

# **FREEDOM AREA**



# **HIGH SCHOOL**

**2024-2025**

**PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK**

# **FREEDOM HIGH SCHOOL**

## **STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK**

### **FREEDOM AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

<u>Building</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>	<u>Fax Number</u>
Freedom Area High School	724-775-7400	724-775-7753
District Office	724-775-7644 724-775-5464	724-775-7434
Middle School	724-775-7641 724-775-7642	724-775-7748
Elementary School	724-775-1122	724-775-3672

THE FREEDOM AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION AND WILL NOT DISCRIMINATE ON THE BASIS OF RACE, COLOR, NATIONAL ORIGIN, SEX AND HANDICAP IN ITS ACTIVITIES, PROGRAMS OR EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES AS REQUIRED BY TITLE VI, TITLE IX AND SECTION 504.

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## **ALMA MATER**

FREEDOM HIGH SCHOOL ALMA MATER  
WE WILL ALWAYS CHERISH THEE,  
THROUGH THE YEARS OUR HEARTS MAY WANDER,  
BUT WE'LL STILL REMEMBER THEE  
THOUGH IN TIMES OUR PATHS MAY SEVER  
MAYBE NEVER TO RETURN,  
PRECIOUS HIGH SCHOOL ALMA MATER  
MAY THY LIGHTS FOREVER BURN.

## **Message to Parents**

Welcome to Freedom Area High School. Our success depends upon the support and cooperation the school receives from our parents and students. This handbook has been provided to you as a resource to assist us in our effort to make this a successful and productive school year.

**IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS SPECIFIC TO A CLASSROOM, TEACHER, GRADE, AND/OR ASSIGNMENT, PLEASE CONTACT THE TEACHER DIRECTLY. IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTIFY THE TEACHER OF ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS YOU MAY HAVE PRIOR TO CONTACTING THE OFFICE.**

## **Message to Students**

Welcome to another school year. It is important that you know you are considered to be a part of an extended family here at Freedom Area High School. We have a responsibility to provide a high quality learning experience for each of you. Our expectations here at the Freedom Area High School are that you are prompt, prepared, polite, and positive. This handbook will provide information that will assist you in understanding our expectations so that you can be sure to get the best that Freedom Area High School has to offer. We hope your year is one defined by success and happy memories.

We extend to you the invitation to join the administration and faculty as we maintain our progress and explore plans for improvement. This handbook provides information on the daily operation of our high school. While it is not intended to be all-inclusive of every detailed policy, the handbook provides the most important information. It is your responsibility to review this information. Don't hesitate to consult with the administration, faculty, or support staff for any additional information. We are extremely excited about the 2024–2025 school year!

Sincerely,

## **Freedom Area High School Administration**

Steven Mott  
Principal  
Freedom Area High School  
[smott@freedomarea.org](mailto:smott@freedomarea.org)

Justin Turpin  
Assistant Principal  
Freedom Area High School  
[jturpin@freedomarea.org](mailto:jturpin@freedomarea.org)

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Freedom Area High School is dedicated to helping all students achieve **academic excellence**, individual responsibility, and the **resilience** to become **successful** adults and **contributing members** of a **global community**.



### **Profile of a Bulldog**

The skills and attributes a Freedom Area School District graduate will need in order to make a successful transition into post-high school life.

#### **Communication**

Students:

- Articulate thoughts and ideas effectively using oral, written, and nonverbal communication skills in a variety of forms and contexts.
- Listen with an open mind to decipher meaning, including knowledge, values, attitudes, and intentions.
- Use communication for a range of purposes (e.g. to inform, instruct, motivate, and persuade).
- Utilize multiple media and technologies, identify their effectiveness, and assess their impact.
- Communicate effectively in diverse environments (including multi-lingual).

#### **Innovation**

Students:

- Identify, define, and solve authentic problems and essential questions.
- Use a wide range of idea creation techniques (such as brainstorming, divergent & convergent thinking).
- Elaborate, refine, analyze, and evaluate their own ideas in order to improve and maximize creative efforts.

- Demonstrate originality and inventiveness in work and understand the real-world limits to adopting new ideas.
- View failure as an opportunity to learn, understand that creativity and innovation is a long-term, cyclical process of small successes and frequent mistakes.
- Act on creative ideas to make a tangible and useful contribution to the field in which the innovation will occur.

### Responsibility

#### Students:

- Seeks excellence in their work by being organized, prepared, dependable, and thorough.
- Work positively and ethically, is reliable and punctual, and presents oneself professionally and with proper etiquette.
- Act responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind.
- Demonstrate personal integrity, honesty, and ethical behavior.
- Are accountable for results.

### Collaboration

#### Students:

- Demonstrate understanding of others' perspectives and needs.
- Demonstrate ability to work effectively and respectfully with diverse teams.
- Exercise flexibility and willingness to be helpful in making necessary compromises to accomplish a common goal.
- Assume shared responsibility for collaborative work, and value the individual contributions made by each team member.

### Perseverance

#### Students:

- Persist to accomplish difficult tasks and to overcome academic and personal barriers to meet goals.
- Adapt to varied roles, jobs responsibilities, schedules, and contexts.
- Work effectively in a climate of ambiguity and changing priorities.
- Incorporate feedback effectively.
- Deal positively with praise, setbacks, and criticism.
- Understand, negotiate, and balance diverse views and beliefs to reach workable solutions, particularly in multi-cultural environments.
- Set and met goals, even in the face of obstacles and competing pressures.
- Prioritize, plan, and manage work to achieve the intended result.

**FREEDOM AREA HIGH SCHOOL**  
**Faculty & Staff**

**Front Office Staff:**

Mr. Steven Mott,\* Principal  
Mr. Justin Turpin,\* Asst. Principal  
Mr. Greg Pullen, Resource Officer  
Mrs. Deborah Muchow,  
Administrative Assistant  
Ms. Carrie Tuszynski,  
Attendance/Discipline/Athletics

**Counseling Office Staff:**

Mr. Chris Bennett,\* Counselor  
Ms. Hope Bennett,\* Counselor  
Mr. Ron Kelm,  
Career Readiness Supervisor  
Mrs. Barb Martz,\*  
Prevention Specialist  
Mrs. Sara Miller, Gifted Teacher  
Mrs. Alyssa Young, Secretary

**School Nurses:**

Mrs. Marissa Metalik  
Ms. Kelly Rupp

**English Department:**

Mrs. Courtney Anderson  
Mr. Kenneth Dickey  
Mr. Aaron Fitzpatrick  
Mrs. Heather Giammaria\*  
Mrs. Blaire Lasko  
Mrs. Andrea Niedbala\*

**Math Department:**

Mrs. Amy Isanogle  
Mr. Ed Majors  
Ms. Becca Pessler  
Mrs. Miranda Santa

\*Denotes SAP Team

**Science Department:**

Mrs. Samantha Circle  
Ms. Debrah Evans  
Ms. Linea Homa  
Dr. Brian Wargo

**Social Studies Department:**

Mr. Cole Eged  
Mrs. Kelly Krawchyk  
Mr. Nate Langelli  
Mrs. Maria Porter

**Foreign Language Department:**

Mr. Craig Bohon  
Ms. Ruthanne Gudzan

**Physical Education Department**

Mr. Chris Coennen  
Mrs. Lisa Woods

**Unified Arts Faculty:**

Mr. David Badamo, Tech Ed,  
Athletic Director  
Mrs. Kaylee Haggerty, Art  
Ms. Michelle Keith,  
Computers/Tech  
Ms. Julia Lawrence, Band  
Mrs. Jennifer Newman, Chorus  
Mr. Brenden Wiatrak,  
Computers/Tech

**Special Education Faculty:**

Ms. Jessika Fontaine\*  
Ms. Morgan Pierce  
Ms. Abby Pritchard\*  
Ms. Ashley Shutak

## 2024-2025 BELL SCHEDULES

PERIOD	RED/WHITE DAYS
Students to Hall	7:20
Warning Bell	7:35
Students to block 1	7:40
Block 1	7:40-9:00
Block 2	9:05-10:25
<b>Lunch A</b>	<b>10:30-11:00</b>
Block 3 (A)	11:05-12:25
Block 3 (B)	10:30-11:50
<b>Lunch B</b>	<b>11:55-12:25</b>
Block 4	12:30-1:50
PLT	1:55-2:40
Student Dismissal:	2:40

