences: Students are responsible for making up all work missed, including tests and exams, during an unexcused absence. If the unexcused absence is due to a suspension of one to three (1-3) days, the student must contact their teachers for assignments upon return to class. Make-up work must be completed within five (5) school days. Parents/ guardians of students suspended for more than three (3) days are responsible for contacting the school by the end of the third day of suspension to obtain the missed assignments. All work must be completed and returned to the classroom teacher upon the student's return to school.

Minimum Attendance: A student may be in jeopardy of retention if he/she fails to attend school for at least 160 days in a school year.

SAFETY

Bullying: It is the policy of the Bay District School Board that all students and school employees have an educational setting that is safe, secure, and free from harassment and bullying of any kind. The District will not tolerate bullying and harassment of any type. Conduct that constitutes bullying and harassment is prohibited. The full policy is available on the Bay District Schools Website: [School Board Policy](#).

SAFE Anonymous Reporting Tool: SAFE allows anyone to submit a report to alert the school district of a possible incident of bullying, harassment, violence, or abuse.

Link to report: <https://safe.bayschools.net/>

Link to video for how to use SAFE: <https://vimeo.com/329874931>

FortifyFL Reporting Tool: FortifyFL is a suspicious activity reporting tool that allows you to instantly relay information to appropriate law enforcement agencies and school officials. To submit a tip online, or for more information about FortifyFL, visit <https://getfortifyfl.com/>

DRESS CODE/STUDENT UNIFORM AND GROOMING

Appropriate dress is the primary responsibility of the student and his/her parent or guardian. In order to promote safety, personal hygiene, academic well-being, and moral development, students shall be expected to comply with Bay District Schools Dress Code Policy. The complete policy can be found on the Bay District Schools Website: [School Board Policy](#). Students are expected to come to school dressed in compliance with Bay District Schools Policy, with proper attention having been given to personal cleanliness, grooming, and neatness of dress. Failure to comply with the dress code will result in disciplinary consequences. Parents may be required to bring a change of clothes that complies with the dress code policy before the student can return to class.

The dress code policy applies from the time the student arrives on campus until the end of the school day and at all school activities during the school day. Exceptions may be made by the principal for field trips or other special activities (examples: Honors and Awards ceremonies).

ADDITIONAL POLICIES AND POLICY AMENDMENTS

As a member of Bay District Schools, Mowat Middle School follows the Bay District School Board Policy Manual. The Bay County School Board policies are subject to change at the discretion of the School Board. The complete School Board policies are available at each school, at the District's website www.bay.k12.fl.us, and at the Superintendent's office at 1311 Balboa Avenue.

Mowat Middle School's specific policies may be changed as deemed necessary by the administration. In the event of any conflict between district policy and school policy, the official policy adopted by the school board shall take precedence and be considered the governing authority.