

FREE STATE ACADEMY

STUDENT HANDBOOK 2023-2024



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FREE STATE ACADEMY STATEMENT OF FAITH

- The Holy Bible is the very Word of God in its entirety and is our only authority in matters of faith and practice.
- In the one and only God, our creator of the universe, is eternally existing in the persons of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
- Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, crucified for our sins, and raised from the dead in eternal victory.
- Faith alone in Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, is the only way to eternal life.
- The Holy Spirit is a personal Being who convicts the world of sin and who regenerates, indwells, empowers, guides, and seals believers eternally for God.
- Heaven is the abode of God and the place of eternal joy for the saved, and that Hell is the place of eternal punishment of separation from God for the lost.
- Marriage is God's sacred gift and is between one man and one woman.
- Gender is God's sacred design and is determined at conception, unchangeable by man.
- Human life begins at conception and is protected from conception to natural death.

CONTACT US

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Free State Academy, Inc. Board of Directors

Merri Cleavland, President
John Stewart, Vice President
Phil Kelley, Spiritual Leader
Mike Williams, Board Member
Janet Stasulli, Secretary & Treasurer
Michael Lynn, IT Director

Free State Academy Leadership Team

Merri Cleavland, Executive Director
John Stewart, Director of Instruction and Discipline
Janet Stasulli, Office Manager

Timber Ridge Baptist Church

Phil Kelley, Senior Pastor

ABOUT US

Our Mission . . .

The mission of Free State Academy (FSA) is to give children in the community an excellent education while fostering their desire to pursue and take hold of truth for life. The purpose is to align the community's intellectual, moral, and spiritual worldview with the fundamental principles that are the foundation and future of America's heritage of freedom. With God's help, we will accomplish this by the people of the community coming together with the resources to offer a low cost, full-time, in-person education.

The donated resources FSA receives will go toward the costs of additional insurance and utility usage at schoolhouse locations; the purchase of curriculum, equipment, and supplies; and the vetting and compensation of a superintendent and all other paid and volunteer staff.

Our Vision . . .

Our goal is to create a God-centered Biblical approach and realistic alternative to education in a 5-day-a-week, full-day, program with a focus on restoring patriotism and lost virtues. Our desire is to help families that feel locked into public education shift into an environment of unhurried, skill-based, mastery-focused education. Many families are unable to afford educational opportunities beyond the free public school system. FSA will remove this barrier and provide quality education as close to free as possible, allowing parental involvement.

Our Philosophy . . .

FSA believes that given the luxury of time, in a relaxed and restful setting for learning, children can master any skill presented to them. We believe that education should be skill-based and mastery-focused. Classical education allows us to approach learning based on developmental stages leading to confidence and success. As students experience this success, special education labels and previous struggles from the progressive educational system can be erased, and children can be viewed as scholars rather than identified by a label or their past. Advanced students will be given the opportunity to advance as they are appropriately challenged.

Our History . . .

In the fall of 2021, the Bedford County School System was in moral disarray, dealing with transgender bathroom and COVID-19 issues, and several other issues that caused conservatives within the Bedford County Militia, Inc. to start looking at starting a Homeschool Co-op.

Sparked by a single Militia member who was fed up with the public schools, there were a series of meetings seeking a solution from within the Militia. Shortly after the meeting started, another member of the Militia, who for several years had a desire to start a school one day, joined the Militia members who were trying to form a co-op. Out of these series of meetings within the Militia the idea of “Free State Academy” was eventually born.

With the help of many volunteers, a structure and plan were formed as leadership of this new school was handed off to this growing group of new leaders. Free State Academy, Inc. was incorporated September 21, 2021, and a Board of Directors was formed consisting of several new volunteers as well as two of the original Militia members.

In the Spring of 2022, Free State Academy ran a Pilot Program that served to mold what would be Free State Academy's first full school year starting in the fall of 2022.

ATTENDANCE

Free State Academy is available for students in kindergarten through 10th grade for the 2023-24 academic year. This is subject to change as volunteers and teachers become available and potential student levels.

Parents are part of the educational process and **need to be actively involved**; therefore, all parents are asked to participate in school activities, whether during the school day or after hours in some capacity.

Part-time families will file either the Notice of Intent to Homeschool (NOI) or the religious exemption with their local school district. Full time students do not file the NOI. FSA is a non-public school and will provide the end of year standardized testing requirement using the California Achievement Test (CAT), progress reports and transcripts for each student.

Classes begin the day after Labor Day and run through the Friday before Memorial Day each year with a corresponding commitment unless otherwise stated. Be sure to follow the website and check Classical U for calendar updates.

Students are required to be at school for 990 hours each academic year in order to obtain credit for the year. We have built in enough hours to allow for 8 excused absences. A note must be submitted stating the reason for the absence upon return to FSA. As Christians, we expect these excuses to be truthful.

