



Freedom Christian Academy Parent/Student Handbook 2026–2027

*"Don't let anyone despise your youth, but set an example
for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love,
in faith, and in purity."*

1 Timothy 4:12 (CSB)

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A Welcome from Freedom Christian Academy

We partner with parents to educate and equip the whole student—spiritually, intellectually, physically, and socially—so that young people go into the world as a light for Jesus Christ.

Welcome to Freedom Christian Academy. We are grateful that you have prayerfully chosen to partner with us in your child's education. This handbook explains who we are, what we believe, and how our school works day to day. Our prayer is that it helps the home and the school work together as one team for the spiritual and academic good of your child. Please read it carefully with your student. The policies here exist not to burden families but to protect a learning environment where Christ is honored, character is formed, and every child is known and loved as a unique creation of God.

Purpose & Mission

Our Purpose

The purpose of Freedom Christian Academy is to educate and train the whole student: spiritually, intellectually, physically, and socially. FCA desires to send out young people into the world who will be a light in this dark world.

Our Mission

Our mission is to assist parents in educating and equipping their students to develop a heart for God, to cultivate a sound biblical worldview, and to prepare students to positively impact this world for Jesus Christ.

Student Goals

Everything we do is aimed at helping students serve Christ with every part of who they are:

1. Spiritual Strength — Serving Christ with Our Lives
 - Knowledge of the Word of God enabled by the Holy Spirit.
 - Ability to internalize the Word of God for spiritual growth and Christ-like character.
 - Practice of the normal Christian life and the application of a conservative, Christian worldview.
1. Academic Agenda — Serving Christ with Our Mind
 - Thorough knowledge of each academic subject.
 - Ability to analyze, synthesize, and summarize academic data and to prepare for education at the collegiate level.
 - A rigorous, sharp mind that practices the habit of lifelong learning—a true critical thinker.
1. Social Skills — Serving Christ with Others
 - Knowing the differences that make each of us unique and a worldwide view that binds us together in true unity through Christian love.
 - Ability to rightly relate with family, fellow students, the local church, and the community at large.

- Practicing kindness, gentleness, and sacrificial love throughout the different spheres of a student's life.
- 1. Physical Pursuits — Serving Christ with Our Bodies
 - Knowing and understanding healthy and unhealthy habits.
 - Ability to see the profit in physical exercise and to develop good exercise habits.
- 1. Artistic Abilities — Serving Christ with Our Gifts
 - Students are encouraged to cultivate the gifts they have been given in the arts.

Educational Philosophy

“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge.” — Proverbs 1:7

It is our goal to help every student enrolled at Freedom Christian Academy reach and maximize academic achievement. FCA strives to be an extension of the family in educating children in an atmosphere of high academics, strong moral standards, and full surrender to the Lord's leading. Attendance at FCA is a privilege, not a right—a privilege that may be forfeited by any student or parent who does not exhibit full cooperation in their actions or attitudes. Freedom Christian Academy is not a reform or remedial school. We require each student to display a good attitude and a willingness to work, and we require full support from parents. Students who have had academic or disciplinary problems in the past may be accepted on a probationary period. We teach a reading program based on phonics. The curriculum also includes core classes such as mathematics, social studies, English, science, and Bible. In addition to the core subjects, students may engage in physical education, art, music, and drama. Spiritual, ethical, and moral standards are intertwined in all we teach. We stress patriotism, respect for others, and apply fair, firm, and consistent guidance to each student.

The Foundations of Our Teaching

Our approach to education rests on five convictions:

- Bible-Based. The final authority for all of our education is the Word of God; every subject is taught in its light. (Psalm 119:89; 2 Timothy 3:16)
- Christ-Centered. Christ is the focal point and object of our faith; students are taught to reverence, trust, and follow Him. (Colossians 1:18)
- Spirit-Led. Genuine spiritual growth is a work of the Holy Spirit, not merely of human ability. (Ephesians 5:18)
- Student-Devoted. We teach each student to discover, know, and do the will of God, and we treat each child as a unique creation. (Colossians 1:9–10)
- Socially-Applied. We prepare students to live in the world without being shaped by it, emphasizing character development. (Philippians 4:8)

Our Objectives

Under God, we aim to develop the whole student in every domain of life:

- Spiritually — to lead students to salvation in Christ, enrich their devotional life, and give them a love and understanding of the Bible. (Colossians 3:16)

- Mentally — to help students think clearly and biblically, discover their aptitudes, and master common knowledge and skills. (Philippians 2:5)
- Socially — to instill loyalty to Christ, an understanding of family and community responsibility, and a heart for others. (Romans 14:7)
- Physically — to teach students to respect and care for the body as the temple of the Holy Spirit. (Romans 12:1)

Statement of Faith

The following comprise the Scriptural beliefs of Freedom Baptist Church and its members. Freedom Christian Academy is an educational ministry of Freedom Baptist Church and reflects the spiritual and moral beliefs and philosophy of the church.

1. The Holy Scriptures We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the verbal and inspired Word of God. The Scriptures are inerrant, infallible, and God-breathed and are therefore the final authority for faith and practice. 2 Timothy 3:16–17; 2 Peter 1:20–21; Psalm 12:6–7
1. The Godhead We believe in one triune God, eternally existing in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—each co-eternal in being, co-identical in nature, co-equal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfections. Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19; John 14:10, 26; 2 Corinthians 13:14
1. The Person and Work of Christ We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man, without ceasing to be God, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful men. He accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice; our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead. Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; Luke 1:35; John 1:1–2, 14; 2 Corinthians 5:19–21; 1 Peter 1:3–5
1. The Eternal State We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment. The souls of the redeemed are, at death, absent from the body and present with the Lord; the souls of unbelievers remain, after death, in conscious punishment until the second resurrection and the Great White Throne Judgment. Matthew 25:46; John 5:28–29; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Revelation 20:11–15
1. Creation We believe that God created the universe in six literal, 24-hour periods. We reject evolution, the Gap Theory, the Day-Age Theory, and Theistic Evolution as unscriptural theories of origin. Genesis 1–2; Exodus 20:11
1. Civil Government We believe that God has ordained all authority, consisting of three basic institutions: the home, the church, and the state. Each institution has specific biblical responsibilities, and no institution has the right to infringe upon the others; all are answerable to God and governed by His Word.

Romans 13:1–7; Ephesians 5:22–24; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 2:13–14

1. The Eternal Security and Assurance of Believers We believe that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are secure in Christ forever. It is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation, which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as

an occasion to the flesh. John 6:37–40; 10:27–30; Romans 8:1, 38–39; 1 Peter 1:4–5; Titus 2:11–15

1. **The Church** We believe that the local church, the body and espoused bride of Christ, is solely made up of born-again persons, and we believe in the autonomy of the local church free of external authority or control. We recognize water baptism and the Lord's Supper as the Scriptural ordinances of obedience for the church. 1 Corinthians 12:12–14; Ephesians 1:22–23; Matthew 28:19–20; Acts 2:41–42
1. **Separation** We believe that all the saved should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord. God commands His people to separate from all religious apostasy and from worldly and sinful pleasures, practices, and associations. Romans 12:1–2; 2 Corinthians 6:14–7:1; 2 Timothy 3:1–5; 1 John 2:15–17
1. **Human Sexuality** We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between one man and one woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance. Genesis 2:24; Leviticus 18:1–30; Romans 1:26–29; Hebrews 13:4
1. **Abortion** We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified taking of unborn human life. We reject any teaching that abortion is acceptable due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the well-being of the mother. Psalm 139:14–16; Jeremiah 1:5; Luke 1:44

If parents disagree with or oppose any of the above beliefs, it would be advisable for them to choose another school.

