

FREE STATE ACADEMY STUDENT HANDBOOK 2024-2025

For the Children, By the People



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Free State Academy

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Free State Academy, Inc. Board of Directors

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Free State Academy Administration

Merri Cleavland, Executive Director

John Stewart, Assistant Director of Special Education and Discipline

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.

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, so their worldview is aligned with Biblical 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 resources to offer a low cost, full-time, in-person education.

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 assist in removing this barrier and provide quality education as close to free as possible while encouraging parental involvement.

Our Philosophy . . .

Free State Academy 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. Students will be placed at an appropriate instructional level with an opportunity to advance.

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 to start looking at starting an educational alternative. Out of a series of meetings the idea of “Free State Academy” was eventually born.

With the help of many volunteers, a structure and plan were formed, and leadership was established for this new private Christian school. Free State Academy was incorporated September 21, 2021, and a Board of Directors was formed.

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 with Timber Ridge Baptist church answering the call to host our academy. We are now in our third year of operation, thanks be to God!

OVERVIEW

Free State Academy is available for students in kindergarten through 12th grade. This is subject to change and is dependent upon volunteer and teacher availability.

Free State Academy is ***For the Children, By the People***. Parents are part of this educational process and **need to be actively involved**; therefore, all parents are **required** 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 as Free State Academy is a private school.

Free State Academy is not an accredited private school as this conflicts with our goal to limit government intervention. FSA will provide progress reports and transcripts for each student. The California Achievement Test (CAT) is required for scholarship recipients and parental request.

Classes begin the day after Labor Day and run through the Friday before Memorial Day each year. Be sure to follow the website and check TrackCC for calendar updates.

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

ATTENDANCE

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 and clubs may require additional purchases or fees for individual families. FSA will administer the end of year California achievement test for an additional fee of \$30. Parents may opt out of this testing unless they receive a scholarship from Renew-a-Nation. ***Failure to take this test or pay the \$30 fee will result in repayment of your scholarship award.***

Part-time attendance

Families may choose two subjects. Additional classes are \$50 per class, per month. Students can participate in group activities and field trips. This attendance option is only available for students who are 10 years of age and older. Daily classes are not included in the part-time option. All curricula will be purchased by the family. Electives, clubs and field trips may require additional purchases for individual families. Your family must file the Notice of Intent to Homeschool. FSA will administer the end of year assessment for a \$30 fee.

**All students are required to attend Chapel services, which is a core class for all students. Students are required to have their Bible with them when attending Chapel. Part-time students must attend if they are on campus during the scheduled time Chapel occurs.*

Free State Academy

TUITION & REGISTRATION

- **Registration** – Enrollment for the 2024-25 academic year will open on March 15, 2024. The registration fee is \$150 per student, prior to June 30, 2024. After July 1, 2024, the registration fee increases to \$200 per student, regardless of enrollment status. The registration fee will be waived for returning students IF reenrollment occurs prior to July 1st. Both new and returning families are required to meet with the Administration to discuss details of the upcoming academic year.
- **Tuition** - Our goal is to supplement the cost of tuition as much as possible with the assistance of generous donors, sponsors, and volunteers. FSA also partners with Renew-a-Nation through the Virginia Education Improvement Scholarships Tax Credits Program. Please see ***Renew-a-Nation 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. Your scholarship will not be available without your support and seeking out donors to the EISTCP.
- **Full-time Tuition** - \$3000 per student, per year is for families involved in the success of Free State Academy through the **active** participation in ALL fundraisers, activities, events, and parental support roles.
- **Additional Fees** - Active participation in fundraisers is expected at FSA. An additional \$50 per month will be added to the tuition balance for families that choose not to participate. An additional \$50 per month will be added to the tuition balance for families that choose not to actively fulfill their chosen role in Sign-up Genius.
- **Full-Year Enrollment** at Free State Academy is agreed upon for the entire 2024-25 academic year. This commitment was made at your initial interview. Early withdrawals are non-refundable after August 1st, and your family is responsible for **ALL** remaining payments for the 2024-25 academic year. Your child's seat was reserved for the entire academic year and other students were turned away to do so. Early withdrawal will also result in the full repayment of any scholarship monies.
- **Tuition Payment Schedule** – Payment agreements will be determined during the enrollment meeting.
- **Part-time Tuition** is \$150 per child per month and includes Two (2) courses or clubs. Additional courses or clubs for part-time students will be \$50 each. Students may participate in group activities and field trips and are responsible for any additional expense. This attendance option is only available for students who are 10 years of age and older. Daily classes are not included in the part-time option. All curricula will be purchased by the family. Electives and clubs may require additional purchases for individual families. FSA will administer the end of year assessment for a \$30 fee.