HIGH SCHOOL	F.I.D. SCHEDULE
Block 1	9:00 - 10:12
Block 2	10:17 - 11:29
Lunch	11:34 - 12:06
Block 3	12:11 - 1:23
Block 4	1:28 - 2:40

TWO HOUR DELAY	RED/WHITE DAYS
Students to Halls	9:20
Warning Bell	9:35
Students to Block 1	9:40
Block 1	9:40-10:42
Block 2	10:47-11:49
<b>Lunch A</b>	<b>11:54-12:25</b>
Block 3 (A)	12:30-1:32
Block 3 (B)	11:54-12:56
<b>Lunch B</b>	<b>1:01-1:32</b>
Block 4	1:37-2:40
Student Dismissal:	2:40

EARLY DISMISSAL	RED/WHITE DAYS
Students to Halls	7:20
Warning Bell	7:35
Students to Block 1	7:40
Block 1	7:40-8:42
Block 2	8:47-9:49
Block 4	9:54-10:56
<b>Lunch A</b>	<b>11:01-11:32</b>
Block 3 (A)	11:37-12:40
Block 3 (B)	11:01-12:04
<b>Lunch B</b>	<b>12:09-12:40</b>
Student Dismissal:	12:40



# **FREEDOM AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT** **2024-2025 School Calendar**

August (6-6)				
M	T	W	T	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

September (20-26)				
M	T	W	T	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30				

October (22-48)				
M	T	W	T	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30	31	

November (17-65)				
M	T	W	T	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

December (14-79)				
M	T	W	T	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31			

January (19-98)				
M	T	W	T	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	31

February (19-117)				
M	T	W	T	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28

March (20-137)				
M	T	W	T	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
31				

April (18-155)				
M	T	W	T	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30		

May (21-176)				
M	T	W	T	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16*
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

June (4-180)				
M	T	W	T	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30				

Green-First Day of School and Last Day of School
Yellow-In-Service Days (No School for Students)
Blue-Act 80 Days-Prof. Dev. (No School for Students)
Pink- Holiday (No School)
Tan-Snow Days (No School)

## **Grading Periods**

First: August 23 – October 28  
 Second: October 29 – January 21  
 Third: January 22 – March 27  
 Fourth: March 28 – June 5

Approved 3-14-24  
 Revised Prom Date 5-23-24

August 21-22.....In-Service Days  
 August 23.....Act 80 Day  
 August 26..... First Day for Students  
 September 2.....Labor Day  
 October 14.....In-Service Day  
 November 8 .....Act 80 Day/Parent-Teacher Conferences (K-12)  
 November 11.....Veteran's Day  
 November 27 – December 2.....Thanksgiving Break  
 December 23 - January 3 .....Winter Break  
 January 20.....In-Service Day  
 February 14.....Act 80 Day  
 February 17..... President's Day  
 March 17.....In-Service Day  
 April 16..... In-Service Day  
 April 17.....Snow Day  
 April 18-21.....Spring Break  
 May 9.....Act 80 Day  
 \*May 16.....No School (Middle and High School Only – Senior Projects)  
 May 17 (Saturday).....Prom  
 May 26.....Memorial Day  
 June 5.....Last Day for Students/Commencement  
 June 6.....In-Service Day  
 June 9.....Kennywood School Picnic

## **Freedom Area High School Student Handbook**

# **DAILY OPERATION PROCEDURES**

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS/BULLETIN BOARDS**

All announcements, messages, posters, fliers, advertisements, signs, etc. must be approved by the Administration before posting or announcing.

### **ARRIVING AT SCHOOL/DISMISSAL**

Once students have arrived on school grounds they may not leave school grounds for any reason until dismissed unless proper protocol has been followed as discussed in the Attendance Policy. Students are to remain on school property in designated areas while waiting for buses after school. No one is permitted to wait on private property or the roadways off school property. Snowball throwing is prohibited while waiting for buses and in all outside areas on school grounds.

### **BOOKS AND OTHER MATERIALS**

Students are responsible for replacing books and any other school materials that have been lost or damaged including laptops. All debts and fines that are not paid will be accumulated each month.

### **BUS PASSES**

Bus passes are available in the main office for those needing to ride a different bus. **STUDENTS REQUESTING TO RIDE A DIFFERENT BUS SHOULD HAVE A NOTE FROM HIS/HER PARENTS PROVIDING PERMISSION TO DO SO AND MUST BE TURNED IN PRIOR TO 2PM ON THE DAY IN WHICH YOU ARE REQUESTING.**

### **CAFETERIA**

Each student is issued an account number where funds can be added either by cash, personal check in the exact amount to be applied towards account or online. An electronic account can be set up at [www.schoolcafe.com](http://www.schoolcafe.com). The electronic version allows you to prepay the account electronically, monitor account daily activity and follow up with any possible charges.

When students do not have lunch money or when their lunch accounts have insufficient funds, the Board shall permit students to incur reasonable charges or special meal arrangements, and parents/guardians shall be contacted for payment. Reasonable charges shall not exceed \$10.00 per student. (Policy 808) Unpaid lunch charges for a student shall result in the school limiting extracurricular activities.

Appropriate behavior is expected while in the cafeteria line and while eating at tables. Throwing food will result in strong disciplinary action. Running and loud talking will not be tolerated.

Food at ALL school pre-planned parties is monitored by Administration and consistent with PA State and Federal recommended guidelines for nutritional health. Students may sit at any

table within the cafeteria they please unless an assigned seat is necessary for disciplinary reasons. Students must have permission from one of the supervisors to leave the area.

Students are not permitted to remove food from the cafeteria for consumption on any portion of the school campus. Students are only permitted to take purchased water from the cafeteria. Deliveries from outside food vendors will not be accepted during the school day. Advance permission from the Principal must be secured before any food is brought in to students.

### **ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND OTHER NON-SCHOOL RELATED ITEMS**

IPOD's, MP3 Players, radios, etc. are allowed in the classroom **ONLY at the teachers discretion** and only if headphones or similar are used. These items should never be on or used while the teacher is talking. In the hallway, these items can be used but must be at a low enough volume so that the listener can hear the other people in the hallway. Yo-yos, skateboards, playing cards, hacky sacks, water guns, balloons, etc. are not permitted in school. If any student is in violation of these rules, these items will be confiscated by the teacher and held in the office until the end of the school day on the first offense. A parent must pick them up at the school on the next offense. Multiple offenses may result in the item being held until the end of the school year.

### **GENERAL OFFICE AREA**

Students are not permitted **BEHIND THE OFFICE COUNTER WITHOUT PERMISSION FROM THE OFFICE STAFF ON DUTY AT THE TIME OF THEIR VISIT TO THE OFFICE.**

### **SMARTPASS/HALL PASSES**

Anytime a student is in the hallway, he/she must have permission from their teacher and also be signed out on SMARTPASS. SMARTPASS is a program that students can access on their phone through a free app, or they can access it on their Chromebook. When teachers give permission for a student to leave class, students must use the SMARTPASS to sign out and then sign back in when they return from their destination. No student is permitted in the halls without a hall pass or permit. Students who abuse the privilege will be placed on hall pass restriction. **Teachers have the authority to restrict or deny the use of the hall pass.** Students are to use the nearest facilities to their classroom. Students should be able to return to class within five minutes. Students who wish to see a Guidance Counselor must first check in with their regularly scheduled classroom teacher. If a student fails to check in with their teacher prior to going to guidance, administrative discipline may be enforced.

***Note: Students are not permitted in other classrooms, the library, the general office and especially the gymnasium when using the pass. Students will lose hall pass privileges if they wander into areas other than the rest room on their floor.***

### **HALLWAYS**

Students should not loiter in the hallway in a manner that obstructs others from passing through, or creates congestion that leads to students being tardy for class. Stay to the right when walking to class. Running or yelling will not be tolerated in the halls for safety and educational reasons. Gathering in groups in the halls between classes can lead to tardiness. **Students are to keep the halls clean so that we can be proud of our building when visitors arrive.**

### **INSURANCE**

Forms are available in the main office.