School Information

Administration

Role	Name
Pastor	Chad Matheny
Administrator	Dr. Alley
Elementary Supervisor	Melissa Matheny

Office & Support Staff

Role	Name / Contact
Secretary	Jessica Robles, Secretary@fcayuma.org
Financial Secretary	Iliana Agundez, lagundez@fcayuma.org
Lunch Coordinator	Marylin Butcher
Athletic Director	Jerry Webb
Admin Support	Iris Escudero

Grade School Teachers

Grade	Teacher
Kindergarten	Mrs. Chamila Valasquez
1st Grade	Mrs. Christine Andrews
1st Grade	Mrs. Diane Gonzalez
2nd Grade	Mrs. Suzanne Clark
3rd Grade	Mrs. Christie Martinez
4th Grade	Mrs. Arianna Diaz
5th Grade	Mrs. Sarah Alley

Secondary Teachers

Subject	Teacher
6th-8th History and High School	Mrs. Ashley Graves
6th-8th English and High School	Mrs. Brooksanne Tilia
6th-8th Math and Drama	Mrs. Sonja Shrauner
6th & 8th Science and Piano	Mrs. Sarah Schomsky
7th Science and Photography	Mrs. Wendy Lugo

FCA Support Team

Role	Name
Art / P.E.	Mrs. Giselle Lugo
2nd Grade Teachers Aid	Ms. Andrea Ibarra
Teachers Aid	Ms. Michelle Lopez

School Hours & Contact Information

The school office is open Monday-Thursday on all school days from 7:45 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., and Friday 7:45 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. We are closed on all holidays the school observes.

Schedule	Hours
K-12, Monday-Thursday	8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
K-12, Friday	8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

School Office: (928) 366-3585. Email: Secretary@fcayuma.org

Non-Discrimination Policy

Freedom Christian Academy admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the

basis of gender, race, creed, color, or national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, scholarship, athletic, or other school-administered programs.

Statement of Christian Lifestyle

The school reserves the right to refuse admission of an applicant or to discontinue enrollment of a student if the atmosphere or conduct within a particular home, or the activities of the student, are counter to or in opposition to the biblical lifestyle taught at Freedom Baptist Church.

Accreditation

Freedom Christian Academy is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC).

Grievances & Conflict Resolution

“Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone.” — Matthew 18:15

The administration and staff of Freedom Christian Academy are always happy to receive constructive suggestions for how the school might improve. In keeping with Matthew 18, concerns should be brought first to the person closest to the situation, and escalated only if needed:

1. Begin with the teacher. Email the teacher directly and, if necessary, arrange a time to speak by phone or in person. If your secondary student has a conflict he or she can appropriately handle, encourage the student to take this first step as well.
2. If the matter is not resolved with the teacher, contact the appropriate administrator to help reach a resolution. Appointments may be made through the school office.
3. Questions about school-wide policy or schedule should be brought directly to administration rather than to a teacher. A concern about an administrator or the Elementary Supervisor should be brought to Pastor Chad Matheny. The exception to this order is any matter you believe to be illegal or that endangers a child; those should be brought to an administrator right away. Please do not bring complaints to a teacher’s home or by personal phone calls.

Admissions

We work in partnership with the home—not in place of it—to educate and disciple each child.

General Admission Policy

Freedom Christian Academy welcomes students whose families desire a Christ-centered education and are willing to partner with the school in support of its mission, statement of faith, and standards. Admission is extended to families who share these commitments and who will work alongside the school in the education and discipleship of their children. FCA comes alongside the home; it does not replace the God-given role and responsibility of parents.

Procedures for New Students

The following steps must be completed to enroll a student at FCA:

- Complete an FCA Pre-Enrollment form online.
- Parent and student (grades 6–12) attend an interview with the FCA Administrator, where you will receive a complete registration packet.

- Parent completes and returns the completed FCA application.
- FCA Administration reviews the completed application and makes a determination on acceptance.
- Once a provisional acceptance has been made, the parent must provide all necessary paperwork, including the student's most recent report card (elementary) or transcripts (secondary), immunization records, and a copy of the birth certificate. (Our front office can often help secure records by sending a transcript request to the previous school.)
- Pay the \$50 nonrefundable enrollment fee.
- Parent unenrolls the child from the previous school.
- ESA requirements: Apply for the Arizona Empowerment Scholarship Account (ESA) and submit the signed ESA contract to the office before the student may attend class.
- Parent(s) purchase school uniforms. The FCA crest shirt, FCA zip-up hoodie, and Freedom T-shirt are purchased through ZTrendz.
- Parent(s) attend the Open House held prior to the start of school.
- The FCA office must have received all enrollment paperwork, the enrollment fee, and the ESA contract before the student may attend class. A copy of the Arizona Guide to Immunizations Required for Entry is included at the end of this handbook.

Re-Enrollment

- All parents and students (grades 7–12) must read the FCA Student Handbook; both will sign a statement acknowledging they have read and will abide by the rules listed here.
- Parent completes re-enrollment on the www.myschoolworx.com portal, updating any information.
- Parent submits all necessary paperwork, including updated immunizations required by Arizona State Law for all students re-enrolling.
- Parents and students agree to attend Parent Orientation / Open House and any additional events hosted by the school.
- Students may be accepted on a probationary basis if previous records or attitudes raise doubt about their ability to work within the framework of FCA.

Dismissals

A student may be expelled from school any time he or she is in violation of the rules and policies of the school (see the Conduct & Discipline section).

Withdrawals

When a parent decides to withdraw a student, a School Withdrawal Form must be signed and dated by the parent. Student records will not be released until all bills are paid. The school office will make the proper arrangements after all accounts are settled, and records will be sent to the new school upon request once all financial obligations to FCA have been met. FCA assumes no responsibility for providing test booklets, curriculum guides, or answer sheets to parents who withdraw their child early. Because of the time and expense involved in early withdrawals within the first month of enrollment, a charge of \$25 is required, and payment is due for the entire month in which the student is withdrawn.

Financial Policies

All tuition and fees collected by Freedom Christian Academy are used for the operation of the school and for no other Freedom Baptist Church ministry. Funds support staff salaries, curriculum, school equipment, expansion, maintenance, and utilities.

Annual Tuition (2026-2027)

Grade Level	Annual Tuition
Kindergarten	\$5,000
1st - 8th Grade	\$6,700
9th - 12th Grade	\$7,200

Tuition Programs & Policies

- All FCA students have tuition paid through the Arizona Empowerment Scholarship Account program (ESA).
- Each family must complete a new ESA application and contract every school year; ESA enrollment does not carry over automatically. Returning families who receive an ESA renewal must forward it to the financial secretary at lagundez@fcayuma.org, and new families must apply and send their contracts to the same address, before the student may attend class.
- Tuition is invoiced quarterly through MySchoolWorx. Each quarterly invoice carries net-30 terms, beginning from the expected ESA funding date for that quarter; you must log in to MySchoolWorx to view your invoice.
- If an invoice is not paid within the net-30 window, the student may not attend class until payment is made and a receipt is sent to lagundez@fcayuma.org.
- Participation in special activities—such as church trips and field days—requires that all financial obligations to the school be paid in full or on an approved payment plan.
- Student accounts are reviewed each quarter, and families are expected to resolve any outstanding balances. If you need help making an ESA payment, please contact our financial secretary at lagundez@fcayuma.org to schedule an appointment.

