



# 2021-2022 Student Handbook



**FREEDOM PREP**  
ACADEMY

[www.freedomk12.org](http://www.freedomk12.org)

Congratulations on your commitment to online learning. Remote learning can be exciting, challenging, and rewarding. There are many advantages to learning online including additional freedom and flexibility, but it's important to be committed to your own success. To be a successful online learner you will must embrace the following:

**Persistence:** Students who succeed at online learning need to be willing to tolerate technical problems, seek help when needed, work daily in every class, and persist through challenges. If you should run into trouble, keep trying and ask for help. We want to help you!

**Effective Time-Management Skills:** Flexibility is one of the advantages of distance learning, but it can also be one of the biggest challenges. You will need to be able to manage your time well. You will need to set up a study schedule and stick to it, even when it gets hard. You will need to be able to keep up in your classes without daily reminders from your teachers.

**Effective and Appropriate Communication Skills:** Your teachers are very willing to help you. They look forward to assisting you over the phone, in online teaching sessions, and through email. The teachers will need you to communicate when you need help. If you do not ask, there is no way of knowing you need help. Helping students succeed is why we are here.

**Basic Technical Skills:** Basic technical skills will be needed throughout your classes. If you do not know how to do something, it is important that you ask your advisor or teacher. We are always willing to teach you anything you need to know to learn.

**Motivation and Independence:** You must want to succeed. Online learning requires independence, internal motivation, and responsibility. Students who are motivated and independent will have many opportunities in an online environment.

**A Good Study Environment:** To be successful you will need a good place to study. You will need peace and quiet away from games. You will need to turn off your cell phone during your school time. You also need to be aware surfing the internet does not mean you are working in your courses.

As you begin to learn about your new school, remember there are many great people who are eager to get to know you, and who are willing to work hard to help you succeed. We are here because of students like you.

Warm Regards,

Sterling Kellis  
Principal  
Freedom Preparatory Academy

## Individualized Education

**Home Learning:** Students may learn at home with the support of their parents under the direction of a teacher. The student may move at a flexible pace, and can select the materials best suited to their learning styles from our diverse collection of resources.

**Partners in Education:** Freedom Prep Partners in Education provides an opportunity for schools and school districts to serve their students better while retaining much, and in most cases all, of the Average Daily Membership (ADM).

Student athletes may visit the NCAA website for information on NCAA eligibility and approved courses.

## Our Programs

### Middle School and High School

Freedom Prep Academy's Middle School and High School offer a variety of opportunities for all students.

Freedom Prep has a team of highly qualified teachers who deliver curriculum and instruction through online courses, collaborate group sessions, and individual teaching sessions. The teachers provide feedback to encourage student growth and concept mastery.

Middle School and High School students are offered a large array of electives taught by our teachers and outside providers.

Freedom Prep students may enroll in courses through community colleges, Williamsburg Learning, and several other curriculum providers, provided the necessary requirements are met, and they may attend classes via multiple modalities including online-independent, online-guided, a microschool, and a learning center.

## Expectations

### Student Expectations

Students enrolled at Freedom Prep are an essential part of the learning team. Students need to be committed to working on their schoolwork the allotted amount of time. A model student will also:

- Work hard at home under the direction of his/her parent or Advisor/Academic Coach.
- Speak with his/her teacher on a regular basis on the phone, or through the internet.
- Call or email his/her guide or teacher for help. This may be hard at first, but will become easier as you get to know your teacher better.
- Try his/her best on all benchmark testing and state testing.
- Do his/her work on his/her own: The parent or Advisor/Academic Coach may help, but the student needs to have the leading role when completing work.

We realize that our students come to us with a wide range of experiences and skills. Parents and Advisor/Academic Coaches are encouraged to persuade their students to be a part of the ongoing communication with the teacher. Not only will this help your child realize they are capable, but it will also help your child develop the skills needed to be self-assured adolescents and adults.

# Parent Expectations for Students

## Communication

At the beginning of your child's journey, you will receive a phone call or email from one of our teachers. This will be the beginning of a partnership that will benefit your child. Students who do well at any school do best when their parents are actively involved. We encourage and welcome ongoing communication with your child's teacher. They welcome your assistance with your child's education.

## Time with Your Child

Since your child will be doing the majority of learning remotely, parent time is necessary for student success. Most children will spend between 4-5 hours working on schoolwork each day. Parents can expect to be directly involved with their children for as much as three hours each day. Most parents who have decided to enroll their children in distance learning cherish this time, and view it as one of the most important things they will do in raising their children. Parents are encouraged to enjoy their child's learning process, and our teachers are available to assist you in establishing the structure needed for success.

## Meeting State Requirements

There are state requirements that we are obligated to follow. As we are partners in your child's education it is important that all state requirements are met. These requirements are:

- Participation in state testing and benchmark testing;
- Weekly reporting of attendance;
- Meeting the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards;
- Devoting the age-appropriate amount of time to school work;
- Turning in work regularly to your child's teacher as agreed upon.
- Returning necessary paperwork such as the Parent Engagement Agreement.

# Expectations for Middle School and High School Students

## Parent Checklist for Helping Your Child with Distance Learning

Helping your child with distance learning schoolwork is an opportunity to improve your child's chances of doing well in school and in life. As a parent, you are your child's first teacher and mentor. As a distance learning parent, you are your child's daily face-to-face contact.

## Embrace the Challenge

- Do you set a regular time every day for schoolwork?
- Does your child have the papers, books, pencils, computer, internet access, and other things needed to do assignments?
- Does your child have a well-lit, fairly quiet place to study?
- Do you set a good example by showing your child that the skills he/she is learning are an important part of the things he/she will do as an adult?
- Do you stay in touch with your child's teacher/advisor?

