



**FREEDOM**  
**ACADEMY**

**Parent & Student**  
**Handbook**

2023-24

**Freedom Academy is located at:**

7921 US 158

Reidsville, NC 27320

**Mailing Address:** 7921 US 158, Reidsville, NC 27320

**Office Phone:** 336.865.0728 FAX:

**Email:** [Office@FreedomAcademyPats.com](mailto:Office@FreedomAcademyPats.com)

**Web:** [www.FreedomAcademyPats.com](http://www.FreedomAcademyPats.com)

***Administrative Prerogative***

The intent of this handbook is to outline the policies and guidelines that apply to students and parents. The administration of Freedom Academy reserves the right to exercise its administrative prerogative in responding to any situation. Responses may include, but are not limited to; parent conference, suspension and/or expulsion, drug testing and required counseling.

***Amendments or Changes***

Freedom Academy reserves the right to amend, revise, supplement, delete, alter or rescind any policies or portion of the handbook from time to time as it deems appropriate, in its sole and absolute discretion. Parents will be notified of such changes to the handbook as they occur. Parents agree to accept and abide by any such subsequent additions, changes, modifications or deletions.

### **Freedom Academy Mission Statement**

Freedom Academy is a back-to-basics, private Christian school providing students with an education rooted in God's word. Our goal is to partner with parents to create an encouraging environment where students grow in their faith, character and academics.

### **School's History**

Freedom Academy was founded in 2022, by parents who desired a quality education that was distinctly Christian for their children. What started as a calling, grew into a ministry that will serve families of school aged children in Rockingham County and its surrounding areas for decades to come. While Freedom Academy is not connected to any one church body or congregation, Growing Oaks Community Church of Reidsville graciously stepped up to help put a roof over our heads as a new school by allowing us to use their building in the early years of our history.

### **Statement of Faith**

Our desire is to provide the best quality education for the children, to help the child to mold character, develop the mind toward Christian ideals and set a goal in life that is pleasing to God.

The basic principles and regulations by which the school functions are set in the following creed and perpetuated in the Constitution:

- There is one God eternally existing in three persons—the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
- The manifestation of God was in Christ, who was born of a virgin.
- Jesus Christ died, shedding His blood for our sins and was bodily raised from the dead for our justification.
- His return will be imminent, bodily and with power and great glory.
- The creation of man was by a direct act of God.
- Man is by nature and practice a sinner separated from God and can become God's child only by faith in Jesus Christ.
- Those who are thus born into God's family have eternal life, and those who are not, remain in spiritual death and will be separated from God forever in Hell.
- The Holy Spirit lives in the believer and enables him to walk in purity of life and submission to the will of God.
- The spiritual unity of the believers is in our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 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. We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other.
- We believe that God wonderfully foreordained and immutably created each person as either male or female in conformity with their biological sex. These two distinct yet complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God.

*Our Statement of Faith is not exhaustive of all of our beliefs. The Bible, as the inspired and infallible Word of God, speaks with absolute authority regarding the proper conduct of mankind and is the unchanging foundation for all belief and behavior. The Freedom Academy Founders hold final interpretive authority on biblical meaning and application with regard to faith, doctrine, policy, practice, and discipline.*

### **Philosophy, Purpose & Objectives**

The purpose of Freedom Academy is to present all truths from the superior viewpoint of faith in Jesus Christ and to instruct children in God's perspective. In fact, keeping in mind that all knowledge, understanding, and wisdom come from God, we see that all education becomes a revelation of God and that no academic subject can be properly understood apart from that revelation. There are three main ingredients to education: knowledge, understanding, and wisdom. Knowledge is the discovery of fact, principle, or concept. It grows from the simple to the complex and is contained in all academic subjects. Understanding is the ability to evaluate the facts. Wisdom is the ability to make judgments in light of that understanding -- the ability to put the facts to use in the daily situations that arise in our lives. The Bible refers to these ingredients of education as treasures, and all three of these treasures come from God and God alone. (Proverbs 2:1-6)

### **School's Affiliation**

Freedom Academy is registered with the Office of Non-Public Schools in the Governor's Office in Raleigh, North Carolina. The school is independent of any denomination.

### **School Board**

At this time, the founding board of Freedom Academy serves as the School Board and will be supported by the PTA and Parental Advisory Board.

### **Admissions Policies**

Non-Discrimination Policy – Freedom Academy admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, programs and athletic and other school administered programs.

### **Kindergarten Admissions**

Kindergarten students are to be 5 years of age on or by September 1st. Each kindergarten student must have his/her state mandated immunization record up-to-date by the first day of school or a waiver must be on file explaining the special circumstances.

### **School Hours**

8:30am - 2:30pm Mon-Fri

8:30am - 12:30pm Mon-Fri (PreK-3 and 4)

### **Attendance Policy**

- North Carolina's compulsory attendance law requires school attendance. It is part of the responsibility of Freedom to be concerned about each student's attendance, and the failure of a student to attend class consistently is seen as a serious problem.
- Students are required to be in school for three and one half hours to be counted present for the whole day; they must be present for three hours to be given credit for a half day. For this reason, it is best to schedule appointments early in the morning or later in the afternoon, if possible. Freedom chooses to have the same attendance requirement for younger and older students.
- Please refer to the section called "Tardies" and "Early Dismissal Policies" in this chapter. All absences and tardies are recorded on the student's permanent record.