Other Fees at a Glance

Fee	Amount
Nonrefundable enrollment fee (new students)	\$50
Early withdrawal (first month)	\$25 + full month's tuition
Arrival tardy fee (every 4 tardies)	\$10 (doubles if unpaid within 15 days)
Detention (each, demerit or class-tardy)	\$10
Emergency lunch (forgotten lunch)	\$5
Replacement water bottle	\$5
Late pickup (after grace period)	\$10 per 15 minutes
Yearbook	Ordered before year-end (price TBD)

Tardy forms, payments, and fees are handled online through MySchoolWorx.

Academic Policies

It is with a biblical perspective that students are taught English, history, science, mathematics, and geography. The Bible is the basis for all we do at FCA.

Curriculum

Freedom Christian Academy uses the Abeka curriculum as the primary source for learning and follows the Abeka curriculum standards. Students who transfer into FCA will have their transcripts assessed by the administration, and equivalency will be granted for courses that align with Abeka courses. For more information, visit www.abeka.com.

Bible

FCA considers the study of God's Word to be of first importance. Each grade has a course in Bible in which a grade is given based on tests and Bible memorization.

Chapel

Students gather for chapel each week in the auditorium. Elementary chapel is held Tuesday mornings from 10:00–10:45 a.m., and secondary chapel is held Friday mornings from 8:00–8:45 a.m. Chapel attendance and participation are reflected in the student's Bible grade.

High School Credits

To graduate, students must complete a total of 24 credits. Each May, FCA holds its annual graduation ceremony for all seniors who have successfully completed FCA's academic requirements (a 4-credit minimum is required during the 12th-grade year).

Subject	Credits
Bible (includes half credit Life Management)	4
English	4
Math (Algebra 1, Algebra 2, Plane Geometry, Math Elective)	4
Science (2 credits with lab components)	3
Spanish (grades 10-12)	1
History (World, U.S., Am. Gov't half, Economics half, Elective half)	3.5
Physical Education	1
Practical / Performing Arts	1
Electives	2.5
Total Required	24

Report Cards & Progress Reports

Report cards for grades K-12 are issued every nine weeks and are typically sent home within three weeks of the end of the grading period. Parents may monitor grades and progress at any time on www.myschoolworx.com.

Grading Scale — Percentile Equivalents

K5-Gr. 5 Grade	Percent	Gr. 6-12 Grade	Percent
A+	98-100	A+	98-100
A	93-97	A	93-97
A-	90-92	A-	90-92
B+	87-89	B+	87-89
B	83-86	B	83-86
B-	80-82	B-	80-82
C+	77-79	C+	77-79
C	73-76	C	73-76
C-	70-72	C-	70-72
D+	67-69	D+	67-69
D	60-66	D	60-66
F	0-59	F	0-59

Jr. High / High School Grading Scale and GPA

Grade	Score	Unweighted GPA	Weighted (Honors)
A+	98-110	4.0	4.5
A	93-97	4.0	4.5
A-	90-92	3.9	4.4
B+	87-89	3.1	3.6
B	83-86	3.0	3.5
B-	80-82	2.9	3.4
C+	77-79	2.1	2.6
C	73-76	2.0	2.5
C-	70-72	1.9	2.4
D+	67-69	1.1	1.6
D	60-66	1.0	1.5
F	0-59	0.0	0.0

Honor Roll

Honor rolls are compiled at the end of the year and recognize students in two tiers:

- High Honor Roll — all A's.
- Honor Roll — all A's and B's. An unsatisfactory conduct grade, or 25 or more demerits, disqualifies a student from the honor roll. In the elementary grades, writing, music, art, and P.E. do not affect honor-roll eligibility.

Homework

To establish proper study habits, homework may be assigned nightly. FCA assigns homework for four reasons: drill (practice to master essential material), reinforcement (so new material has lasting value), remediation (to overcome weaknesses as they appear), and enhancement (reports, compositions, research, and projects that supplement the curriculum). Parents are asked to provide a time and place conducive to good study habits, offering encouragement and supervision without doing the child's work.

Homework Time — Elementary

Beginning in fourth grade, a good rule of thumb is about ten minutes per subject. For first through third grades, assignments should not exceed thirty minutes total. No homework is assigned on Wednesdays, and no assignments are given during special church meetings.

Homework Time — Secondary

Students in grades 6–8 should spend no more than one hour per night on homework, and students in grades 9–12 no more than 90 minutes; teachers are encouraged to give some in-class time to complete it. Homework is not issued on Wednesdays except for a light math assignment. Select days are designated “no homework days” so students and families can participate in events. Tests are not scheduled on Thursdays or on the day after a “no homework day,” double homework is not assigned after a “no homework day,” and no projects are due on Thursday. Late/missing homework (secondary): Secondary students who do not complete homework receive a grade of zero, entered as missing in MySchoolWorx. If the work is turned in later, at least half credit is given.

Homework Make-Up (Absences)

Students who miss assignments or tests due to absence are given one week (five full school days from the day they return) to make up the work, regardless of the length of the absence. After that time, incomplete work receives the same penalty as work never completed (a zero). A test missed while absent is taken on the last available make-up day; if a student is present when a project or assessment is assigned and is then absent on the due date, the work is turned in the day the student returns (no extension is given for work that can be submitted online). Teachers and administrators may extend grace in extenuating circumstances.

Recovery of Grades for Absences

- Excused absence — 100% recovery.
- Unexcused absence — 70% recovery.
- Suspension — 70% recovery.
- Truancy — 0% recovery.

Incomplete Grade

An Incomplete may be made up by completing the work. All work to make up an incomplete must be submitted within two weeks of the end of the grading period, or the grade becomes a "0." Extra work for seniors in their second semester must be submitted prior to senior final exams.

Promotion

Promotion is not automatic; students must master one level before being promoted to the next. K-8 students who fail to earn at least a "D" cumulative average for the year will be retained. Those who fail a core subject (English or math) must make it up in summer school before promotion. Students in grades 9-12 must pass each subject with at least 60% to receive credit.

Parent Conferences

FCA schedules two parent-teacher conferences each year. If you would like an additional conference, please reach out to the teacher to schedule a convenient time.

Standardized Testing

FCA uses the IOWA achievement test for its elementary and lower grades, and the PSAT 8/9 and PSAT 10 as a general evaluation of students, educational goals, and teaching effectiveness. The PSAT/NMSQT is given to 11th grade in the fall. Achievement tests are administered during the third quarter on specified dates. Please be sure your child is present on test days.

Semester Exams

Each secondary student has two days of exams at the end of each semester — four exams of 75 minutes each in the four major subjects (math, English/language, science, and social studies/geography). Semester exams cover the course subject areas that are taught in person; online courses are handled separately. For younger secondary students these may be end-of-unit exams; older students have more cumulative exams but are never tested on material not covered that semester. Some classes may use projects in place of exams. Exam days are half days.

Help Classes

Teachers offer one help class each week after school, from 3:15-4:00 p.m., open to any student with academic needs. All struggling students are encouraged to attend, and failing students are required to attend. Teachers will inform parents at least one week ahead so families can arrange transportation.

Calculators

As a general rule, calculators are not used for academic assignments in the elementary grades. Secondary students should have a TI-84 Plus calculator and be familiar with its proper use.