Full-time attendance

5 days a week from 8:30am-3:00pm. FSA provides all instruction and socialization in a formal school setting. Curriculum for core classes is provided and included in the tuition. Electives may require additional purchases or fees for individual families. FSA will administer the end of year assessment at no additional charge.

Part-time attendance

Families may choose two subjects. Students participate in group activities and field trips and may have an additional expense. This attendance option is not available for any daily classes, lower school math, kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grade students. All curriculum is purchased by the family. Electives may require additional purchases for individual families. Family must file the Notice of Intent to Homeschool. FSA will administer the end of year assessment for an additional fee.

**All students, regardless of attendance option chosen, are required to attend Chapel services, which is a core class for all students. Part-time students will need to discuss this with the Executive Director if they are not scheduled to attend FSA on Chapel Day. Students are required to have their Bible with them when attending Chapel.*

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the case of bad weather, Free State Academy follows the Bedford County Public Schools when there is a **closing due to inclement weather only**. FSA will be open at regular time on morning delays and for any teacher workdays, etc.

Free State Academy

CURRICULUM

The curriculum will consist of any of the following and is subject to change without notice:

Character Sketches, Answers in Genesis, The Noah Plan, Story of the World, Mystery of History, Math-u-See, Writing and Rhetoric, Compass Classroom, Veritas Press, Apologia, Song School Latin, Latin for Children, Latin Alive, Hillsdale College-1776, Prager U and NavPress.

TEACHERS, VOLUNTEERS AND ADMINISTRATION

- Each member of the staff has a servant's heart. They are involved in FSA because they care about your children and the state of education these children face. As a non-public school, the teachers are not required to be certified although several of them are. Each teacher is placed according to their ability. Enrollment is FSA indicates understanding and agreement.
- FSA has elected to limit government intervention when possible. Therefore, we will not be seeking accreditation status. Nor will we be offering a school breakfast or lunch program.
- As with Parents and students, all teachers are required to sign and respect FSA's Statement of Faith. Each teacher and visitor will complete a background check and will wear a badge while on campus. Teachers will complete the Scholé Classical Education Training with the ability to become certified through our classical education training course.

COMMUNICATION

- All Communication between parents and students must occur within the Free State Academy internal communication site. This year it will be through TrackCC rather than ClassicalU. Parents and students should never email or text teachers directly outside TrackCC. This is for your safety as TrackCC provides a history if anything ever comes into question. Sometimes a phone call is a necessity. Please call the FSA phone number 434-259-8308.
- The Executive Director can be reached via phone, email or within the TrackCC app. TrackCC allows for instant messages equivalent to a text message. In an emergency, please call.
- ALL issues, concerns, problems, and suggestions are to be brought to the Executive Director who is the primary contact person and ultimately the final decision maker.
- If the Executive Director is not on site, contact the Assistant Director for problems and concerns. Anything brought to the Assistant Director must be shared with the Executive Director as well, especially if the Executive Director is off site for that day.
- The Leadership Board of Free State Academy will assist in molding and voting in support of these decisions.
- Please download the app TrackCC. Your account will be created for you and you will receive an email with log-in instructions. Create a free account in Classical U. Classical U hosts the parent classical education training and will remain as our digital library. Be sure to check for documents that are uploaded here.

CODE OF CONDUCT

“You are the light of the world, a city set on a hill cannot be hidden.”

Matthew 5:14

“ . . . whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.”

Corinthians 10:31

“ . . . conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ.”

Philippians 1:27

Thus, in keeping with God’s Word, the following offenses will be grounds for expulsion from Free State Academy and are Prohibited from all campuses:

- Alcohol
- Drugs
- Weapons
- Pornography
- Transgender, Homosexual or Heterosexual Behavior
- Open displays that violate the Statement of Faith

The following will be handled on a case-by-case basis and could result in consequences that will include writing assignments, seclusion, detention, or suspension:

- Bullying
- Foul language
- Cheating
- Ignoring and not following directions
- Inappropriate interactions with staff or peers
- Influencing class discussions to condone any agenda contrary to the Statement of Faith

Standards of Conduct and Discipline

- Good conduct and discipline are necessary for the welfare of the student as well as the entire school. It is impossible for learning to take place in a classroom unless control and good order are maintained.
- Students are reminded that they must adhere to a good code of conduct not only for their benefit, but for the benefit of others. **FSA expects full cooperation from both students and parents.**
- Parents who cannot support the discipline standards of Free State Academy are encouraged to find a school whose standards more nearly reflect their own.