- **Late Fees** – Monthly tuition is **due on the 15th** of each month unless scheduled otherwise during your interview. Untimely payments will result in a **late fee of \$25** unless pre-arranged with the Administration. Habits of untimely tuition payments may result in termination of enrollment. Please reach out to the Administration with concerns and questions regarding your account.
- **Non-payment Withdrawal Statement**
Past due tuition that is more than **30-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-3:15 pm, Monday through Friday. Doors open for students at 8:15 am. Pick-up after 3:30 pm will result in a **late fee of \$5 per student** and will be added to your tuition balance, unless other arrangements have been made with the Administration. FSA is not responsible for any students, including siblings, who are not attending after school clubs.
- **Transcripts and progress reports will not be issued unless balances are paid in full, and all books and materials have been returned to Free State Academy in excellent condition. Materials not returned in excellent condition will need to be purchased or replaced.**

SCHOLARSHIPS

Renew-a-Nation Eligibility Requirements

To qualify for a Renew-a-Nation 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% of the current federal poverty level, or in the case of special needs students, 400% of the federal poverty level with a written and filed IEP.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS

Free State Academy **often parallels** Bedford County Public Schools when there is a closing due to inclement weather. The FSA administration may determine that Free State Academy will be open regardless of the BCPS decision to close school for the day. FSA will be open at 8:30 and will not delay the start of the school day. FSA will NOT follow BCPS calendar for any delays, teacher workdays, conference days, etc.

Track CC will be utilized for school closures and last-minute announcements. Please check TCC prior to leaving for school. School closure may be due to weather, illness, lack of substitutes, or other safety concerns. No other communication will be sent. No notice will be posted on the school door and no school personnel will meet you at school in case you missed the announcement. If you arrived at school and it is locked, please refer to TrackCC for the message you may have missed.

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. Our teachers are involved in FSA because they care about your children and the state of education these children face. As a private school, the teachers are not required to be certified although most of them are. Each teacher is placed according to his or her ability. Enrollment in FSA indicates understanding and agreement with this arrangement.
- 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 volunteer will complete a background check and will wear a badge while on campus. The Scholé Classical Education Training Program provides the opportunity for teachers 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, TrackCC. Parents and students should never email or text teachers 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. If so, please call the FSA phone number 434-259-8308.
- The Executive Director can be reached via the school phone, FSA email or within the TrackCC app. TrackCC allows for instant messages equivalent to a text message. In an emergency, please call the school during school hours. Outside school hours, please use TCC. All emails, voicemail and TCC messages are checked by 9:00am on school days.
- 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 Board of Free State Academy will assist in molding and voting in support of these decisions.
- Please download the app TrackCC. You will receive an email once FSA has added your family contact information. You will then need to create an account through the app.

HOLIDAYS

- Free State Academy will not be participating in any holidays. There will be no parties or celebrations except a Biblical Christmas and a Biblical Easter. FSA will not participate in any pagan aspect of these holidays. Please be mindful by **not** wearing clothing, or sending paraphernalia related unless it is Biblical.

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

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.

Free State Academy

- 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. Direct violation and disregard for our Statement of Faith is unacceptable.

Free State Academy

Free State Academy

- The administration may request withdrawal of any student at any time who, in the opinion of the Administration, 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.
- Any student can be removed from Free State Academy at any time without cause.
- 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.

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
- Open displays that violate the Statement of Faith including but not limited to Transgender, Homosexual, Furry or Satanic displays.
- Any sexual activity
- Physical assault on any staff member or student enrolled in FSA.

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

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

Rules

- Hats are to be removed during pledges, national anthem, prayer and catechism.
- Students will walk when inside the building.
- Students must obey promptly the directives of staff without complaint, argument, or facial expressions of disagreement. Disrespect, disobedience, and insolence will not be tolerated.
- Stealing another's personal belongings, 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 without notice or permission.
- Never touch anything on or in a teacher's desk without permission. Show respect for boundaries and another's personal items.
- Disrespectful criticism of teachers, administration, or rules is not permitted. If there is a concern, schedule a meeting with the administration to discuss your concerns.
- Physical contact, inappropriate touching, is not permitted. Respect personal boundaries. 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. All trash is to be discarded in the available trash cans.
- Students are required to keep classrooms, hallways, bathrooms, and other areas neat and orderly at all times. Students are expected to complete their stewardship task thoroughly and completely. If the student does not complete the assigned chore, detention will result. If necessary, the parent will supervise and sign off that the task has been completed.
- Cellphones are to be turned in at the beginning of the school day. Backpacks and bags may be searched at any time without notice or permission. Watches are to be used strictly for checking time *not for messaging*.
- Computer usage must be approved by the administration prior to use and strictly for the class it is approved for. Students must be prepared to share their search history if asked. A deleted history will assume that the student was using the device inappropriately. Devices can be confiscated and held by the administration. Usage can be denied at any time. Disregard for this policy may result in detention, suspension, or expulsion.