Students with IEPs / 504 Plans (Resource Department)

Students with an IEP or 504 plan are served based on the school's ability to accommodate their needs. Parents with questions about these services should contact the school office.

Attendance Policies

Prompt and regular attendance is an excellent habit to establish now and is essential for successful class work.

To gain the greatest benefit from the spiritual, physical, and educational opportunities at FCA, students must attend class every day. Some absences and tardies are unavoidable, but a student with partial attendance does not receive the same value as one in full attendance. As required by law, attendance records are kept for each student. When a student is absent, parents are notified through MySchoolWorx. All absences are recorded as unexcused until the office receives communication regarding the date and reason.

Tardy

A student is considered tardy to school if not in their seat, prepared for the day, by 8:00 a.m. Students arriving between 8:30–11:30 a.m. with no prior notice are counted as a half-day unexcused absence; those arriving after 11:30 a.m. with no prior notice are counted as an unexcused, full-day absence.

Arrival Tardy Check-In

A parent or guardian must walk a tardy student into the office to receive the tardy slip; a student may not walk in alone and check themselves in. The office records who dropped the student off (parent, guardian, or other named adult) on the tardy slip. The only exception is 11th- and 12th-grade student drivers, who may park and walk in without a parent.

- Every 4 arrival tardies results in a \$10 fee per student (assessed at the 4th, 8th, 12th tardy, and so on). This fee is for tardies to school (arrival).
- The tardy fee is due within 15 days. If it is not paid within that time, the fee doubles.

Tardies to Class During the Day

Throughout the day, a student who is late to a class is marked tardy for that period. For secondary students, once a student accumulates 10 tardies to periods or blocks during the day, the student serves a detention and the family is charged \$10. Tardies are recorded separately from demerits and do not count toward a student's demerit total.

Early Check-Out

Students must be signed out at the secretary's desk by a parent or an approved adult from the pickup list; failure to do so results in the student being recorded as absent that day. If a student in grades 6–12 leaves campus without being signed out, or fails to sign back in upon return, they will receive 10 demerits.

Absence

For full-day credit, students must be present at least 5 hours; for half-day credit, at least 3.5 hours. Any student present fewer than 3.5 hours is considered absent for a full day. Extended absences for emergencies are considered separately; non-emergency absences should be submitted to administration at least one week in advance. Students returning from an absence must submit the dates and specific reason to the school office in writing—by a signed, dated note or by text or email to Secretary@fcayuma.org. Verbal explanations are not accepted. If the office has not received a written explanation by the fourth day of the student's return, the student may not attend class until it is received.

Excused Absences

A student receives an excused absence only for sickness, a death in the family, family emergencies, approved family vacations, or a scheduled medical appointment. All other reasons are unexcused. Each

student is allowed one personal day per semester, which may be used to excuse an otherwise unexcused absence. Per the Arizona Education Code, absences are excused for: illness or injury (an admittance slip from a physician is required after a contagious disease seen by a doctor); doctor or dentist appointments (with a written note); and the death of an immediate family member (three-day bereavement).

Excessive Absences

Under Arizona State law, a student absent more than 18 days during the school year (9 per semester) may lose all grades earned and be retained the following year—this includes both excused and unexcused absences. At 9 absences in the first semester, a letter is sent to parents. At 15 absences, the student is placed on administrative review and a meeting is requested with the administrator. Beginning with the 19th absence and thereafter, the student receives 0's on all assignments, homework, tests, quizzes, and projects due that day, with no opportunity to make them up.

Campus Policies

Arrival

School begins promptly at 8:00 a.m. when the bell rings. Students are supervised in their classrooms no earlier than 7:45 a.m.; parents arriving before then must remain with their children. No children in grades K–5 may be on the playground before school unless accompanied by a parent. When dropping off or picking up, please pull into a parking slot in front of the sidewalk or use the drop-off lane and put your car in park; never stop in the driving lane to let anyone in or out.

Drop-Off & Building Entry

All drop-offs occur in front of the building on Mesa Drive. Staff direct traffic during arrival; please pull forward, put your car in park, and follow staff direction. A student arriving after 8:00 a.m. must be walked into the office by a parent or guardian to receive a tardy slip (see the Tardy section).

Dismissal

Grades K–12 are dismissed at 3:00 p.m. Monday–Thursday and 12:00 p.m. on Friday. Pick-up is between 3:00–3:15 p.m. (Mon–Thu) and 12:00–12:15 p.m. (Fri). Students not picked up by 3:15 p.m. (Mon–Thu) or 12:15 p.m. (Fri) are charged a \$10 fine every 15 minutes thereafter. If a child must leave early, the parent should send a note that morning or contact the office, and must come in to sign the IN/OUT log when picking up.

Closed Campus

FCA is a closed-campus school. Once students arrive, they may not leave until dismissed. A student needing to leave (for example, for an appointment) must be signed out by a parent at the secretary's desk. Seniors may leave for lunch with permission from their 4th-period teacher and must sign out and sign back in before 5th period. All visitors must obtain a Visitor's Pass from the office; non-FCA students are not allowed on campus during school hours. Items dropped off for a student should be left with the office staff. Personal invitations, literature, and items for sale may not be distributed on campus without prior approval from the administration.

Student Drivers

Driving to school is a privilege that comes with elevated responsibility. Secondary students who drive must follow these rules or lose driving privileges:

- Provide proof of insurance before driving to school.
- Park in the designated parking area; all drivers and passengers wear seat belts; pedestrians always have the right of way.
- Drivers transporting other students must have a note from both sets of parents on file with the teacher or office.
- Students may not return to their vehicle after arriving without the teacher's permission, and may not exceed the 5 mph campus speed limit.
- No loud music, reckless driving, spinning tires, or fast take-offs. Traffic violations may result in revoked privileges.

Work Permits

Work permits are available to seniors who maintain a 2.0 GPA with no F's and no more than one D and who maintain regular attendance. A work permit allows a senior to leave school once their schoolwork is completed. No high school student should plan to work more than twenty hours per week.

Bicycles, Skateboards & Scooters

Students may ride bicycles and scooters to school; during school hours these must be parked in the designated area. Skateboards, roller blades, bicycles, and scooters may not be ridden on school grounds during school hours.

School & Church Property

Any student who abuses or damages school or church property will be required to pay for the damage, and continued enrollment may be brought into question. Lockers are the property of FCA and should be kept neat; periodic locker checks will occur. The school reserves the right to search lockers, vehicles, backpacks, and purses at the discretion of the administration. A student may place a lock on their locker only if the combination is registered with the office. If a staff member needs to open a locker and the registered combination does not work, the lock will be cut and may not be replaced, and FCA will not reimburse for the cut lock.

Lost and Found

Unclaimed lost-and-found items become the property of the school after two weeks and may be disposed of or donated. Items may be claimed before school, after school, and during lunch. Please mark your child's belongings for quick identification.

Lunches

Each student should bring lunch and any needed utensils; microwaves are available to warm food, and parents are welcome to eat with their child. Parents of K–5 students may send a light snack for mid-morning recess. FCA also offers a school lunch program (Monday–Thursday, except holidays). To order, go to MySchoolWorx, select the lunch icon, and choose dates; orders must be placed by Thursday evening for the following week. Please consult the school calendar to avoid ordering on non-school days. If a student forgets their lunch, the school will provide an emergency lunch and the family will be charged \$5.