### **LOCKERS**

Lockers are assigned to students as a convenience for the safe storage of books, clothing, school materials, and limited personal property to facilitate movement between classes and activities. Lockers are the property of the school district and can be searched at any time. Students are required to ensure that their lockers do not contain spoiled food items, beverages, or soiled clothing which may attract pests, create odors or cause unhealthy conditions. Students are exclusively responsible for their assigned locker, as well as, locking their assigned locker to ensure the security of their personal belongings and school property entrusted to them. **Students are encouraged to have a lock on their lockers at all times.**

### **LOST AND FOUND**

Items that are found in the building are placed in lost and found in the hallway of the main entrance where they will remain for a limited time.

### **RELEASE TIME**

Students on work release or early dismissal must leave school grounds at his/her scheduled time and not return during the school day without checking in with the Attendance Office.

### **SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS**

In the case of an emergency school cancellation, Freedom Area School District will do an All-Call to all students/parents. Cancellations/delays are also published on the following resources:

WTAE	Channel 4 TV	WPXI	Channel 11 TV
KDKA	1020 AM Radio & Channel 2 TV	WBVP	1230 AM Radio
WMBA	1460 AM Radio	FROGGY	98.3 & 104.3 FM

Radio

**Note: If school is canceled, so are any scheduled home activities. An automated call will go out to the number allocated by the family to receive such notices.**

## **COUNSELING DEPARTMENT**

Our Guidance Department is available for the developmental needs of all students. Although each counselor carries specific assignments, each of them are available for consultation in the areas of career planning, college information, scheduling, parent conferences and special counseling.

Mr. C. Bennett: Student Scheduling, Standardized Testing, College/Career School Applications and Information  
Ms. H. Bennett: Career Education, CTC Students, Scholarship Information  
Mrs. B. Martz: Prevention Specialist, Student Assistance Program

### **CLASS RANK AND GPA**

Weighting will be applied to final grades in Honors and Advanced Placement classes: the final grade percentage in an Honors class will be multiplied by 1.05 and the final grade percentage in AP and CHS class will be multiplied by 1.1. Report Cards and Permanent Transcripts will display the “un-weighted” percentage. A final, un-weighted percentage grade less than 60% in an Honors or AP class will be a failing grade, regardless if the GPA weighting elevates the grade to a 60% or higher.

### **CLASS STANDING**

Class Standing is determined by the number of credits earned:

From Grade	To Grade	Credits Earned by September 1 <sup>st</sup>
9	10	4 – Minimum Credits
10	11	12 – Minimum Credits
11	12	20 – Minimum Credits
12	Graduation	28.0 Minimum Credits*

\*See Graduation Requirements

### **DUAL ENROLLMENT**

Students from Freedom Area School District are permitted to supplement their education with independent coursework from an approved provider. This details the terms and conditions of these programs and must be endorsed by all parties listed below, before the student is enrolled in the requested program.

Programs:

**Dual Enrollment:** Freedom Area students take College Courses and receive both college and high school credit. CCBC and Penn State – Beaver Campus are the most common providers.

**On-line Coursework:** Freedom Area students enroll in high school elective courses online and complete the coursework during a regularly scheduled study hall in a computer lab.

**Independent Study/Correspondence Coursework:** Where appropriate, Freedom Area students work independently with Freedom Area teaching staff. Depending on the circumstances, this may or may not include on-line assignments.

Terms:

- Participation in these programs requires administrative approval.
- Grades from these courses will be placed on the student’s high school transcript but will NOT be computed in the student’s high school GPA.
- The high school credits earned will be “elective credits” and will count as such toward the total credits required for graduation. (student must “pass” to earn a credit)
- These courses may not be substituted for a specific course that is a graduation requirement at Freedom Area High School.

- These courses will have no bearing on class rank and will not affect the eligibility for: Varsity Athletics, National Honor Society, Honor Roll, or Graduation with an Honors Standing.
- The deadlines for completing course assignments, deadlines for the course itself, and all grades for the course are determined solely by the course program provider/instructor.
- Students in the Dual Enrollment Program must see Ms. H. Bennett for additional registration materials and instructions.
- Students in the Dual Enrollment Program who decide to “DROP” a college course must contact Ms. H. Bennett and the Registrar’s office at the college.
- If a student in any of the above programs decides to “DROP” a course, the student or parent will be obligated to pay for any tuition, textbook and/or fees paid by the high school.

### **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

Credits toward graduation are earned in Grades 9-12. Credits must be earned in the following areas:

<b>Class of 2025-2026</b>		<b>Starting Class of 2027</b>	
English	4	English	4
Social Studies	3	Social Studies	3
Science	3	Science	3
Math	3	Math	3
Arts/Humanities	2	Arts/Humanities	2
Health & Phys Ed	2	Health & Phys. Ed	2
Sec. Computer App	1	High School Exploration	1
Communication	1	Communications	1
Personal Finance & Economics	1	Personal Finance & Economics	1
STEM	3	STEM	3
Electives	4	Electives	4
PLT/Grad Project	1	PLT/Graduation Project	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>28</b>

**\* All students are required to pass a Graduation Project in order to earn a diploma from Freedom Area High School.**

### **PARENT CONFERENCES**

Parent conferences are welcomed at any time. Please call the school (724-775-7400) to make an appointment. Contact the Guidance Secretary to schedule an appointment with a Counselor. To schedule an appointment with the Principal or Assistant Principal, please contact the high school secretary.

## **STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

The Student Assistance Program is an innovative program whose goals are to maximize individual student success in the regular classroom. The Student Assistance Team is available to all students in the Freedom Area Middle School. Involvement with the SAP Team may be initiated by Administration, Parent(s), Teacher(s), Student(s), or through a review of the student's grades or records. Requests for assistance may be made to the Principal or the Guidance Counselor. Parental permission is required for continuation in the program.

The Student Assistance Program is a process which includes:

1. Identifying students who are in need of academic, behavioral and social support.
2. Convening SAP meetings to advocate for specific needs of students.
3. Applying intervention and management strategies.
4. Expanding the capability of classroom teachers by involving them in team decision making, problem solving and guided practice.
5. Monitoring implementation and student progress.
6. Determining how best to meet the needs of students through a continuum of services.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES AND PROGRAMS**

The Freedom Area School District offers a full continuum of special education programs and services to all eligible for such services. Special education programs and services are available for eligible students between the ages of three (3) and twenty-one (21). Services for eligible children ages three (3) to school entry age may be requested by contacting the Beaver Valley Intermediate Unit at 724-774-7800. Services for eligible students of school entry age through twenty-one (21) years of age may be requested by your child's building principal. Special education programs at the Beaver Valley Intermediate Unit and/or the Freedom Area School District include:

1. Developmentally Delayed (Pre-School Only)
2. Autistic/Pervasive Developmental Disorder
3. Visually Impaired
4. Mentally Gifted
5. Neurologically Impaired
6. Seriously Emotionally Disturbed
7. Speech and Language Impaired
8. Intellectually Challenged
9. Learning Disabled
10. Hearing Impaired
11. Multi-Handicapped
12. Physically Handicapped

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

All information collected as part of an individual student referral or evaluation is treated in a confidential matter. A written policy regarding the confidentiality of student records is available for review by contacting your child's building principal. Printed information regarding available special education services and programs and parent rights as they pertain to special education is available in the building Principal's Office or the Office of the Superintendent of Schools. If you have any questions about the above information or about

special education services, please contact the school psychologist or your child’s building principal.

**SCREENING**

The Freedom Area School District conducts screening activities to identify students who may be eligible for special education services.

Parents or guardians may request that their child be screened or evaluated for special education services. Requests for screening or evaluation should be made in writing and directed to your child’s principal. For further information, parents or guardians may contact the school psychologist by telephone at 724-775-7641.

**PROTECTED HANDICAPPED STUDENTS**

The Freedom Area School District will not discriminate against protected handicapped students as defined in Chapter 15 of the regulations of the State Board of Education. The Freedom Area School District will provide each protected handicapped student enrolled in the district, without cost to the student or family, those related services or accommodations which are needed to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school program and extracurricular activities without discrimination and to the maximum extent appropriate to the extent of the student’s ability.

**ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE**

All new students are required to complete an ESL Survey with parent signature. ESL Support for qualifying students will be provided by the district through the Intermediate Unit.

**RECORDS POLICY**

Confidentiality laws regarding student records are enforced to safeguard our students’ rights. Please contact the Principal for further information regarding student records.