### **General Principles**

- A student who is absent from a class period must have an “Admit Slip” from the office to be readmitted to the class when they return. Excessive absences may result in the student losing their privilege to be enrolled at FREEDOM ACADEMY.
- A student who wishes to participate in an extracurricular activity, must have attended school for three continuous hours to be eligible for that day’s athletic activity unless otherwise approved by the athletic director or administration.
- A student will not be considered absent when the absence is related to a quarantine as long as the student is actively engaging with the teacher to complete makeup work.

### **Excused Absences**

Absences are classified as either excused or unexcused. Typical excused absences are listed below and must be documented by a note from the parent or an official doctor’s excuse slip. Please be sure that the note accurately reflects the scenario and is turned in within one school day of returning to the school office. (A student returning Tuesday should turn in an excuse note by Wednesday).

Illness or personal injury can only be excused if there is a doctor's excuse or an excuse written, signed and dated by a parent. The administration reserves the right to require a doctor's note in cases where a student has more than five absences in a quarter. Please see the section called “Excessive Absences” below.

- Serious illness, death in the immediate family, or a family emergency will be excused.
- Medical or dental appointments are excused with a doctor’s note or parental note.
- Pre-approved absences - see section below by that name.
- College visits

*Other reasons may be excused when considered appropriate by the administration at the time the student returns to school.*

### **Make Up Guidelines for Absences**

When a student misses class time, it is his or her responsibility to contact each teacher regarding missed daily work, homework assignments, tests and quizzes using the following guidelines:

- Students have one (1) day to make up work (daily work, homework, quizzes and tests) for each full day absent. It is the student's responsibility to make-up any missed quizzes and/or tests outside of normal class time.
- Signing in late: Students who sign in after a scheduled test must make up the test the same day. It is the student's responsibility to make up for the missed test outside of normal class time.
- Signing out early: Student's who sign out before a scheduled test must make up the test the following day. It is the student's responsibility to make up for the missed test outside normal class time.

### **Unexcused Absences**

Missed work for unexcused absences may be made up if completed within one school day of returning to class. Unexcused absences include:

- Taking trips not approved in advance by School Administration
  - Working
  - Absence without a note to the school (i.e. one that verifies that the absence should be excused)
- Students suspended from school may be permitted to make-up missed assignments.

**Excessive Absences**

Compulsory attendance laws require students to be in attendance. A student should not miss more than ten (10) days per semester, a total of twenty (20) days for the year. Elementary students missing more than twenty (20) days in the school year may have to repeat the grade. Middle School students may not receive a completion grade for any course in which they receive 10 absences per semester. Excessive absences may require that class/credit recovery be completed in order to receive a passing grade or credit for the class or classes in jeopardy. Cases will be reviewed by the Principal, Guidance Counselor, and content teacher. Physician's notes must be on file for review. If there are extenuating circumstances not covered by a medical excuse, parents may submit a petition for the team to review. A student with more than twenty (20) unexcused absences may be risking truancy charges as per North Carolina law and may place at risk a student's ability to re-enroll. The office records each student's attendance each day.

**Check-in Procedures After an Absence**

When returning to school after an absence (full-day or part-day), students are to report to the office with a written note signed by the parents explaining the absence. This student's absence will then be marked excused or unexcused as determined by the school administration. Even with a note, an absence is not necessarily excused. The above guidelines will be followed. Students without a note will receive an unexcused absence until a note can be presented. The student must bring in the note within two days of returning for the absence to be excused. After this time the absence automatically becomes unexcused.

**School Tardies**

Please be on time to school. When a student is late, it disrupts the class and causes the student to miss material. Students are considered tardy if they arrive after 8:45 a.m. Excused tardies are granted for illness, doctor or dentist appointments, car trouble, accidents on the way to school, extremely bad weather conditions, or emergencies. Examples of unexcused tardies are oversleeping, routine morning traffic, missed ride.

**Class Tardies**

Students not in the class on time are tardy and must go to the office to get a class admit slip. When three unexcused tardies are accumulated, an after-school detention will be assigned.

**Student Dismissal Policies**

- A closed campus policy is followed at FREEDOM ACADEMY. Unless arrangements have been made with the administration, students must stay on the school grounds from the time they arrive until dismissed. Non-compliance with this policy is considered a serious offense punishable by suspension.
- A valid picture I.D. will be required from the person who picks up a student if that person is not known by the office staff. Please see the section called "Authority to Release Students" below. Parents who are picking up a student early should go directly to the School Office, not to the child's classroom; they must sign their child out on the official sign-out sheet before the child is permitted to leave campus. Failure to do so will constitute leaving school property without permission, and the student can be suspended.
- When the parent of an elementary student signs their child out, the parent will wait in the school office until a member of the office staff or a school aide brings the student to the office.

### **Authority to Release Student**

A form is sent home to parents to list those friends and family members who may pick up their children from school. Children may only be released to the people on this list. If an update needs to be made to the pre-approved list, parents are asked to notify the child's teacher or the School Office. In custodial/non-custodial situations, only the custodial parent/guardian may create or append the pick-up list. Children will only be released to non-custodial parents with a court order or with the custodial parent's permission. Students 6th grade and above are supervised during dismissal; however, it is expected that they will know who they are permitted to leave with.