- Because attendance at FSA is a privilege and not a right, the privilege may be forfeited by any student who does not conform to the spiritual, moral, and scholastic standards and regulations of the institution.
- The administration may request withdrawal of any student at any time who, in the opinion of the Leadership Team, does not fit into the spirit of the school ministry, regardless of whether or not the student conforms to the specific rules and regulations of the school.
- While FSA is concerned for each family individually, we must also be committed to the general welfare of the total school family and to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Rules

- Remember the sanctuary is a place of reverence. Be respectful and use any waiting time to quietly ponder your relationship with Jesus Christ and His will for your life. You may bring your own pencil, paper, and Bible, all other items remain outside the sanctuary. No hats are allowed in the Sanctuary or during prayer in the classrooms.
- Always treat others with respect using words like “please” and “thank you.”
- When entering a classroom other than your own, respectfully go in without knocking and quietly stand until recognized by the teacher.
- Students will walk when inside the building.
- Students must obey promptly the commands and directions of teachers without complaint, argument, or facial expressions of disagreement. Disrespect, disobedience, and insolence will not be tolerated.
- Stealing another’s personal belongings will not be tolerated.
- Cheating and lying are not tolerated. Their use undermines the integrity of the class, school, and student.
- Swearing and other indecent language is not allowed.
- No student will be allowed to remain at FSA who is sexually active, involved in pornographic behavior, or at any time uses unlawful drugs, alcohol, or tobacco of any form. Personal belongings can be searched.
- Never touch anything on or in a teacher’s desk without permission. Show respect for boundaries and another’s personal items.
- Criticism of teachers, administration, or rules is not permitted.
- Physical contact, touching, is not permitted. Teacher directed activities are the only variance to this policy. Keep hands, feet, arms, and lips to yourself at all times. Horseplay is not permitted.
- Students and Staff will be treated with respect and be free of discrimination, harassment and bullying.
- Littering is not allowed in the buildings or on the grounds. Please pick up and discard any trash you see.
- Students are required to keep classrooms, hallways, bathrooms, and other areas neat and orderly at all times.

BEHAVIOR

Students

Students should display Christ-like character and proper behavior at all FSA functions, and show respect for all authorities, adults, and fellow students. Students should strive to live in such a way that others will see Jesus through them and abide by our Statement of Faith.

- Students will be familiar with the Code of Conduct expected and will support these standards and the Leadership Team, **regardless of whether they fully agree with them or not.**
- All students must be willing to respect FSA's Statement of Faith without opposition, disruption, or modification.
- Students will adhere to the academic policy and understand expectation for completion of assignments, projects, and preparations for assessments. Students who violate the academic policy will be placed on academic probation.

Parents

Parents are integral in promoting an atmosphere of Christ-like conduct and academic excellence.

- Parents will be familiar with the Code of Conduct expected from their child(ren) and will support these standards and the Leadership Team, **regardless of whether they fully agree with them or not.** Leadership welcomes the opportunity to talk with parents about these standards should they have questions or concerns.
- Students and Parents will sign the Behavior Agreement.
- **Parents will support FSA by being actively involved. ALL families are required to participate in fundraising and expected to lend a hand as often as called upon.**
- Parents commit to work with (not for) their student(s) to complete assignments, recognizing that they are responsible for their child's education.
- Parents commit to supplying the necessary tools their child(ren) needs for each class as designated by FSA.
- FSA will not tolerate promotion of behavior contrary to any portion of the Statement of Faith adopted by Timber Ridge Baptist Church (TRBC) or Scholé, nor does it comply with the federal government's directive regarding transgender bathroom use. All persons are required to use the pronoun and bathroom facility designated to the gender stated on their birth certificate.
- All registering families must be willing to respect FSA's Statement of Faith without opposition, disruption, or modification.
- FSA leadership reserves the right to refuse registration of families who have shown themselves (student or parent) in a previous year to be disruptive, delinquent in payment of fees or tuition, exhibit unsolvable behavioral issues, or intentional opposition to FSA's mission and beliefs.

DISCIPLINARY PROCESS

Disciplinary Action: Violations of this Code of Conduct will be evaluated by FSA leadership and may result in disciplinary action, including, but not limited to the following: verbal warning, written warning, detention, suspension, or dismissal from FSA.

Classroom Behavior

To promote Godly character within our student body and provide a positive learning environment, teachers will not accept disruptive or disrespectful behavior during class time. Teachers will make their specific expectations known to the students and will handle problematic behavior in the following way:

1. The student will receive a verbal warning when they do not follow the expected guidelines (maximum of two).
2. As deemed necessary by the teacher, the student will be escorted to the office.
3. The student will remain in the office until the end of that class period at which time the teacher will provide further information to the administration and, if necessary, the parent will be contacted by phone or written communication.
4. A record will be kept in the office of such disciplinary action and repeat offenses will result in student detention, suspension, or dismissal from FSA as determined by the FSA leadership.
5. Students who do not complete assignments consistently or are failing courses will be placed on academic probation.