**REPORT CARDS & PROGRESS REPORTS**

Report cards are distributed at the end of each nine week grading period. Progress reports will be distributed at the midway point (4.5 weeks) of each grading period. Please contact the guidance office for a schedule of when report cards and progress reports will be issued.

<b>Grading Period</b>	<b>Progress Reports Issued</b>	<b>End of 9 weeks</b>
1	September 25th	October 28th
2	December 5th	January 21st
3	February 24th	March 27th
4	May 5th	June 5th



### **SCHEDULING/DROPPING CLASSES**

Information regarding specific courses is available in the Program of Studies booklet and in the Guidance Office. It is highly recommended that students and parents work with teachers and the Guidance Department when scheduling classes. Schedule changes are done during the first week of school after conferring with the Guidance Counselor. Withdrawals from classes cannot occur without Administrative approval. The Counselor/Administrators must endorse that dropping the class will help the educational welfare of the student. **After the FIRST TWO WEEKS of school**, students who drop a course will receive an “F” in the course regardless of the grade achieved up to that date.

### **SPECIAL PROGRAMS/SERVICES**

Gifted Program

Honors Classes

Work Release

Advanced Placement Classes

Dual Enrollment

Beaver County Rehab Center (BCRC)

College in High School (CHS)

Career and Technical Center (CTC)

Community College of Beaver County (CCBC)

### **WORK PERMIT**

Students can apply for work permits online on the district’s web site. The link and instructions can be found on the High School page. Every student under the age of 18 who works must have a work permit.

### **SUMMER SCHOOL**

Summer school arrangements can be made through the Guidance Office. Students failing two or more subjects should attend summer school. It is not academically feasible to double up on core classes. Class loads are limited and sequential knowledge requirements are important to progressing to the next school year.

## **ACADEMICS**

### **CHANGES IN PERSONAL INFORMATION**

Students must report all changes in personal information in writing to the office ASAP (address, phone number, etc.). **A completed Emergency Medical form must be submitted to the office each year for each student.**

### **PERSONALIZED LEARNING TIME (PLT):**

Personalized Learning Time (PLT) provides an extended period at the end of the day where students will be able to view Bulldog Beat and have access to all of their teachers for the support of the school curriculum. The program provides a time for teachers to identify and work with students with documented learning differences to assist them in reaching their highest potential within the rigorous academic environment at Freedom Area High School. Below is a list of the options students have during the Personalized Learning Time:

- Sustained Silent Reading (SSR)
- Targeted Assistance in Content Area (Tutoring); Remediation for At-Risk Students
- One-on-One or small group extended learning sessions
- Work and Test Make-Up
- Tutoring
- Need-based strategy and skill development in reading, writing, mathematics, and science
- Communication with parents, content-area teachers and guidance staff
- Test prep instruction for college entrance and state-mandated exams.
- Counseling/advising for ALL Freedom students in areas concerning academic, social, emotional, and post-secondary concerns and/or planning.

The Personalized Learning Time is not a special education program. The extra support and encouragement of PLT is designed to give students the tools to achieve and maintain the highest level of academic excellence possible here at FAHS. Personalized Learning Time is not meant for social time. There are times when student activities meet, teachers may collaborate, and/or meetings with parents may be held; however, these social meetings all have an academic purpose that supports the overall mission to help all students experience success at Freedom Area High School.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips are scheduled by individual teachers as part of the academic program. Students may be denied the opportunity to attend field trips based on poor attendance, discipline or academic effort. **Academic eligibility for field trips is determined by the same standards governing athletic eligibility.** The decision will be made by the Administration and the teacher.

### **FINAL GRADE**

Determination of the final grade in each class will be determined as follows:

1 <sup>st</sup> Nine Weeks Grade	22.5%
2 <sup>nd</sup> Nine Weeks Grade	22.5%
3 <sup>rd</sup> Nine Weeks Grade	22.5%
4 <sup>th</sup> Nine Weeks Grade	22.5%
Quarterly Exams	10%

### **GRADING POLICY**

90 – 100%	A
80 – 89%	B
70 – 79%	C
60 – 69%	D
0 – 59%	F

**The student will receive zero credit for each unexcused day of class absence** (see Attendance Policy for information about valid excuses. If a student was legally absent on the day that a test was announced, the test must be made up within three SCHOOL days, or at teacher discretion.

## **TEACHER POSTING OF ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADES ENTRIES IN POWER SCHOOL**

**Teacher posting of assignments in POWERSCHOOL/GOOGLE CLASSROOM:** Teachers must post in their PowerSchool/Google Classroom grade book any “to-be graded” assignments (including: tests, quizzes, homework, projects) before 8 AM on the following day they are actually assigned in class. Posting assignments in PowerSchool before the day they are actually assigned is permissible. The assignment description, assigned date, and due date will be posted and available to parents, students and administration to view in POWER SCHOOL.

**Teacher entry of grades in POWERSCHOOL and/or GOOGLE CLASSROOM:** Grades for all assignments should be entered into POWER SCHOOL between two to four days from the due date; while no set delineation can be defined, the expectation would be closer to two days (from due date) for much of what is graded. Grades for larger assignments, such as larger written work, should be entered within a reasonable amount of time depending on the length of an assignment. Students who do not turn in an assignment on the date it is due will be given a zero for that assignment and the teacher should mark the assignment as “missing”.

## **HOMEWORK**

Students are responsible to see their teachers for any work missed because of an **excused** absence. The student has to make-up homework and other assignments within five (5) school days after returning from an excused absence. If a student misses an extended period of time (5 or more consecutive school days) and has excuses for the absences, the student/parent should initiate contact with the Attendance Office and request work to be sent home. Assignments missed during extended periods of excused absences should be submitted in a timely manner. It is each student’s responsibility to see their teacher when returning from an absence to make arrangements for missed work. Parents may request homework in advance for known absences of three days or more. (Upon request, teacher may ask attendance office for total number of unexcused absences.) **IF A STUDENT IS ABSENT ON THE DAY AN ASSIGNMENT IS DUE THEN THE ASSIGNMENT BECOMES DUE THE DAY THE STUDENT RETURNS TO SCHOOL.**

## **MAKE-UP TEST POLICY**

If the student was present on the day that the tests/homework was announced, then the student must take the test when he/she returns to school. If the student was absent on the day that the test was announced, then the student will have up to three days to make up the test. The number of days will be determined by the teacher with consideration of extenuating circumstances such as prolonged illness.

Note: If a student is late to school with an invalid excuse, that student receives a zero on the test that was missed. If the student has a valid excuse, then the test must be taken that same day by using a permit pass from another period or the student must stay after school to take the test. Also, if the student has a valid early dismissal note, he/she must take the test before leaving school that day. **It is the responsibility of the student to see the teacher in each of these circumstances or otherwise receive a zero on the test.** Extenuating circumstances will be reviewed by Administration.

### **HONOR ROLL AND HIGH HONOR ROLL:**

Honor Roll status is based on an average grade percentage for a specific grading period. Course credit value and course weighting are a part of the calculation. Weighting will be applied by multiplying each Honors course by a 1.05 and each Advanced Placement course and college in the high school by a 1.1. Students who earn less than a 70% in one of their courses will not be considered for the Honor Roll. Students who have incomplete grades in one or more courses will not be considered for the Honor Roll.

High Honor Roll: 93 – 100%

Honor Roll: 87 – 92.999%

### **NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY**

The selection will be determined by a five-member council that is chosen annually by the Principal and the NHS coordinator. Juniors and Seniors are considered. The minimum Grade Point Average is a 93% on the current 100 point, weighted, class rank scale. The faculty will evaluate each candidate in the areas of character, leadership and service.

The five-member council will use the following criteria:

- A. Student activity information sheet
- B. Student scholastic average
- C. Discipline records
- D. Attendance/Tardies in school
- E. Faculty evaluation survey on character, leadership and service
- F. Essay

The majority vote of the five-member council will determine entrance to the NHS. All students who are academically eligible will be considered unless notification indicating otherwise is given to the Principal.

Students must be in good standing to participate in the annual induction ceremony or be recognized at the Principal's Reception or graduation.

