



Parent/Student
Handbook

2026-2027 School Year

TEACHING INDIVIDUALS ~ REACHING FAMILIES

VISION STATEMENT

Students who walk humbly, confident in Christ, according to their calling.

MISSION STATEMENT

Freedom Christian Schools seeks to provide Biblical instruction and academic education in a non-denominational Christ-centered atmosphere. It is our goal to assist each student in reaching their full spiritual, emotional, and physical potential, while recognizing their individual talents and abilities. We will faithfully endeavor to nurture, discipline, and serve those students entrusted to us, and help prepare them to meet the challenges of our world while leading a life pleasing to God.

FREEDOM CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS IS COMMITTED TO

The Authority of Scripture: God's Word is recognized as inspired, inerrant, and authoritative.

Truth: All truth is God's truth, and all knowledge and every discipline is recognized as created by Him.

Partnership: We strive to partner with parents to train up a child in the way that they should go. It is not our goal to take the place of a parent, but to stand side by side with them.

Community: Our philosophy comes from the interpersonal relationships that are fostered in the educational process.

Excellence: We strive to do everything to the glory of God. The relentless pursuit of excellence in all aspects of the school must remain a priority.

The faculty: Our teachers are the hallmark and backbone of our school.

A Biblical Worldview: Every area of knowledge is presented from a Biblical perspective so that teachers and students may live lives to the glory of God.

Diversity: The character and breadth of our school comes from our families' cultural heritage, economic status and denominational differences and similarities.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Freedom Christian Schools shall admit students of any race, color, religion, sex, national and ethnic origin with all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, disability, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship programs, athletic programs, and other school-administered programs.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Foundation of all we do at FCS shall be the Word of God as interpreted by the following statement of faith:

1. We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative Word of God. (2 Peter 1:20-21, 2 Timothy 3:16)
2. We believe that there is only one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (Isaiah 48:12-16, John 15:26-27)
3. We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory to rule a thousand years. (John 11:25-26, John 14:2-3)
4. We believe in the blessed hope – the rapture of the Church at Christ’s second coming. (Thessalonians 4:16-18, Titus 2:13)
5. We believe the only means of being cleansed from sin is through repentance and faith in the precious blood of Christ and that he is the ONLY way to salvation. (1 John 1:7 & 9, Hebrews 10:22, John 14:6) We believe the redemptive work of Christ on the cross provides healing of the human body in answering to believing prayer. (James 5:14-15, 1 Peter 2:24)
6. We believe that for salvation of lost and sinful man regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential. We believe that salvation is based on grace and grace alone, not by any works. (John 14:26, Romans 8:26)
7. We believe the baptism in the Holy Spirit is given to believers who ask for it. (Acts 2:4)
8. We believe in the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a holy life. (John 14:26, Romans 8:26)
9. We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ, and that all believers are members of His Body, the Church. (Philippians 2:1-4)
10. We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person male and female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. (Genesis 1:26-27)
11. We believe that the term “marriage” has only one meaning; the uniting of one man and one woman in a single exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. (Genesis 2:18-25, Matthew 19:5-6, Mark 10:6-9, 1 Corinthians 6:9)
12. We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved into everlasting life, and they that are lost into everlasting damnation. (John 5:28-29; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17)

We welcome children from all church doctrines. While your child is with us, every effort will be made to **support the basic Christian belief system as it is found in the Bible and** not bring conflict. We offer our statement in an effort to be open and straightforward with who we are, not as a goal for training our students in these distinctive doctrines. Please feel free to ask any questions concerning these issues.

FACULTY of FREEDOM CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS PRO-LIFE POSITION STATEMENT

In light of recent developments through the Supreme Court, the following resource is meant to help give foundation and clarity to our Freedom Christian Schools Pro-Life position.

Although the families we serve and their children may come from various persuasions, our faculty/ staff position is unabashedly pro-life from pre-born to aged, disabled to victim of sin or violence, under-loved or not. This is not a matter of opinion or with what empathy we choose to align; it is not a position born of emotion or personal desire. This is a Biblical position based on the direct revelation of the Author of Life, Himself.

God is the Author of life—*Genesis 2:7* ~And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being.

John 5:21 ~For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the Son gives life to whom He will.

1 Timothy 6:13 ~I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things and before Christ Jesus...

Psalms 139:13-16 ~For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; And that my soul knows very well. My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book, they were all written, The days fashioned for me, When as yet there were none of them.

Job 10:8-12 ~Your hands have made me and fashioned me, An intricate unity; Yet you would destroy me. Remember, I pray that You have made me like clay. And will You turn me into dust again? Did You not pour me out like milk, And curdle me like cheese, clothe me with skin and flesh, And knot me together with bones and sinews? You have granted me life and favor, And Your care has preserved my spirit.

Job 1:21 ~And he said: "Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked shall I return there. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; Blessed be the name of the LORD."

Conception is the beginning of life and personhood and is always a gift from God—*Genesis 4:1*

~Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, "I have acquired a man from the LORD."

Jesus was Jesus from conception and John the Baptist, still in the womb, confirmed this—*Matthew*

1:23 ~ "Behold a virgin shall be with child and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us."

Isaiah 7:14 ~Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son and shall call His name Immanuel.

Luke 1:31,34-35,41,44 ~And behold, you [Mary] will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son and shall call His name JESUS. ... Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I know not a

man?” And the angel answered and said unto her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God....And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit....For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.

God’s recognition of our personhood and purpose from conception—*Isaiah 49:1,5* ~ “Listen, O coastlands, to Me, And take heed, you peoples from afar! The LORD has called Me [the Suffering Servant—Jesus] from the womb; From the matrix of My mother, He has made mention of My name. ...”And now the LORD says, Who formed me from the womb to be His Servant, To bring back Jacob to Him, So that Israel is gathered to Him...”

Luke 1:15 ~For he [John the Baptist] will be great in the sight of the Lord and shall neither drink wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb.

Galatians 1:15 ~But it pleased God, who separated me [Apostle Paul] from my mother’s womb and called me through His grace.

Exodus 33:12 ...Yet You have said, ‘I know you [Moses] by name, and you have found grace in My sight.’

Jeremiah 1:5 ~ “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; Before you were born, I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations.”

One could also look at the narratives of the births of Esau and Jacob, Samuel, Samson, Isaiah’s sons, and many more.

We are God’s masterpiece of all creation and purposed for good works—*Ephesians 2:10* ~For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Ephesians 1:4 ~Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love.

The Supreme Court did not determine pro-life or abortion, but correctly recognized in this secular society, state legislatures would have to respond to the will of their constituents and take their respective stands. It is not for us as representatives of God’s ministry at Freedom Christian Schools to present nuanced arguments for or against life. Every parent entrusting their child to us must be assured that our curriculum, our practice, and our public persona unequivocally stand with the Biblical truth that God makes no accidents, all life is valuable in that He generated life from the beginning by His own breath, and He purposes each soul for eternity.

OBJECTIVES

We offer the following objectives, which are born out of our Mission Statement and Statement of Faith:

A. SPIRITUAL AND MORAL GROWTH

1. To teach the Bible as the inspired Word of God.
2. To develop love and respect for God's Word.
3. To teach the basic doctrines of the Bible.
4. To lead the student through a process of receiving Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior.
5. To lead the student to a committed life of discipleship and service to the Lord Jesus Christ.
6. To develop a desire for righteousness and an aversion to sin.
7. To develop self-discipline and responsibility in the student, based on respect for, and submission unto God and all others in authority.
8. To encourage the student to meet all of life's problems head on in the power of the Holy Spirit.

B. PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

1. To help the student realize that he/she is a unique creation of God made in His image with a definite eternal purpose.
2. To help the student develop his/her God given talents, capacities, and gifts.
3. To lead each student to accept, respect, and love others as he is loved and accepted by God.
4. To promote physical fitness, good health habits, and wise use of the body as the temple of the Holy Spirit.
5. To impart the Biblical attitudes toward material things, and to encourage the use of them for God's glory.

C. ACADEMIC GROWTH

1. To help each student gain a thorough comprehension and command of academic disciplines and life skills.
2. To develop good study habits.
3. To teach and motivate the student to do independent study in areas of interest.
4. To promote good citizenship through an understanding and appreciation of our Christian and American heritage, to use our freedom responsibly, respect human dignity, and accept others in authority.
5. To promote understanding, appreciation, and responsible stewardship of God's world in the administration of our education, admissions, and other school-administered program.

ASSOCIATION / AFFILIATION

Freedom Christian Schools is a non-licensed school, registered in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to operate an academic religious school in Adams County Pennsylvania. We are a non-profit 501c3 incorporation. FCS is affiliated with Life Discovery Network of Churches.

TUITION & FINANCE POLICY

- A. **Enrollment Fee:** Fees for registration and enrollment cover the processing of applications, student files, and testing. ***Enrollment fee is non-refundable.***
- B. **Tuition:** Tuition is charged to help cover the cost of instruction. All our operating costs, including teachers' salaries, are the exclusive responsibilities of Freedom Christian Schools.
- The annual tuition cost includes book fees, and other necessary expenses that may occur throughout the year.
 - **Tuition accounts will be monitored, and invoices will be sent by Simple Tuition Solutions.**
 - **Upon enrollment ALL parents MUST create an account with Simple Tuition Solutions.** There will be a few payment plans, and various options in how you can pay. Once your account is set up you will see your tuition amount in the portal. Use this link to set up your account - <https://app.simpletuitionsolutions.org/register?sc=24360> If it happens to ask you a School or Scholarship Organization Code, you want to enter code: 24360
 - This is a link to view your balance, update your information or to make payments, you can access your STS account anytime at <https://app.simpletuitionsolutions.org> and login using your previously created account information.
 - All tuition payments are due on the chosen due date. If your financial situation changes, please contact the business manager Karen Trout or principal, Karissa Costello.
 - Any long-term requirements for partial payments of tuition or fees must have prior approval by the business manager, Karen Trout, or the principal, Karissa Costello.
 - If an account is in arrears, or if any fees or charges are due, report cards, transcripts and/or diplomas will not be issued, nor will records be released. Enrollment may not be possible until the account is paid in full.
- C. **Book / Material Fee:** Students use a combination of purchased and rental textbooks. Rental books returned in unusable condition will be charged with a replacement fee that must be paid before the report card will be released.
- D. **Donations:** All donations to FCS are welcome and are tax deductible. They will be used to meet the needs of the school.
- E. **Scholarships:** Scholarships are available – please see the next page (Tuition, Discounts & Scholarships) or speak to Mrs. Costello for options.

TUITION, DISCOUNTS & SCHOLARSHIPS

EITC SCHOLARSHIP TUITION ASSISTANCE

Tuition assistance is available to eligible students enrolled at Freedom Christian Schools. In order to qualify for tuition assistance, the household annual income cannot exceed \$116,025 plus \$20,425 per dependent child as established by EITC law.

Freedom Christian Schools has partnered with Central Pennsylvania Scholarship Funds, ACSI-CTF and BLOCS which all now require a third-party verification to determine eligibility. Every family seeking tuition assistance must apply through Simple Tuition Solutions and the steps to apply are enclosed with your enrollment packet. Scholarship notifications will be updated on the Simple Tuition Solutions portal, and your tuition amount will be adjusted. If you have questions and would like to discuss this in more detail - please contact our principal, Mrs. Karissa Costello.

If you have received a scholarship in the past and need it for the 2026-2027 school year, please fill out the app on STS. Please note - to receive another scholarship your account for the previous school years must be paid in full - please contact Karissa Costello or Karen Trout if you need special tuition arrangements for past accounts.