Campus Behavior

Students are expected to adhere to the Code of Conduct while at FSA. If an adult witnesses problematic behavior, they will handle the matter in the following way:

1. The student will receive a verbal warning when they violate the Code of Conduct and the student should correct their behavior promptly.
2. If the student does not properly respond to the verbal warning, or in the case of more serious or repeated offenses, the student will be escorted to the office.
3. As soon as possible, the person witnessing the offense will complete an incident report.
4. A member of the FSA leadership team will review the incident, then impose the appropriate consequences.

Detention Policy

If a student is found to be disrespectful, disruptive, or exhibiting any of the above listed offenses, the student will be required to stay after school for detention.

1. First offense is one (1) hour starting at 4:00 pm. Parents will be required to pick up their child at 5:00 pm.
2. Second offense will result in a two (2) hour detention starting at 4:00 pm with parents picking up their child at 6:00 pm.
Third offense will result in Saturday school from 8:30 am until noon. Should a parent have a conflicting schedule, they can request a conference with the administration.

3. Parents will support this detention policy **regardless of whether they fully agree with it or not.**

DRESS CODE

Those students that are considered inappropriately dressed will be required to go home or have a parent bring them an appropriate set of clothes.

- Each student will be given two FSA polo shirts as part of their daily attire. Additional shirts can be purchased for \$15 each. White FSA t-shirts may also be worn.
- Students may wear properly fitting pants, or shorts that come to the bottom of their fingertips when standing upright. Skirts must be finger length and shorts worn underneath.
- Clothing and accessories will not contain vulgar language or graphic references.
- Clothing and accessories will not contain references to violence, drugs, alcohol, or tobacco.
- Pants are to be worn at the waistline. Students that have not yet reached the tanner 4 level of maturity may wear leggings.
- Clothing not to exhibit rips or tears above the knee.
- Clothing and accessories will not display gender confusion or loyalty to anti-Biblical affiliation.

ACADEMICS

Free State Academy strives to promote high academic standards and prepare students to serve Christ as they enter college or career of their choice.

Academic Guidelines

The following academic guidelines will encourage the success of each student at FSA:

- Class sizes will be limited to 10-12 students unless the teacher and leadership of FSA determine that an increase or decrease in the class size is in the best interest of the teacher and/or students.
- Teachers will routinely provide assessments. Parents are ultimately responsible for mastery and should remain in contact with teachers regarding growth and concerns.
- Students will need to exhibit mastery of skills or content prior to advancing to the next level of instruction.
- Students missing instruction will be required to make-up missing assignments. Make-up time will be determined by the number of days out for excused absences. Teachers will allow 3 days for missing assignments for each day excused not to exceed 10 days. Missing assignments that not turned in on time will result in a grade of zero (0).
- Trimester grades will be posted every eleven (11) weeks.

We recognize the need to provide grades for students. It's a delicate balance to achieve both restful learning and excellent academic performance. Earning a specific grade should not overshadow achievement

goals for mastery. Student's grades will be comprised of the following: class participation, classwork, homework, written assignments, quizzes, tests, projects, dissertations, memorization, effort, preparedness, group work, neatness, attitude, active listening, presentations.

EVALUATION PROCEDURES and GRADING CRITERIA

Free State Academy teachers assign the following grades based on students' level of achievement.

Grading Scale

Magna Cum Laude- with great praise (*unusually exceptional demonstration of mastery*): Students achieve mastery but then also go above and beyond the expectations of an assignment can earn a mark of great praise 96%-100%.

Cum Laude – with praise (*mastery, fully met expectations*): Students demonstrating mastery of the targeted skills and content of any assignment have their mastery acknowledged by a praiseworthy mark 86%-95%.

Satis -sufficient, satisfactory (*near mastery or met expectations with aid*): Student work demonstrating near mastery of the targeted skills or content of the assigned work, but with some gaps 77-85%

Non Satis -not sufficient (*material not mastered, not meeting expectations*): Student's work lacks sufficiency or adequacy to demonstrate mastery of skills or content. 0-76%

Homework

Homework is not busy work. It is given to help a student master the understanding of skills and concepts taught in the classroom. Homework plays a major role in our quest for academic excellence; therefore, students are required to complete homework assignments.

Please note: Homework should not take an unreasonable amount of time for any grade level. A study hall for homework is provided within the student's schedule.