Members who fall below the standards that were the basis for their selection shall be promptly warned in writing by the chapter adviser and given a reasonable amount of time to correct the deficiency, except that in the case of flagrant violation of school rules or the law, a member does not have to be warned. The Faculty Council shall determine when an individual has exceeded a reasonable number of warnings. In all cases of pending dismissal, a member shall have a right to a hearing before the Faculty Council. For purposes of dismissal, a majority vote of the Faculty Council is required. A member who has been dismissed may appeal the decision of the Faculty Council to the principal and thereafter under the same rules for disciplinary appeals in the school district.

### **STUDY HALLS**

Students are to remain quiet during study halls, permitting others to work in an educational atmosphere. Light conversation is permitted with teacher discretion. Each student in the study hall must bring materials to pursue academic areas. Students desiring to see a teacher must present a previously obtained permit to the study hall teacher at the beginning of the period.

# STUDENT SERVICES & ACTIVITIES

## HOMELESS ACT: McKINNEY-VENTO ACT

### About Homeless Act-McKinney Vento Act:

The McKinney–Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act guarantees a free and appropriate public education for all homeless children and youth. B.E.C. 42 U.S.C. 11431 outlines procedures for deciding school placement, enrolling students, and determining responsibility. Federal and state laws make our responsibility clear. Freedom Area School District is committed to providing proper educational support and services.

What is the definition of a “homeless youth” under McKinney-Vento? “Homeless” is defined as “anyone lacking a fixed, adequate, regular nighttime residence.”

### What situations fit this definition?

- Staying in the home of other people due to unavailable housing, financial hardship, or similar circumstances
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks (in some instances – examples: leaking roof, no heat, etc.), public places, or campgrounds due to unavailable suitable housing options
- Living in an emergency shelter or transitional housing
- Unaccompanied (not living in direct care of legal parent or guardian) or runaway youth
- Refugee and migrant youth

### How does McKinney-Vento help these students?

The law makes sure that these students receive a free and suitable public education by removing barriers to school enrollment and full, basic, daily participation in school activities. This includes:

- Immediate enrollment
- Free and Reduced School Lunch
- Help from school with any necessary enrollment documents
- Help from school setting up transportation service (if the student qualifies)
- Help from school with basic school supplies
- Help from school with any basic clothing needs
- Help from school with basic high school graduation needs and expenses

### Where can I find more information for Pennsylvania?

You can visit the PA Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness at the following website: [www.education.pa.gov](http://www.education.pa.gov).

Contact Information:

Mr. Isaac Tarbell

Director of Student Services

724-494-0941 [itarbell@freedomarea.org](mailto:itarbell@freedomarea.org)

## **ACTIVITIES**

### **CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS**

Anime Club  
Art Club  
Big Brothers, Big Sisters  
Book Club  
Computer Science  
Debate Club  
DECA  
Drama Club/Musical

Forensics  
GSA  
Math League  
National Honor Society  
Naturalist Club  
Pep Club  
Photography Club  
Physics Club

Service Club  
Ski Club  
Spanish Club  
Student Government  
Varsity Club  
YEA  
YAP

### **PARENT ORGANIZATIONS**

Band Parents  
Sports Booster Organizations  
Drama Club Parents  
Freedom Area Educational Foundation  
Freedom Area CARES Foundation  
Freedom High School Parent Advisory Council

## **SPORTS**

### **FALL**

Cross Country (Boys)  
Cross Country (Girls)  
Football (Boys)  
Golf (Boys)  
Soccer (Boys)  
Soccer (Girls)  
Volleyball (Girls)  
Cheerleading (Football)

### **WINTER**

Basketball (Boys)  
Basketball (Girls)  
Bocce (Co-ed)  
Indoor Track (Boys)  
Indoor Track (Girls)  
JH Wrestling (Boys)  
Wrestling (Boys)  
Cheerleading

### **SPRING**

Baseball (Boys)  
Softball (Girls)  
Track & Field (Boys)  
Track & Field (Girls)

## **FUND-RAISING**

All fund-raising must be approved by the Principal. Fund-raising is limited to organizations directly affiliated with the high school. Students are not permitted to solicit games of chance or sell items on school grounds for profit. Fund-raising that includes the sale of food items must occur outside of school hours and must be approved by the Foods Service Department Manager if sold on school property.

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR SPORTS PARTICIPATION**

- Age – Not to turn 19 before July 1 of up-coming school year (JH-16)
- Semesters of participation – not to exceed 8
- Attendance – Absences not to reach 20 days in a semester. After 20 absences in a semester, the student must attend for 60 days before being declared eligible.
- Grades – Please see Freedom Area School District Eligibility Requirements

- Must have permission slip signed by parent/guardian
- Must pass a physical examination and have school insurance.
- Other PIAA/WPIAL/MAC sanctions that apply must be adhered to.
- Amateur status
- The student has no disciplinary probation restrictions.
- Transferring student/athletes must be approved by the WPIAL.
- \*\*\*No student-athlete is permitted to participate in practice or a game unless he/she has been in school that day. Students must be in school by 11:00 a.m. with a valid tardy excuse approved by the Administration in order to be permitted to participate that day. No student-athlete will be permitted to leave school without a valid early dismissal note before 1:00 p.m. unless first approved by the Administration.

### **SOCIAL ACTIVITIES**

School activities (dances, formals, banquets, athletic events, field trips, etc.) are scheduled throughout the school year. Student behavior at these events, regardless of location, is subject to disciplinary action in accordance with our code of conduct listed in this handbook. Participation in these events is a privilege, not a right and **can be taken** from a student for poor behavior and/or academic performance.

\*\*\*Students must be in school by 11:00 a.m. with a valid tardy excuse approved by the Administration in order to be permitted to participate that day. No student will be permitted to leave school without a valid early dismissal note before 1:00 p.m. unless first approved by the Administration.

### **Academic Eligibility Requirements**

The Freedom Area School District requires that any student who participates in athletics, band, or any extra-curricular activity meet high academic standards in order to participate. Because of our belief that academics must come first for all students, we require stricter eligibility requirements than the P.I.A.A. mandates. Student grades will be pulled every Friday and will serve as each student's eligibility report for the upcoming week (Monday through Sunday). ***ANY STUDENT WHO IS FAILING TWO OR MORE CORE CONTENT CLASSES (ENGLISH, SOCIAL STUDIES, SCIENCE, MATH) OR FAILING THREE TOTAL CLASSES WILL BE INELIGIBLE FOR ALL ATHLETIC, BAND, AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES FOR 7 DAYS.*** While students are ineligible, they are NOT permitted to play/perform with their athletic team, band, or extra-curricular group **or attend any school field trips**. Students that are ineligible will be permitted to practice and we will continue to monitor their progress in hopes that they become eligible. Student eligibility for the first two weeks of every nine weeks will be based on the previous nine week's final grade rather than weekly grades. The same eligibility requirements will be required during report card checks as are required for students to be eligible at the start of every new week.

**Important Note:** Athletic, band, and/or extra-curricular eligibility for the first 15 days of every school year will be determined on a student's final nine weeks grades and the student's previous semester attendance. For instance, if a student fails two or more Core Content classes or three total classes for the 4<sup>th</sup> nine weeks that student will be ineligible for the first 15 days of the new school year. If a student falls under this category, he/she is eligible to take summer school classes to pull their grades up before school begins and therefore gain eligibility. Please contact the guidance office for information regarding this option.

## **NCAA REGULATIONS**

Student-athletes should check with the Guidance Counselor regarding the academic requirements for eligibility at the college level.

# **CODE OF CONDUCT**

## **PURPOSE OF THE DISCIPLINARY CODE**

Our code addresses the district's goal of providing a safe and secure learning environment for students and encourages, supports and maintains an educational environment conducive to learning. Everyone involved in the educational setting at Freedom Area High School has the right to expect a safe, orderly and pleasant environment.

The guidelines set forth in the following code are intended to protect the rights of all students and staff. Regulatory guidelines and policies have been set to insure that all offenders will be treated fairly and reasonably when actions or speech become disruptive to the educational process in the building. The code of conduct provides guidance in the process of producing a safe environment and encouraging responsible behavior with mutual respect and cooperation among all within the Freedom/Conway/New Sewickley community. Mutual respect, responsibility and self-discipline are the common threads of success that will be emphasized throughout our school and community. It is our desire that each student has the opportunity to expand his/her knowledge, enrich his/her life experience, exercise his/her own self-control and take responsibility for his/her own actions. We will work together to learn, to grow, and to enjoy our high school days and prepare for the future as independent, responsible adults.