REFERRAL DISCOUNT

Freedom Christian Schools is pleased to offer a Referral Discount to our FCS families. FCS families will receive a \$100.00 discount off their tuition total for each new family referred to FCS. Referred families must indicate who referred them on the enrollment application where indicated. In order for FCS families to receive the discount – the referred family must begin the 2026-27 school year.

EARLY PAY DISCOUNT

Due to the new system, we will ***NO LONGER*** be offering an early discount.

FCS ALUMNI

Any FCS Alumni who would like to enroll their child(ren) will receive a 10% discount off the total tuition.

PASTOR TUITION SCHOLARSHIP

Freedom Christian Schools would like to honor and assist those who work in full-time paid ministry as pastors by giving a 50% scholarship. **Please fill out the scholarship application on Simple Tuition Solutions to receive this.**

TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TAP) by VOLUNTEERING

This program is a way to help families with their tuition through volunteer hours at the school. Parents (and grandparents) can volunteer which will equal \$10 per volunteer hour toward tuition each month. If you are interested in this program, please contact the school office to request a Volunteer Packet.

SCHOOL HOURS

- Regular school days for Full-Day Kindergarten through 12th Grade - 8:30 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.
- Half-day Kindergarten and PreK - 8:30 A.M. to 11:30 A.M.
- Hours for seniors who are half day - 8:30 – 12:00 PM.
- Students should arrive no earlier than 8:05 A.M. unless special arrangements are made and leave promptly by 3:15 P.M. unless they are staying for a supervised activity. If staying after school notes should be sent into the office in advance.

Please remember to observe a ten (10) m.p.h. speed limit in the parking lot and always be conscious of any students walking in the lot.

COMMUNICATION

CLASSDOJO APP. - Freedom Christian Schools uses the *Class Dojo* Messaging App. as a way to communicate with parents. It is a SAFE, SIMPLE and FREE tool built especially for schools, which helps administrators, teachers, students, and parents communicate quickly and efficiently. It allows us to send quick, simple messages, whether it be to a group or individual via through the app.– ex. school closings/delays, upcoming events, reminders etc. *Class Dojo* is certified by IKeepSafe for your protection and privacy. Personal information remains private.

PARENT- TEACHER CONFERENCES

We do not have designated days for parent/teacher conferences. If a parent would like to request a conference, please contact the office to set it up. Teachers are available to have in person or phone conferences with individual or group of teachers. If a teacher is requesting a conference, the teacher will communicate that to the parent and Mrs. Garrett will follow up to set up the conference.

IN-PERSON – we greatly value in-person communication. All appointments with teachers and administration should be scheduled in advance through the school office.

EMAIL – If you prefer to communicate via email – below is a list of staff/teacher emails.

Karissa Costello – Principal kacostello@freedomchristianschools.org

Lynne Garrett – Administrative Assistant legarrett@freedomchristianschools.org

Doris Kramer – Food Services dkramer@freedomchristianschools.org

Anna Ruppert – Preschool Teacher alruppert@freedomchristianschools.org

Ana Davis – Kindergarten Teacher adavis@freedomchristianschools.org

Autumn Belch – Teacher – Grade 1 abelch@freedomchristianschools.org

Kathryn White – Teacher – Grade 2 kwhite@freedomchristianschools.org

Patti Elgersma – Teacher - Grade 3 pelgersma@freedomchristianschools.org

Karen Trout – Business Manager/Teacher - Grades 4-5-6 ktrout@freedomchristianschools.org

Hank Elgersma – High School Teacher - English, Science, Math

helgersma@freedomchristianschools.org

Terri Elgersma – High School Teacher - History, Alg.1, Art trelgersma@freedomchristianschools.org

Sue Thompson – Teacher - 7th & 8th sethompson@freedomchristianschools.org

Lara Wible – High School Bible Teacher, Music lmwible@freedomchristianschools.org

Jessica Myers – Art & PE – jshibleydesigns@gmail.com

FCS FACEBOOK – FCS has a private Facebook page (for FCS school families ONLY) and a public page, both of which you are invited to join! Search for Freedom Christian Schools Online Community.

BUSSING

If your child is age 5 and older and a full-time student who resides in the following school districts – bussing is available. Bus forms will be given at the time of enrollment and will be available in the school office. If you have any transportation questions, please contact the transportation coordinator in your school district.

- Bermudian Springs School District
- Conewago Valley School District
- Gettysburg Area School District
- Hanover Public School District
- Littlestown Area School District
- South Western School District
- Spring Grove School District
- Upper Adams School District

Who can ride buses/vans?

The school district only allows students who live in their districts and have a registered transportation form on file with the school district to ride the bus/van. Visitors and /or non-registered students are not permitted to ride.

TRANSPORTATION CHANGES

All deviations from the student’s normal transportation routine must have parental authorization. Examples of changes would be a student not needing bus transportation, a student going home with another student (parental permission for each student is needed), etc. If your child rides a bus, please notify your transportation coordinator of any changes.

Carpooling

If parents/guardians would like their child to be transported by another family, arrangements must be made between the two parties and the school notified with written permission from the two parties the morning of.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

General Information:

Pennsylvania and Maryland school laws require that any child of compulsory school age shall attend school continuously throughout the entire term.

Compulsory attendance laws require that a written statement signed by a parent/guardian be submitted to the school **every day the child is absent**. This includes events when absences extend multiple days. Absence or Tardiness Excuse forms are located on the FCS website. Should a student be absent from school, parents/guardians are asked to complete the Absence or Tardiness Excuse Form and have the child submit it to the school office on the day of his/her return before reporting to homeroom. Additional excuse forms are available throughout the year in the school office. If the absence excuse is forgotten, your child will be issued a temporary

excuse. After three (3) days the temporary excuse may become an unlawful/unexcused absence if an absence excuse form is not turned in from the parent/guardian.

Students who are absent from school are not permitted to attend FCS evening activities on the day of absence except for certain circumstances (funeral, emergency, etc.) Permission to attend on the day of absence shall be granted by the administration.

It should also be noted that all high school students who attend FCS (including those attending on a part time basis) must attend and participate in high school chapels and ministry teams. The only excused absences from chapel and ministry team are illness, extreme family emergency (determination to be decided by FCS administration), funeral attendance, and pre-arranged absence. Academic penalties will be imposed upon the student's Bible class grade, and all state regulations concerning unexcused absences apply.

EXCUSED / LAWFUL

Pennsylvania Law broadly defines absences as excused when a student is prevented from attendance for mental, physical, or other urgent reasons. Absence from school will be considered "excused/lawful" for the following reasons:

- *Illness of student*
- *Death in the immediate family*
- *Family emergencies (exact emergency must be explained to the administration and approved)*
- *School scheduled student educational trips*
- *Authorized school activities*
- *Pre-arranged Educational Trip with prior approval*
- *Doctor/dental appointments*
- *Weather related*
- *College visits*
- *Quarantine*
- *Court hearings*
- *To obtain professional health care or therapy care services*

UNEXCUSED / UNLAWFUL

All absences will be considered unlawful until the school receives a written excuse from the parent/guardian explaining the reason(s) for an absence. "Unexcused absences" will be considered unlawful for all other reasons (some examples: oversleeping, missing the bus, family coming to visit, work, not sleeping well).

Parents should submit a written explanation to the school within (3) three days of the absence. Parents will be informed in writing upon each unlawful absence, if a written excuse is not provided within the 3 days it will be permanently counted as unlawful.

Other than the above "Excused/Lawful Absence" list, all other absences and tardies are considered unexcused/unlawful, even with a written note. A student having three (3) or more unexcused/unlawful absences during the school year is considered habitually truant under definitions set forth by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

When a student accumulates three (3) unlawful absences – FCS must report those absences to the supervising attendance officers of the various school districts in which the student resides.

Consequently, illegitimate, and unreported absences of FCS students must be referred by FCS to the public authority. Therefore, it is important that a legitimate reason for absence be made known to the school by a note signed by a parent or guardian. Parents/guardians who fail to comply with the provisions of the compulsory attendance law may, on summary conviction thereof, be required to pay a fine plus court costs.

The Principal of FCS has no power to grant permission to a student to be absent from school for a reason which the Commonwealth does not recognize as legitimate. It is the parents who are answerable to the state authorities for an illegal absence.

No assignments or tests may be made up for any unexcused absences.

EXCESSIVE ABSENCE

If absence due to illness extends three (3) days or longer, or if attendance is irregular, school administration may require a physician's statement showing such absences to be justifiable. The authority is to be used only when warranted by the specifics of each case. If you know your child will be absent for a medical or dental appointment or a funeral, please contact the school office in advance.

It is an established policy that a student absent for more than twenty (20) days will be subject to review as to whether the scholastic year is to be repeated.

HALF-DAY ABSENCE

Any student reporting to school after 10:00 A.M. will be considered absent 1/2 (one-half) day.

If the student leaves school for any reason before 1:00 P.M. and does not return that day, it will be considered 1/2 (one-half) day of absence.

Those students arriving late but before 10:00 A.M. will be considered tardy.

TARDINESS

Lateness will not be tolerated. Students are to be in their seats ready for class at 8:30 A.M. A student will be considered tardy after 8:35 A.M. Only medical and emergency excuses will be accepted as an excused tardy. If a student is going to be late, a legal excuse must be presented to the school office in exchange for a Tardy Admission Slip before entering class.

Student drivers who incur unexcused tardy absences will serve lunch detention to make up for the time missed. This applies to both full day and half day students.

EARLY DISMISSAL

As much as possible dental and doctor appointments should be made after school hours. If the appointment occurs during school hours, the request must be completed in writing or call the school office in the morning. It is understood that early dismissals should seldom be requested and should be restricted to circumstances that are otherwise unavoidable. Permission will generally not be granted for early dismissals in order for a student to attend non-sports, non-academic, and /or non-medical appointments, etc. If the early dismissal is medical related, a note from the doctor or dentist must accompany the student upon their return to school.

Students leaving school early for any reason will be ready and waiting at the school office for the parent. Parents need to park and come into the school office to sign your child out before departure. Students who transport themselves must sign out at the office before departure.

PRE-ARRANGED ABSENCES

Learning is an experience that is not limited to the confines of a school building. Travel or other activities of an educational nature will be considered excused if properly planned and carried out. Educational trips are strongly discouraged during the first and last week of school and the week of SAT Testing. Educational travel is not to exceed ten (10) days during the school year. A Pre-arranged Absence Form must be completed one (1) week prior to the pre-arranged absence. Forms are available on our website and from the school office.

It is understood that the student who is away on an educational trip is responsible for all classwork and homework missed during the days of absence. All assignments are due to the appropriate teacher upon their return to school. If any tests/quizzes are given during their absence, they will be expected to take them shortly after their return to school.

WITHDRAWING FROM SCHOOL

When a student is withdrawn from school for reasons of moving or is transferring to another school, FCS should be notified at least one (1) week prior to the change. A withdrawal form must be completed by the parents. The student must secure a withdrawal form from the school office and on the last day of attendance have each teacher initial the form to show all obligations with each teacher are cleared. All hardback textbooks must be returned to the teacher and the locker cleaned out. Academic records will not be released until all financial obligations are met.

STUDENT DRIVERS

Driving to school and parking in the school parking lot is a PRIVILEGE granted only to upper school students with a driver's license. Parents and students are required to complete the Student Driver Permission Form. The form can be picked up from the school office or found on our website - (Student Driver Permission Form).