Academic Probation

- Any student who refuses to or consistently does not complete assignments will receive a grade of NS (non-satis).
- Any student who receives NS (*failing/not meeting expectations*) on two or more subjects at the end of the trimester will be placed on academic probation.
- Students on academic probation will not attend elective courses nor recess until they have improved their grade to S (Satis) or above. Instead, the student will be required to attend an additional academic study hall.
- Should the student still be failing two or more subjects at the end of the year, s/he may not be readmitted for the following year.

Academic Testing

All students, excluding Kindergarten, are given the California Achievement Test in the spring.

Promotion and Retention

At the end of the year, the final grade report will state whether the student has been promoted or

retained. Students receiving an NS in any academic subject will repeat that course until mastery is obtained.

The review will include both academic and behavioral performances. Students who are passing but tend to not do homework and/or are disruptive in the classroom may not be allowed to advance to the next academic level.

Students are required to be at school for 990 hours each academic year to obtain credit for the year. We have built in enough hours to allow for 8 excused absences. A note must be submitted stating the reason for the absence upon return to FSA. Any student absent more than 8 days may be automatically retained. If the student is passing, parents MAY have the option to develop a plan with the Leadership Team to make up the time in an acceptable manner but within a 2-weeks after the completion of the academic year.

The final decision regarding mastery and promotion will be based on a comprehensive review of the achievement levels, standardized test scores, ability, maturity (social, emotional, and physical), grades, subject mastery, rate of absenteeism, behavior and needs for educational assistance above and beyond what FSA can provide.

Graduation Requirements

There are two graduation tracks: Academic and College Preparation. The high school transcript consists of a list, by year, of every course taken in high school along with the final grade achieved. This information reflects credit earned while in attendance at FSA. Credit may be transferred from the previous school or homeschool.

Academic

- 4 credits of Bible: Virtue Training, Chapel, Discipleship
- 4 credits of English: Literature, Writing & Rhetoric, Public Speaking
- 3 credits of Math: Pre-Algebra, Algebra Ia, Algebra Ib
- 3 credits of Science: Physical Science, Biology, Astronomy or other Science
- 4 credits of Social Studies: World History, US History and Geography
- 1 credit of Required: Personal Finance, Government (.50 each)
- 2 credits of Physical Education
- 2 credits of Foreign Language: Latin
- 2 credits of Free Electives

25 Total Credits Required

GPA will be converted and reflected numerically.

College Prep:

- 4 credits of Bible: Virtue Training, Chapel, Discipleship
- 4 credits of English: Literature, Writing & Rhetoric, Public Speaking
- 4 credits of Math: Algebra Ia, Algebra Ib, Geometry, Algebra II
- 4 credits of Science: Physical Science, Biology, Chemistry, Astronomy or other Science
- 4 credits of Social Studies: World History, US History and Geography
- 1.5 credits of Required Personal Finance, Government, Economics (.50 each)
- 2 credits of Physical Education
- 2 credits of Foreign Language: Latin
- 2 credits of Free Electives

27.5 Total Credits Required

GPA will be converted and reflected numerically.

Graduation

- Students will not be permitted to participate in the graduation exercises unless all credits are complete and final.
- Transcripts are not released until all accounts are paid in full.
- Credits for graduation are accumulated for courses taken in grades 9 through 12; therefore, GPA and numerical averages are calculated only from academic courses taken in high school. Only Algebra I graduation credit can be brought forward from middle school.

CAMPUS GUIDELINES

It is a privilege to have use of the campus at TRBC. To show our gratitude and in respect of the property, we will follow these guidelines:

- The doors will be opened at 8:15 am.
- The doors will be locked at 8:45 am, remaining locked until dismissal.
- The playground is open according to normal TRBC guidelines and FSA school schedule.

Students

- Students not currently enrolled in FSA may NOT be on campus without the permission of FSA leadership.
- Students must adhere to the FSA Code of Conduct.
- Students may NOT leave campus unsupervised and should only leave campus with their parent or legal guardian. FSA leadership must be notified before any other arrangements are made.

Parents

Parents will retrieve their kindergarten-aged children from the playground. On inclement weather days, please pick them up at side entrance near the playground. Kindergarten dismisses at 12:30 pm. All other children will be released to the fellowship hall for parent pick-up at 3:00 pm. Parents must notify FSA staff if the child is to be picked up by an alternate adult.

When arriving at FSA during school hours, please come to the front door rather than the Fellowship Hall door to avoid class disruptions.

Visitors

All visitors must be **pre-approved** by a member of the FSA leadership team and have a purpose for being on campus. All visitors will sign in and wear an identification tag.

Designated Areas

- **The Fellowship Hall:** Lunch will be eaten in the Fellowship Hall, start of day arrivals and end of day pick-ups will be via the Fellowship Hall outside door.
- **The Playground:** The playground is reserved for enrolled students, and its use is to be determined by FSA's daily schedule.