### **Building Access**

Students and parents must have administrative approval to access the school building prior to 8:10am in the morning, unless participating in before school care. Students are to avoid loitering in the buildings before or after school. The buildings are to be cleared shortly after classes end and students are to proceed to after school activities without loitering in class areas. After 3:00 p.m. students are not allowed in the main building unless accompanied by a teacher or parent. Students of staff members should be either in the after school care or in their parent's classroom working quietly and supervised.

### **Visitors and Guests**

All visitors are required to present a government-issued ID and sign in at the School Office in order to receive a visitor's pass. If a parent has a delivery for a student such as lunch, homework, books, etc., it may be left in the office and our staff will see that the student receives it. Former students are welcome to visit FREEDOM ACADEMY, but their visit must be pre approved by an administrator. They also must present a government-issued ID in order to receive a visitor's pass. Former students are not permitted to attend classes, spend the day in the FREEDOM ACADEMY gym, or other activities on campus during the normal school day without Administrative permission. Only non-FREEDOM ACADEMY students who have applied to FREEDOM ACADEMY for admissions will be allowed to visit classes during the school day. Visiting students are required to wear a student visitor's pass and must be approved by FREEDOM ACADEMY administration. All visitors must dress appropriately. The general rules for modest clothing in the dress code apply.

### **Parent/School Communication**

The preferred method of communication with your son/daughter's teacher is by email. You should expect an answer to all emails within 24 hours. If you have a need to speak to your child's teacher in-person, please communicate by email to set up a meeting and contact the administrator if you do not receive a response in an acceptable amount of time (24 hours) (excluding weekends).

If you have a concern with something in your child's class:

- Contact your child's teacher by email (teacher email address: firstinitial.lastname@FreedomAcademyPats.com) – wait for a response, should be 24 hours or less.
- If you do not receive a response in the stated time, then contact the Administrator responsible for your child's grade.
- In emergency situations, please contact the school office at 336-865-0728, and someone in the office will handle your immediate needs.

**Buckley Amendment**

- FREEDOM ACADEMY abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents.
- In the absence of a court order to the contrary, the school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and to other school related information regarding the child. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order.

**FERPA**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a law that requires both parents to have access to their student’s educational records unless there is a court order denying this right. FREEDOM ACADEMY honors this law by providing both parents access to records. FERPA does not require that schools honor a standing request for information. FERPA does not pertain to such information as general announcements, lunch menus, school pictures, teacher conferences and other similar information. FREEDOM ACADEMY will try to honor all requests for information, but it is up to each parent to be in contact with the school and their child's teacher.

**Academics**

**Testing**

Testing is part of every subject in every grade and is completed in order to evaluate a student’s progress in each subject. Testing includes “pop” quizzes, unit tests, and semester exams. Announced tests and announced quizzes may be given on any day. Teachers will coordinate schedules so that no more than two tests fall on the same day.

**Achievement Assessment**

FREEDOM ACADEMY has a detailed program of assessment designed to measure the student’s abilities and progress. The results provide teachers with information to help them deliver appropriate content for each student and determine each student’s academic growth over time. Assessment also provides teachers and administration important data that assists in improving the curriculum. The Principal along with the staff oversee this program. Please note that any assessment score is just one data point in time that teachers and administration use to determine how a student is performing.

**Grading Scale and Report Cards**

A (Exceptional)	100-90
B (Above Average)	89-80
C (Average)	79-70
D (Below Average)	69-60
F (Failing)	59-0

**Additional Elementary Grade Symbols**

E	Exceptional
S	Satisfactory
N	Needs Improvement
U	Unacceptable

The grades will be based on daily assignments, quizzes and test averages. Occasionally, student participation will be used as an assessment criterion. Students who excel will be placed on the school’s Honor Roll.



## **Honor Roll**

Honor Roll is compiled at the end of every nine-week grading period. It is published at FREEDOM ACADEMY. It is determined by the following criteria:

- “A” Honor Roll - A student must have all A's in all subjects.
- “A-B” Honor Roll - A student must have all A's or B's.

## **Promotion Requirements**

Promotion from the 1st through 5th grades: Students must pass math, reading (phonics for 1st and 2nd grades), receive a school recommendation, and receive no more than one F in another academic subject. Students will not be retained twice in the same grade. Students who do not receive a school recommendation for promotion may be placed in the next grade, but not promoted.

Promotion from the 6th through 8th grades: Students must pass math, reading, and Bible, and receive no more than one F in another academic subject. Students that qualify for accommodations and modifications may need to be placed, not promoted to the next grade. Specifically, any educational intervention plan that alters the coursework to no longer cover the subject objectives can result in placement to the next grade rather than promotion. Sixth through eighth graders who fail math, reading, or Bible may attend summer school for the subject failed in order to be promoted.

## **Middle School Grade Recovery**

Middle School students who fail any major academic course must complete a credit recovery course in order to be promoted to the next grade level. All credit recovery courses must be pre approved by the administration. Middle School students who fail two or more major courses will not be promoted. Major courses are English, Bible, history, science and mathematics.

## **Homework**

Homework serves two purposes. It reinforces class work and it allows enrichment and creativity. The amount of time a student needs to do homework varies from day to day and from student to student. The faculty attempts to keep all homework assignments reasonable. To promote family time, Freedom Academy has a little to no homework policy. Students who do not use such class time wisely can expect homework. Assignments, such as book reports, special reports, and projects are assigned over a length of time to allow for completion.