Students must be aware of the restrictions and adhere to all regulations to maintain their driving privileges. Students who fail to comply with these rules and regulations will forfeit their driving privilege at the administration's discretion.

The following rules and regulations apply to student drivers.

- Obey traffic directions of any teacher or administrative staff member.
- Obey the speed limit of 5 MPH in the parking lot.
- Reckless driving is unacceptable.
- Buses/vans always have the right-of-way.
- Students are not to return to their cars during the school day (including lunchtime) unless they receive permission from the school office.
- Student drivers may not display any bumper stickers etc. on or in their cars that depict ideas or persons that are inconsistent with Christian values.
- Student passengers of a student driver, other than immediate family members, must have written parental approval on file in the school office. The driver must also have written

parental approval to transport other students.

- FCS is not responsible for any damage that may occur to vehicles while parked in the school parking lot (during school hours and /or after hours). FCS cannot be responsible for stolen or lost items.

SCHOOL CANCELLATION POLICY

If the weather conditions are severe enough to cancel school - please listen to the following media outlets for cancellation. We will follow the **Gettysburg Area School District for closings and delays**. We will send out messages through ***CLASSDOJO*** to keep families abreast of any schedule changes due to the weather. At no time should the school be called for this information. We must keep the telephone lines open for emergency use. Your cooperation will be appreciated.

- WGAL Lancaster Channel 8
- ABC Channel 27

NOTE- There is a “New Freedom Christian School” that broadcasts their delays and closings on the radio and TV. Please do not confuse our school with theirs.

If FCS has a scheduled half-day of school AND inclement weather causes a 2-hour delay – FCS will be CLOSED for that day.

Also, please note that any time we have a 2-hour delay at the start of school, there will be no Pre-School or 1/2-day Kindergarten class held that day. 1/2-day seniors DO NOT need to come to school but must check in with their teachers.

ELECTRONIC SNOW DAY

To maintain continuity in education, FCS has developed a plan for snow days. This plan is to utilize the technology that we have available through ClassDojo, Zoom, Moodle (high school students are already aware of this), email and prepared snow day packets.

As we hear about upcoming storms, we will put together “snow day packets” or have them available online (MS/HS) so that students will be able to accomplish work at home and it will not hinder our educational process. Students will be able to contact their teachers through email or ClassDojo to ask questions if needed. There are a variety of educational tools that will be used during these times. If we receive 70% participation on these assignments, it is considered a school day, and we will not have to make up this day.

As parents partnering with us, you will be a vital key to helping us to succeed in this. Please make the school aware if you do not have internet access available. If the electricity is out or Wi-Fi is down due to the weather, please make sure to communicate with us so that your child will be excused if that was a part of their assignment. In these situations, teachers will work with your students to make up the electronic assignments. We also need you to help to guide them in creating a balance between “snow day fun” and completing the assignments that have been sent home with them. Please feel free to contact individual teachers with any questions about this.

LOCKERS AND LOCKER USE

The school provides a locker for each student in grades 4-12. These will be assigned and recorded by the office. A student is NOT permitted to use or open any other locker than the one that is assigned to him/her. Sharing lockers is NOT permitted. Students should not store valuables (including money) in their lockers. The school cannot be responsible for stolen or lost items. These lockers are the possession of the school, so the school reserves the right to inspect any locker without a student's permission, as well as have regular locker inspections. A student will be required to remove any objectionable items.

Locks are available to purchase from the office for \$10.00. No personal locks are permitted. No stickers of any kind may ever be used on the inside or outside of a locker. Only magnets or magnetic strips may be used. Decorations on the outside of a locker may be removed for any reason by the principal. Gym bags and backpacks are to be placed inside the locker during the school day. Lockers are off-limits during class periods unless the student has permission from the classroom teacher.

LOST and FOUND

Clothing and unmarked personal items left on the playground, in hallways, lobbies, outside of the lockers and other areas in the school will be placed in the Lost and Found.

Lost and found items are located in the school office. **Parents can help alleviate the build-up of articles in the lost and found by marking your child's name on all items, coats, sweaters, jackets, lunchboxes, and other personal items.** It is helpful for parents to instruct & remind their children to take care of all clothing and personal items. FCS assumes no responsibility for lost items. Items left at the end of the school year will be donated.

SPORTS

FCS Lions Sports teaches Teamwork, Leadership, Sportsmanship, Integrity, and Responsibility. This is a new program and sports offered are subject to change depending upon the interest and student participation for the sports. More information about each sport will be given out before the season begins.

There may be a fee to participate in sports to cover the cost of uniforms, rental fees, and additional costs. Partial scholarships may be available for those in financial need.

Anyone participating in sports should read the FCS Athletic Handbook (available digitally on our website or printed copy upon request only).

Sports Physicals:

In order to play any sport at FCS, a student athlete must have a physical prior to playing. Physicals must be obtained prior to the start of the first season a student athlete wishes to play and will be good for a year from the date of the physical.

CURRICULUM

Freedom Christian Schools uses the traditional classroom approach to learning based on the Christian point of view. We DO NOT support or implement CRT in the classroom. We also reject the humanistic philosophy of encouraging the child to set the educational standards of the classroom. We believe the teacher should be the authority figure in the classroom ~ the "living curriculum " (Philippians 4:9). Our primary purpose is to provide a sound scholastic environment while maintaining high academic standards. We primarily use A-Beka curriculum in grades Preschool

– 6; while A-Beka, Bob Jones, and ACSI curriculums are primarily used in grades 7 –12.

STANDARIZED TESTING

Stanford Achievement Testing (SAT) are administered to grades Kindergarten through 10th yearly in the spring.

Why do we do testing?

- It provides a consistent way to assess student knowledge across different schools.
- It helps identify areas where students excel or struggle, allowing interventions
- It holds teachers accountable for student performance & curriculum improvement.
- It helps parents and students track progress over time.
- It helps highlight achievement gaps
- It prepares students for higher education.

PRESCHOOL & KINDERGARTEN GRADING SYSTEM

A letter grading system is used:

E = Excellent

G = Good

S = Satisfactory

N = Needs Improvement

U = Unsatisfactory

N/A = Not Applicable

The progress report / report card will be issued at the end of each nine (9) week marking period. Progress reports / Report cards must be signed by a parent / guardian and returned by the designated date in the envelope provided.

GRADING SYSTEM ~ GRADES 1 – 12

The purpose of our grading system is to give parents and students an indication of the progress which is being made. Each student's ability, attitude, and application are taken into account in the grading process.

The school year is divided into four (4), nine (9) week marking periods. Report cards are issued at the end of each period. Report cards are for parents / guardians to keep. Report card envelopes must be signed by a parent / guardian and returned by the designated date on the envelope. In addition, progress reports are sent home at the halfway point within each marking period. Progress reports must be signed by a parent / guardian and returned, in the envelope provided, by the indicated date.

GRADING SCALE

Letter	Percent	GPA*	Letter	Percent	GPA*
A+	98 – 100	4.3	C+	80 – 82	2.3
A	95 – 97	4.0	C	77 – 79	2.0
A-	92 – 94	3.7	C-	74 – 76	1.7
B+	89 – 91	3.3	D+	71 – 73	1.3
B	86 – 88	3.0	D	68 – 70	1.0
B-	83 – 85	2.7	D-	65 – 67	0.7

*GPA – Grade Point Average

HONOR ROLL REQUIREMENTS (Grades 4 – 12)

Distinguished Honors	Straight A's.
Honors	Combination of A's and B's or all A's with one C
Honorable Mention	Combination of at least one A, B's, and no more than one C.

For subjects given a Pass (P) or Fail (F) grade – If a grade of (P) is earned, honor roll ranking will not be affected. If a student earns an (F), the failing grade will keep them off the honor roll.

Music, Art, Physical Education, and Penmanship (Grades 4-6)

O Outstanding

S Satisfactory

N (Needs improvement) will not keep off the Honor Roll

U (Unsatisfactory) will keep off Honor Roll

INCOMPLETE GRADES

Students who receive an incomplete grade on either a progress report or report card will be addressed on an individual basis by the principal. It is the responsibility of the student to complete all missing assignments. Failure to do this may result in the “I” become an “F”.

Promotion from grade to grade is based on the accumulated minimum number of credits listed as follows:

End of 9th grade – 5 credits

End of 10th grade – 10 credits

End of 11th grade – 15 credits

Credit Recovery - If a student's final average for the year is an F, he/she will be required to retake the course. Credits earned outside the normal school day/ school year must be approved by the principal. Students may take the required course through our online academy called Ignitia. Credit recovery grades below a D- will not be accepted for credit.

CHEATING

Any student caught cheating may receive a zero on the work involved and may be referred to the administration. Original work is expected for all work assigned by a teacher. Students must be given special permission to work in groups for part of or for the entire assignment. Students must realize that the one who gives illicit answers is just as guilty of cheating as the student who receives them. Students in positions of leadership may be asked to relinquish their positions as a consequence of cheating.

Plagiarism is using someone else's words or ideas without giving proper credit to the person who devised them. It is wrong to plagiarize whether you do it deliberately or thoughtlessly. The most blatant kind of plagiarism is submitting another person's paper or someone else's writing as your own. Letting a reader think you did work that you really did not do is cheating.

A more subtle kind of plagiarism is to let your reader think that certain words, phrases or ideas are your own when they are, in fact, the property of other people you failed to acknowledge.

Paraphrases and summaries, as well as individual groups of words - facts, opinions or ideas - may be plagiarized. Changing a word here and there or changing singular to plural will not protect you from the concept of plagiarism. Even presenting common knowledge (meaning: can it be found in 100+

sources or books) in somebody else's words, without credit, is plagiarism. Plagiarism is a form of cheating and will be dealt with as such. This includes submitting any AI applications as original student work.

AI Policy for Students in the K-12 Educational Environment

Introduction to Artificial Intelligence (AI):

Artificial Intelligence (AI) refers to the simulation of human intelligence in machines that are programmed to think and learn. It can perform tasks that typically require human intelligence, such as understanding language, recognizing patterns, solving problems, and making decisions. In the educational context, AI can support personalized learning, automate administrative tasks, and provide interactive and engaging learning experiences. As AI technologies evolve, it is imperative to establish clear guidelines to leverage these tools effectively and ethically within our K-12 schools.

Purpose:

This policy outlines the principles and rules governing the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools by students within the K-12 educational environment. The aim is to ensure that students engage with AI technologies responsibly, ethically, and effectively to enhance their learning experiences while safeguarding their privacy and well-being.

Policy Scope:

This policy applies to all AI technologies and platforms accessed or used by students within the school premises, for school-related tasks, or through school-provided devices and networks.

Responsible AI Use:

Educational Purpose:

Students must use AI tools solely for educational purposes, as directed by teachers or school authorities. Using AI for non-educational activities or submitting AI work as original student work within the school context is prohibited.

Ethical Conduct:

Students are expected to use AI technologies ethically, respecting copyright laws, privacy norms, and the intellectual property rights of others. AI should not be used to engage in plagiarism, cheating, or any form of dishonesty in academic work. AI work must not be submitted in the place of student work.

Privacy and Data Protection:

Students must be cautious when interacting with AI tools that require personal information. Sharing sensitive or personal data without proper authorization or oversight is prohibited. Students should understand the risks and implications of data sharing and seek guidance from teachers when necessary.

Respectful Interaction:

Any form of communication with or through AI tools, including chatbots or virtual assistants, must adhere to the same standards of respect and decency expected in human interactions. Abusive, harmful, or disrespectful conduct through AI platforms is unacceptable.