Restricted Areas

- **The Sanctuary** is off-limits except for scheduled assemblies.
- **The Kitchen** is off-limits except for scheduled class.
- **The Hallways** are to be used for accessing classrooms and other designated areas only. Please WALK QUIETLY. Please be mindful that many of our classes are in close proximity and that the walls and doors are not soundproof. We ask that ALL – adults and students alike – speak and interact in quiet tones. Please do not congregate in the hallway near the Pastor's Office.

Lunch Zones

- Lunch and snacks are to be eaten only in the Fellowship Hall or outside.

The Parking Lot

- Please Park behind the church building for drop-off and pick-up. There is **NO PARKING** on the playground side of the church, except for kindergarten pickup.
- Please maintain a VERY CAUTIOUS driving speed. We have students using the parking lot regularly.
- Students may not “hang out” in the parking lot or in any vehicle.

Housekeeping

- EVERYONE is expected to CLEAN UP after themselves.
- Food containers left behind will be discarded at the end of the day.
- Please keep your belongings tidy and in a designated area.
- Personal items left on campus will be placed in the Lost & Found bin. Unclaimed items will be donated or discarded before each vacation period.

HEALTH – SAFETY – SECURITY

Health Guidelines & Sickness Policy

- Students should NOT be in attendance if they have experienced fever, vomiting or diarrhea within 24 hours of a class or event. This means students must be FEVER FREE and SYMPTOM FREE without medication for 24 hours.
- Students with an uncontrollable, distracting cough should remain home.
- Students with ANY signs of lice (including treated nits) should remain home.
- Students with a communicable disease, which can be transmitted through ordinary contact should remain home.
- Students with a communicable disease, which is transmitted through blood contact MUST notify FSA leadership. Parents should make this situation known in the interview process or at the time of diagnosis. FSA leadership will evaluate the risks to other students and make the final decision regarding the student's enrollment at FSA.
- Parents must notify FSA during the interview process of any health concerns or allergies.

Hygiene

- Students are to use restrooms only during breaks and will not be excused from class unless it is an emergency.
- Students are expected to shower regularly and to wear deodorant daily.

Safety & Security

Students, parents, and teachers need to be watchful for anyone and anything that looks suspicious, out of place or dangerous. Please report anything of concern to a member of the Leadership Team.

STUDY HALL

Study hall is for study and is a monitored class with a quiet atmosphere to promote studious pursuits. Students are expected to remain quiet, be respectful and diligent while in Study Hall. Our goal is to have the majority of schoolwork completed during the day, limiting the amount of work brought home.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

FSA will consider enrollment for students with an IEP or 504 and do our best to accommodate and comply with any existing IEP or 504 plan. We will not be writing any original, nor renewing IEPs or 504 plans. Admission to FSA is on a case-by-case basis and each situation is evaluated individually to determine if FSA is the best fit for your child. The parent or other approved adult may be required to attend class with the student. FSA teachers are a team who does their best to comply with student accommodations. However, once the student accommodations have been established, it is the student's responsibility to utilize the accommodations.

TUITION & REGISTRATION

The tuition will cover the building expenses, cleaning, insurance, internet, curriculum, and financial support for our teachers.

- **Tuition** - Our goal is to supplement the cost of tuition as much as possible with the assistance of generous donors, sponsors, volunteers. FSA also partners with RewewANation through the Virginia Education Improvement Scholarships Tax Credits Program. RewewANation scholarships are financially based on your AGI. Please see ***RewewANation Eligibility Requirements*** section of this handbook for eligibility requirements. If you qualify for this scholarship, please help us build funding for FSA by reaching out to local business owners. If you prefer, John will speak to them on your behalf.
- **Full-time attendance** tuition is \$3,000 per child per year and includes all courses and curriculum for core classes. Electives may require additional purchases or fees for individual families. FSA will administer the end of year assessment at no additional cost.
- **Part-time attendance** tuition is \$150 per child per month and includes 2 courses. Additional courses for part-time students will be \$50 per course. Study hall option is \$25 per study hall. This tuition rate does not apply to K, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, lower-level math, and other daily courses. All curriculum is purchased by the family. Electives may require additional purchases or fees for individual families. Family is responsible for filing the Notice of Intent to Homeschool. FSA will administer the end of year assessment for an additional fee.
- **Late Fees** – Monthly tuition is due on the 15th of each month. Untimely payments will result in a late fee of \$25 unless pre-arranged with the Leadership Team. Habits of untimely tuition payments may result in termination of enrollment. Please reach out to the Leadership Team with concerns and questions regarding your account.
- **Non-payment withdrawal statement**
Past-due tuition that is more than 10-days late will result in the student being unenrolled until tuition is brought up to date.
- **Late pick-up fee** - School hours are from 8:30 am-3:00 pm, Monday through Friday. Doors open for students at 8:15 am. Pick-up is promptly at 3:00 pm. Pick-up after 3:15 pm will result in a late fee of \$5 per student, payable at the time of pickup, unless other arrangements have been made in person with the leadership team.