Water & Hydration

Students are never denied water. If a student forgets their water bottle, the office can provide one. The student may use the water bottle and return it within 24 hours; if it is not returned within 24 hours, the family will be charged \$5, and the bottle is not returnable after that point.

Use of the School Phone

Students may not use the school phone to call home for forgotten items such as P.E. clothes, a water bottle, lunch, or books. Use of the school phone is limited to genuine needs—illness, arranging pickup, or a true emergency.

Conduct & Discipline

One of the goals of a Christian school is to develop a self-disciplined young person who is submissive to the Word of God. Discipline at FCA is never carried out to hurt or demoralize, but to protect the student and to form Christ-like character.

Each student should remember that their behavior reflects not only on themselves, their home, their church, and their school, but also on their Savior. We believe in a balanced approach—rewarding good behavior and correcting poor behavior—and our goal is always to match the consequence to the offense. We recognize that no two situations are exactly alike; the administration evaluates each case individually and seeks to respond with both firmness and grace, in partnership with the home. There is one procedure of discipline for grades K5–5th and a different procedure for grades 6th–12th.

Classroom Conduct

1. A student may leave their seat only with the teacher's permission, and should raise a hand and wait to be recognized before speaking.
2. Students walk (never run) inside any school or church building, and keep their volume low.
3. We appreciate the diversity of cultures in our student body; as a matter of classroom policy, only English is spoken and written during school hours.
4. Materials unrelated to school (toys, magazines, electronics, cameras, video games) should not be brought to school. Phones may be brought but must be given to the classroom teacher until school is over.
5. Members of the opposite gender may not be alone together or touch in any manner on school or church property.
6. Students keep their hands to themselves—no pushing, hitting, holding, wrestling, or horseplay.

7. Students refrain from singing, playing, or possessing worldly music (jazz, rock, country western, rap, and similar) at school and on field trips.
8. Students speak to peers and adults with a respectful tone and attitude; good manners are always expected.

Elementary Discipline (K5–5th Grade)

Elementary discipline follows two approaches by grade. The goal in every classroom is calm, firm, consistent correction that trains a child toward self-discipline (Proverbs 22:6).

Grades K5–2: Discipline Notices

In grades K5–2, teachers use discipline notices, issued as needed, and parents are asked to sign and return them. Discipline problems are handled in the following order:

- A warning is given (often a simple reminder helps the child correct the behavior).
- A brief time-out—the child may be moved to the back of the room for a short period.
- Loss of a privilege, such as some break time.
- If these are ineffective, the child is taken aside and spoken with firmly; if still ineffective, the child is taken to the office, and administration may call a parent to pick the child up for the remainder of the day.

Grades 3–5: Elementary Demerit System

In grades 3–5, teachers use an elementary demerit system. Demerits are recorded, parents are notified, and accumulated demerits lead to consequences appropriate to the elementary level, in keeping with the school's overall discipline approach. Repeated serious offenses during a semester escalate: 1st — phone call or note to parents; 2nd — a parent meeting with the teacher; 3rd — a meeting with administration and the teacher to discuss continued enrollment; 4th — dismissal from school. Certain serious behaviors merit automatic out-of-school suspension (see below).

6th–12th Grade Discipline (Demerit System)

To promote a healthy learning environment and reinforce biblical values, FCA uses a demerit system for grades 6–12. We believe discipline is most effective when teachers, students, and parents all know what behavior is expected, what counts as an infraction, and what action follows. A demerit value is assigned to each infraction; in cases of cheating or compromised academic integrity, a 0% is issued for the assignment plus 10 demerits.

Character (1 demerit each)

Tardiness to class; inattentiveness; incomplete work; irresponsibility; negative attitude; unprepared for class; untidy desk.

Behavior

Infraction	Demerits
Eating or drinking in class (except water in an approved container)	1
Dress code violation	1
Horseplay	2

Infraction	Demerits
Disturbing class or chapel	2
2nd dress code violation (same infraction)	3
Possession of cell phone without permission	5
(Boys) failure to get hair cut after notification	5
3rd dress code violation (same infraction)	6
Skipping class	10
Direct disobedience toward a teacher	10
Skipping detention	10

Integrity

Infraction	Demerits
Cheating / plagiarism	10
Lying	10
Cursing or inappropriate behavior, language, or material	5-10
Disrespecting authority	5-10
Inappropriate physical contact with opposite gender	10+

Demerits are recorded for conduct only. Tardies are tracked separately and do not count toward a student's demerit total.

Detention

A student serves one 45-minute detention for every 10 demerits accumulated, and the family is charged \$10 for each detention. The office texts the parent the day and time; detention is held on designated days immediately after school, and multiple detentions may be divided among multiple detention days. Detention format: Detention is silent. Cell phones are not permitted, and students complete assigned copy-work for the duration of the detention.

Demerit Thresholds

Accumulated Demerits	Consequence
Every 10 demerits	45-min detention + \$10 charge
15 demerits	Parents notified; warned of 20-demerit consequence
20 demerits	1-day out-of-school suspension; meeting with student, parent, administrator
35 demerits	Parents notified; warned of 40-demerit consequence
40 demerits	3-day out-of-school suspension; meeting with

Accumulated Demerits	Consequence
	student, parent, administrator
50 demerits	Expulsion

For the fall and spring semesters, all students begin with a demerit record of 0. Parents are notified through MySchoolWorx each time a demerit is issued and may view the student's discipline record there.

Out-of-School Suspension or Expulsion

The following infractions may result in immediate out-of-school suspension or expulsion (a minimum of 30 demerits up to expulsion, depending on severity, at the administration's discretion), whether they occur on or off church property: abuse of school property; alcohol possession or use; defiant disobedience or disrespect; drug use, possession, distribution, or paraphernalia; gambling; involvement in crimes other than traffic tickets; immorality; gang membership; obscene gestures or comments; pornography; possession or distribution of birth-control devices; possession or distribution of explosives, firearms, knives, or other fighting implements; possession or use of tobacco; profanity or racial comments; theft; striking a teacher; blasphemy; bullying; and fighting. A student given out-of-school suspension is removed from class immediately, sent home for the day, and serves the suspension the following day; any academic work missed on the day of suspension is recorded as 0%. In the event of expulsion, remaining academic work for the year is forfeited and transcripts reflect grades earned up to that point.

Couples

FCA is committed to a biblical standard in boy-girl relationships. There is to be no physical contact between students at any time, and each student is to be above reproach in their behavior toward both students and guests.

Technology, Social Media & Acceptable Use

As stewards of the gifts and time God has entrusted to us, we want students to use technology wisely, safely, and in a way that honors the Lord.

Students are encouraged to honor the Lord in all their media and social-media choices. The internet, while a valuable educational tool, can pose moral and physical threats. FCA students may not surf or participate in websites containing profanity, partial nudity, vulgarity, or other offensive material, and may not give out information about FCA online. The school may monitor web and social-media activity and discipline students who fail to comply.

Cell Phones & Personal Devices

Cell phones may not be used during school. Students turn in their phones before class at the beginning of each school day and receive them back once school is dismissed. Possession of a cell phone without permission carries a 5-demerit penalty (see the discipline section).

Acceptable Use

Technology resources are provided to support learning. All use should be ethical, respectful, legal, and God-honoring. Students should access only resources for which they have permission and should not attempt to bypass security or access restricted material. The school reserves the right to monitor use of its technology resources, and violations may result in loss of privileges, demerits, or other discipline.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Policy

As a Christian school, FCA believes that wisdom, integrity, honesty, and stewardship should guide the use of technology. AI is a tool that should enhance learning while honoring God through truthful, ethical, and responsible behavior.