Safety and Security:

Students must not use AI to access or disseminate harmful or inappropriate content. They should immediately report any security breaches, suspicious activities, or exposure to inappropriate content encountered during AI use to school authorities.

Resource Responsibility:

AI resources, such as software, chatbots, or assistants should be used responsibly and not abused for the ease of use in creating original content. Students should ensure that AI tools are used responsibly, without unnecessary ethical implications.

Monitoring and Compliance:

The school will monitor the use of AI technologies to ensure compliance with this policy. Monitoring will be conducted in an ethical manner, respecting the privacy and rights of students.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including but not limited to, restriction of access to AI resources, educational interventions, or other disciplinary measures as deemed appropriate by the school administration.

1st Offense: Forfeiture of grade on assignments and a teacher conference.

2nd Offense: Forfeiture of grade on assignments and a parent/teacher conference.

3rd Offense: Forfeiture of grade on assignments and an administrator conference.

All additional offenses will be handled by administration.

Review and Update:

This policy will be reviewed and updated annually to reflect new developments in AI technology, changes in legal and ethical standards, and the evolving needs of the educational environment.

Conclusion:

The responsible use of AI by students in the K-12 educational setting is essential for fostering a safe, ethical, and productive learning environment. By adhering to this policy, students will be better equipped to leverage AI technologies for their educational advancement while respecting the norms and values of our school community.

MATH ACADEMIC PATHWAY (Middle/High School)**Expectations:**

Fundamental Math, Pre-Algebra & Algebra 1 students with a B- or higher will advance to the next level math class. Students with a C or lower will be handled on a case-by-case basis in order to determine whether to continue to the next class or take a continuation course (Fundamental Math B/ Algebra 1B) to reinforce skills.

Reasoning:

Sometimes, students need an additional year for their brains to mature and be able to understand the deeper concepts of advanced math. These additional courses (in which they will still earn credit) are not an exact repetition of the previous class but builds upon those concepts to strengthen the student's overall skills to help them be successful in the next level class.

TEACHER ASSISTANTS

Purpose and Qualifications: The objective is for students to explore one of the following areas: teaching, office management, music, and business department. Students receive one credit and serve in lieu of an academic course. To be eligible, the Teaching Assistants (TA) must be in 11th or 12th grade, have a GPA of 2.0 or higher, and have been enrolled for at least one semester. **THE STUDENT MUST ASK AND GET PERMISSION FOR THE TEACHER/SUPERVISOR TO BE HIS/HER TA FOR THE SEMESTER.**

Responsibilities and Expectations: Students may be required to do the following: cleaning, organizing equipment, collating papers, creating bulletin boards, mentoring other students, moving equipment, assisting in event prep, and entering data into computer programs. Teacher Assistants are required to contact their staff members to report any absence due to illness or student activity. All Teacher Assistants are under a confidentiality requirement and are not to discuss specific students or classroom events with others. In lieu of the above statement, any signs of child abuse must be reported to the staff member and/or a school administrator. Teacher Assistants should not be left alone with a student and refrain from physical contact with students.

Assessment: It will be the responsibility of the Teaching Assistant to collect the weekly grading rubric from their assigned staff member. Rubric forms should then be submitted by 3 pm Friday to the main office. The grading of the Teaching Assistant will be based on: attendance, attitude, duties fulfilled, initiative, and data collection. In addition to the weekly rubric, all Teaching Assistants are expected to complete a "TA Semester Project". This final project can consist of: teaching a lesson, designing a classroom display, creating a reflection PowerPoint on the role of the TA, or designing an original project. All final projects should be approved by the assigned staff member and submitted at least two weeks prior to the end of the semester.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Students wishing to receive a Freedom Christian Schools diploma must accumulate a minimum of twenty (20) credits. The following must be part of a graduate's program, as mandated by

Pennsylvania State law:

- Four Years of ENGLISH
- Three Years of MATHEMATICS
- Three Years of SCIENCE
- Three Years of SOCIAL STUDIES (must have American Government)
- Two Years of ARTS AND HUMANITIES
- Two Years of PE / HEALTH
- ½ credit FINANCIAL LITERACY
- 25 Service Hours / High School Years

Bible classes fulfill requirements for Arts and Humanities; however, it should be noted that students in grades 9 - 12 **MUST** receive a Bible credit for every year that they attend FCS to graduate.

VALEDICTORIAN AND SALUTATORIAN ELIGIBILITY

Valedictorian and salutatorian eligibility is based upon the student's freshman, sophomore, junior and first three quarters of his/her senior year for both academic and Christian character. Transfer students may be eligible if they are enrolled for seven (7) consecutive quarters beginning his/her junior year. Students skipping a year of academics will not be eligible. The Valedictorian and salutatorian do not automatically give speeches at graduation. The leadership team will decide on graduation speakers.

FREEDOM CHRISTIAN VIRTUE AWARD

The vision of FCS is to help our students become "Students who walk humbly, confident in Christ, according to their calling."

As educators, we are encouraging students to seek a deeper relationship with Christ and to search for God's purpose in their lives. When we see students consistently exhibiting attributes and characteristics according to scripture (Philippians 2:1-5), we want to honor that accomplishment. That is why the Freedom Christian Virtue Award was established for the graduating class of 2025.

Philippians 2:1-5: Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, ² then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. ³ Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, ⁴ not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

⁵ *In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:*

CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

The core focus of discipline is to train the heart. There are two drawbacks to this approach...

Only God knows the heart.

Only God can change the heart.

This, however, does not negate the calling of adults to address the heart of a child. We must partner with parents to train the child and guide them to do what is pleasing to the Lord by instilling Christian values.

For any organization or institution to operate efficiently, it must have certain rules of conduct and courtesy that must be followed. The Bible teaches that God is not the author of confusion. The Christian life should be marked by self-control and honorable conduct. We offer the rules below for what we feel are essential rules of conduct and procedure in this school. These rules will be taught to the students and consistently enforced by the teachers in the classroom and throughout the school. At the teacher's discretion, other rules for a particular classroom may be made if they are in keeping with the general policies and spirit of the school.

Below you will find a list which we will use to aid us in getting to the heart of the child. This list is not exhaustive, but it is a great starting point to build the foundation of a child's God-ward orientation.

- Attitude: take ownership of your attitude. All actions, attitudes and thoughts should bring glory to God. Disrespect toward teachers, disobedience and mocking behavior during classes or chapel is unacceptable.

- Honesty: take ownership of your actions by being a person of character. A student should not lie, cheat (includes but not limited to plagiarism and copying on tests, quizzes, or homework).
- Respect Authority: be respectful and submit to the authority of teachers, school personnel and volunteers. Do not disrupt the class. Resolve conflicts after class by speaking to the teacher privately.
- Respect Property: be respectful of others' property. Do not steal or destroy or damage school property or others property.
- Encourage Others: build others up. Fighting, harassment, bullying, profanity or using the Lord's name in vain is prohibited. Mocking behavior or stirring up dissension by gossiping or threatening is not allowed. No use of profanity, sexual innuendos, or racial slurs at any time.
- Purity: the body is the temple of God. Inappropriate or obscene behavior, materials or discussions are not allowed. Use of alcohol, tobacco, illegal narcotics, and weapons are strictly prohibited and will be referred to the police.

SAFE 2 SAY PROGRAM

Each year in schools and communities across the United States, there are millions of youth who hurt themselves or others through verbal, physical and digital means. These behaviors can cause youth to experience emotional trauma and physical injury, mental health or wellness issues, stress, anxiety, and/or feelings of being unsafe. Too often the outcome results in self-harm, suicide or homicide.

The Safe2Say Something system teaches youth and adults how to recognize warning signs and signals, especially within social media, of individuals who may be a threat to themselves or others and say something, using our anonymous reporting system, BEFORE it is too late.

Safe2Say Something, a school safety program, is an anonymous way for you to submit a tip to your school. You do not need to share your name, phone number or anything unless you want to.

What types of things should I report?

If it makes you uncomfortable, submit a tip. It will be up to your school to determine what the next steps are. Do you think someone is going to harm themselves? Did you see something scary that concerns you online? Submit this kind of thing.

Safe2Say Something is the easiest way to let someone know that there is a problem and let them handle it. The best part is, they will never know who it was that submitted it. It's that simple. Below is the link to submit a tip. There is also a link on the FCS website.

<https://www.p3campus.com/tipform.aspx?ID=3085&C=e780ab>

Due to new legislation, schools are required to communicate incidents of weapons found on school premises to parents and staff. Though this is an infrequent occurrence and may not be a viable threat, parents will still be notified. This new procedure does NOT mean that the school is less safe, but that the communication is improving between the school and parents.

Students and staff will have periodic training to ensure everyone understands how to use Safe 2 Say Something Program as well as the importance of communication and safety.

DRUG POLICY

Any student determined to be using or dealing illegal drugs will be immediately suspended and be considered for expulsion. Any activity considered to be "substance use, abuse, and/or dependency" (i.e., alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs, prescription drugs, over the counter drugs, natural substances, etc.) will also be considered under this policy. This policy applies to all school-related activities.

WEAPONS POLICY

Pennsylvania law (18 Pa.C.S. § 912) strictly prohibits possessing weapons—including firearms, knives, and any tool capable of inflicting serious bodily injury—in school buildings, on school grounds, or on school transportation. Act 26 mandates a minimum one-year expulsion for students violating this policy. Effective Jan 2026, Act 44 requires schools to notify parents/employees of weapon incidents within 24 hours.

A student bringing anything that could be used as a weapon (pocketknife, etc.) to school will have the item confiscated and returned at the discretion of the principal. If a student uses anything as a weapon, it will be considered a weapon, and the student will be immediately suspended and referred to school authorities for consideration for expulsion.

For those special cases when a student receives permission from the school principal to bring a weapon to school (i.e., Civil War musket, etc.), the weapon will be turned over to the principal or proper school authority for safe keeping immediately upon arrival at school. At the time of its demonstration, the principal or other responsible adult will transport the weapon to its place of demonstration. Following that, the weapon will be returned to the principal or proper authority for safekeeping until school is out for the day.

Weapons will not be carried on school buses for any reason; therefore, the student will have to make special transportation plans for that day.

BULLYING

Bullying, cyber-bullying, and social aggression will be dealt with using the same framework as that cited for harassment. The definition of bullying is as follows: "Bullying means any intentional written, electronic, verbal, or physical act or actions against another person that will have the effect of:

- Placing a person in reasonable fear of substantial harm to his or her emotional or physical well-being or substantial damage to his or her property.
- Creating a hostile, threatening, humiliating, or abusive educational environment due to the pervasiveness or persistence of actions or due to a power differential between the bully and the target.
- Interfering with a student or staff member having a safe school environment that is necessary to facilitate education performance, opportunities, or benefits.
- Perpetuating bullying by inciting, soliciting, or coercing an individual or group to demean, dehumanize, embarrass, or cause emotional, psychological, or physical harm to another person." ("Delaware Senate Bill – Bullying." Bullypolice.org. N. p., 2019. Web 11 June 2019.)

The three types of bullying most apparent, whether aggressive or passive, are:

- Physical: includes actions such as pushing, tripping, and hitting and fighting.
- Social or Relational: the “use of peer pressure and manipulation to isolate a target and hurt his or her feelings.”
- Verbal: includes actions such as teasing, mocking, threatening, and taunting. This type of bullying includes spreading rumors, gossip, and lies. (“Bullying in Schools.” Google Books. N.p.,2019, Web.11 June 2019.)