## Monitor Assignments/Progress

- Do you know what classes your child is enrolled in?
- Do you know how many lessons are in each of your child's courses?

- Do you know what your child’s assignments are? How long they should take? If/when should you be involved in them?
- Do you see that your child starts and completes assignments?
- Do you require your child to show you feedback or responses when he/she submits work for grading?
- Do you read the teacher’s comments on assignments that are returned?
- Is TV viewing, internet surfing, or video game playing cutting into your child’s schoolwork time?
- Do you use consequences or incentives tied to school performance and/or progress?

### **Provide Guidance**

- Do you help your child get and remain organized? Does your child keep a planning calendar or assignment book? A book bag, backpack, folder, or shelf for storing all schoolwork?
- Do you encourage your child to develop good study habits (for example, scheduling enough time for big assignments like portfolios; creating study guides or practice tests)?
- Do you discourage procrastination by stressing the importance of finishing required work before engaging in leisurely activities?
- Do you talk with your child about assignments? Does he/she understand them?

### **Talk with the Teacher/Advisor to Resolve Problems**

- Do you check your school email regularly for updates on your child from the teacher/advisor?
- Do you contact the teacher/advisor early in the year before any problems arise?
- If a problem comes up, do you speak with the teacher/advisor?
- Do you cooperate with the teacher/advisor to work out a plan and schedule to resolve schoolwork problems?
- Do you follow up with the teacher/advisor and your child to make sure the plan is working?

This document is an adaptation of the Checklist for Helping Your Child with Homework re-printed by the Parent Information Network, Arizona Department of Education, Exceptional Student Services. The original form appeared on the U.S. Department of Education web-site at [www.ed.gov/pubs/parent](http://www.ed.gov/pubs/parent).

## **Expectations for Teachers**

### **Teacher/Student Interaction**

The teacher/student relationship is a special one. Every child likes to be known by their teacher and likes to know their teacher. Our teachers enjoy interacting with their students. Depending on your location, you may see your teacher regularly for tutoring sessions, or see your teacher online for tutoring. Your child may have the opportunity to work with other students during their tutoring sessions as well.

Your child’s teacher is a part of his or her education. They are encouragers and accountability partners. Your child’s teacher can be reached to speak with your child, assist with their schoolwork, and offer a supportive voice.

### **Teacher/Parent Interaction**

Just as the teacher/student relationship is special, so is the teacher/parent relationship. This relationship is essential to the success of each student. Open communication optimizes student progress. Our teachers are your partners in your child’s education. They are available to help with planning, curricular choices, and the overall educational journey of your child. When our parents and teachers work well together, the results are exciting for everyone. Every child deserves to grow every year. Through ongoing, direct communication, children can reach

their full potential.

Parents are encouraged to share the good and bad with their teachers. Feedback is essential, and will always benefit the student.

### **Feedback**

It is the responsibility of your child's teacher to provide you with ongoing feedback about your child's progress. Students benchmark test three times a year. These benchmark tests provide up-to-date information about your child's progress. Teachers share the results of the benchmark testing, and will use it for reflection when working with you to continually monitor and adjust your child's educational path. Teachers also provide feedback on the assignments that are submitted for grading.

Students are given regular progress reports and report cards. These are discussed and are used to formulate the best educational decisions for your child.

## **Expectations for High School and Middle School Teachers**

### **Online Teachers**

Teachers who educate our students are part of a much larger network that provides instruction for all Freedom Prep students at home or at academic centers throughout the state. Our teachers are highly qualified in their areas of expertise and enjoy teaching in the online environment. Freedom Prep teachers are responsible for:

- Presenting content to the students in a meaningful way;
- Providing relevant and helpful feedback on assignments;
- Encouraging and providing additional assistance through tutoring when needed;
- Communicating with students and parents when needed to facilitate learning;
- Keeping current academic records.

Although the students will always be the most important part of the equation, the teachers and advisors are highly committed to helping students be successful.

### **Guides and Academic Coaches**

The role of the Guide is to be an intermediary between the student and our school program and opportunities. The Guide serves as an advisor, a coach, a mentor, and an intervention aide as the student navigates their educational journey. The advisor is responsible for the ongoing administrative tasks that are needed for school success. Guides also:

- Provide an orientation period;
- Begin classes with the student;
- Map out graduation plans;
- Help students with course work, teacher interaction, and school planning;
- Hold students accountable when coursework is subpar and attendance guidelines are not being met;
- Communicate with students and parents about school progress and expectations.

One of the highlights for all advisors is celebrating graduation with students and their families.

### **Guidance Counselor**

The guidance counselors at Freedom Prep Academy are available to help you with your current high school goals, as well as your future goals. The guidance counselors can help you with career and college planning and

preparation, providing information to colleges and universities, assist with scholarship opportunities, and provide support for any academic concerns you may have.

## Enrollment and Admissions

### Enrollment

Incoming students may enroll online at [www.freedomk12.org/enroll](http://www.freedomk12.org/enroll).

### Admission Requirements

Freedom Prep Academy is an Arizona Charter School. We enroll students year around. Students enrolling with Freedom Prep Academy must provide the required documents as listed on our website at [www.freedomk12.org](http://www.freedomk12.org).

### Release of Records

Upon enrolling at Freedom Prep Academy, a records request will be sent to the student's previous school. Transcripts and previous school records will be used to determine a student's course placement and graduation plan. Previous school records will be used to help determine how we can best assist students in reaching their academic potential.