## **Discipline**

### **Introduction**

Discipline involves training a child so that he/she can take moral responsibility for his/her own choices. Discipline is sometimes required as a consequence for making poor choices. However, our emphasis is on positive instruction and practice in proper behavior. We want the child to be guided by love of virtue, not fear of reproof. Our goal is having each student accept Jesus Christ as his/her Lord and Savior and surrender to His Lordship; at that point, the child can learn to “walk in the Spirit,” and the child’s relationship with God becomes his/her moral compass.

### **Philosophy of Discipline**

Hebrews 13:17 makes it clear that it is profitable for children to “obey those that have rule over them.” Jesus says that we are His friends if we obey Him (John 15:14). Obedience is responding with the right attitude, immediately and completely. The goal of all corrective action is the restoration of the student’s right-standing with a peer, an authority and/or the Lord. We know that all children struggle with self-will; that is man’s/woman’s condition.

The following is a list of many of the scriptures that helped us formulate the approach we take to discipline at FREEDOM ACADEMY: Eph. 6:1-3, John 1:5, Deuteronomy 10:12-13, Galatians 3:24-25; 5:16, Matthew 22:37-40, Philippians 2:3-4, Proverbs 22:6, and 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Luke 16:10.

### **Methods of Training**

There are a number of venues we use to teach the students the right ways to go. We believe that unless children are trained, they cannot fairly be expected to obey the school’s rules and guidelines. We use instruction and practice in proper behavior, positive reinforcement, natural consequences, parent conferences, in-school-suspension (ISS), out-of-school suspension (OSS), loss of privileges (including but not limited to athletic eligibility, activities, fine arts and field trips), and, if necessary, asking the parent to withdraw the student.

### **Elementary School Conduct System**

K5 through 3rd grades use a clip chart system to track infractions. Warnings and classroom consequences are awarded by the teacher. If the student further chooses to challenge the teacher, he/she is referred to the Elementary Principal. In situations where misbehavior is unusually disrespectful to authority or potentially harmful to other students, the misbehaving student will be referred directly to the Elementary Principal.

### **Elementary Methods of Discipline**

Students will be treated fairly and reasonably. Discipline will be based on careful evaluation of the circumstances for each case. The teacher will determine the disciplinary action based on the seriousness of the offense, the student’s age, frequency of misbehavior, the student’s attitude, and parental support. The Principal may, at their discretion, circumvent the evaluation process due to the gravity of the offense. Teachers and/or administration will communicate with the student’s parents or guardians when a behavior report has been completed. Depending on the gravity of the offense, the Principal may request/require that the student’s parent or guardian come to pick up their child early from school. The school reserves the right to suspend any student for a serious infraction or repeated violations of school rules. Suspensions will generally take place the day following notification to the student and parents. Out of School Suspensions may be given for a period of one to five days.

A student may be expelled from FREEDOM ACADEMY depending on the gravity of the offense or for repeated violations of school rules. Expelled students will bear the full responsibility of the withdrawal fees as agreed upon in the FREEDOM ACADEMY tuition and fee structure. Expelled students may be prohibited from attending any function on the FREEDOM ACADEMY campus for one year. Expelled students may reapply for admission to FREEDOM ACADEMY following one (1) full school year of successful enrollment in another school.

## Middle School Discipline

### Expectations

These expectations take into consideration that MS students understand that each student is an important part of the whole of our student body. Rules and guidelines are given to protect our students and to provide for their needs and desires. As we train in Godly living, it is hoped that each student will continue to grow in their understanding of how they should conduct themselves in any given situation.

- We anticipate that students will treat each other the way they would like to be treated.
- Students are expected to take personal responsibility for their own behavior and property. It is expected that if an accident occurs, either because of immaturity or foolishness, and there is damage to property belonging to Growing Oaks or Freedom Academy (Chapel, School), the student will report it to the administration and that he/she, or his/her parents, would assume liability for damages incurred.
- Students are expected to come to school each day completely dressed in the appropriate school dress code approved attire. It is further expected that each student will be clean and neat, having taken care of routine personal hygiene.
- It is expected that students who drive a vehicle to school will obey safety rules in the parking lot and follow traffic patterns. Having a car on campus is a privilege and students are asked to keep their music down low as a courtesy. Loitering in cars during school is not allowed. Violation of this policy can result in the loss of driving privileges on campus.

### Middle School Disciplinary Process

*Instruction* - Students are instructed by their teachers concerning the rules and regulations that they are expected to obey. These rules are reviewed regularly so that each child fully understands what is required of them. Classroom rules are posted and reviewed by teachers.

*Warning* - Students are given warnings when they do not obey the rules. When necessary, they are spoken to privately when they have violated a rule. If the inappropriate behavior continues after the warning, the student will be disciplined accordingly. The incident will be recorded and parents will be notified of the incident through email.

*Verbal correction* – Used by a teacher or staff member instructing a child as to what is expected and offering suggestions.

*Dismissal from Class* – If a teacher finds it necessary to send a student from the classroom because of disrespectful behavior, he/she is to report immediately to the office. Students who refuse to submit to authority or comply with disciplinary actions will be sent home and not allowed to return to school until they are ready to comply. If the student is a driver, a parent will be notified before the student is permitted to drive their own vehicle.

*Detentions* – Detentions are assigned by administration for matters regarding class discipline.