Cyber-bullying is when bullying takes place via cell phones, instant messages, social network sites, chat rooms, video games, or any other communication via electronic or internet means. (“Bullying in Schools.” Google Books. N. p., 2019, Web 11 June 2019.)

Written threats should be printed out or screenshot, and cell phone messages should be saved. After reviewing all the facts, the administration will make a determination concerning whether harassment or bullying has occurred. Consequences will be determined based on the context, severity, and impact of the harassment or the bullying. The consequences may include detentions, suspensions, or expulsion.

HARASSMENT POLICY

The school considers harassment to include physical conduct, verbal conduct, or cyber-bullying. Actions are considered harassment or bullying whether or not they take place in person, via electronic transmission, gesture, or any other form of communication toward any individual based upon his or her created gender, race, ancestry, appearance, mental ability, disability, handicap, or any other characteristic that would be reasonably perceived as harassment, bullying, threats, humiliation, endangerment, or de-valuing in any way on or off school campus. This policy includes the ban of any form of intimidation, violence, prejudice, and/or any other dehumanizing expression.

Any form of harassment, including sexual harassment, racial discrimination or harassment, and derogatory comments or bullying, is absolutely prohibited. Sexual harassment includes:

- Unwanted sexual advances such as making or threatening reprisals after a negative response to advances.
- Visual conduct such as leering, making sexual gestures, and displaying sexually suggestive objects/pictures.
- Verbal conduct such as making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs, and jokes; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; graphic verbal commentaries about an individual’s body.
- Sexually degrading words used to describe an individual.
- Suggestive or obscene letters, notes, or invitations both in person and through social media, texting or emailing.
- Physical conduct: touching, assault, impeding, or blocking movement.

Assaults of any kind including transporting persons against their will, hazing of any kind including throwing or smearing food and drinks, or cyber-bullying of any kind may result in suspension or dismissal.

Racial discrimination includes racial slurs, jokes, epithets, or any other form of communication that could be considered demeaning to another race or nationality. Racial harassment could include any

negative treatment of individuals based solely on their race, nationality, or family background/heritage.

Any incident of possible harassment, discrimination, or bullying should be brought immediately to the attention of an administrator who will thoroughly investigate the matter in confidence. After reviewing all the facts, the administration will make a determination concerning whether reasonable grounds exist to believe that harassment has occurred. Any consequences will be determined based on the context, severity, and impact of the harassment or the bullying by the principal and FCS Leadership Team. Suspension or expulsion could result.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

FCS will not tolerate verbal or physical conduct by or against any employee or student that harasses, disrupts, or interferes with another's work or academic performance or that creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile environment. While all forms of harassment are prohibited, FCS emphasizes that sexual harassment is specially prohibited.

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. No student shall threaten or insinuate, either explicitly or implicitly, that another student's refusal to submit to sexual advances will result in negative consequences.

Any student who feels they are being sexually harassed should immediately bring the matter to the principal, who will bring the matter to the leadership team. All allegations will be investigated as discreetly, and confidentially as possible and appropriate corrective action will be taken if warranted. Suspension or expulsion could result.

PHYSICAL/SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

- Inappropriate public displays of romantic affection (i.e., holding hands, kissing, excessive hugging)
- The possession and/or distribution of pornographic materials and information, including the distribution of sexually suggestive material via cell phones, computers, or any other electronic devices.
- Possession of impure or suggestive literature, writing, symbols, drawings, or recordings (audio or video). Distribution of such will result in a more severe penalty.
- Sexually harassing another individual (see Anti-Harassment Policy)
- Immoral sexual conduct (including, but not limited to, homosexuality or extramarital sex activity)

HARASSMENT/INTIMIDATION

- Sexual harassment including all acts of a sexual nature, whether verbal or physical, which are unsolicited, unwelcome, inappropriate, and/or demeaning, which interfere with an individual's performance or which create an intimidating, hostile or offensive atmosphere.
- Physical harassment, including threats or intimidation of any nature, or inappropriate verbal or physical conduct which creates a hostile, offensive or fearful environment. Examples of threats or intimidation include, but are not limited to provoking a fight, fighting, bullying,

acts that inflict injury or damage, and/or acts intended to control by fear and/or intimidation.

VERBAL BEHAVIOR

- Language and/or gestures that are vulgar, obscene, offensive, derogatory, or disrespectful will result in disciplinary action. The believer's talk should build up, not put them down.

CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATIONS

The consequences will be determined by the principal for the above-listed violations. Some consequences, depending upon the severity, will receive greater consequences such as suspension, loss of privilege or expulsion. For any offense not listed, the administration has the right to assign consequences.

DETENTION

Detention Guidelines

1. Are scheduled for 1 hour at the supervising teacher's discretion.
2. Must be on time.
3. Must remain in school dress code while serving detention.
4. Will not be permitted to talk or communicate in any way.
5. Will not be permitted to have or use electronics.
6. Will not be permitted to eat or drink.
7. Will not be permitted to do any homework.
8. Will not be allowed to sleep.
9. May include maintenance or cleaning duties.

SUSPENSION

The administration may assign a suspension as the appropriate consequence. The duration of the suspension and whether it will be served as an in-school suspension, or an out-of-school suspension will be determined by the principal depending upon the severity of the offense. Parents of the suspended student will be informed by letter/phone and may be asked to come to school for a conference before the student will be allowed to return to school.

DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE

The disciplinary committee will meet when a student has accumulated a combination of five (5) detentions or suspensions, two (2) suspensions within a given academic year, or by recommendation of the principal. The purpose of the Disciplinary Committee is to determine probation and a student's terms of probation. The administration will make decisions whether a student will be dismissed or expelled from Freedom Christian Schools.

DISCIPLINARY PROBATION

Probation gives the student an opportunity to correct his/her problem behavior. Students, once placed upon probation, will remain on probation until released by the disciplinary committee. If a student does not meet the terms of probation, he/she will be expelled. Administration will meet at the end of an academic year to determine the student's probationary status or dismissal.

ADMINISTRATION DECISION CONCERNING DISMISSAL

A student completing an academic year may not be allowed to return for the following year due to an administrative decision, regardless of whether the student was placed on probation or not. There may be times the administration will choose not to allow a student to return for various discipline issues, a negative impact upon the student body or a combination of a poor attitude and poor academics. These decisions will usually be made near the end of the fourth quarter or after the conclusion of the school year. A student who has been dismissed will be considered for readmission after a minimum of one year from the time of dismissal and can only re-enter during a new academic year.

EXPULSION

A student will be expelled from Freedom Christian Schools for failing to meet the stated expectations and/or a single incident determined by the principal. A student who has been expelled will be considered for readmission after a minimum of one year from the time of expulsion and can only re-enter during a new academic year (August) and upon the approval of the Disciplinary Team.

SCHOOL WIDE RULES – Grades 7-12

The purpose of FCS is to partner with parents in guiding students in the pursuit of excellence through Christ in all areas of life, including self-discipline. FCS carries out its role in the process by ensuring a stable, encouraging, and educational environment through the framework of school expectations. All the following expectations are school rules and will be enforced, but with less immediate consequences than violations of the Christian values listed previously.

INFRACTIONS:

For the following School Rules Violations, if a student receives two infractions within the month, the student will receive an after-school detention. On the first of each month, the student's School Rules record will be wiped clean, and they will have a clean slate for the next month.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIORS:

If a student is not following classroom procedures, a teacher may give an infraction. If the student immediately changes their behavior, the student will talk with the teacher after class and the infraction may be voided. If the behavior continues, escalates or the disrespectful behavior is exhibited then the infraction will be sent to the principal. Parents will be contacted with each infraction. If a student accumulates 3 within a month the student will receive an after-school detention.

DRESS CODE

The dress and hygiene codes at FCS are established to provide comfort and modesty in the classroom. While emergency situations do arise, please understand that lack of time to launder or prepare clothing is not an acceptable excuse to dress improperly. Students will be warned, and parents will be notified of each instance. Chronic disregard for the dress code could result in detention, suspension, or expulsion. If a situation arises that there will be a deviation of the dress code guidelines, it **MUST** be pre-approved by the FCS school administration.

SAFETY PROCEDURES

Safety Procedures are in place to keep students safe. Students are expected to follow the guidance of a teacher in these situations. Disregard for procedures or disrespect toward teachers will not be tolerated as it can put others in harm.

LATE TO HOMEROOM / CLASS

Students must be in homeroom (first period class) by 8:30 A.M. and punctual to the other classes. If not, they will be marked tardy. If the student thinks the tardy is unexcused or if the student came in after 8:45 he/she must report to the office. Acceptable excuses for being late to homeroom would include 1) busing problems and 2) medical appointment (doctor/dentist note will be required). If a student is consistently late to homeroom or classes, they may begin to receive infractions.

PHYSICAL CONTACT (PDA)

No physical contact (public displays of affection) is permitted from the time of arrival until students are off school property.

Healthy friendships between boys and girls are acceptable & allowed, however, students should refrain from public displays of affection during the school day or during any school function where the student is under FCS supervision (including) but not limited to field trips, athletic events, dances, productions, etc.

SCHOOL RULE VIOLATIONS WITH MORE IMMEDIATE CONSEQUENCES

FCS strives to carry out its role by ensuring a stable, encouraging, educational environment through a framework of school expectations. All the following expectations are considered school rules and will be enforced, but with more immediate consequences than violations of the school rules listed previously.

PERMISSION SLIPS/ RETURNING BROWN ENVELOPES

Any form that needs to be turned into the office or to a teacher needs to be turned in the day assigned by the teacher or administration. If the form, slip, progress report, report card envelope etc. is not turned in by the assigned due date, the student will receive a lunch detention until it is turned in. A parent may contact the school personally if it was an oversight of the parent to prevent the child from receiving the lunch detention for that day, but the student will only receive one (1) day of grace and must turn it in the next school day.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

While in the classroom, students will be given access to the school's iPads, Chromebooks, and other such devices to meet their technological needs. Exceptions may be given for approved students (especially 11-12th graders*) to use their personal laptops in school for specifically approved purposes, with the understanding that they are solely responsible for the protection of their device, and that its use is subject to the policies of their individual teachers.

*As an upper classroom privilege Jr & Sr's are allowed to carry & use their personal laptops in class during appropriate times but must be put away when asked by the teachers. If computer is used inappropriately, they follow same infraction policy as all other behavioral issues

FREEDOM CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS ACCEPTABLE USE AGREEMENT FOR INTERNET AND OTHER ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

Freedom Christian Schools recognizes the value of computer and other electronic resources to improve student learning and enhance the administration and operation of its schools. To this end, Freedom Christian Schools encourages the responsible use of computers; computer networks, including the Internet; and other electronic resources in support of the mission and goals of Freedom Christian Schools.

Because the Internet is an unregulated, worldwide vehicle for communication, information available to staff and students is impossible to control. Therefore, Freedom Christian Schools adopts this policy governing the voluntary use of electronic resources and the Internet in order to provide guidance to individuals and groups obtaining access to these resources on Freedom Christian Schools owned equipment.

Freedom Christian Schools Rights and Responsibilities

It is the policy of Freedom Christian Schools to maintain an environment that promotes ethical and responsible conduct in all online network activities by staff and students. It shall be a violation of this policy for any employee, student, or other individual to engage in any activity that does not conform to the established purpose and general rules and policies of the network. Within this general policy, Freedom Christian Schools recognizes its legal and ethical obligation to protect the well-being of students in its charge.