Freedom Christian Academy recognizes that Artificial Intelligence (AI) is becoming an important tool in education and the workplace. When used appropriately, AI can enhance learning, encourage creativity, improve productivity, and support student success. Students are expected to use AI responsibly, ethically, and honestly while maintaining academic integrity.

Definition

Artificial Intelligence (AI) includes computer programs and online tools that generate text, images, videos, code, audio, or other content in response to user prompts. Examples include ChatGPT, Claude, Google Gemini, Microsoft Copilot, Grammarly AI, Canva Magic Write, and similar AI-powered applications.

Tools and Access

The specific AI tools students may use are at the discretion of the teacher and administration and may change as technology develops. AI use in the elementary grades is limited and directly teacher-supervised. Some AI tools require users to be at least 13 years old and must be used in a manner consistent with the school's protection of student information.

Appropriate Uses

When permitted by the teacher, students may use AI to: brainstorm ideas; generate study guides, practice questions, or review materials; receive explanations of difficult concepts; improve grammar, spelling, punctuation, and writing clarity; identify possible sources or research topics; practice foreign-language or mathematics skills; organize notes or create outlines; and support creativity in approved projects.

Prohibited Uses

Students may not use AI to: complete assignments meant to reflect their own thinking without permission; write essays, reports, discussion posts, or projects and submit them as their own work; generate answers during quizzes, tests, or exams unless authorized; plagiarize AI-generated content without acknowledgment; falsify research, citations, data, or sources; impersonate another student or staff member; create or share inappropriate, offensive, harmful, or misleading content; bully, harass, or intimidate others; or bypass school filters or security measures.

Teacher Expectations and Default Rule

Teachers decide whether AI may be used for a particular assignment, and each assignment falls into one of four levels: (1) AI use is not permitted; (2) AI may be used for brainstorming or editing only; (3) AI may be used with proper citation or acknowledgment; or (4) AI use is encouraged as part of the learning activity. If a teacher gives no AI instruction for an assignment, students should assume AI is not permitted and ask first.

Citation and Disclosure

When AI is used where permitted, students must disclose it according to the teacher's instructions — for example, listing the AI tool used, describing how it was used, and identifying any AI-generated content in the assignment. Failure to disclose AI use when required may be considered academic dishonesty.

Academic Integrity and AI Detection

AI should support learning, not replace it. Students are expected to demonstrate their own knowledge, understanding, and original thinking; submitting AI-generated work as one's own may be treated as cheating or plagiarism under the school's Academic Integrity Policy. A suspected violation will be handled through a conversation with the student and the teacher's professional judgment — not an AI-detector score alone, since such tools can be inaccurate.

Approved Assistive Use

Students with an IEP or 504 plan may use AI tools as an approved accommodation. This policy is not intended to bar legitimate assistive technology used as part of a student's plan.

Privacy and Safety

Students should never enter confidential or personal information into AI systems — including passwords, student ID numbers, medical or financial information, home addresses, phone numbers, or personal information about other students, families, or staff. Students should also remember that AI-generated information may be inaccurate, biased, incomplete, or outdated, and all information should be verified using reliable sources. Because AI can reflect views contrary to Scripture, students should weigh AI output against biblical truth and trustworthy sources.

Consequences for Misuse

Misuse of AI may result in loss of credit on an assignment, redoing the assignment, parent/guardian notification, loss of technology privileges, disciplinary action under the Student Handbook, and additional consequences for repeated or serious violations. This policy may be updated as AI technology continues to evolve.

Student Data Privacy

FCA is committed to protecting the privacy of student records. Online educational tools used by the school are selected to support learning and to safeguard student information consistent with applicable law (such as FERPA).

Dress & Appearance

The purpose of these guidelines is to encourage Christian young people to be concerned with the biblical principle of modesty.

Uniforms for Young Ladies

Monday–Thursday, girls wear one of the following:

- A red, navy, or white polo crest shirt with navy or khaki uniform pants, shorts, or skirts that come to at least the middle of the kneecap in length when sitting.
- A red, navy, or white polo shirt (with or without crest) under a khaki or navy jumper with the crest that comes to at least the middle of the kneecap in length when sitting. On Fridays, girls may wear the above uniform or the heather-blue T-shirt with blue jeans, blue-jean shorts, uniform shorts, or uniform pants (no rips or tears). The FCA zip-up jacket is the only outerwear allowed on campus; long-sleeve red, white, or navy shirts may be worn under crest shirts.

Appearance for Young Ladies

- Skirts must not be tight or form-fitting; they should be A-line style and must be able to move freely over the hips.
- Skirts and jumpers should be at least to the middle of the kneecap in length when sitting. Slits should not extend above the knee.
- Leggings may not be worn under skirts or jumpers. Knee socks, if worn, must be plain white or navy.
- Belts may not have studs or other similar decorations; they should have conservative buckles.
- Hair must be clean and styled neatly; faddish, unisex, or punk hairstyles (including unnatural coloring) are not permitted.
- Sandals and tennis shoes are permitted; no flip-flops or crocs.
- No excessively tight pants or shorts; cargo pants/shorts are not permitted.
- Body-piercing jewelry (nose, tongue, lip, etc.) is prohibited; earrings are permitted. No tattoos, permanent or temporary. Hats, caps, and bandanas are not allowed on school property.

Uniforms for Young Men

Monday–Thursday, boys wear a red, navy, or white polo crest shirt with navy or khaki uniform shorts or pants (shorts to the knee). On Fridays, boys may wear the above uniform or the heather-blue T-shirt with blue jeans, blue-jean shorts, uniform shorts, or uniform pants (no rips or tears). The FCA zip-up jacket/hoodie is the only outerwear allowed on campus.

Appearance for Young Men

- Hair must be clean, cut, and styled neatly—off the ears and collar and no more than 2 inches on top. No spiked, punk, mullet, or faddish styles, and no dyeing. Secondary students must be clean-shaven each day.
- For quick reference: “off the eyebrows, off the ears, off the collar.”

- No flip-flops, crocs, or open-toed shoes. Pants should be nice casual slacks (no cargo or skinny styles). Shirts must be tucked in, with a belt on all pants that have belt loops (except Kinder and 1st grade).
- No tattoos (permanent or temporary); no bracelets, earrings, or body-piercing jewelry. Hats, caps, and bandanas are not permitted on campus.
- Elementary boys may not wear necklaces. Boys in 6th grade and up may wear a necklace, but the chain must be worn inside the collared shirt and any charm must be kept under the collared shirt. If a student does not meet dress standards, he or she will be sent home to change, or a parent may bring proper attire; the student resumes activities once changed. Dress code violations are issued as noted in the discipline section.

Uniform Purchasing

FCA crest shirts, the zip-up jacket, P.E. shorts, and T-shirts are purchased through ZTrendz: ZTrendz — 773 S. Orange Ave., Yuma • (928) 783-3370 • blancaztrendz@cs.com

Physical Education

Every student in grades 7–9 participates in P.E. unless excused by a note from a physician or parent; one P.E. credit is required to graduate. Students must wear the P.E. uniform: Freedom athletic shorts to the knee, the heather-blue Freedom T-shirt, and athletic shoes. P.E. meets twice per week; students not in uniform receive a dress cut, and three dress cuts in a semester result in a ten-point reduction in the student's grade. A doctor's excuse is required to be excused from P.E. for more than two days, and additional work will be given.