RewewANation Eligibility Requirements

To qualify for a RewewANation scholarship a student must meet the following criteria:

- Be a resident of Virginia and
 - (i) eligible to enter kindergarten or first grade or
 - (ii) in the current school year has enrolled and attended a public school in the Commonwealth for at least one-half of the year or
 - (iii) for the school year that immediately preceded his/her receipt of a foundation scholarship was enrolled and attended a public school in the Commonwealth for at least one-half of the year or
 - (iv) is a prior recipient of a foundation scholarship or
 - (v) for the school year that immediately preceded his/her receipt of a scholarship foundation scholarship was domiciled in a state other than the Commonwealth and did not attend a nonpublic school in the Commonwealth for more than one-half of the school year. Full time students exiting public school, including schools from other states, or those enrolled in kindergarten, or first grade are eligible to apply.
- Have a family household income that does not exceed 300 percent of the current federal poverty level, or in the case of special needs students, 400 percent of the federal poverty level with a written and filed IEP.

Registration Process

1. Fill out the Enrollment form online. Reenrolling families, please fill this form out if there are changes from the previous academic year.

<https://freestateacademy.org/student-enrollment-form>

Password: fsa2023

2. Choose the attendance option that best fits your family. Please visit our website FAQ for details.

<https://freestateacademy.org/>

3. Schedule your Family Interview. https://zcal.co/merri1776fsa/enrollment_interview

4. Take the Math Assessment (Parent perspective) <https://placement.mathusee.com/> and email the results to email to admin@freestateacademy.org

5. Take the Reading Assessment <https://pioneervalleybooks.com/pages/assessment> and email the results to email to admin@freestateacademy.org

6. Complete Scholarship application and return to admin@freestateacademy.org

Students in kindergarten, first grade or withdrawing from public school are eligible to apply. Attached are the application and the income criteria based on your family's adjusted gross income. Simply locate the number of people in your family and check the 300% column to determine the income cap. If your child has an IEP or 504 plan, please refer to the 400% column instead. We will need a copy of the IEP or 504 and the first page of your 2021 tax return if you qualify for the income level.

7. Tuition payment options will be discussed during your interview. \$300 per child is due at the time of the enrollment interview to reserve his or her seat at FSA and is non-refundable. If, while at the enrollment interview, you decide not to enroll, there is no cost. Checks are payable to Free State Academy.

Future tuition payments will be determined by the amount of the scholarship award. The remaining balance will be divided into 9 payments and due on the 15th of each month from August through April.

8. Determine how you will be able to help FSA. If you are unable to help directly, please help us find committed people who share our vision, share information on FB, Instagram, via email, and ask your church to earmark Free State Academy as a local mission.

9. All teachers and on-site volunteers must complete a background check. If you will be on site, please bring your license with you.

10. Download the TrackCC app for internal communication. You will receive an email just prior to the start of the academic year to finalize set-up.

Free State Academy

ATTACHMENTS

Free State Academy Scholarship Foundation Application Form

2023-24

(Please make a copy of this application. A copy will be kept on file at FSA)

Student/Family Information:

Parent/Guardian's Name: _____
First Name Middle Initial Last Name

Parent/Guardian's Name: _____
First Name Middle Initial Last Name

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: (____) _____ Work Phone: (____) _____ Cell Phone: (____) _____

Name of Public School District in which your family resides: _____

Please list all children applying for scholarship. Only children entering grades K-12 are eligible.

	Child 1	Child 2	Child 3	Child 4
<i>Name</i>				
<i>Date of Birth</i>				
<i>Gender</i>				
<i>Relation to Guardian</i>				
<i>School attended last year</i>				
<i>Grade Level last year</i>				

Please put a check to the left of each statement that is true. An affirmative answer to all the following questions is required for scholarship eligibility.

- ☐ I am a Virginia resident.
☐ I certify that the above student(s) is entering grades K-12 in the Fall/Spring (Circle one).
☐ I certify that our family qualifies for the scholarship program according to the income guidelines.
☐ I agree that my child(ren) may participate in testing to measure learning achievement and results.
☐ I promise to ensure at least 90% attendance of my child(ren) or risk the loss of their scholarship.
☐ I promise to pay my child's school account in a timely and responsible manner. I understand that failure to stay current with payments will result in loss of the scholarship funds.

Is this a first-time application? ☐ Yes ☐ No Reapplication: Year _____

FORM: FSA Family Application 2022-2023

Financial Information:

All parents and/or guardians who claim scholarship recipients as dependents must report income on the form with supporting documentation.