Freedom Christian Schools retains the following rights and recognizes the following obligations:

1. To log network use and to monitor space utilization by users and assume no responsibility or liability for files deleted due to violation of space allotments.
2. To remove a user account from the network.
3. To monitor the use of online activities. This may include real-time monitoring of network activity and/or maintaining a log of Internet activity for later review.
4. To provide internal and external controls as appropriate and feasible. Such controls shall include the right to determine who will have access to Freedom Christian Schools owned equipment and, specifically, to exclude those who do not abide by Freedom Christian Schools' acceptable use policy or other policies governing the use of school facilities, equipment, and materials. Freedom Christian Schools reserves the right to restrict online destinations through software or other means.
5. To provide guidelines and make reasonable efforts to train staff and students in acceptable use and policies governing online communications.

Staff Responsibilities

1. Staff members who supervise students, control electronic equipment, or otherwise have occasion to observe student use of said equipment online shall make reasonable efforts to monitor the use of this equipment to assure that it conforms to the mission and goals of the Freedom Christian Schools.
2. Staff should make reasonable efforts to become familiar with the Internet and its use so that effective monitoring, instruction, and assistance may be achieved.

User Responsibilities

Use of the electronic media provided by Freedom Christian Schools is a privilege that offers a wealth of information and resources for research. Where it is available, this resource is offered to staff, students, and other patrons at no cost. In order to maintain the privilege, users agree to learn and comply with all of the provisions of this policy.

Acceptable Use

1. All use of the Internet must be in support of educational and research objectives consistent with the mission and objectives of Freedom Christian Schools.
2. Proper codes of conduct in electronic communication must be used. In news groups, giving out personal information is inappropriate. When using e-mail, extreme caution must always be taken in revealing any information of personal nature.
3. Network accounts are to be used only by the authorized owner of the account for the authorized purpose.
4. All communications and information accessible via the network should be assumed to be private property.
5. Subscriptions to mailing lists and bulletin boards must be reported to the system administrator. Prior approval for such subscriptions is required for students and staff.
6. Mailing list subscriptions will be monitored and maintained, and files will be deleted from the personal mail directories to avoid excessive use of fileserver hard-disk space.
7. Exhibit exemplary behavior on the network as a representative of your school and community. Be polite!
8. From time to time, Freedom Christian Schools will make determinations on whether specific uses of the network are consistent with the acceptable use practice.

Unacceptable Use

1. Giving out personal information about another person, including home address and phone number, is strictly prohibited.
2. Any use of the network for commercial or profit purposes is prohibited.
3. Excessive use of the network for personal business shall be cause for disciplinary action.
4. Any use of the network for product advertising or political lobbying is prohibited.
5. Users shall not intentionally seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify files, other data, or passwords belonging to other users, or misrepresent other users on the network.
6. No use of the network shall serve to disrupt the use of the network by others. Hardware and/or software shall not be destroyed, modified, or abused in any way.
7. Malicious use of the network to develop programs that harass other users or infiltrate a computer or computing system and/or damage the software components of a computer or computing system is prohibited.
8. Hate mail, chain letters, harassment, discriminatory remarks, and other antisocial behaviors are prohibited on the network.
9. The unauthorized installation of any software, including shareware and freeware, for use on Freedom Christian Schools computers is prohibited.
10. Use of the network to access or process pornographic material, inappropriate text files (as determined by the system administrator or building administrator), or files dangerous to the integrity of the local area network is prohibited.
11. Freedom Christian Schools network may not be used for downloading entertainment software or other files not related to the mission and objectives of Freedom Christian Schools for transfer to a user's home computer, personal computer, or other media. This prohibition pertains to freeware, shareware, copyrighted commercial and non-commercial

software, and all other forms of software and files not directly related to the instructional and administrative purposes of Freedom Christian Schools.

12. Downloading, copying, otherwise duplicating, and/or distributing copyrighted materials without the specific written permission of the copyright owner is prohibited, except that duplication and/or distribution of materials for educational purposes is permitted when such duplication and/or distribution would fall within the Fair Use Doctrine of the United States Copyright Law (Title 17, USC).

13. Use of the network for any unlawful purpose is prohibited.

14. Use of profanity, obscenity, racist terms, or other language that may be offensive to another user is prohibited.

15. Playing games is prohibited unless specifically authorized by a teacher for instructional purposes.

16. Establishing network or Internet connections to live communications, including voice and/or video (relay chat), is prohibited unless specifically authorized by the system administrator.

Disclaimer

1. Freedom Christian Schools cannot be held accountable for the information that is retrieved via the network.

2. Pursuant to the Electronic Communications Privacy Act of 1986 (18 USC 2510 et seq.), notice is hereby given that there are no facilities provided by this system for sending or receiving private or confidential electronic communications. System administrators have access to all mail and will monitor messages. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities will be reported to the appropriate authorities.

3. Freedom Christian Schools will not be responsible for any damages you may suffer, including loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by our own negligence or your errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained is at your own risk.

4. Freedom Christian Schools makes no warranties (expressed or implied) with respect to: o the content of any advice or information received by a user, or any costs or charges incurred as a result of seeing or accepting any information; and o any costs, liability, or damages caused by the way the user chooses to use his or her access to the network.

5. Freedom Christian Schools reserves the right to change its policies and rules at any time.

ELECTRONIC DEVICE PRIVILEGE

Device usage is a privilege at FCS, not a right. Laptop usage is only permitted when instructed by a teacher to do so. The following consequences will occur:

1st **Offense:** Loss of Privilege for one week

2nd **Offense:** Loss of Privilege for one month

3rd **Offense:** Loss of Privilege for the remainder of the school year

CELL PHONES/MOBILE DEVICES

We understand that many of our students have one or more mobile devices on their person for a wide range of uses. While on the school grounds, students should place all electronic devices in the locked case kept in the office and receive them prior to leaving the building. Outside of school

hours, students are certainly encouraged to use their phones, and other devices to connect with teachers through the use of ClassDojo, Moodle, google accounts, and many other web-based applications which we will employ to stay better connected.

Smart watches and other related electronics can be restricted at the administration and each teacher's discretion, should they become a hindrance or distraction to themselves or others. **Students should not use smartwatches to text or call during the school day.** Therefore, students should not have any mobile device on their person at all (**this includes in their book bags**) during school hours.

If a phone or other mobile device is found on the student's person or in their book bag during school hours, it will result in an infraction. 2 infractions within a month will result in after-school detention. These infractions are categorized the same as other behavioral infractions and will not have separate consequences.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION (for High School Students)

Conflict will happen. Conflict helps us learn much about ourselves and our own selfishness. During conflict, we must follow principles from Matthew 18:15-17. Admonishment, confrontation, reconciliation, and forgiveness may take time. This is a monumental task to attempt to address the heart of each person including the student and the teacher.

There will be times when the teacher will need to discipline the child publicly just to address the behavior, though, if possible, they will discuss things privately. When the teacher speaks to the student about something he/she is doing wrong, the student is to never talk back or argue with the teacher. The teacher will try to be as fair as possible. However, teachers are human and can make mistakes. If the student feels that a teacher has made a mistake, or the student has something to say to the teacher, the teacher will be willing to discuss anything or "hear you out" **after class or after school.** If this has not resolved the situation, please contact the principal.

FERPA / MEDIA & PHOTO PERMISSION

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy interest of students (34CFR§99.3). It affords parents the right to access and amend their children's educational records and gives them some control over the disclosure of the information in these records.

FERPA requires that Freedom Christian Schools, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, Freedom Christian Schools may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised FCS to the contrary. Directory information is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released. If you do not want Freedom Christian Schools to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the school in writing on a yearly basis through this form.

BUS CONDUCT

The following rules apply to students riding buses (This includes all off-site and sports activities):

1. Students are to always abide by the driver's regulations and directions.
2. Students must be seated and facing the front of the bus while it is in motion, and conversation

between passengers must be kept at a low pitch. Students are to sit in assigned seats if requested to do so by the driver.

3. No gum chewing, loud talking, commotion, or throwing objects is allowed on buses. Students are not to eat on the bus unless the bus driver grants permission.

4. Windows on the bus are to be operated only at the discretion of the driver. Students are to refrain from extending their head, arms, or objects out of the bus windows.

5. Students are not to litter on the bus.

6. If there is disobedience to the driver's authority, the driver will issue a warning to the student. If disobedience continues, the situation will be referred to the administration, and the student may lose the privilege of riding the bus.

7. Students who ride public school buses are expected to obey the bus rules of the school districts on whose buses they ride. School districts only allow the students who live in their districts and have a registered transportation form on file with the school district to ride the bus. Visitors and/or non-registered students are not permitted to ride.

If there is disobedience to the driver's authority, the following steps will be taken:

1st & 2nd Offense - The Principal will confer with the student reported for misconduct by the bus driver or bus company. A misconduct notice from the bus company will be sent to the parents.

3rd Offense - The student reported for misconduct on the bus will conference with the principal & student will receive lunch detention. Parents and the bus company will be notified of disciplinary action.

4th Offense - The student reported for misconduct on the bus will conference with the principal & student will receive 3 days of after school detention. Parents and the bus company will be notified of disciplinary action.

5th Offense - The student reported for misconduct on the bus will conference with the principal & student will be suspended from the bus for a minimum of 3 days. Parents and the bus company will be notified of the suspension.

Any major offenses or repeated offenses will be dealt with by the principal. District rules may cause a student to be suspended from school bus use if a student has violated the district's rules. The parent is responsible for transporting that student to and from school if a child is suspended and the cost of transportation is the parent's responsibility.

THE PROCESS OF DISCIPLINE - GRADES K-6

A. Freedom Christian Schools seeks to help children understand that they are responsible for the choices they make and that all choices have either positive or negative consequences. The forms of communication which may be used to inform parents of a discipline problem are listed below:

1. A written note sent home.
2. A phone call home by the teacher and/or principal.
3. A scheduled parent/teacher conference.
4. A discipline referral slip (detention – lunch and/or after school).
5. Any combination of the above.

B. Discipline for misconduct which is not of a serious nature in grades K – 6 will be handled by the individual classroom teacher. The teacher is authorized to take reasonable and prudent action

necessary to maintain classroom order. **ANY FCS STAFF MEMBER** may write a minor offense report.

C. The teacher may choose to refer the child to the principal if the problem is of a more serious nature. At that time, a discipline referral slip may be completed. The principal will then confer with the child and inform the parent of the corrective action to be taken.

D. The administration reserves the right to handle serious disciplinary offenses with in-school and/or out-of-school suspensions. The most serious offenses may warrant expulsion.

E. Freedom Christian Schools does not advocate corporal punishment.

ABSENTEE ASSIGNMENT PROCEDURE

Middle & High School:

Students absent from classes for any reason have full responsibility for covering material missed. To be properly briefed on subject matter missed, the student should seek assistance from the teacher. Students have an obligation to make arrangements with their teachers to take any tests or quizzes missed during their absence. Unless other arrangements are made, students must make up all assignments, tests, and quizzes within three (3) days after returning to school. Each teacher reserves the right to administer tests and quizzes within that three (3) day period.

If a student is absent from school for three (3) or more days, the parent/guardian may call and request make-up work from the teachers. A twenty-four (24) hour notice is required for teachers to prepare make-up assignments.

While FCS does not discourage older students from having part time jobs, it must be understood that work related absences and work schedules cannot be cited as a reason for incomplete assignments.