*Suspension/Expulsion* – Freedom Academy reserves the right to suspend or expel a student on or off campus, and without regard for whether the form of misconduct is identified specifically herein, and without regard for whether it is specified as improper off campus. While Freedom Academy has no control over activities by students off campus which are not school sponsored, and does not supervise student conduct off campus which occurs during an activity which is not school sponsored, misconduct during such activity may come to the attention of school authorities and may result in the administration of discipline, including suspension or expulsion.

The school reserves the right to suspend any student for a serious infraction or repeated violations of school rules. Suspensions will take place the day following notification to the student and parents. Out of School Suspensions may be given for a period of one to five days.

The school reserves the right to question students (without their parents being present) who are suspected of or may be a witness to any disciplinary infraction. The school is obligated by law to report serious offenses (those that may constitute a violation of criminal laws established by the State of North Carolina) to the proper authorities and to press charges against the student if the situation should warrant.

1. School Suspensions are assigned when a student commits a Class 3 or 4 (see below) offense. The student is required to complete any missed work. Work, including tests and quizzes, that is not completed within the determined time will receive zero (0) credit. Suspensions also disqualify a student from Exam Exemption.
2. Expulsion is for when a student commits a Class 5 offense. Expelled students will bear the full responsibility of the withdrawal fees as agreed upon in the FREEDOM ACADEMY tuition and fee structure. Expelled students may be prohibited from attending any function on the FREEDOM ACADEMY campus for one year. Expelled students may reapply for admission to FREEDOM ACADEMY following one (1) full school year of successful enrollment in another school.

CLASS 1 ACTS OF MISCONDUCT - CLASS 1 acts of misconduct are those which interfere with the orderly operation of the classroom or school activities. Discipline for Class 1 infractions will be handled as follows:

- 1st Offense – Warning
- 2nd Offense – Warning
- 3rd Offense – Detention (15 minutes)
- 4th Offense – Detention (30 minutes)
- 5th Offense – Detention (45 minutes)

Examples of Class 1 infractions include, but are not limited to: classroom disruption, disorderly behavior, off-task, disrespect for other students, inappropriate public display of affection, parking violation, gum chewing, disobedience, unauthorized use of technology.

CLASS 2 ACTS OF MISCONDUCT – CLASS 2 acts of misconduct will be handled in the following manner:

- 1st Offense – Visit Principal
- 2nd Offense – 1 Day In-School Suspension.
- 3rd Offense – One (1) Day Out of School Suspension.

Examples of Class 2 infractions include, but are not limited to: chronic Class 1 infractions (6 or more), disrespect of staff or faculty, direct disobedience/defiance, threats, intimidation, destruction of property, insubordination, skipping class, cheating (homework, assignments, ungraded work), leaving campus without permission, use of inappropriate language (profanity, obscene, inflammatory language or gestures), taking God's name in vain, use of physical force to solve a conflict, possession of simulated weapon, association with unsanctioned groups, indecency, gross behavior, careless driving (on campus, at, or in transit to school events), possession of tobacco or vaping paraphernalia on campus or at a school activity.

CLASS 3 ACTS OF MISCONDUCT – CLASS 3 acts of misconduct may be reported (if appropriate) to the proper law enforcement agency. CLASS 3 acts of misconduct will be handled in the following manner:

- 1st Offense – One (1) Day Out of School Suspension..
- 2nd Offense – Discipline will be determined by Founding Board/School Board

Examples of Class 3 acts of misconduct include, but are not limited to: chronic Class 2 infractions (4 or more), use of tobacco or vaping at any time, fighting/assault, tampering with safety equipment, honor offenses (lying, cheating on tests, quizzes, papers, projects, etc...), stealing, deception, forgery, withholding information, gambling (making a wager or a bet that involves the use of money, goods, services or favors as payment), pranks of a degrading nature, Class 3 harassment, unacceptable language (written, verbal or gesture) directed toward a FREEDOM ACADEMY employee, endangerment and reckless driving on campus, verbal/non-verbal threats of harm to a student to his/her possessions or to other individuals whether transmitted verbally or in writing.

**CLASS 4 ACTS OF MISCONDUCT** – CLASS 4 acts of misconduct will result in removal from school organizations, leadership positions and may be reported (if appropriate) to the proper law enforcement agency. CLASS 4 acts of misconduct will be handled in the following manner:

- 1st Offense – Three (3) days out of school suspension with a required parent/administration meeting prior to return to school.
- 2nd Offense – Suspension while pending a hearing with the Founding Board/School Board to review points for expulsion.

Examples of Class 4 acts of misconduct include, but are not limited to: use of alcohol at any time, sexual/racial or other Class 4 harassment, possession of or involvement in pornography, mooning, flashing, distribution of tobacco or vaping paraphernalia on campus or at a school activity, fighting resulting in physical injury to the other person, any criminal activity of a misdemeanor nature or defamation of any employee of Freedom Academy or Growing Oaks.