What follows is a section of Pennsylvania school code that establishes the foundation for codes of conduct throughout the state. In practice it provides direction for developing and maintaining guidelines for individual behavior.

## **IN LOCO PARENTIS**

Section 1317 of the Pennsylvania school code states: "Every teacher in the public school shall have the right to exercise the same authority as to conduct and behavior over the students attending his/her school, during the time they are in attendance, including the time required in going to and from their homes, as the parents, guardians or persons in parental relation to such pupils may exercise over them."

## **PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINARY ACTION PLAN**

Teaching responsibility and self-discipline has become a growing challenge for our schools today. We believe that students become more responsible decision-makers when they are held accountable for their decisions. As educators we realize that these traits are not learned overnight. Some learn quickly, and others take a little longer to learn how to think before they act. For this reason, we follow a progressive disciplinary system that gradually incorporates disciplinary steps as the student grows (i.e. hour detentions, two hour detentions, Saturday Detentions, ISS, SAP referrals, parent conferences, etc.). In addition to this progressive system are disciplinary actions that are more severe, such as suspensions, hearings, expulsions, etc. These are in place for infractions that call for stronger actions, all of which are described in this handbook. The following action plan is



in place for minor disruptions occurring at the high school and is handled in a manner that preserves a quality educational environment.

### **ADMINISTRATION, FACULTY & STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. To provide a safe, secure learning environment for all students.
2. To treat all students fairly and with respect.
3. To provide guidance and support for students in their pursuit of academic excellence.

### **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Students should attend school regularly.
2. Students should give a conscientious effort in classroom work.
3. Students should adhere to all school rules and regulations.
4. Students should share in responsibility to develop a school climate that is conducive to learning.
5. Students should respect the rights of all others involved in the educational process.
6. Students should express their ideas and opinions in a respectful manner.
7. Students should cooperate in the investigation of any matter relating to the health, safety and welfare of the school community.
8. Students should comply with commonwealth and local laws.
9. Students should exercise care when using school facilities and/or equipment.
10. Students should be on time for school and school activities.
11. Students should make up work when absent from school.
12. **In summary: Be prompt, prepared, polite, and positive.**

### **RESTROOMS**

Students are not to loiter in the restrooms. **Please keep them clean.** Restrooms are open on both floors; students are to use the restrooms nearest their classroom. Restrooms will be checked frequently throughout the day for cleanliness and to monitor vandalism. If any student(s) is found to be in the same stall with another student, all students involved will automatically receive a detention plus additional disciplinary action if needed.

### **SPORTING EVENTS**

Students are expected to act in a respectful and cooperative manner during school assemblies or pep rallies. Booing, taunting, derogatory comments towards officials, coaches, players, or opposing fans are not acceptable behaviors. Our behavior must be such that any guests would be proud to have witnessed. Students should sit in designated areas when attending assemblies in the auditorium. Teachers will take roll.

### **BUS BEHAVIOR**

The code of conduct is in effect from the time a student leaves home in the morning until the time the student returns home in the afternoon. This includes bus stops. Under no circumstances will misbehavior on the school buses be tolerated. The safety of all the students on the bus is affected by distractions towards the bus driver. Students are to stay in their seats and follow the rules set up by each driver. Loud and rowdy behavior will result in disciplinary action that may include suspension from the bus. **IMPORTANT NOTE:** Audio and visual recording is used on all buses.

### **PARENT NOTIFICATION REGARDING STUDENT BUS BEHAVIOR**

The Freedom Area School Board has authorized the use of video/audio recording on school buses. These cameras can record both what is said and done on the school bus. The video/audio cameras will be used to monitor student behavior to maintain order on the school buses to promote and maintain a safe environment. **Students and parents are hereby notified that the content of the tapes may be used in a student disciplinary proceeding. The content of the recordings are confidential student records and will be safeguarded.** Recordings will be retained, only if necessary, for use in a student disciplinary proceeding or other matters as determined necessary by the administration.

### **CHEATING/PLAGIARISM**

Any student who is discovered to have cheated, plagiarized, including aiding another student to knowingly cheat, plagiarize, or similar will receive a zero for that assignment, project, test, mid-term, final, etc. and will not be able to make up the missing point total for that assignment. This also includes cheating and plagiarism on Cyber course work. (Students who violate this rule will also receive a two-hour after school detention. Further administrative discipline may be taken depending on the circumstances of the violation).

### **DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION**

Inappropriate displays of affection (**CUDDLING, INAPPROPRIATE TOUCHING, EXCESSIVE HUGGING, KISSING IN THE HALLWAY**) are not permitted in the school setting. Students will be disciplined and parents contacted if necessary.

### **SPORTSMANSHIP**

The Administration, faculty, coaches and athletes at FHS stress the following pledge as a positive Bulldog fan. Students should realize that sportsmanship violations will be carried over as school discipline infractions and will have accompanying consequences.

We enforce the fundamental principles of fair play.

We realize that “winning at any cost” is unacceptable.

We respect the opposing team, cheerleaders, fans and game officials.

We realize that name-calling, taunting, finger-pointing and any other form of verbal or physical confrontation have no place in our athletic arenas.

We realize that degrading or insulting cheers or signs are unacceptable.

We realize that we are to cheer for our team rather than against our opponent.

### **HAZING**

Under no circumstances is hazing condoned at Freedom Area School District or in regards to any extra-curricular activity within the district. Hazing is identified as any behavior committed by a person towards any other person or group of people that causes physical, emotional, or mental harm for the affected individual(s). Reports of this abuse will be fully investigated and the proper disciplinary action will be taken.

## ATTENDANCE:

### ABSENCES:

STUDENTS ARE ALLOWED 10 EXCUSED PARENT NOTES PER YEAR

### TARDIES:

STUDENTS ARE ALLOWED 5 EXCUSED PARENT NOTES PER YEAR

### EARLY DISMISSAL

STUDENTS ARE ALLOWED 5 EXCUSED PARENT NOTES PER YEAR

### Excused Absences

1. MUST SEND WRITTEN EXCUSE TO SCHOOL within 3 days of returning to school. After the 3 day grace period, the absence will be marked as unexcused!
2. A maximum of **10** parent notes can be used to verify absence. **After 3 unexcused absences a warning letter will be sent home.**
3. After the 10th unexcused absence, all other absences must be verified with a doctor's excuse or will be counted as unexcused.
4. All doctor excuses must include a doctor's name and phone number for verification.

Definition of an EXCUSED ABSENCE:

- a. Sickness/injury verified by a doctor's excuse or parent note.
- b. Serious illness or death in the immediate family
- c. Suspensions from school
- d. Medical, dental or legal appointments that cannot be made after school  
(Student must have official note from the doctor's office)
- e. Observance of religious holidays
- f. Hazardous weather conditions
- g. Definite emergency situations approved by the Administration
- h. School sponsored trips
- i. Vacation (Maximum 5 Days)
- j. Any other circumstances that have been previously approved by the Administration (college visit, vacation, etc.)
- k. Car failure may be used as a valid excuse only once and with verification from a parent or guardian.

### Unexcused/Illegal Absences

1. Once a student accumulates **3** unexcused absences, a warning letter will be sent home to the parent/guardian of the student.
2. Once a student accumulates **6** unexcused absences, a warning letter will be sent home via mail to parent/guardian and a Truancy Elimination Plan must be discussed and drafted between the designated school official, parent/guardian, and the student.
3. After the **10th** unexcused absence, a third notification letter will be sent to the parents via certified mail. An attendance meeting will be held between the TIP coordinators, school, and family; the school will make a referral to the Truancy Intervention Program. If student and parent/guardian fail to attend Truancy Intervention Program (T.I.P.), Freedom Area School District will file charges with Freedom Magistrate for violation of compulsory school attendance. It is the student and parent/guardian's responsibility to bring appropriate paperwork to the Attendance Office to prove attendance at Truancy Intervention Program.

4. Once a student accumulates **more than 10** unexcused absences, Freedom Area School District will file charges with Freedom Magistrate (compulsory school attendance).
5. Students will receive zero credit for all work on unexcused/illegal absences.