### Student Age

Freedom Prep Academy accepts students who are five on or before September 1 of the current school year, but not older than 21. These students may attend for free.

Children who are under five on or before September 1 of the current school year may be admitted on a case-by-case basis. Early kindergarten students will be given an academic assessment as well as a readiness inventory. Once the child has completed both of these, the teacher and the parent will work together to determine if the child is ready to begin kindergarten. Students who are older than 21 years may still attend Freedom Prep Academy to complete their high school diploma for a fee.

## Student Status

### Full-Time Students

Students who attend Freedom Prep Academy as their primary school are considered full time.

Middle School students typically attend four to six courses and report between 15 and 30 hours of attendance each week.

High school students who are full time may have five to six classes, and should report 25 hours of attendance each week. If the student takes courses outside of the school operating system, such as early college credit and Williamsburg Academy courses, they are still considered full time, and should report attendance for these courses.

### Part-Time Students

Part-time students do not take the full complement of courses offered each semester. Students taking credit recovery or extra courses, or who blend home-schooling and Freedom Prep, may be considered part time. Part-time students should work with their advisors or academic coaches to determine the amount of attendance they are expected to report weekly. Part-time students take ELA and Math with Freedom Prep as these are state assessed subject areas.

Many part-time students may be enrolled at another school. If a student is taking credit recovery or working ahead, and they plan to transfer the credit to another school, prior approval from the student's primary school is recommended.

### **Anti-discrimination Policy**

Freedom Prep Academy does not discriminate, exclude from participation, or deny benefits of an educational activity on the basis of race, color, religious preference, or national origin.

Freedom Prep Academy complies with the American Disabilities Act of 1990.

## **Attendance**

### **Attendance Policy**

Distance learning allows students the flexibility to arrange their academic schedule in many different ways. Students may study at various times during the day, and may use the weekend to get ahead or to catch up on their work. All Freedom Prep students must devote enough time to their education and demonstrate appropriate academic progress to experience success in their courses.

Students, whether at an academic center or at home, must meet the weekly attendance requirements. Although Freedom Prep allows students to schedule their courses according to their personal needs and preferences, minimum attendance hours must be fulfilled. Below are attendance requirements:

- Grades 7-8: 25 hours per week
- Grades 9-12: 22 hours per week

Note: With distance learning, attendance hours are extremely important because they represent the total time spent on educational activities. Non-attendance has a profound effect on a student's learning.

### **Consequences for Non-Attendance (hours recorded)**

Students who have no reported attendance and no course progress for 10 consecutive days may be withdrawn from Freedom Prep Academy.

### **Illness/Extended Inability to Participate**

Students not participating in their schooling for more than three school days are expected to contact their teachers and guides. The school staff is willing to work with any student to recover from a lengthy absence. Students who do not communicate an upcoming or ongoing absence may be withdrawn from the school.

## **Student Learning**

### **Course Placement**

The partnership between students, parents, teachers, advisors, and academic coaches is essential in deciding each student's course placement.

### **Grades 7-8**



Students are assigned to a grade level based on prior grades successfully completed and the student's age. Parent input is also an important part of student placement. Although Freedom Prep Academy values the input of parents in student placement, the school reserves the right to make the final placement of students. Students who enter without a previous school history will be placed in the age appropriate grade level. If the student is lacking the necessary skills the teachers will work with the student to help close the achievement gap. Students who are working above grade level will also be provided material and interventions from their teacher to ensure the student is challenged and growing academically.

### **High School Students**

Students who are entering 9th grade are expected to be able to demonstrate success on state testing and successful completion of 8th grade English and Math. Students who need remediation to be successful in high school will be given the appropriate remediation prior to being placed into the 9th grade. If necessary, additional placement tests may be given.

Freedom Prep does not discriminate in its enrollment policy. Students applying for enrollment may be tested to determine appropriate placement regardless of age or prior grade level. If it is determined that a student is not ready for high school courses, it will be necessary to give them appropriate curriculum for their level.

### **Credit Transfer**

Freedom Prep accepts credits from most other accredited secondary schools. We reserve the right, however, to accept, reject, and adjust credits at our discretion. Students hoping to transfer credits must provide official transcripts from their former schools and consult with a Freedom Prep counselor to determine how their previous courses will apply toward a Freedom Prep high school diploma. Students entering Freedom Prep with a home-school transcript may elect to either retake the equivalent course or take a challenge exam to obtain the desired credit.

### **Course Withdrawal**

Students may withdraw from a course within the first 60 calendar days upon enrollment without penalty. After the 60 calendar days, students who withdraw from a course may receive a grade of "F." Once the "F" is issued, the student may enter the aligned credit recovery course.

## **Course Pacing**

### **Grades 7-12**

Students in grades 7-12 are enrolled in online courses and provided course checklists and timelines for completion. Students are expected to meet the deadlines as outlined by the checklists. Students who fall behind in the course may be suspended from the course until the student and teacher meet to ensure future student success.

### **Course Completion Expectation**

Students are expected to complete the course by the set end date. All courses are designed to take a typical student 65 hours to complete. Since a semester is 90 school days, engaged and committed students should be able to complete each course with time to spare. When students fall behind, they risk delaying their graduation date, retention, or working through the summer.

When a student falls behind the following steps will be taken:

**A Warning Letter** or email will be sent to any student who should be 75% done with their course, but has completed 50% or less. Students have two days to respond to the letter via email. If a student does not respond within two days,

the course may be locked to ensure that the teacher and the student interact to ensure future success. At this time the teacher may elect to offer a challenge exam if the student feels they are not progressing because they believe they already know the material.