Athletic Policy

The athletic program exists to complement the school's mission by promoting physical fitness, teamwork, discipline, leadership, perseverance, and Christ-like character. Participation in athletics is a privilege, not a right.

Athletic Director: Jerry Webb. Student-athletes represent Freedom Christian Academy and are expected to compete with integrity, respect, humility, and good sportsmanship at all times — accepting victories with humility and defeats with grace.

Eligibility Requirements

To participate in interscholastic athletics, a student-athlete must be officially enrolled at FCA, meet all academic eligibility requirements, maintain satisfactory attendance and classroom behavior, be in good disciplinary standing, and submit all required paperwork before participating, including a current sports physical, emergency medical information, parent/guardian consent and release forms, and any league-required documentation. All athletic participation fees must be paid before the first contest unless other arrangements have been approved. A student who becomes academically or behaviorally ineligible may be suspended from practices and competitions until eligibility is restored.

Academic Eligibility

Student-athletes are expected to make academics their highest priority — maintaining passing grades in all required courses, demonstrating consistent effort, completing assignments on time, and attending any assigned tutoring or help classes. Athletic grade checks are performed once per quarter, based on

the quarterly report cards. In addition to grade requirements, a student-athlete must complete all class assignments to retain eligibility; a student who is ineligible due to an incomplete assignment becomes eligible as soon as the assignment is complete. The administration reserves the right to place a student on athletic probation or suspend participation due to poor academic performance.

Sportsmanship Expectations

Athletes are expected to display Christ-like conduct before, during, and after events: treating teammates, opponents, coaches, officials, spectators, and volunteers with courtesy and respect; demonstrating honesty and integrity; encouraging teammates; following the instructions of coaches and officials; using language that reflects Christian values; and respecting school and opponent property. Unsportsmanlike conduct, arguing with officials, profanity, fighting or threatening behavior, bullying, hazing, or harassment, and disrespect toward coaches, teammates, opponents, or spectators are prohibited and may result in discipline, suspension from contests, or removal from the team.

Participation and Playing Time

Student-athletes are expected to attend all scheduled practices, games, meetings, and team events unless excused by the coach; to notify the coach as early as possible of any unavoidable absence; to

arrive on time and prepared; to wear the appropriate uniform; and to care for and promptly return all school-issued uniforms and equipment. Playing time is determined solely by the coaching staff based on factors including attendance, effort, attitude, skill development, team needs, sportsmanship, and commitment. Participation on a team does not guarantee equal playing time.

Athletic Fees

Athletic participation fees help offset the cost of uniforms, officials, equipment, transportation, league fees, and athletic operations. Fees are set annually by the administration, are due before the first scheduled competition unless payment arrangements have been approved, and are generally non-refundable after team selections are finalized. Optional costs such as spirit wear, camps, or tournaments may be the responsibility of participating families.

Game-Day Attendance

A student-athlete must attend school for at least one-half of the scheduled school day to participate in practices or contests that day, unless the absence has been approved in advance by the administration.

Transportation to Away Games

FCA provides transportation to away contests whenever possible. Student-athletes travel to away contests with the team on school-provided transportation unless prior written approval has been granted by the Athletic Director or administration, and are expected to follow all transportation rules and behave respectfully. After an away contest, a student may leave with his or her parent or legal guardian after the coach has been notified in person and any required release form is signed. Students will not be released to another adult without prior written authorization from the parent and approval from the administration.

Injuries and Concussion Clearance

Any athlete who is injured during practice or competition should notify the coach immediately. In keeping with Arizona law, any athlete suspected of having sustained a concussion is removed from play immediately and may not return until a health-care provider trained in the evaluation and management

of concussions provides written clearance. The student and parent must sign a concussion information form each year. Written medical clearance may also be required before returning to participation following an illness, injury, surgery, or other medical condition.

Emergency Action Plan & Heat Safety

Coaches follow an emergency action plan for practices and competitions. Because of Yuma's climate, the athletic program follows heat-illness and hydration guidelines — including acclimatization, regular water breaks, and modifying or suspending activity in extreme heat — to protect the safety of every athlete.

Conduct, Discipline & Department Authority

Student-athletes are expected to serve as positive role models. Violations of school rules, athletic policies, or behavioral expectations may result in a warning, a parent conference, suspension from

practice or competition, athletic probation, dismissal from the team, or additional school disciplinary action, based on the severity and frequency of the violation. Participation in athletics is a privilege; the Athletic Director and administration reserve the right to interpret, modify, and enforce athletic policies in a manner that supports the mission and best interests of FCA.

Parent & Spectator Expectations

- Spend your energy encouraging the team rather than addressing officials; treat referees and coaches with respect.
- Stay in the stands; parents are not on the sideline or in team meetings during a game (except to attend to an injured child), and do not attend practices unless invited by the head coach.
- Direct any concern to the Athletic Director or administration by appointment, never to a coach during or immediately after a game.
- Above all, remember that the reputation of FCA and of the Lord Jesus Christ is reflected in how we conduct ourselves at games.

Emergency Drills & Safety

The safety and security of our students and staff are a top priority. Students are expected to take every drill seriously and follow all staff instructions promptly and respectfully.

FCA prepares for emergencies using standardized, plain-language response terms so that students, staff, and first responders share one common vocabulary. The five standard actions are:

- Hold — “Stay in your room or area; clear the halls.” Used when hallways need to be kept clear (for example, a medical situation).
- Secure — “Get inside; lock the outside doors.” Used for a threat outside the building; normal activity continues inside with the perimeter secured.
- Lockdown — “Locks, lights, out of sight.” Used for a threat inside the building; students move away from doors and windows and remain silent.
- Evacuate — Used for fire or any situation requiring students to leave the building and move to a designated assembly area.
- Shelter — Used for a hazard such as severe weather; students move to a designated safe area.

What Students Do During Any Drill

- Stop all activity immediately and follow staff directions the first time they are given.
- Remain calm and quiet so important instructions can be heard.
- Move quickly and safely — no running, pushing, or loud talking.
- For an evacuation, leave personal belongings behind unless told otherwise, proceed to the assigned area, and stay with the class for attendance until the “all clear” is given.
- For a lockdown or secure, stay away from doors and windows, silence devices, and do not open doors for anyone unless directed by school administration or law enforcement. Refusing to cooperate, or deliberately disrupting a drill or triggering a false alarm, places others at risk and will result in disciplinary action (and, for a false alarm, possible referral to authorities).

Trauma-Informed Drills

Drills are conducted in an age-appropriate, trauma-informed way. Students are told ahead of time that a drill is a drill, drills do not use props, actors, or simulated violence, and parents are notified after drills as appropriate. The goal is to prepare students calmly, not to frighten them.

Drill Frequency

FCA holds one fire (evacuation) drill each quarter and one lockdown/safety drill each quarter.

Students with Disabilities

Students with mobility, sensory, or medical needs receive appropriate assistance and advance planning so they are safely supported during evacuations, lockdowns, and other drills.

Parent Communication During a Real Emergency

In an actual emergency, FCA communicates with parents and guardians as quickly as possible through the school’s designated communication system. Parents are asked not to come to the school during an emergency unless instructed to do so, so that emergency vehicles and first responders have immediate access to campus. Student release occurs only under the direction of school administration and/or law enforcement, and follows the school’s reunification procedures, using the nationally recognized Standard Reunification Method. The reunification site is Foothill Southern Baptist Church. Parents or authorized emergency contacts must present identification before a student is released.