Definition of an UNEXCUSED/ILLEGAL ABSENCE:

- a. Skip days are not approved by the school (this act of truancy will result in ISS to be served by all parties involved in the skip day).
- b. Seen on or near school property and does not report to school
- c. Missing the bus, over sleeping, car failure
- d. Trips not approved in advance
- e. Working during the school day, helping at home (non-emergency), babysitting
- f. Hunting, fishing, shopping, eating breakfast, birthdays, etc. or any other reason that doesn't fall under State Regulations as an excused absence.

Disciplinary Procedure for Unexcused Absences – When the parent is not aware of the student's absence on any particular day, the student will serve ISS/OSS for skipping school that day. On the **FIRST** day of unexcused/illegal absence, the parent will be sent a disciplinary referral indicating ISS/OSS, depending on the student's prior record, and magistrate charges will be filed. Each additional unexcused/illegal absence will lead to additional disciplinary action(s). **The school will not accept parental notes for unexcused/illegal absence.**

**Freedom Area High School CTC Attendance Policy**

- All CTC students are required by the district to maintain an 85% attendance requirement to continue to participate in their respective program. Once the student falls under that 85% attendance rate, a parent conference will be scheduled to determine future eligibility at CTC.
- CTC students who drive are required to be back at Freedom Area High School no later than **10:40am**.
- Continued failure to return to Freedom Area High School by 10:40am will result in the student losing their driving privileges to CTC.

**TARDIES TO SCHOOL** - All tardies will accumulate on a yearly basis.

**Excused Tardies**

1. MUST SEND WRITTEN EXCUSE TO SCHOOL within 3 days of returning to school.
2. A maximum of 5 parent notes can be used to verify tardies.
3. All other tardies must be verified with a medical excuse or they will be deemed as unexcused.
4. All doctor's excuses must include the doctor's name and phone number for verification.
5. The same guidelines set by the State in regards to attendance will be followed to determine excused and unexcused tardies.

**Unexcused Tardies** - Disciplinary Procedure. Excessive tardies can impact eligibility.

1. Only unexcused tardies accumulate for disciplinary reasons
2. Students cannot make up work in any classes that were missed during unexcused tardies. Students will receive zero credit in those classes. To avoid this, students who are tardy must have their valid excuse available when they arrive at school.
3. **Five (5) School tardies** = a warning letter sent home, lunch detention

4. **Ten (10) School tardies** = a warning letter sent home, and One-Hour Detention.  
If driver – loss of driving privileges length of time to be determined by administration.
5. **Fifteen (15) School tardies** = 2-hour detention and Magistrate charges will be filed.
6. The following reasons are considered to be unexcused tardies:
  - a. Sleeping in, the alarm did not go off, no one got me up.
  - b. Missed the bus, missed ride
  - c. Any other excuse not covered under the State exemption clause for mandatory attendance

**NOTE:** Students must be in school at least half the day to be permitted to participate in extracurricular activities that day after school. Valid tardy notes and early dismissal notes are mandatory in these cases. Extenuating circumstances will be reviewed by administration.

### **EARLY DISMISSALS**

Students wanting to be excused early from school must bring in a note from their parent/guardian explaining the **valid** reason for the dismissal. The note must be specific and the reason must be covered under the acceptable excuses outlined in the attendance policy. The student will not be permitted to leave until the parent calls to confirm the validity of the note. The parent/guardian must include a phone number on the note for the school to confirm in case the parent forgets to call the school. Students who attempt to use a forged early dismissal will be disciplined accordingly. All early dismissals will accumulate on a yearly basis.

**NOTE:** Students must SIGN OUT with the attendance office before leaving. No student is permitted to leave school without permission from the nurse and attendance office or administration. *Students leaving the building without signing out will be considered to be 'cutting class' and will face school consequences including assignment to Saturday Detention.*

### **Excused Early Dismissal**

1. MUST TURN IN WRITTEN NOTE TO ATTENDANCE OFFICE before school and receive an EARLY DISMISSAL PERMIT. Note must contain Student Name, Time of Early Dismissal, Reason for Early Dismissal including Doctor/Dentist name & phone number if applicable, Phone Number of Parent/Guardian, Parent/Guardian Signature.
2. A maximum of 5 parent notes can be used to excuse students for an early dismissal.
3. All other early dismissals must be verified with a doctor excuse or will be counted as unexcused. Student will receive a zero for any work missed due to an unexcused early dismissal.
4. All doctor's excuses must include the doctor's name and phone number for verification.
5. The same guidelines set by the State in regards to attendance will be followed to determine excused and unexcused early dismissals.

### **Unexcused Early Dismissal - Disciplinary Procedure**

1. Only unexcused early dismissals accumulate for disciplinary reasons.
2. Students cannot make up work in any classes that were missed during unexcused early dismissals. Students will receive zero credit in those classes. To avoid this, students must turn in their valid note to the attendance office when they arrive at school.
3. **Five (5) unexcused early dismissals** = a warning letter sent home, lunch detention

4. **Ten (10) unexcused early dismissals** = a warning letter sent home and a one (1) hour detention
5. **Fifteen (15) unexcused early dismissals** = a 2-hour detention

#### **AUTOMATED MESSAGING SYSTEM**

An automated messaging system will telephone the students who have been recorded as absent to notify parents. If the student has a valid reason listed previously, then it will be considered if the parent note or doctor's excuse is received within three days and the student has not exceeded their given number of excuses.

**NOTE:** If the parent was not aware of the child's absence, the disciplinary action will be assigned immediately for truancy.

**NOTE TO PARENTS:** So that we can continue to work together to provide a sound education for your children, please follow these guidelines when writing absence or tardy excuses for your child: Include full name, dates of absences/tardies and reason for the absence/tardy. When writing the reason, please be as specific as possible. For example: "John was absent/tardy because he wasn't feeling well" would be better written as "John was absent/tardy because he had an upset stomach this morning." If the note is too vague, the excuse will be considered invalid and the student cannot make up work missed and may have further disciplinary action taken. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated and extremely helpful when determining whether the absence/tardy is excused or unexcused according to State guidelines.

**NOTE:** The student must be in school for over half a day to get credit for a full day attendance.

# **Student Disciplinary Code**

## **LEVELS OF BEHAVIOR**

**Note:** Each behavior infraction carries with it a disciplinary action. Our philosophy in matters of discipline is that the student is ultimately responsible for his/her behavior; therefore, with a good balance of consequences and counseling, the student will be expected to improve his/her decision-making process that may have led to trouble in the past. Over a reasonable period of time, behavior problems and poor decision-making by the student should improve significantly. With parent involvement throughout this process, we hope to support and encourage the student, as well as provide consequences when necessary. It should be noted that an uncooperative attitude by the student could lead to expulsion.

### **Level 1**

- Classroom Disruption
- Tardy to Class (#1-2)
- Homework Incomplete (3+)
- Unprepared for Class
- Inappropriate Language
- Inappropriate/Uncooperative Behavior
- Cell Phone Violation (1-2)
- Inappropriate Bus Behavior (Minor)
- Hall Pass Abuse
- Eating or Drinking in an Unauthorized Area
- Dress Code Violation (1-2)
- Littering
- Verbal Dispute Between Students
- Horseplay/Scuffling

\*Disciplinary action for **Level 1** may be one or more of the following:

- Change Seating/Isolate
- Verbal Reprimand
- Hall Pass Restriction
- Hour Detention/Lunch Detention
- Administrative Conference/Warning
- Parental Contact (Mail or Phone)
- Academic Detention
- Administrative Discretion

### **Level 2**

- Habitual Level 1 Referral
- Tardy to Class (3-5)
- Tardy to School (10+)
- Class/Study Hall/PLT Cut
- Altercation/Confrontation (Minor)
- Inappropriate Bus Behavior (2<sup>nd</sup> Offense/Major)
- In Area Without Permission
- Defiant (Refusing to follow instructions)
- Possession of Lighter/Matches
- Unauthorized Use of Electronic Devices
- Dress Code Violation (3+)
- Insubordination/Disrespect (Minor)
- Inappropriate/Uncooperative behavior
- Cell Phone Violation (3+)
- Inappropriate Use of Technology (Minor)
- Public Display of Affection
- Inappropriate Language
- Did Not Serve Hour Detention
- Did Not Serve Academic Detention
- Did Not Report to Attendance Office
- Cafeteria Misconduct
- School Assembly/Activity Misconduct
- Behavior for Substitute Teacher
- Cheating/Plagiarism
- Driving/Parking Violation
- Behavior on a Field Trip (Minor)
- Filing a false report