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 Administration, **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, **regardless of whether they fully agree with it or not.**
- 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. Students failing two or more subjects 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 Administration, **regardless of whether they fully agree with them or not**. Administration welcomes the opportunity to speak 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 activities and expected to lend a hand as often as called upon. Parents will sign up for support roles through Sign-up Genius. Up to \$50 per month will be added to tuition for inactive families.
- Parents commit to work with (not for) their student(s) to complete assignments, recognizing that they are ultimately 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 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 by 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 **regardless of whether they fully agree with them or not**.
- FSA Administration 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, not actively involved or unfulfilled parent support role, 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 Administration and may result in disciplinary action, including, but not limited to the following: verbal warning, written warning, detention, suspension, or dismissal from FSA. Any student can be removed from FSA at any time, without cause.

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. Repeat offenses will result in student detention, suspension, or dismissal from FSA as determined by the FSA Administration.
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 if required.
4. Administration 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 may be required to stay after school for detention.

1. First offense is one (1) hour starting 3:30 pm. Parents will pick up their child at 4:30 pm.
2. Second offense will result in a two (2) hour detention starting at 3:30 pm. Parents will pick up their child at 5:30 pm.
3. Third offense will result in Saturday school from 8:30 am until noon ***with the parent in attendance.***
4. 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. Detention will be assigned for the same day to anyone not in uniform.

- Each new 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 or sweatshirts may also be worn. Sweaters and shirts, may be worn over the school uniform **if the uniform is clearly displayed**. Non-FSA sweatshirts are not permitted.
- **Properly fitting jeans without holes or khaki pants** are to be worn at the waistline. Students under 8 years old may wear leggings.
- Shorts or skirts must be mid-thigh and shorts worn underneath skirts.
- Clothing and accessories will not contain vulgar language, graphic references and must not reflect paganism or satanic emblems, references to gangs, violence, drugs, alcohol, or tobacco.
- 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

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.

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

- Class sizes will be limited to 10-12 students unless the Administration determines 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. Mastery is considered as a grade of Cum Laude (CL).

- Students missing instruction will be required to make-up missing assignments. Teachers will allow 3 days for missing assignments for each day excused not to exceed 5 days. Missing assignments that are not turned in on time will result in a grade of zero (0).
- TrackCC has live grades available for parental monitoring all year. Quarterly grade reports will be emailed. Reports will be sent only if the tuition balance is current. Academic probation will be determined at this time.

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 may be 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 quarter 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.

- Students still failing two or more subjects at the end of the year will need a meeting with the Administration for permission to be readmitted the following academic year.

Academic Testing

All students receiving a scholarship through Renew-a-Nation, are required to take the end of year standardized test. FSA has selected the California Achievement Test. Students not receiving a scholarship can opt out of this testing. The fee for this test is \$30. ***Failure to take this test or pay the \$30 fee will result in repayment of your scholarship award.***

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 Non-Satis (NS) or Satis (S) 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 eight (8) excused absences. A written note must be submitted in TrackCC 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 Administration to make up the missed time in an acceptable manner but within a 2-weeks after the completion of the academic year. Any long-term absences need to be discussed with the *Administration* in advance of the absence.

The final decision regarding mastery and promotion will be based on a comprehensive review of the achievement levels, 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, Bible
- 4 credits of English: Literature, Writing & Rhetoric, Public Speaking
- 3 credits of Math: Pre-Algebra, Algebra I, Personal Finance
- 3 credits of Science: Physical Science, Biology, Other Science
- 4 credits of Social Studies: History & Geography, Government
- 2 credits of Foreign Language: Latin
- 4 credits of Electives

24 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 I, Geometry, Algebra II, Personal Finance
- 4 credits of Science: Physical Science, Biology, Chemistry, Other Science
- 4 credits of Social Studies: History & Geography, Government
- 2 credits of Foreign Language: Latin
- 4 credits of Electives

26 Total Credits Required

GPA will be converted and reflected numerically.

Graduation

- All graduation credit requirements must be met.
- Students will not be permitted to participate in the graduation exercises unless all credits are complete and final, and all accounts are paid in full.
- 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 credit can be brought forward from middle school.

CAMPUS GUIDELINES

- The doors will be opened at 7am for Before Care ONLY All other students arrive after 8:15 am.
- The doors will be locked at 8:40 am, remaining locked until dismissal.

Students

- Students not currently enrolled in FSA may NOT be on campus without the permission of Administration.
- Students may only leave campus with their parent or other designated adult. FSA Administration must be notified before any other arrangements are made.

Parents

- Parents will retrieve their Pre-K and Kindergarten children at 12:30 pm. All other children will be released for parent pick-up after stewardship is complete and by 3:15 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 FSA school office entrance.

Visitors

- All visitors must be **pre-approved** by Administration and have a purpose for being on campus. All visitors will sign in and wear an identification tag.