**CLASS 5 ACTS OF MISCONDUCT** – The following acts of major misconduct may result in an automatic expulsion from Freedom Academy;

1. Bringing a weapon, explosive, or firearms on campus or to any school sponsored event.
2. Threatening to bring bodily harm to a faculty, staff member, or administrator.
3. Possession of illegal drugs, or alcohol on campus or at any school activity at any time.
4. Involvement in sexual immorality while enrolled at FREEDOM ACADEMY.
5. Any involvement with illegal drugs.
6. Any criminal activity of a felony nature.
7. Parent(s) who do not adhere to or cooperate with the philosophy of Christian Education and the discipline system as agreed upon by signing the Handbook Agreement Form.
8. Distribution or usage of prescription drugs (not prescribed to the student).
9. Public indecent exposure.
10. Any involvement in gang related activity

Any student who is involved in or is suspected of being involved in any of these major violations of school policy will be dealt with in the following manner:

1. The student will be immediately removed from class/school event or activity for a conference with the school administration.
2. Parents will be notified of the results of the conference.
3. Students may be subject to suspension from school pending the completion of an investigation.
4. The case will be referred to the Principal for a final decision.

### **Discipline Committee**

The Discipline Committee is made up of the Principals, and at least three teachers/administrators or founders.

### **Fulfillment of Disciplinary Actions**

All disciplinary actions, including returning discipline notices with a parent's signature, and suspensions must be served/completed before a student can receive his/her report card, be promoted to the next grade or even participate in Graduation ceremonies.

### **Corporal Punishment**

No agent of the school will use any form of corporal punishment as a disciplinary measure.

### **Bullying**

FREEDOM ACADEMY will not tolerate the mistreatment or abuse of one consumer by another consumer. In addition, our organization will not tolerate any behavior that is classified under the definition of bullying, and to the extent that such actions are disruptive, steps will be taken to eliminate such behavior. Bullying is a pattern of behavior that is intentional, is repeated over time, and involves an imbalance of power or strength intended to cause distress in one or more students. Bullying can take on various forms, including:

- Physical bullying - when one person engages in physical force against another person, such as hitting, punching, pushing, kicking, pinching, or restraining another.
- Verbal bullying - when someone uses their words to hurt another, such as by belittling or calling other hurtful names.
- Nonverbal or Relational bullying - when one person manipulates a relationship or desired relationship to harm another person. This includes social exclusion, friendship manipulation, or gossip. This type of bullying also includes intimidating another person by using gestures.
- Sexualized bullying - when bullying involves behaviors that are sexual in nature. Examples of sexualized bullying include bullying that involves exposure of private body parts, and verbal bullying involving sexualized language or innuendos.

### **Counseling**

According to the school 's discretion, a student may be referred to a counselor.

### **Drug Testing**

Freedom Academy reserves the right to require random or selective drug testing on students. Testing will be administered by FREEDOM ACADEMY Administration using an outside drug-testing company (a certified lab of the school's choosing). The cost for this test will be paid for initially by FREEDOM ACADEMY. The type of drug tests may be one of the following methods:

urine, hair, or saliva testing.

1. If drug use is verified, the student will be disciplined in accordance with the school policy (see Class 5 Acts of Misconduct).
2. Refusal to submit to the test will result in the same discipline as a positive test result.

*In all discipline situations, a record will be kept of the date, infraction/problem, and disciplinary action taken. Contacts with parents concerning discipline will also be recorded.*

### **Standard of Conduct for Off-Campus, School-Sponsored Activities**

- Whether off campus for school related functions (away games, field trips, etc.) students are to demonstrate integrity in their actions and in their speech. All rules that apply to campus life at FREEDOM ACADEMY are applicable when off campus.
- Students are not permitted in the hotel rooms of the opposite sex at any time.
- Dress code will usually be the same as during normal school activities. Neat jeans or knee-length shorts are permitted on some trips when approved by the administration.

### **MS Use of Electronic Devices**

Cell phones and smart watches are permitted at the teacher and administration's discretion during designated times only, and provided they do not present a distraction. Otherwise, electronics should remain in the students backpack at all times, unless prior approval has been granted by school staff. School issued tablets, computers, laptops, or chromebooks are used during the school day for academic use only. Non-school issued laptops are not permitted for use in classrooms without administrative approval. Students must keep their school issued school devices charged prior to their arrival at school. Misuse will result in restrictive privilege.

Students are responsible for the content and use of their devices at all times. Students will be subject to disciplinary action if content is deemed inappropriate. Students are required to turn electronic communication devices over to school personnel when requested. Students who refuse to do so shall be subject to disciplinary action including but not limited to removal from class or other school activity.

### **Tardy/Unprepared for Class Consequences**

An Upper School student may be considered tardy either at the beginning of the day (late to school) or by the period (late for class). The following consequences will be followed:

- 1st – Warning
- 2nd – Warning
- 3rd – ISS(15 minutes)
- 4th – ISS(30 minutes)
- 5-6th ISS(45 minutes)
- Out of school detention

### **Dress Code**

We ask our students to dress in an appropriate manner for school. Clean, neat, comfortable clothing, which allows your child to participate in all events of school without undue concern, will be most appropriate. Reasonable consideration will be made for those students who, because of sincerely held religious beliefs, cultural heritage, or medical reasons, request in writing to the school administrator a waiver of a particular guideline for dress or appearance. Decisions of this nature will be made by the school administrator.

School Dress:

- Clothing must be age appropriate, cannot be distracting, revealing, indecent, or vulgar. No short skirts or short shorts are allowed. Skirts and shorts must be mid-thigh.
- All tops must have a fitted arm opening. No spaghetti-stringed tops are allowed. All tops must cover the waistband of the bottom garment. Upper garments must cover the midriff at all times.
- Leggings must be worn with a shirt no shorter than mid-thigh.