**An End Date Letter** will be sent to any student whose end date has passed and the student is less than 70% complete. The end date letter will be accompanied with a Success Plan. To ensure future success, the student will be locked out of the class until the success plan is completed, signed by a parent, and a virtual conference with the student takes place. The teacher is responsible for adjusting the course completion date in ELMS.

**An Adjusted Course Completion Letter** will be sent once the agreed-upon adjusted course completion date has passed within the last week and the student is less than 80% complete. Once the letter has been sent, the student will be locked out of their course, and the teacher will send the student tools for improving their time management and organization skills. Once the student completes the tools and sends them back to the teacher, a virtual conference will take place with the student, parent, and teacher. After the conference is complete the course will be unlocked.

If the student still fails to make adequate progress after the above interventions have been completed, the teacher and the advisor will work together to determine if the student should be removed from the course in an effort to help the student find the right academic setting and avoid losing additional time.

## Academic Engagement Policy

Distance Learning is a unique opportunity for students who desire to learn outside the typical school setting. At Freedom Prep Academy, this model meets the needs of most of our students, but it requires a high level of independence and self-awareness.

Distance learning schools and their students are legally held to a comparatively high standard. Fortunately, Freedom Prep students who consistently work in their online courses, and who produce a steady flow of valid, completed assignments, are almost guaranteed to pass their courses.

We desire that every student be successful. We encourage students who feel they are more than 15% behind in their course to contact their teachers and advisors to design a plan for success.

## Appeal Process

Students who are withdrawn from Freedom Prep Academy because of failure to be academically engaged have the right to appeal. The appeal process will be overseen by an administrator. Through the appeal process, students must demonstrate they are committed to their academic success. If a student is not allowed to return to their course work, they may re-enter Freedom Prep Academy the next semester.

# Assessment and Grading

## Assessment

Freedom Prep Academy requires all students to participate in a variety of assessments to monitor student progress, provide intervention and enrichment, and to monitor the effectiveness of our courses and curriculum.

### Challenge Exams

Students may request a challenge exam during the first 60 school days in a course. Challenge exams are

reflective of the course content, and demonstrate competency of the state standards.

Challenge exams must be proctored. Each section of the exam must be completed in one sitting. The challenge exams may have 1 or 2 sections.

A student must earn an 80% or better to pass the challenge exam. The grade earned for the course will reflect the challenge exam grade. Challenge exams may be used to replace a previous failing grade.

### **State Testing**

All students in grades 2-10 must participate in the state testing each April. Students in high school second semester courses will also test in October. As necessary, Freedom Prep Academy will arrange for testing sites throughout the state, and students will be assigned to the testing location that is closest to the address on file. We strive to have a testing site within an hour's drive one way. Students who choose not participate in state testing may be withdrawn from the school per state statute.

### **Benchmark Testing**

All students who are enrolled in Freedom Prep and Williamsburg classes are expected to take benchmarks throughout the school year. Benchmarks are embedded in the student's courses. The student is expected to take the benchmark when they come to the appropriate assignment within the course. Benchmark test results are shared with students and their parents. Because students are expected to complete the benchmarks on their own and do their best, the results are used by the teachers to adjust a student's learning path in their courses.

### **Final Exams**

Courses may contain a final exam or final project that is weighted to no more than 20% of the total course point value. Failure to complete the final exam or project will result in course withdrawal. A failed final exam or project may require the student to complete additional assignments, retest, or repeat portions of the course. Students who fail to complete the teacher-directed expectations will fail the course.

Once students enter the final exam, they may not complete or resubmit assignments. Advisors and Academic Coaches will check course completion prior to students beginning final exams to determine if they are ready to take the final. Any skipped assignments will be given the same grade as that earned on the appropriate summative assignment.

Final exams must be proctored. Proctoring can take place at an academic center, other approved location, or at our school office. Proctoring times must be pre-arranged with the location. In extreme situations, virtual proctoring may be available. All final exams must be completed in one sitting.

## **Grading**

P = Pass (no impact on GPA)

## **Course Credit**

High school credit is earned when a course is successfully completed. Credit is awarded on a semester basis. Each high school level course is worth 0.5 credits for the semester. Students who take community college courses will earn 0.5 credit for a 2-3 credit college course, and 1 credit for a college course worth 4+ college credits.

## **Competency Credit**

Competency credit may be awarded when a high level of mastery is demonstrated on a standardized test such as the ACT, SAT, GED, or Accuplacer. Competency credit may also be awarded after a student successfully completes a college course of higher rigor in the same subject area. Competency credit cannot be used to replace a previous failing grade.

## **Elective Credit for Non-School Sponsored Activities**

Many students enrolled with Freedom Prep Academy participate in activities that are not sponsored by or are a function of the school. Students who wish to earn elective credit for non-school related activities may submit a Form for Outside Elective Credit Approval with their advisor after the activity is completed. Forms submitted for activities that meet all criteria will be approved and the course will be entered on to the student's transcript as an elective credit with a grade of P.

Outside Elective Credit Criteria:

- Number of hours spent in the activity must be greater than 65;
- Hours must have been completed within the school year for which credit is requested;
- Evidence of regular participation in the activity, such as an activity log;
- Completed Form for Outside Elective Credit Approval.

With regard to mandatory attendance laws for students, participation in any outside elective activity or course will not be considered as attendance for any student at Freedom Prep Academy.

## **Grade Point Average (GPA)**

GPA is determined using the potential credit of a student's high school courses and the traditional 4.0 scale:

A = 4.0 points  
B = 3.0 points  
C = 2.0 points  
D = 1.0 point  
F = 0 points

As an example, a student who has attempted 22 credits and earned 77 points would have a 3.50 GPA.