Elementary School:

Teachers of elementary students will inform parents of any make-up work, tests, or quizzes to be made up by the student. Unless other arrangements are made, students must make-up all assignments, tests, and quizzes within three (3) days of returning to school. Each teacher reserves the right to administer tests and quizzes within that three (3) day period.

If a student is absent from school for three (3) or more days, the parent/guardian may call and request make-up work from the teachers. A twenty-four (24) hour notice is required for teachers to prepare make-up assignments.

HEALTH POLICY & PROCEDURES

Students must get permission from their teacher before going to the health station. Only those injuries or illnesses that occur during school hours should be brought to the attention of the person on duty.

Parents / guardians please do not send your child to school if he/she is sick or not feeling well in the morning or has a fever.

For the health and safety of all students, FCS staff and the peace of mind of our children's parents, students that have had the following are asked to remain at home:

- ✓ Fever – a temperature of 100.4 degrees or more within the past 24 hours. **NOTE:** students must be fever free for a full 24 hours WITHOUT medication to return to school.
- ✓ Diarrhea within the past 24 hours.
- ✓ Vomiting within the past 24 hours.
- ✓ Impetigo (infected wounds), boils, untreated ringworm.
- ✓ ANY communicable diseases. ***These will require a doctor's note in order to return to***

school. Examples, including but not limited to: Influenza, COVID-19, Pink Eye, Chicken Pox, Fifth Disease, Measles, Rubella, Pertussis, Hand-Foot and Mouth, etc.

- ✓ Lice – students must be treated and be free of live lice and nits to return to school.
- ✓ An identified rash that is not explained by a doctor's note as non-communicable (discretion of administration).
- ✓ Use of antibiotics for less than 24 hours.
- ✓ Being treated or required to quarantine by your PCP due to contact with a COVID-19 positive person.

COVID -19

If a student would come in contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 it is up to the family's discretion whether the PCP needs to be contacted for guidance. If a student is required to quarantine, parents/guardians must notify the school immediately so a return to school plan can be developed for the student(s). A note from your PCP will be required upon student(s) return to school and the PCP should recommend the length of time the child should quarantine.

To stop the spread of germs, we ask that students practice the following guidelines and other recommendations by the CDC. For more information go to <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/prevention.htm> or <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>

- Cover your cough or sneeze with your elbow.
- Do not touch your eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Stay at home when you are sick, except to get medical care.
- Wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds.

PLEASE help us by responding immediately when we call you if your child is ill at school. Students should be picked up within one hour of notification of illness.

Please note that students with minor illnesses (allergies, headache, etc.) will only be allowed to stay in the health area for a maximum of 15 minutes before they will be returned to class.

If a student develops a fever or an upset stomach, etc. while at school, they will be required to remain in the health area until their parents are able to come pick them up.

Students who require any type of restrictions due to injuries and/or surgeries must have a written doctor's note on file in the office specifying the type of restriction needed and the length of the restriction. Students with casts, splints, slings, etc. will stay with their class (at recess/gym) but be restricted to activity as dictated by a doctor's note.

MEDICATIONS

If it is necessary for a student to take any form of medication at school, the following procedures must be followed:

1. **Prescription Medication** – *Procedure for Administration of Prescription Medication at School Form* must be completed and signed by the physician who prescribes it. Parents (or other responsible adults) must bring the medicine to the school office, along with a medication label containing specific instructions regarding that medication attached to the prescription bottle. The form is available on our website, or it can be picked up from the school office,
2. **Non-prescription** -- Any non-prescription medication must be in its original bottle with a medication label with specific instructions regarding that medication and a signed note from

parent/guardian.

All medications must be delivered to the school office by a parent or responsible adult. Any medication found in a student's possession and not registered with the office will result in disciplinary action. All medication will be kept in and dispensed through the health area.

By signing the Student Medication List / Health Information Form you consent to release, discharge, indemnify and/or hold harmless Freedom Christian Schools, FCS school staff and volunteers from any liability for any reaction, injury, harm and/or damage, negligent acts or omissions which may be caused to my child by reason of administering the said medication list on my child's Health Form.

If a student has a life-threatening medical condition such as diabetes, severe asthma, epilepsy/seizures or severe allergic reactions, a Medical Action Plan must be on file in the office. Please contact the office for the appropriate forms.

IMMUNIZATIONS and PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS – PENNSYLVANIA STUDENT REQUIREMENTS

Pennsylvania requires students to have certain immunizations and/or examinations for attendance in Pennsylvania schools.

For students entering kindergarten and students who have been previously home-schooled:

- Medical/Physical Exam
- Dental Exam
- Up to date Immunization Record – you will find the current immunization requirement on our website.

3rd grade: Dental Exam

7th Grade: Dental Exam

6th Grade: Medical/Physical Exam

11th Grade: Medical/Physical Exam

Newly enrolled students will be asked to provide copies of all of the above medical records/physical examinations as part of the enrollment process.

EXEMPTIONS

Pennsylvania allows for the following exemptions: medical reasons, religious belief, or philosophical/strong moral or ethical conviction. Parental signature is required to be on file for any exemptions. The form is available in the school office.

FOOD AND DRINK - INCLUDING ALLERGIES

Food brought from home may only be eaten by students before school, during designated break time, at lunch and after school. Food and drink may not be consumed in the hallway. Freedom Christian Schools promotes good nutrition and strongly encourages the packing of healthy snacks. Students will be expected to follow lunchroom procedures. Students may not share food at lunch due to allergy concerns. No outside food may be ordered for delivery by students in grades K-12.

Allergies

Parents/Guardians must notify the school of any allergies. Food allergies should be accompanied with an Allergy Medical Action Plan **if severe**. It is recommended that parents/guardians send acceptable snacks to their student's teacher in the event that the class has special events and/or celebrations.

Birthday Celebrations and/or Classroom Parties

Birthday celebrations should be coordinated with the teacher in advance and please check with the office or teacher for any children with food allergies. Individual items (i.e., cupcakes) are preferred. Homemade items are permitted with an ingredients list. It is recommended that if there are food allergies, please avoid bringing those food items in so all students may participate in the celebration.

Snacks

A brief snack time will be provided around the morning recess for lower school students. Fruit, cheese, vegetables, and other nutritional snacks are recommended. The purpose of this snack time is to fuel students' bodies so that their minds can remain engaged for instruction and junk food, or sugary snacks impede this process.

Water Bottles

Each student is to have a refillable water bottle with the following guidelines:

- Water bottles are to contain water only.
- The student's name needs to be clearly marked on the bottle.
- Teachers will discuss with the student (and notify parents as needed) if a student's water bottle becomes a distraction in the classroom.
- Glass bottles are not permitted.
- Bottles may be confiscated or inspected by the Administration at any time.

DRESS CODE

The Bible directs the Christian to do "*all to the glory of God*" (1 Corinthians 10:31). In today's society this has special reference to the fact that God may be honored, or dishonored, by our personal dress and grooming. The Christian is to have a regard for things that are "*pure...commendable ... of excellence ... and worthy of praise.*" (Philippians 4:8).

Freedom Christian Schools believes that these principles have a practical application to the dress and grooming of students. God is glorified when we dress and conduct ourselves in good taste and with modesty. We recognize that conforming to dress standards does not make a person a Christian or even more "spiritual". However, disciplined effort in keeping all rules does have a maturing effect upon the Christian if his/her attitude remains proper and pride does not develop.

All students are expected to conform to the dress code from the first day of school as outlined in this section, and on all school field trips, unless otherwise specified. A student's conformity to the dress code is primarily the responsibility of the home.

It must be recognized that a dress code cannot address every area. For that reason, the administration reserves the privilege of interpreting the principles and specifics of the dress code.

DRESS CODE GUIDELINES

The dress and hygiene codes at FCS are established to provide comfort and modesty in the classroom. While emergency situations do arise, please understand that lack of time to launder or prepare clothing is not an acceptable excuse to dress improperly. Students will be asked to leave the classroom until appropriate clothing can be delivered. In some instances, no matter what the student's age, the administration may deem it necessary to send a student home or remove them from the classroom for the remainder of the day. Chronic disregard for the dress code could result in suspension or expulsion. If a situation arises that there will be a deviation of the dress code guidelines, it **MUST** be pre-approved by the FCS school administration.

JEWELRY

- **NO** jewelry that pierces the body **EXCEPT:** the ears are allowed for males or females.
- **Nose piercings:** only nostril piercings are allowed with studs – no hoops. No septum piercings etc.
- **NO** ear gauges, plugs or tunnels are allowed. Any adornment worn must **NOT** symbolize anything contrary to Christian values nor be a distraction in the classroom. *****Peace symbols should NOT be worn*****

HAIR

- All hairstyles must be conservative.
- Must be kept neat, clean, and out of the eyes.
- May **NOT** be worn in extreme styles and colors.

COATS

- Are **NOT** to be worn during the school day.

SHIRTS

Preschool – 6th grade:

- Polo shirts, oxford shirt, or jersey of any color are acceptable styles.
- **Plain** T-shirts of any color or pattern – DECALS must be God honoring: **NO** zombies, skulls, skeletons or controversial or negative decals. Superheroes are ok but **NO** villains. **NO** non-Christian bands.
- **NO** low cut or belly shirts or shirts that are **excessively tight**.
- **NO** see-through or thin fabrics.
- **NO** tank tops, sleeveless shirts, or spaghetti straps.
- **NO** shirts with inappropriate messages, slogans, or pictures.
- **NO** secular musical groups/artists.

Grades 7-12th grade:

- Polo shirts, oxford shirt, or jersey of any color are acceptable styles.
- T-shirts of any color or pattern. **No decals except FCS logo or scripture.**
- **NO** low cut or belly shirts or shirts that are **excessively tight**.
- **NO** see-through or thin fabrics.
- **NO** tank tops, sleeveless shirts, or spaghetti straps.
- **NO** shirts with inappropriate messages, slogans, or pictures.
- **NO** secular musical groups/artists.

SWEATERS / SWEATSHIRTS

- Cardigan, crew neck, or V-neck sweaters, zip jackets or blazers must be worn with an appropriate shirt.
- **Pullover sweatshirts must be worn with an appropriate shirt.**
- Hoodies and jackets can be worn in the classroom. The hood of the hoodies should **never be worn up** while in the building.
- **NO** sweatshirts or hoodies with decals. The only exception is FCS merchandise.
- **NO** secular musical groups/artists.
- **No** villains or antiheroes (including joker, venom, Deadpool, Harley Quinn, Disney villains, zombies, skeletons etc.)

SLACKS / SHORTS / SKORTS

- Cotton pants or jeans of any color are allowed.
- Pants and jeans must be clean and have no rips or holes.
- Athletic pants/jogging pants may be worn.
- Shorts should be mid-thigh in length – **NO** shorter.
- Shorts or capri pants may be worn any day from **August until October 31 and April 1 until the last day of school** unless weather conditions warrant date changes.
- Athletic shorts of heavy material may be worn.
- **NO** pajama bottoms.

DRESSES / SKIRTS

- Skirts (**to the knee or below when standing**).
- Jumpers should be worn with an appropriate shirt.

**** If there is a question as to the appropriate length of a skirt, skort, or pair of shorts, girls will be sent to the office to be checked. If it is too short, girls will remain out of the classroom until appropriate clothing can be delivered.*

Consequence – on the 3^d offense in a given school year skirts, shorts, or skorts will NO LONGER be allowed for the offenders.