Head of Household Name:

First Name

Middle Initial

Last Name

Number of people in household: Adults _____ Children _____

INCOME SOURCE	FATHER	MOTHER	OTHER	
Adjusted Gross Income reported on current 1040*				
AFDC or ADC				
Other Public Assistance				
Any Other Additional Income				Total Household Income (Sum of Row)
Total Individual Income (Sum of each column)				

To verify income, please attach to this application copies of your 2020 Form 1040 tax return and other supporting proof of income. Married couples filing separately must attach both forms. If you would like a free copy of your 1040, please call the Internal Revenue Service at 1-800-829-1040.

By signing below, I certify that all the information provided on this application is true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I agree to provide proof that the statements made in this application are true, and I acknowledge that failure to do so will invalidate any possible scholarship. I further understand that all the above conditions must be met by my child/family to be eligible for a Virginia Scholarship Foundation award and I agree to release RENEWATION from any liability in its efforts to provide this scholarship.

Printed Name of Parent or Guardian

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Date

Printed Name of Parent or Guardian

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Date

COMPLETE THIS SECTION ONLY IF YOU DO NOT FILE A 1040:

(Parents/guardians using a notary must also provide supporting financial information).

I certify that this applicant has provided me or this notary service with adequate proof of income and that to my knowledge the financial information provided on this form is true and complete.

Space for Notary Stamp

Notary Signature

Date

2023 POVERTY GUIDELINES FOR THE 48 CONTIGUOUS STATES AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	
Persons in family/household	Poverty guideline
1	\$14,580
2	\$19,720
3	\$24,860
4	\$30,000
5	\$35,140
6	\$40,280
7	\$45,420
8	\$50,560

2023 POVERTY GUIDELINES FOR THE 48 CONTIGUOUS STATES AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Persons in family/household

Poverty guideline

For families/households with more than 8 persons, add \$5,140 for each additional person.

Letter of Intent

I HEREBY AGREE that my intent is to teach at Free State Academy in the 2023-2024 school year. I commit to the following:

1. Fulfilling my duties during the entire school year from September 5, 2023, through May 24, 2024.
2. If I am unable to do so, I will:
 - a. Attempt to find a replacement before I leave my position.
 - b. Give 2-weeks' notice (unless the reason for leaving is an unforeseen emergency).
 - c. Repay any scholarship money my child(ren) has received.
3. As a teacher/volunteer or parent with Free State Academy, I affirm that I have read, understood, and agree to promote (without modifying) FSA's Statement of Faith (attached) in my attitude, words and conduct while I am affiliated with FSA.
4. I will bring all concerns straight to the administration first and foremost and not to others. I will work directly with the administration to resolve any issues related to FSA.
5. I can be called upon to substitute for a teacher/teacher aid during school hours at the following times: _____

I am not available at the following times: _____

Printed name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Signature

Date: _____

Volunteer Commitment Form

I HEREBY AGREE that as a volunteer for Free State Academy I commit to the following:

1. Fulfilling my duties during the entire school year from September 5, 2023, through May 24, 2024.
2. If I am unable to do so, I will:
 - a. Find a replacement before I leave my position.
 - b. Give 2-weeks' notice (unless the reason for leaving is an unforeseen emergency).
 - c. Repay any scholarship money my child(ren) has received.
3. As a volunteer with Free State Academy, I affirm that I have read, understood, and agree to promote (without modifying) FSA's Statement of Faith (attached) in my attitude, words, and conduct while I am affiliated with FSA.
4. I can be called upon to substitute for a teacher/teacher aid during school hours at the following

times: _____

I am not available at the following times.: _____

Printed name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Signature

Date _____

Please initial each item and sign at the bottom. This page must be returned to the Executive Director upon committing to the 2023-24 academic year.

_____ I acknowledge Jesus Christ as my personal Lord and Savior.

_____ I agree to adhere to and respect FSA's Statement of Faith without opposition, disruption, or modification.

_____ I understand the chain of command and will bring all issues, problems, concerns, and suggestions directly to the Executive Director. I will not compromise morale by leaving issues unresolved or by participating in gossip and complaint.

_____ I agree to use TrackCC for all school related communication with the teachers.

_____ I understand the grading criteria and graduation requirements, as applicable.

_____ I understand and will adhere to the dress code.

_____ I understand that Chapel is a core class and required.

_____ I am aware that 990 hours of attendance are required to receive credit for the academic year.

_____ I have read and understand each page of the handbook for the 2023-24 academic year.

Signature of Student

Date

Signature of Parent

Date

Signature, Executive Director

Date

_____ I have received a copy of this signed document.