Freedom Prep does not weight GPA for any courses or credits. GPA is calculated to the fourth decimal place.

## **Determining Class Rank**

Class Rank is determined based on a student's GPA as compared to other students in his or her cohort or graduating class.

## **Credit Recovery**

If a student has failed a course in a prior semester, he/she may retake the course to earn the required credit. Students who wish to improve their grades may also participate in a credit recovery course. Credit and grade changes will be awarded once the student has successfully completed the course. Credit recovery courses are noted on the transcript with an asterisk.

# Graduation Plans and Diploma Information

## Graduation Plans

Freedom Prep offers two possible graduation plans to our students. The Standard graduation plan prepares students with a general background suited for enrolling in a community college or a trade or technical school. This diploma requires 22 credits. The Academic graduation plan is the more academically rigorous program and is intended for students who want to enter a four-year college or university directly after high school. This diploma requires 23 credits, including more rigorous math and science courses and two years of a foreign language.

### Standard Diploma

The Standard Diploma is the most flexible. It prepares students with a general background suited for entering the workforce or enrolling in a community college. This diploma requires 22 credits.

### Academic Diploma

The Academic Diploma is the more academically rigorous program and is intended for students who want to enter a four-year college or university directly after high school. This diploma requires 23 credits, including more rigorous math and science courses and two years of a foreign language.

Diplomas are awarded to students who have fulfilled all graduation requirements and received their final grades. Freedom Prep holds a full graduation ceremony annually at the end of the school year. Graduates who cannot attend the ceremony may receive their diplomas by mail. We will loan caps and gowns to all of our graduating students.

## ECAP

You will begin hearing the term ECAP (pronounced E-CAP) fairly often. ECAP stands for Educational and Career Action Plan. The state of Arizona requires that every student have an Educational and Career Action Plan.

So, what exactly is ECAP? Aside from the acronym, ECAP means every student must give serious thought as to what he or she wants to do after high school. Whether it's writing a cover letter, preparing a resume, picking out a college or technical school, or deciding on a career or major, students will begin to prepare for their lives post-high school.

Students can take ECAP as a class for credit through Freedom Prep, or students can work on their own through the Arizona Career Information System. Either way, it is important that students think about their future plans.

## Early College Credit

High school students can participate in our Early College Credit program, full-time or part-time. They don't even have to leave their current school! Students can attend local community colleges (even online through Rio Salado), and Freedom Prep covers the cost for tuition and books. The college courses result in college credit and high school credit at the same time. Students are encouraged to utilize the third-party payer letter when registering for college courses. This requires planning before the start of the semester.

Some students may wish to attend a college or university that is not part of the community college system. Freedom Prep Academy will reimburse up to \$84 per credit hour.

Students who pay for their own textbooks and courses will be reimbursed only after the student has provided an official copy of their college course grades and the names of their professors. Advisors can assist in obtaining reimbursements.

Students apply for the Early College Credit program through their Freedom Prep advisor and guidance counselor.

## Student Interaction Policy

Research consistently supports students grow as learners when they interact with one another, express their thoughts and ideas about their learning, and receive and assess the perspective of others. To allow our students the opportunity to develop as well-rounded and respectful learners, our courses may present opportunities for our students to participate in various types of class discussion boards. Students may be asked to post their thoughts and/or respond the thoughts of others.

As digital citizens every student is expected to follow the 10 Rules for Digital Citizenship:

1. Present yourself in a way that represents your best you to everyone who may come in contact with you.
2. Treat others the way you want to be treated, always respectfully. Don't forget there is a human receiving your comments.
3. Share your thoughts and ideas in a fair way, but don't steal the work or thoughts of others.
4. Report and record the unwanted or inappropriate actions of others who are interacting with.
5. Listen to others, think through your response, and then respond.
6. Follow all classroom rules and procedures as they pertain to interacting with classmates.
7. Share your opinion and debate, but never make it personal.
8. Use proper grammar and English. Don't shout by using all capitals.
9. Be careful with what you share. Once it is shared it can easily be re-shared.
10. Never share another student's post without the permission of the student and teacher.

We believe when all students follow the 10 Rules of Digital Citizenship, all message boards and student interactions will ensure a safe learning place for all 24/7. Since our school provides extreme flexibility, message boards will always be open to allow students to complete assignments as their schedule allows. Message boards will be monitored periodically during regular school hours. If a student should come across an unwanted or inappropriate post, please notify the teacher immediately via email so it may be addressed. Removal of unwanted or inappropriate posts will happen during teacher work hours.

We take digital citizenship very seriously. Students who fail to follow the 10 Rules of Digital Citizenship will be referred to the principal, and will receive the appropriate consequence, such as making restitution with whoever was offended to possible school suspension.

Freedom Prep Academy realizes that some families have chosen distance learning to limit their children's interactions with others. Parents may elect to opt-out their students from interactions with other students within a course. It is the responsibility of the parent to notify the teacher via email if they wish their child to complete alternative assignments rather than participate in the group interaction activities. Please note: students will still have access to the activities, but they will be given an equivalent alternative assignment.

## Academic Integrity Policy

Freedom Prep Academy encourages students to do their very best. Freedom Prep maintains a strong commitment to the principles of academic integrity and expects students to behave with honesty in all their school interactions.