SHOES: Preschool - Elementary

- Tennis shoes/sneakers are recommended because they provide the best in safety and support.
- For safety reasons, **NO** sandals, flip flops, platform, high heel shoes or boots, dress shoes with “little girl heels” or slick shoes allowed.

Middle School & High School

- Tennis shoes/ sneakers/ dress shoes and sandals constructed of durable materials – not plastic – are acceptable.
- **NO** flip-flops, platform shoes, high heel shoes or boots or slippers – for safety reasons.

Consequence of Dress code violation:

Grades 7-12 will receive an infraction if out of dress code and parents will be notified.

Grades K-6 – parents will be notified.

If your child needs a special exemption due to a medical issue, please give a doctor's note to the office for our records.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASS DRESS CODE– Grades K-10

All students in grades K-10 must wear appropriate gym uniform (FCS logo t-shirt and sweatshirt. Athletic shorts or sweatpants, and tennis shoes) for all PE classes. FCS logo gym t-shirts and sweatshirts **must** be purchased through the school. In the absence of an FCS hoodie a plain solid-color sweatshirt is permitted. Black athletic shorts and black sweatpants may be purchased elsewhere. Athletic shorts short be mid-thigh in length – no shorter. Tennis shoes (that tie and have a back to them) should be worn with socks.

Cold weather attire – please send students with appropriate outerwear including gloves, scarves and coats.

DRESS CODE - SPECIAL EVENTS

Graduation:

Seniors must follow the following dress code for graduation:

- Male students must wear collared dress shirts with tie or bow tie, dress pants with dress shoes.
- Female students must wear dresses (must meet dress code) or blouses with dress pants and dress shoes.
- No T-shirts or sneakers are to be worn.
- No jeans.

Junior/Senior Banquet Attire:

Dress code is semi-formal for Banquet.

Females attending (*student or guest*) shall dress in formal attire that is cut for a woman and adheres to high standards of modesty and respectability. Dress expectations for young ladies include:

- No cut-outs (where the skin is showing).
- Dresses must reach mid-thigh (please keep in mind length can be impacted by tightness of material & when sitting).
- No back exposure below the bra line.
- No cleavage showing.
- No strapless gowns or dresses. If a thin or halter strap is worn, a wrap is required.
- No tight, clingy, or see-through material.

Males attending (*student or guest*) shall dress to high standards of modesty and respectability in apparel ranging from semi-formal attire.

Semi-formal attire:

- Dress pants
- Dress shirt
- Tie, bowtie, or jacket

Formal attire:

- Tuxedo
- Dress blues
- Shirts must be tucked in at all times.

- Pants must be worn at the waist.
- No jeans, sweats or t-shirts.

If parents or students are unsure if a dress or outfit meets dress code guidelines, please email a picture or bring the dress to Mrs. Costello.

Any student or guest found to be in violation of the banquet dress code will **NOT** be granted admission to the event and will **NOT** be issued a refund for the cost of their ticket.

Guests are required to follow the same dress code as students.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are any off-site experience related to the classroom curriculum etc. A permission slip with details of the trip will be sent to each parent/guardian. The signed permission slip must be returned to the office by the indicated due date.

- Verbal permission will not be acceptable.
- Students may not go on a field trip if a signed permission slip is not returned.
- Students not participating in field trips are to remain at home and will be marked absent.
- No students may drive for field trips unless permission is obtained by the administration & parents in advance.
- Chaperones must have all their clearances in the office prior to any field trips.
- If parents/guardians are not able to go on a field trip and your child is 8 years and younger, a child seat/booster (with name labeled on it) must be brought into the office before 8:30 AM and arrangements must be made to pick it up from the school office.
- If parents/guardians choose to drive other students in their vehicle on field trips, liability for any incident would fall solely on the parent/guardian and their insurance and not on FCS.

FORMS

The following forms are available on our website and in the school office upon request.

- Prescription Medication Form
- Student Driver Permission Form
- Volunteer Packet
- Pre-arranged Absence Form

CHAPEL

All chapels will be held on Fridays. Chapel format varies to include special speakers, worshipping, learning activities, etc.

Parents and families are invited to attend chapel. All parents are required to sign in at the school office.

STUDENTS WHO WORK

In most cases, a student with an after-school job will need to have a work permit as required by state law. These can be obtained from the school district in which you live. Students will not be permitted to leave school early in order to work.

SUPPLIES

Students are required to supply their own paper, notebooks, pencils, pens, etc. Teachers are not responsible to loan out such materials when the student does not have them available. A supply list will be sent out to families before the new school year.

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

All visitors must sign in prior to entering the building. Parents/grandparents are welcome to visit the classroom for lunch or special events. All visits must be organized /pre-approved in advance by teachers and office.

Students from other schools are welcome to visit FCS for the day. They should have prior approval and be in appropriate dress code and willing to follow all FCS procedures and expectations. Student Visitor Form is available in the office and must be filled out and submitted prior to the date of visitation.

FUNDRAISERS

EITC:

It's as easy as 1 2 3! Look at Line 12 of PA40 Tax Return. If tax liability is more than \$3500 – you can contribute that to a school scholarship program and receive 90% Tax Credit for PA taxes. Contact Mrs. Costello for more information.

Federal Scholarship Tax Credit beginning January 1, 2027 – 100% of donation to school through SGO will receive up to \$1700 Federal Tax Credit.

BOX TOPS FOR EDUCATION:

Download the app.

Sign up under Freedom Christian Schools, Gettysburg

Start scanning receipts and making money for the school.

<https://www.boxtops4education.com/>

WEIS MARKETS:

Go to weis4school.com and register your Weis rewards card and link it to our school to help earn money every time you use your rewards card while shopping.

KENNIES MARKETS:

*** you must have a Kennies rewards card to sign up.

<https://www.kenniesmarket.com/rewards-and-programs/community-rewards/>

COMMUNITY AID:

Cleaning house or getting rid of clothes? Donate to Community Aid and give our name or partner number #50089 and FCS will receive \$0.13/lb. that is donated.

<https://communityaid.org>

FACEBOOK BIRTHDAY FUNDRAISING:

Prior to your birthday, FB offers the opportunity to raise funds for a non-profit organization. FCS is set up to be this option. Just choose FCS as your charity and they will take care of the rest.

DINE TO DONATE:

FCS sets up opportunities to partner with local restaurants & businesses and a % of sales goes to FCS. (ie. Hoss's, Wendy's, Panera, Chic Fil A, Dough & Arrows, Mr. Gs, etc.) Watch newsletter, calendar & ClassDojo for when they are scheduled throughout the year.

R&K SUB SALES:

Our spring Sub Sales goes towards end of the year classroom events and field trips. The funds raised are kept specifically for those classes. HS students use this money to help cover the cost of the Jr/Sr Banquet tickets. Any remaining funds not used for tickets would go toward the cost of their HS trips.

AMAZON WISH LIST:

***This is a new program and still in the works. Many times, parents would like to help in small or large ways but are not sure how. Here is a quick and easy way to help teachers in the classrooms. A link will be provided for the wish list.

STAPELS REWARDS:

When you use your Staples Rewards, you can contribute rewards to your school's teachers so they can purchase school supplies for the classroom.

STAPLES RECYCLING:

Staples has a recycling program for schools that contributes \$2/ink and toner cartridges & \$5/electronics recycled. These items can be sent to the school, and we will recycle them. I'm not sure how to link personal accounts to the school.

CHILD ABUSE

All staff members at FCS are mandated reporters. We are required by law to report any suspected cases of child abuse. Such reports will be dealt with in a confidential manner, and Adams County Children and Youth will determine the need for investigation or further action.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Mrs. Karen Trout is the Director of Special Education at Freedom Christian Schools. If you have concerns about your child struggling academically, please contact her through the school office. Mrs. Trout will set up observations and work with the teachers to set up accommodations. Testing by the Lincoln Intermediate Unit (LIU) may be recommended and discussed with parents prior to moving to that step.

LINCOLN INTERMEDIATE UNIT (LIU) SERVICES

LIU offers speech therapy in person on school premises. All kindergarten and 3rd graders are screened for speech issues. Parents will be contacted if evaluations are needed.

VOLUNTEERISM

Volunteerism is encouraged at Freedom Christian Schools. However, in the interest of the educational program, FCS reserves the right to designate where volunteers may serve. Persons not on the teaching or administration staff of FCS may not assist in the classroom or in any other part of the FCS program, without prior approval of the FCS Principal.

TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS (TAP)

The Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) is a way to help families with their tuition through volunteer hours at the school. Parents (and grandparents) can volunteer which will equal \$10 per volunteer hour toward tuition each month.

CLEARANCES

All new volunteers, and/or those who plan to chaperone/drive on field trips at Freedom Christian Schools must have the following **mandatory clearances**:

Act 151 Child Abuse Clearance

Act 34 Pennsylvania State Police Clearance

National Sex Offender Clearance

Child Abuse Mandate Class – required for any volunteer working directly with children on a regular basis.

FBI Federal Criminal History Clearance – if you have continuously resided in Pennsylvania for ten years AND complete the attached Volunteer Verification Form swearing that you have **never** been convicted of a disqualifying crime, the FBI Federal Criminal History Clearance **is not needed**. If you have **NOT** been a resident of Pennsylvania for the last ten years, you **must apply** for an FBI clearance.

For all new volunteers – if you already have your clearances, please bring copies and the required paperwork as outlined in the checklist below to the secretary in the school office. Please note that clearances can be used – as long as they are less than one year old and will be valid for five years.

The following checklist MUST be completed (These forms are in the Volunteer Packet):

- ✓ Volunteer Registration Form/Disclosure Sheet – must be completed and returned.
- ✓ Emergency Information for Volunteers – must be completed and returned.
- ✓ Act 151 Child Abuse History Clearance (website) - must be completed and returned.
- ✓ Act 34 Pennsylvania State Police Clearance (website) – must be completed and returned.
- ✓ FBI Federal Criminal History Clearance or Volunteer Exemption Form – one must be completed and returned.

Submission of the above paperwork should be handed to the secretary in the school office. **YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO VOLUNTEER UNTIL ALL OF THE REQUIRED PAPERWORK IS COMPLETED.**

CHAPERONING – if you plan to chaperone on a field trip throughout the school year – you **ONLY** need to submit the mandatory clearances to the school office.

PLEASE OBTAIN CLEARANCES AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. THIS WILL ENSURE THERE ARE NO DELAYS PREVENTING YOU FROM VOLUNTEERING AND/OR CHAPERONING A TRIP DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR

WEBSITES TO OBTAIN MANDATORY CLEARANCES

Act 34 Pennsylvania State Police Clearance <https://epatch.pa.gov/> (When applying please mark “Volunteer” and there will be no charge. The results you will receive right away.)

Act 151 Child Abuse Clearance <https://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home>
(When applying as a volunteer, please mark “Volunteer” so there will be no charge. If renewing, you will need to wait 57 months from the initial clearance date. This clearance will take about 2-3 weeks to be received.)

If you have been a resident of Pennsylvania for the last ten years, you may fill out a Volunteer Verification for Exemption from FBI Federal Criminal History Clearance. If you have not been a resident of Pennsylvania for the last ten years, you must apply for an FBI Clearance through <https://uenroll.identogo.com/workflows>
Enter service code 1KG6TR. There will be a \$22.60 fee. Please turn in your receipt following fingerprinting. We need the UEID# to access the results.

National sex offender clearance <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/KeepKidsSafe/Clearances/Pages/National-Sex-Offender-Registry.aspx>

Child abuse mandate class <https://www.reportabusepa.pitt.edu>