Audio and Video Recording

For the safety and protection of our students and staff, Freedom Christian Academy uses audio and video recording in classrooms and common areas across campus. These recordings help keep our campus secure and may be reviewed if a situation needs to be looked into; they are not used for routine, day-to-day monitoring. Private offices and the staff lounge are not audio-recorded. Recording on campus is disclosed through posted signage at building entrances and in recorded areas. Our aim is simple: a safe, Christ-centered environment where every child is known, cared for, and protected.

Heat Policy

Because of Yuma’s climate, FCA follows a heat-index policy to protect students during outdoor recess, physical education, and activities:

- Heat Index under 80°F: Normal outdoor play with standard hydration.

- Heat Index 80°–89°F: Limit time outdoors and encourage frequent water breaks (for example, 10 gulps every 20 minutes).
- Heat Index 90°–105°F: Limit strenuous outdoor physical activity and reduce recess duration.
- Heat Index 106°F and above (or a local Red Flag or Excessive Heat Warning): Move all physical education, recess, and activities into indoor, air-conditioned spaces (an indoor or “rainy day” schedule).

Health & Wellness Policy

Sick children belong at home and well children belong in school. As a protection to other children, our sick policy is strictly enforced. Please keep your child home according to the following guidelines:

- Colds: mild but otherwise well—may attend; heavy or hacking cough—stay home, even without fever.
- Sore throat: without other symptoms—may attend; with white spots or fever—see a doctor and stay home.
- Diarrhea: keep home. Nausea/Vomiting: keep home until food stays down.
- Stomachache: if persistent or severe enough to limit activity—see a doctor. Headache: with no other symptoms—may attend.
- Fever or chills: a temperature of 100.0°F or higher means the child stays home for a full 24 hours after the fever resolves without fever-reducing medicine.
- Rash: do not send a child with a rash unless a doctor has cleared it. Earache/Toothache: see the doctor or dentist if severe. Students or staff showing signs of illness or a temperature of 100.0°F or higher will be sent home; the administration will call a parent to arrange immediate pickup, and the student will wait in an isolated area. In the case of head lice, a child is sent home upon detection and may return after the administration determines the hair and scalp are free of lice.

Communicable Diseases

FCA works to maintain a healthy environment by taking reasonable steps to limit the spread of communicable diseases. Any staff member who reasonably suspects that a student has a communicable disease notifies the administration promptly. A student with a communicable disease is kept home while ill and during the recognized period the illness can be spread; if warranted, the school may ask for a physician’s clearance before the student returns. FCA reserves the right to make the final decisions necessary to protect the health of its students and staff. Conditions that should be reported to the office include, but are not limited to:

- Chicken pox, measles, mumps, rubella, and fifth disease
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye), impetigo, and head lice
- Influenza, COVID-19, pneumonia, mononucleosis, and hepatitis

Returning to School After Illness

- Fever: the student may return once their temperature has stayed under 100.0°F for 24 hours without fever-reducing medicine.
- Vomiting or diarrhea: the student may return 24 hours after the last episode.

- Conjunctivitis (pink eye): the student may return 24 hours after starting medication, once the eye appears normal, or when cleared by a doctor.
- Undiagnosed rash: the student may return after a doctor determines the rash is not contagious or after it has cleared. A student should be kept home for any illness that keeps them from taking part in normal school activities.

Medications

Medications are rarely given at school; we urge families and physicians to schedule doses outside school hours when possible. Students who require prescribed medication during school hours must bring it in the original container, clearly labeled with the student's name, medication name, dosage, and directions. School staff will only administer over-the-counter medicines (Tylenol, Ibuprofen, Tums) indicated on the student's medical form. Students who need an inhaler may keep it with them but may not share it. Antidote kits for allergic reactions should be sent to the child's teacher on the first day of school and are administered on an emergency basis only. It is the parent's responsibility to provide these supplies. Whenever any medication is administered to a student, the parent is notified the same day—including the time it was given, what was given, and the reason.

School Closings & Inclement Weather

In the rare event of a school closing, delay, or early dismissal (for example, due to inclement weather), families will be notified by email, MySchoolWorx messages, and the school's social media posts.

General Policies & Information

Church Involvement

"And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together... but exhorting one another." — Hebrews 10:24-25

Scripture calls believers to gather regularly with the local church—to worship God, to grow in His Word, to encourage one another, and to serve. The local church is God's design for the spiritual health of families and the discipleship of the next generation, and what a student learns at FCA is meant to be reinforced and lived out in the life of a Bible-believing church. Because of this, FCA encourages every family to be actively and faithfully involved in a local church—attending its services, growing in fellowship, and serving together. Church involvement is a partnership between the home, the church, and the school, and it strengthens everything we do together for the good of your child and the glory of God.

Field Trips

Occasional field trips are scheduled and arranged by the administration; parents are notified in advance. Only students in good standing may attend, meaning a D or higher in each subject and no more than one in-school suspension. In addition, students in grades 5-12 with more than 25 demerits may not attend. For the safety of our students, FCA uses a van-only transportation policy for field trips.

Volunteers & Chaperones (Background Checks)

Parents and other adults who wish to volunteer at school or chaperone a field trip must complete the volunteer form (on the school app or the parent page of the school website) and clear a background check before participating. This requirement applies to parents of enrolled students as well as any other

volunteer. The background-check process can take up to two weeks, so please begin early. Because chaperones represent the Academy, they are asked to dress according to school standards.

Class Parties

Class parties may be held throughout the year, planned as a class with each student assigned to bring something. Students may bring simple treats to share with the entire class for their birthday; please arrange the timing with the teacher in advance.

Fundraising

During a school fundraiser, students and families turn in fundraiser money to the teacher, not to the front office. The teacher holds the funds until the fundraiser closes and then delivers them to the office in one batch.

Yearbook

A yearbook is produced each school year. Ordering details, deadlines, and pricing will be communicated to families during the year.

Our Commitment

We trust you have prayerfully considered the decision to partner with Freedom Christian Academy in providing a high-quality education for your child. We will honor our end of the commitment to provide a Christ-honoring education where students can compete in an academically challenging world. We will have instructors in each class who care for and love your child and who consider each one a unique creation of God. We will stress character development—courtesy, good manners, and dependability—because if character is not developed, academics are useless. We also ask that parents honor their end of the commitment. Although we can do a great deal for our students and their families, we must be honest about our limitations:

- We cannot be a substitute for a good home where love, values, discipline, and a challenge to grow abide.
- We cannot be a substitute for a good church with consistent biblical teaching, loving fellowship, and mutual encouragement. Regular attendance and membership in a Bible-believing church is essential for both parents and students.
- We cannot be a substitute for a good youth group and Sunday school where students learn scriptural principles and develop positive friendships.
- We cannot offset a materialistic, immoral, or humanistic philosophy that pervades a child's out-of-school time and entertainment; families must monitor and limit this influence. We cannot guarantee success unless the child chooses to learn, obey, and follow what is taught. We give students choices in the best possible context, but each one must choose the right road. Thank you for partnering with us as we labor together for the spiritual and academic good of your child.

“And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men.” — Colossians 3:23

Handbook Acknowledgment

Please sign this page and return it to your student's teacher by the Friday of the first week of school. By signing, both parent and student acknowledge that they have read the Freedom Christian Academy Student & Parent Handbook for 2026-2027 and agree to abide by its policies.

Student Name (print): _____ Grade: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent / Guardian Name (print): _____

Parent / Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____