- Students are honest in all their dealings with school administrators, teachers, advisors, specialists, staff, and other students.
- Every student assignment represents the student's best effort at the time.
- Students do not allow others to copy their work. Every assignment submitted should represent the student's individual knowledge and ability.
- Students do not share specific information regarding lesson assessments or exams with other students.
- Students use only authorized notes and materials while taking tests or completing assignments. Students should openly disclose all materials used on assignments and tests to parents, teachers, advisors, and other school officials, and use only those materials allowed for each assignment.
- Students do not allow others (including parents/guardians, tutors, or family members) to complete their work for them. While Freedom Prep encourages parents/guardians to actively participate in their student's education, adults should exercise careful judgment when helping their student complete assignments. All student work must accurately reflect the student's abilities, effort, and time spent on task.
- Students do not plagiarize. Plagiarism is defined as using another's words, information, or ideas without giving credit to the original source. It involves copying the work of other students, authors, organizations, or individuals and presenting it as the student's own.
- Students are expected to follow rules of "Netiquette," and use common courtesy when engaging in dialogue with online instructors.

Electronic resources and the internet greatly expand opportunities for plagiarism, making it easy to copy and paste others' work into student documents, or even download entire papers and claim ownership for them. These practices are severe violations of academic integrity. Freedom Prep teachers and advisors will thoroughly check student work for authenticity, and use technologies that search the internet and other sources to detect work that is not original.

## Acceptable Use Policy

Freedom Prep Academy uses the Internet as the deliverer of educational materials. While

enrolled with Freedom Prep, students and parent/guardians should abide by the following:

- I recognize and accept the responsibility for my actions and conduct on the internet.
- I will not participate in any type of inappropriate behavior while online. Inappropriate behavior includes, but is not limited to: accessing, viewing or distributing vulgar or demeaning language, images, or audio; hacking; and damaging and/or altering software, data, or hardware so as to harm or inconvenience others.
- I will be courteous and respectful of property (including but not limited to data, programs, or information) and people on the internet.
- I will not use Freedom Prep computers and internet resources for commercial purposes without prior written consent.
- I understand the use of the internet and computers of Freedom Prep is a privilege, not a right. Abuse or misuse of that privilege may result in loss of computer or internet privileges or other disciplinary action, including mandatory withdrawal.
- I recognize that Freedom Prep cannot control and is not responsible for filtering incoming internet email, nor the content of online chat or news groups not related to the school. Freedom Prep strongly encourages parent/guardians to monitor their student's at-home computer.

## Behavior Policy

Freedom Prep Academy may elect not to admit students who are currently under disciplinary action, or who have withdrawn pending such action from another school. If the school discovers that a student has been previously expelled, the student's enrollment may be terminated.

A student who has been suspended or withdrawn pending disciplinary action from Freedom Prep Academy may not return to the vicinity of the campus during the school day or attend any school functions. Doing so may result in the student's expulsion or police involvement. An exception to this policy will be made for the student if he/she is supervised by a parent/guardian while attending the school function of a sibling.

During the school day, including lunchtime, students may not associate with individuals who are suspended or who have been expelled. Such associations may result in their own suspension or expulsion.

Freedom Prep Academy students should avoid all individuals and groups who are involved in acts that violate the school's Student Code of Conduct. Students who associate with others who are violating the Student Code of Conduct may be deemed guilty by association and disciplined accordingly.

A student or his/her possessions may be searched if there is a reasonable suspicion that they are in possession of illegal, dangerous, or inappropriate items or substances. A student's refusal to cooperate with such a search may result in suspension or expulsion.

A student may be required to undergo alcohol or drug screening if there is reasonable suspicion of substance abuse. A positive test result or a student's refusal to submit to such a test may result in suspension or expulsion.

Students who have been long-term suspended or expelled from Freedom Prep Academy, or who have withdrawn pending disciplinary action may not attend school functions or return to the school campus at any time. Doing so will be considered trespassing and may result in police involvement.

Following a suspension, the student and a parent/guardian are required to attend a conference with a Freedom Prep administrator to discuss readmission. A student who is readmitted may be placed on probation. Any misconduct occurring during probation may result in long-term suspension or expulsion.

## **Conduct Policy**

Our school is dedicated to providing a safe, nurturing atmosphere of respect that fosters the love of learning. A parent or guardian must be present to supervise their student's academic work. Please read and discuss these guidelines with your child. Your signature below demonstrates your approval of this contract and your willingness to uphold and abide by it. Both you and your student must sign and submit the enrollment forms.

### **Expectation #1: Students will respect and obey the law.**

Any illegal activity occurring while participating in any school activities, while with other students, or with school property will be met with zero tolerance resulting in immediate suspension or expulsion. These activities include, but are not limited to: possession or use of tobacco or alcohol; activities related in any way to the purchase, use, or possession of drugs; gang-related activities; possession of weapons; or abuse. Theft, vandalism, or other mistreatments of property belonging to others (including the school) will result in consequences, which may range from an informal conference to expulsion, and may include restitution of stolen or damaged items, or police involvement.

### **Expectation #2: Students will respect the ideas, beliefs, cultures, and individual differences of others.**

Students engaging in verbal or written abuse, intimidation, harassment, discrimination, disrespect of authority,



fighting, profanity, obscene behavior, extortion, gang-related activities, or other such behaviors will receive consequences ranging from an informal conference to expulsion based on attitude, severity, and prior history.

**Expectation #3: Students will respect the privilege of education.**

Plagiarism, lying, cheating, dress code violation (when on campus or participating with others in school activities), public displays of affection (when on campus or participating with others in school activities), or any form of academic misconduct will result in consequences ranging from an informal conference to expulsion based on attitude, severity, and prior history.

**Expectation #4: Students will have the ability to use a computer daily.**

All students must have daily access to a computer with internet access, and must have the basic computer skills needed to use a computer. Students and parents must be familiar with and know how to operate a windowed computer environment. Email skills, including receiving and sending attachments, are required. Minimal typing skills are also essential. Most importantly, students and parents should not be afraid of the computer, or learning new technology.