- Clothing will not be allowed which promotes alcoholic beverages, tobacco, the use of controlled substances, depicts violence, is of a sexual nature, is racially offensive, gang related, demeaning or degrading to a particular group or individual, or is disruptive in nature.
- Anything that goes against Freedom Academy's biblical beliefs and principles is not permitted.
- Clothing is not to be sheer or of mesh material as to reveal the body or undergarments.
- Any accessories or attire that has the potential to be used as a weapon is prohibited.
- All pants must be worn and fitted at the waist.
- No rips or tears of any nature above the mid-thigh.
- Sleepwear is not permitted, unless prior approval has been obtained by administration.
- Appropriate footwear should be worn at all times. Flip flops in elementary school should not be worn for safety purposes.
- Jewelry or body piercings that poses a health risk, safety risk or is disruptive to the learning environment is prohibited

## **Emergencies**

### **School Dismissal/Inclement Weather Policy**

On days of snowfall or other hazardous weather conditions, please know the safety of our students is our utmost concern.

- In the event of school cancellations, we will send a voice/text and/or email communication.
- School closures will result in the cancellation of all academic programming.

### **Fire, Tornado & Lock Down Drills**

An electronic alarm signals a fire, tornado, or other emergency requiring rapid, quiet, orderly evacuation or lockdown of the buildings. We practice fire drills on a monthly basis and we practice tornado/lock down drills several times each school year.

## **General Information**

### **Grievances and Conflict Resolution**

Due to the number of and types of interactions staff members have with students and parents during the course of a school year, it is natural that occasional misunderstandings or problems may arise. It is the mission of Freedom Academy to resolve conflicts and misunderstandings from a biblical perspective while demonstrating genuine love. As a ministry of Freedom Academy, it is critical that we precede all discussions or meetings prayerfully and with a humble heart, especially those where we are addressing a problem or misunderstanding with another person. Matthew 5:21-24, describes the proper attitude when addressing a problem, which is peaceful instead of being angry or insulting. Matthew 18:15-22 provides a description for resolving disputes one-to-one at the lowest level before moving to a higher authority. 1 Samuel 25:18-35, describes the benefits of using an intermediary in order to address a problem. A common thread is addressing problems or misunderstandings in a way that results in resolution and unification, versus an adversarial approach that tends to cause separation and division. Applying these principles, the FREEDOM ACADEMY staff is committed to resolving conflicts in a spirit of Christian love and respect rather than approaching misunderstandings or problems from an adversarial perspective. Approaching a problem from an adversarial position clearly hinders the likelihood that a positive resolution will occur. When reasonable, students and parents should address concerns and



problems one to one with the staff member in question before involving a school administrator in the matter. If after trying to resolve a misunderstanding/problem at the lowest level one-to-one, the misunderstanding/problem still exists, both sides should bring the issue to the attention of the Principal. However, if the Principal is the person with whom the problem exists, then the issue would be sent to the Founding Board. The Founding Board will review the matter considering both sides before determining the next steps, which will include some form of a conference with the parties involved. In order to resolve differences that students and parents may have with school staff, the following expectations will be followed during conferences and interactions involving school personnel and families:

1. Everyone involved in the communication will demonstrate mutual respect for each other.
2. Discussions can only be about one's own student.
3. Unfounded or false allegations will not be addressed.
4. Due to the confidential nature of each student's records, including discipline, information about another student will not be released.
5. Conferences and communications with staff should occur during normal working hours.

All parties are expected to refrain from posting negative, emotionally charged posts on social media platforms that would cast FREEDOM ACADEMY students, families, teachers, staff and administration in an undesirable light.

### **Media**

From time to time, students' pictures, names, and/or likeness are published on our school website, on social media, advertising, etc. To opt-out a student, please contact [office@FreedomAcademyPats.com](mailto:office@FreedomAcademyPats.com).

### **Classroom Food and Drink**

- Students are allowed to have bottled water in classrooms.
- Food is not permitted in classrooms, without administrative approval.

### **Student Drivers**

Driving an automobile to school is a privilege. If a student abuses the privilege by violating the law or the school rules, that privilege will be revoked. Students may purchase parking stickers in the school office for \$100. Vehicle stickers must be visible on the driver-side rear windshield.

- Speed limit is 10 mph in the parking lot.
- Students are to park according to the most current parking procedures.
- Students are not permitted to go to their vehicles during the school day without permission. If a student forgets something in his or her vehicle, then they must get a pass from the office in order to retrieve the article.
- Any student who rides with another student must provide the office with written permission from parents.

### **Damaged Textbooks**

Students will be charged for the replacement cost of any damaged or lost non-consumable textbooks. Textbooks are expected to be returned at the end of the school year within one "condition category" of its issuance. All students are strongly encouraged to cover their textbooks with a non-adhesive cover in order to preserve the condition of the textbooks. FREEDOM ACADEMY attempts to reuse non-consumable textbooks for at least 4 years. Textbooks are issued in one of four conditions.

- New – pristine condition
- Very good – well cared for, may show some limited signs of wear

- Good – items show wear from consistent use, but it remains in good condition. It may be marked and show signs of previous use
- Acceptable – item is fairly worn and may include scratches, dents, and worn corners

### **Transportation**

Parents are responsible for transporting their children to and from school. Many parents choose to carpool. The school office will be glad to inform you of other students who may live in your area.