The Parking Lot

- Please follow Entrance & Exits for drop-off and pick-up. We cannot disrupt traffic on Main St.

Housekeeping

- EVERYONE is expected to CLEAN UP after themselves. Students who do not complete their stewardship task thoroughly will have their parent complete the stewardship assignment with them. Students who intentionally leave prior to completing their stewardship task will receive detention upon return.
- 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.

Free State Academy

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 Administration. Parents should make this situation known in the interview process or at the time of diagnosis. FSA Administration 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 and ALL health concerns or allergies. This must be revealed and addressed during the initial interview. Parents who withhold information may risk the dismissal of their child/ren from Free State Academy.

Hygiene

- Students are to use restrooms only during breaks and between classes. Students 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 the Administration.

STUDY HALL

Study hall is to promote studious pursuits. Students are expected to remain quiet, be respectful and diligent while in study hall. Our goal is to have most of the 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 do 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. ALL concerns must be revealed and addressed during the initial interview. Parents who withhold information may risk the dismissal of their child/ren from Free State Academy.

Free State Academy

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. Once this step has been completed, you will receive an invitation for an in-person interview. Interviews are required for both new and returning families.

<https://form.jotform.com/231186042249150>

2. Family Interview: Please use the following link to schedule with Merri: [Schedule Interview](#).

3. Assessments: Before the interview, we kindly ask that you complete this Math Assessment from a parent's perspective: [Math Assessment](#).

If your child is in 8th grade or lower or has reading delays or concerns, please complete this Reading Assessment: [Reading Assessment](#).

Both the math and reading assessments are initial evaluations. Depending on the results, additional testing may be needed. We will conduct formal assessments for kindergarten and 1st grade, as well as other necessary evaluations, in August. Please email both results to admin@freestateacademy.org.

4. Registration is \$200 per child and is due at the time of the enrollment interview to reserve your child's 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. We also accept credit and debit card payment with an additional processing fee.

5. Scholarships: Students in kindergarten, first grade or withdrawing from public school are *eligible to apply* for a scholarship. Attached are the application and the income criteria based on your family's adjusted gross income. 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. Please complete the scholarship application and bring it, along with the relevant pages of your 2023 tax return, to the interview.

6. Tuition: We will discuss tuition payment options during your interview. The amount of any scholarship award will determine future tuition payments, which will be divided into equal payments due on the 15th of each month, starting in July 2024.

7. Parental Support: Free State Academy was created "For the Children, By the People," and we rely on active parent participation to succeed. Each parent is required to fulfill support hours during the academic year. Please choose your responsibility on Sign-up Genius: [Parental Support Sign-Up](#).

8. Share information about our school on Facebook, Instagram, via email, and with your church. Please ask your pastor if they can support FSA as a local mission and participate in character/virtue training and chapel. Help us **spread the word!**

9. Teaching & Volunteering: All teachers and on-site volunteers must complete a background check. If you're interested in teaching or helping on-site, please bring your driver's license and complete the following application before your interview: [Volunteer Application](#).

10. TrackCC app is our internal communication. Please download the app, and you will receive an email just before the start of the academic year to finalize the setup: [Download TrackCC](#).

Free State Academy

ATTACHMENTS

Free State Academy Scholarship Foundation Application Form

2024-2025 academic year

(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 RENEWANATION 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

2024 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

2024 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.

On-Site Volunteer Commitment Form

I **HEREBY** commit to the following:

1. Fulfilling my duties during the entire school year from September 3, 2024, through May 23, 2025.
2. If I am unable to do so, I will:
 - . Find a replacement before I leave my position.
 - . Give 2-weeks' notice (unless the reason for leaving is an unforeseen emergency).
 - . 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 indicating your commitment to the 2024-25 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 will monitor TCC for last minute updates and closings. I agree to monitor assignments as they are posted in TCC.

_____ I understand the grading criteria, graduation requirements, and accreditation policy.

_____ I understand and will adhere to the dress code.

_____ I understand the cell phone, watch and computer policy.

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

_____ I am aware that 990 hours of attendance are required to receive credit for the academic year. My child may have eight (8) excused absences throughout the school year. I will provide a note in TrackCC.

_____ I have selected my level of participation and support for FSA. I agree to the additional fee if I am not an actively involved participant.

_____ I understand that I am reserving my child's enrollment for the entire academic year. My commitment was made at my initial interview. I understand that early withdrawals are non-refundable after August 1st, and I am responsible for ALL remaining payments for the 2024-25 academic year. **Any scholarship award must be paid back if the student withdraws.**

_____ I have read and understand each page of the handbook for the 2024-25 academic year. I have asked questions to clarify any uncertain areas.

Signature of Parent

Date

Signature, Executive Director

Date

_____ I will download a copy of this signed document for my records.