**Expectation #5: Students will be responsible citizens of the internet.**

Students and parents/guardians must agree to abide by the following as users and citizens of the internet:

- I recognize and accept the responsibility for my actions and conduct on the internet.
- I will not participate in any type of inappropriate behavior while online. Inappropriate behavior includes, but is not limited to, accessing, viewing, or distributing vulgar or demeaning language, images or audio; hacking; and damaging or altering software, data, or hardware so as to harm or inconvenience others.
- I will be courteous and respectful of property (including, but not limited to, data, programs, and information) and people on the internet.
- Freedom Prep computers and internet resources will not be used for commercial purposes without prior written consent of the Freedom Prep Governing Board.
- Use of the internet and computers of Freedom Prep is a privilege, not a right. Abuse or misuse of this privilege may result in loss of this privilege or other academic or disciplinary action.
- Parents and students recognize that Freedom Prep School can do nothing about, and is not responsible for, filtering incoming internet email nor the content of chat groups or news groups. We suggest that parents monitor computer use carefully.

**Expectation #6: Parents/Guardians realize upon student enrollment, they become active participants in a technology-assisted educational program sponsored by Freedom Prep, and chartered by the State of Arizona.**

Parents/Guardians work closely with teachers in developing an individual instruction plan, which includes a variety of educational opportunities and experiences assisted by technology.

Students whose parents/guardians fail to communicate or responsibly work with teachers and staff for the benefit of their student(s) may be withdrawn from the program. Parents and students should check the school site and their email daily.

Upon withdrawal or termination from the program, parents/guardians agree to return all school materials within two weeks.

Parents/Guardians are responsible for ensuring their home computer is connected to the internet. If an internet connection is down, it is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to contact the school to inform us. The student's computer is expected to be online again as rapidly as possible.

### **Expectation #7: Parents/Guardians will monitor attendance.**

Educational hours are tracked in the categories set forth in the Arizona State Standards. Students who have 10 consecutive days of no attendance and no course progress will be withdrawn. Full-time students should log the following educational hours:

Grades 7-8 = 25 hours per week

Grades 9-12 = 22 hours per week

The parent/guardian is legally responsible for approving, recording, and/or reporting attendance.

### **Expectation #8: Parents/Guardians will be responsible for student transportation.**

Parents must provide transportation to the campus or other designated sites whenever necessary to complete tests and for all other requirements. These requirements include state testing and hearing and vision screenings. It may also be necessary to transport your student(s) to participate in optional field trips or activities.

#### General Discipline Policy.

We constantly strive toward the goal of creating a self-disciplined child and believe that self-discipline is an aspect of growth and maturity and not the result of punishment. We make every effort to provide the child with an environment conducive to learning, and work with positive correction of faults and acknowledgment of desirable conduct. We require firm, consistent, kind and respectful treatment of all children from our staff. There is no use of corporal punishment or inappropriate language directed towards the child. His or her individual right to dignified treatment is constantly respected. Similarly, we require respectful treatment by all our students towards classmates, staff members and volunteers so that all members of our school community feel safe and are protected from any physical or emotional abuse on our campus along the following guidelines:

- Each class will create its "Bill of Rights" detailing the respectful treatment that all community members deserve.
- Peace education and character development will be a vital and regular part of the curriculum.
- Conflict resolution skills will be demonstrated and used.
- Causes of misbehavior will be analyzed to facilitate prevention of behavior problems.
- Logical and natural consequences for behavior will be applied.
- Self-discipline and responsibility will be taught and encouraged at all times.
- Communication among students, staff, and parents will be facilitated.

When a student's conduct is serious or repetitive, disrupts the educational process, threatens safety or interferes with the rights and well being of others, the following procedures may be employed:

- Parents will be called to set up a planning conference with staff regarding the student's behavior.
- Temporary in-house suspensions, such as loss of playtime or special events, may be utilized.
- Community service within the school may be required.
- The child may be suspended from school for one or more days.
- Parents will be called at the time of a serious event to come immediately to pick up the student.
- Counseling for the student and/or the family may be suggested or required.

The following behavior will not be tolerated:

- Physical abuse or violence of any kind including hitting, kicking, pushing, tripping, destruction of property or other physically violent behavior.

- Verbal or emotional abuse of any kind including name calling, threatening, taunting, foul language or other abusive speech.
- The possession of any dangerous or illegal items or substances on the school grounds.

Any of the above disrespectful behavior will result in the calling of parents, suspension from school, and enforcement of logical consequences at school and at home. The school's governing board will make the final decision on serious misbehavior.

The staff is committed to working with every child and every family to facilitate positive behavior at the school.

Suspension/Expulsion Procedure. The following guidelines and procedures have been developed pursuant to ARS 15-840, -841, -842, -843, and -844, and approved by the State Board for Charter Schools.