### **Sexual Harassment Policy**

Sexual harassment of students or employees by other students or by employees of Freedom Academy is unlawful under both North Carolina and federal laws and is contrary to the commitment of this ministry to righteousness. FREEDOM ACADEMY will not tolerate any sexual harassment of students or employees. Sexual harassment includes making unwelcome sexual advances, engaging in improper physical contact, making improper sexual comments, or otherwise creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment. If a student has concerns about the nature of any conduct or physical contact by an adult employed by FREEDOM ACADEMY, by a fellow student, or by a member of the public, the student should immediately report this concern to the Principal and discuss this concern with his/her parent or guardian.

All such reports will be investigated promptly by the FREEDOM ACADEMY Administration. Anyone found to have violated this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from school if they are a student or termination from employment if they are an employee. All such reports will be handled discreetly to maintain confidentiality in order to avoid embarrassment and to protect the student making the report, or the accused employee. FREEDOM ACADEMY is required by law to report child abuse to the Department of Social Services.

### **Withdrawal**

Students are considered enrolled for the entire school year; therefore, budgets and teacher contracts are set accordingly. Application and Enrollment Fees are Non-refundable. Students who withdraw any time after enrollment will be assessed a \$500 Withdrawal Fee and are responsible for the full curriculum fee. Students that withdraw on or after August 1st are also responsible for the Tuition Fee for the full quarter in which they withdraw. Submission of the withdrawal form confirms the withdrawal date.

### **Withdrawal Time Fees Assessed**

Prior to August 1 \$500 Withdrawal Fee + Curriculum Fee

August 1 – End of Q1 \$500 Withdrawal Fee + Curriculum Fee + ¼ Tuition

During Q2 \$500 Withdrawal Fee + Curriculum Fee + ½ Tuition

During Q3 \$500 Withdrawal Fee + Curriculum Fee + ¾ Tuition

During Q4 \$500 Withdrawal Fee + Curriculum Fee + Full Tuition

Note: completion of a withdrawal form is a requirement for FREEDOM ACADEMY to release your children's records to a new school (in addition to your account being paid in full).

### **Health and Wellness Policy**

#### **General Illness**

What do I do if my child is ill or showing signs and/or symptoms of a contagious illness?

- Notify a member of the Freedom Academy Staff at the beginning of the school day.
- Keep your ill child at home until he/she has been cleared to return to school.

- Each student must exhibit signs of wellness and be free of symptoms for at least 24 hours prior to returning to school.
- No fever and/or fever-reducing agents (Tylenol/Motrin/Acetaminophen/Ibuprofen/ Aspirin) for at least 24 hours prior to returning to school.
- Please keep your child at home if they are showing any signs of not feeling well or any signs of illness regardless of whether they have a fever or not.

What do I need to do if my child becomes ill or begins to not feel well at school?

- The Freedom Staff will evaluate him/her and will contact you.
- Have a plan and someone who can pick your child up from school in a timely manner (within an hour).
- Keep your child home for at least one full school day and until they are symptom-free for 24 hours.

Do I need a school note from a physician to return to school/work?

- No, FREEDOM ACADEMY does not require a note from a physician; however, the school administration may deem it necessary in some cases.

Can my child receive medication at school?

- Yes, only if the Medical Information/Emergency Release Form has been completed, signed by a parent.
- All prescription medication, must be:
  - Kept in the office (some exceptions given for rescue inhalers, etc.)
  - In original packaging with the child's name(first and last)/DOB on the label
  - Unexpired
  - The staff will not administer medication if we do not have the Medical Information/Emergency Release Form on file.

### **COVID Illness**

What do I do if someone in my house is going to be tested for COVID?

- Notify a member of the office as soon as you know that someone in your household may be getting tested.

My student tested positive for COVID. What do I do now?

- Notify the office immediately.
- Isolate your child at home. The administration will determine the length of time based on current CDC guidelines.

I, or someone other than my student, tested positive for COVID and lives within the same household of a FREEDOM ACADEMY student. What happens next?

- Notify the office staff immediately.

### **Masks**

Freedom Academy is a mask-optional environment. The decision to mask or not-to-mask will be left up to the individual students, families, and staff. Mask shaming in either direction will not be tolerated.

**Extra cleaning procedures**

FREEDOM ACADEMY will operate daily with increased levels of cleaning and sanitizing of all campus buildings.

**Required Immunizations**

FREEDOM ACADEMY abides by state immunization laws; NC State Law requires that immunizations be administered according to their website.

See [www.immunize.nc.gov/schools/k-12.htm](http://www.immunize.nc.gov/schools/k-12.htm) for more details on the dosages and age guidelines for required immunizations. All FREEDOM ACADEMY students must be up to date on all immunizations according to the State of North Carolina. FREEDOM ACADEMY does reserve the right to accept or deny medical or religious exemptions. Philosophical exemptions are not recognized.

**Lice**

Students may be checked randomly for head lice. If lice or nits are found, the student will be isolated and parents will be notified to pick up their child as soon as possible. Students need to be treated with medication and must be nit free before returning to school. The Office staff must clear students before they are allowed to return to the classroom. Parents are encouraged to always give notice to the school in the event that they find head lice or nits on their child at home; this will help prevent the spread of head lice at school.

**Accidents**

When an accident does occur, it is dealt with promptly. If warranted, injuries are reported to the parents by phone shortly after they occur. An accident report will be filled out and kept on file in the office.