- Suspension. The principal may suspend any student for up to 10 school days for serious cause, including but not limited to the following: defiance of authority of FPA staff, disregard or disobedience of school rules and regulations as outlined in the FPA Family Handbook, verbal abuse of adults or students, disruptive or disorderly behavior, violent or threatening behavior, fighting, intoxication, possession of tobacco or controlled substances including illegal and prescriptive drugs, destruction of school property or personal property, truancy, persistent absenteeism that is not due to certifiable medical illness or disability, and persistent tardiness.
- In cases of suspension out of school, the Principal shall present the student with the reasons and evidence for suspension and provide the student with an informal opportunity to respond to the charges prior to the suspension. The school officials involved shall make reasonable efforts to verify facts and statements prior to recommending a discipline. Depending on the severity of the offense and the student's past behavior, the principal may choose to impose a lesser discipline, including parental conference, and/or work detail.
- In cases of inappropriate behavior observed by the teacher, the teacher has the discretion to initiate a parental conference, or to recommend suspension orally or in writing to the principal.
- There will be no corporal punishment of students at FPA, though staff may use reasonable, necessary force to restrain a violent, disruptive, or disobedient student.
- The parent/legal guardian will be notified of the behavior problem and the discipline applied, by phone or in writing, and, in the case of suspension, will be required to attend a conference with the student and the school prior to re-admission. If the school is unable to contact the parent/legal guardian, the suspended student will be held in school until the end of the day. The parent/legal guardian shall be held liable for all damages caused by a student.
- Expulsion. The teacher may recommend to the principal, and the principal may recommend to the governing board, expulsion of a student for serious cause, including, but not limited to the following: defiance of authority of FPA staff, repeated disregard or disobedience of school rules and regulations as outlined in the FPA Family Handbook, verbal abuse of adults or students, disruptive or disorderly behavior, violent or threatening behavior, fighting, destruction of school property, truancy, persistent absenteeism that is not due to certifiable medical illness or disability, persistent tardiness, possession of firearms or other dangerous weapons, possession of controlled substances, including illegal drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and prescription drugs. In cases where the student has committed a crime or violation of local, state or federal law, law enforcement authorities will be notified.
- The parent/legal guardian will be notified of the intent to expel, and a hearing shall be held, after at least five working days' notice, and must include the student, the principal or other staff, and the parent/legal guardian. All rights and responsibilities of the school, the governing board, the parent/legal guardian and the student, pursuant to ARS 15-840, -841, -842, -843, and -844 shall adhere in cases of expulsion, including the right of parents to request an open meeting or an executive session for the expulsion hearing, the right to reapply for admission after one year of expulsion, and the right of the governing board to deny admission of a student expelled from another school, and to deny, upon review of a request, re-admission of a student previously expelled.

# Microschool and Learning Center

- Students will respect the safe learning environment of the academic Center.
- Ignorance of the rules will not be considered justification for violating the rules.
- Profanity and obscenity are not permitted in the academic center or on the campus.
- Public displays of physical affection are not permitted in the academic center or on the campus.
- Plagiarism, cheating, forgery, and gambling are not permitted in the academic center or on the campus.
- Possession and voluntary viewing of pornography is not permitted in the academic center
- Possession of alcohol, tobacco, and controlled substances is not permitted in the academic center or on the campus.
- Possession of weapons is not permitted in the academic center or on the campus.
- Students who are current on hours will be “in good standing.”
- Students who are not current on hours will be “not in good standing.”
- Students should arrive at the academic center ready to work.
- Full-time students may take a break with the academic coach’s permission.
- Full-time students may take one 45-minute lunch break each day.
- Students must sign in every time they enter the academic center.
- Students must sign out every time they leave the academic center.
- Students working offline must submit a weekly attendance log.
- Students should list time spent in each class on their weekly attendance log.

Cellular phones, tobacco products, and shelled food products are prohibited in the academic center and campus. Any student may be placed “not in good standing” by a teacher or academic coach.

Academic coaches have the right and responsibility to determine when an academic center policy has been violated. This includes interpretation regarding profanity, obscenity, pornography, cheating, etc.

Academic center policies are subject to change at any time.

## Privacy Policy

Freedom Prep Academy strongly protects the privacy rights of its students and only collects personal data that families choose to supply to the school. Freedom Prep Academy abides by the regulations set forth in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Under this act, the following individuals have access to student records (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99):

- School officials with legitimate educational interest;
- Other schools to or from which a student is transferring;
- Specified officials for auditing or evaluation purposes;
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- Accrediting organizations;
- Individuals with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific state law;
- Military recruiters, post-secondary educational institutions, and prospective employers as specified.

Freedom Prep Academy staff is not authorized to disclose student information to any other individuals or institutions without written permission from the student’s parent or legal guardian, or the student him/herself if over 18.

Freedom Prep Academy also upholds the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 98), which governs the administration to students of a survey, analysis, or evaluation that

concerns one or more of eight protected areas. This amendment requires parental notification and/or written consent in advance of the administration of such surveys.

Freedom Prep Academy follows the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. For more information, please contact the Arizona Department of Education: **Arizona Department of Education** 1535 West Jefferson Street Phoenix, Arizona 85007; 602- 542-5393; 800-352-4558.

## Technology Requirements

Freedom Prep Academy students who are not working from an academic center must have daily access to a telephone and an adequately equipped computer with high-speed internet access. Students should make sure their computers have the following:

- Latest version of Flash, Java, and Adobe Reader;
- Word processing and spreadsheet programs;
- Up-to-date internet browser.

Students need to have basic computer skills, including:

- Fundamental typing;
- Emailing;
- Sending and receiving e-mail attachments.

## Assistance

Staff at Freedom Prep Academy want your time in our school to be a time of great learning that is easily accessible and highly enjoyable. To make this happen, communication is essential.

When you need assistance, you are encouraged to start with the person closest to you in our educational setting, or closest to the problem.

Guides and Academic Coaches are your liaisons, advocates, and accountability partners in this educational setting. They desire to help you with any concern you may have. Since this is the best place to start, find a way to keep their contact information handy.

Teachers want and are able to answer questions regarding student progress, submitted work, and individual course expectations. Administration is also available to assist you.

Wishing you the best for an amazing school year!