\*Disciplinary action for **Level 2** may be one or more of the following:

- Administrative Conference/Warning
- Parental Contact (Mail/Phone)
- Hour Detention/Lunch Detention
- Two-Hour Detention
- Saturday Detention
- Parental Conference
- Hall Pass Restriction
- In-School Suspension
- Contact Probation Officer
- Suspension from Bus
- Loss of Driving Privileges
- Administrative Discretion

### Level 3

- Habitual Level 2 Referral
- Insubordination/Disrespect (Major)
- Destroy/Deface/Vandalize School Property
- Intimidation/Threats/Bullying
- Causing a Disruption
- Deceiving a Staff Member
- Altercation/Confrontation (Major)
- Fighting/Assault
- Harassment
- Stealing
- Act of Gambling
- Possession of a Tobacco, Nicotine, or Vape Product
- Smoking Policy Violation
- Left School Without Permission
- Hindering an Investigation
- Disorderly Conduct
- Safety Violation
- Inappropriate Use of Technology (Major)
- Forges a Pass
- Poor Sportsmanship at an Extra-Curricular Event (Spectator or Athlete)
- ISS/Detention Behavior
- Inappropriate Bus Behavior (3+ Offenses)
- Behavior on a Field Trip (Major)
- Other

\* Disciplinary action for **Level 3** may be one or more of the following:

- Parental Contact
- Probation Officer Contacted
- Police Contact
- Out of School Suspension
- In-School Suspension
- Informal Hearing
- Behavior Contract/Agreement
- Loss of Field Trip Privileges
- Restitution
- Probation/Hall Pass Restriction
- Community Service
- Parental Conference
- Loss of Technology Privileges
- Loss of Driving Privileges
- Administrative Discretion
- Loss of Extra-Curricular Privileges (Athletics, Dances, Etc.

### Level 4

- Habitual Referral/Incorrigibility
- Weapons Policy Violation
- Drug/Alcohol Policy Violation
- Threatened Teacher/Staff
- Assault Teacher/Staff
- Sexual Harassment Violation
- Set Off Fire Alarm
- Set Fire On School Property
- Other
- Inciting a Disturbance/Riot
- Destroy/Deface/Vandalize Staff/Personal Property
- Bomb Scare Involvement
- Arson or Major Damage
- Indecent Exposure
- Endangers Self and/or Others
- Malicious Use of Technology
- Inappropriate conduct/contact

\*Disciplinary action for **Level 4** may be one or more of the following

- Strict Probation
- Informal Hearing
- Suspension (5 – 10 days)
- School Board Hearing for Expulsion
- Contact Police
- Contact Probation Office
- Loss of Field Trip Privileges
- Restitution
- Recommendation to Outside Agency for Counseling
- Loss of Driving Privileges
- Loss of Technology Privileges
- Administrative Discretion
- Loss of Extra-Curricular Privileges (Athletics, Dances, Etc.)



## **CLASS CUTS**

The following disciplinary action will be carried out for students cutting classes. Students who are out of class without permission are also considered to be cutting class.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Class Cut = 2 Hour Detention
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Cut = 1 Saturday Detentions from 8am – 11am each.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> or more Class Cuts = ISS – Parent/Teacher Conference

Students will receive zero credit for work missed in classes when they leave without permission. Failure to serve an assigned detention will automatically result in the next level of consequence.

## **TARDY TO CLASS**

Students who are late to class will be counted as tardy to class and the following disciplinary action will be carried out per each 9 weeks:

- 1<sup>st</sup> offense = Student will receive a verbal warning from the teacher and the office will be notified of the offense.
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> offense = Student will receive a one-hour detention and a letter will be sent home.
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> offense = Student will receive a two-hour detention.
  - 4<sup>th</sup> offense = Student will receive a Saturday detention.
  - 5<sup>th</sup> offense = Student and parent will be required to have a formal meeting with the High School Principal and Assistant Principal.
- \*Please note: Students that are not in their classroom at the starting time for each class are considered tardy. Any student that is more than **ten minutes** tardy to class will be counted as cutting that class for the day.

## **DRESS CODE**

Freedom students are expected to present a neat, clean and well-groomed appearance. Any attire causing a disruption to the educational process or posing a health or safety issue will not be permitted. This code applies to both male and female students. **Students not abiding by the dress code will be sent home to change into appropriate clothing or have their parents bring in a change of clothing for them. In addition to being asked to change, additional discipline will be assigned as follows:**

- 1<sup>st</sup>- Offense- Warning
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense- 1-Hour Detention & Phone Call to Parents
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense- 2 Hour Detention & Phone Call to Parents
- 4<sup>th</sup> Offense- Saturday Detention & Phone Call to Parents
- 5<sup>th</sup> Offense or More – In-School Suspension & Phone Call to Parents

1. Hats and head coverings are permitted as long as they do not disrupt the learning environment.
2. Hoods and non-prescription sunglasses are not to be worn in school on any occasion.
3. Clothing or jewelry with obscene or suggestive pictures or language may not be worn. This includes but are not limited to clothing that advertises drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and/or profanity.
4. Clothing which interferes with the normal function of a class or causes disharmony in the building is not permitted.

5. A student may not wear any apparel that reveals or exposes the midriff/lower back or sides of the upper body (torso), and/or undergarments. Pants must be cinched around the waist above the hips.
6. Shorts, skirts, and dresses must be worn at a length that reaches the middle of wearer's thigh.
7. Undergarments should not be exposed or visible.
8. Provocative dress such as see-through fabrics, deeply plunging necklines, strategic cutouts, and extreme bared midriffs will not be permitted.
9. No items that could, in the opinion of the teachers or administration, be used in any way as a weapon or is a health & safety issue. This includes but is not limited to: chains, spikes, etc.
10. Strapless tops are not permitted.
11. Shoes must be worn at all times. It is recommended that all footwear should strap, buckle, or tie to the student's foot and have a rubber sole.

**NOTE: The faculty and administration have the right to question a student's dress. The administration will take any necessary action for any item that is not specifically covered above.**

### **CELL PHONES**

Administration understands that there are valid reasons for students to carry cell phones. It is with this understanding the following guidelines will be followed with regard to cell phone use in the school building. Cell phones must remain in the **off** position during class unless permission is given by the teacher. They must not interrupt class, are not visible and are not used in any way including as a camera, calculator, and text messaging during the school day. Students may only use their cell phones before school, **DURING PASS TIME**, during their lunch period and after school. Violations of this policy will result in the cell phone being confiscated. Failure to comply with reasonable request to forfeit a cell phone could result in, but is not limited to, detention, in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension as determined by the administration. **Cell phones are not permitted in a classroom during standardized testing, such as Keystone exams.**

### **CELL PHONE RULES**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Student is required to put their phone away and he or she receives a verbal warning.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: Student must turn the phone over to the teacher. The teacher will write the student up. The student will get their phone back at the end of the block.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: Student is sent to the office and he or she is required to turn their phone over to an administrator. The teacher will write the student up for the cell phone violation. The student is permitted to pick up their phone at the end of the day.
- 4<sup>th</sup> Offense or more: The student is sent to the office and he/she is required to turn his/her phone over to an administrator. The phone will be turned over to the student's parent or guardian at the conclusion of the day.

## **DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCE DEFINITIONS**

### **Notes:**

- \* Teachers and Administration have the right to schedule academic detentions at their discretion.
- \* Ejection from an extra-curricular activity may also result in suspension from that activity from Principal and/or Assistant Principal.
- \* Student conduct at any off campus school related activity will result in severe disciplinary action.
- \* Consequences may be doubled if a student fails to serve them.

**LUNCH DETENTION** - Students who receive a lunch detention, will report to the assigned location after getting his/her lunch from the cafeteria. Students are to remain quiet in lunch detention and not sit directly by any other student receiving lunch detention. Students are required to turn their cell phone into the teacher. Students can eat their lunch and get out homework to work on during the lunch period. Students are not allowed to use their Chromebooks to play games during this time.

**ACADEMIC DETENTION** – Individual teachers assign academic referrals for infractions involving students needing tutoring, remediation or to make up tests, homework, etc. The 30 minutes will be scheduled at a time convenient for both teacher and student, with parent notification. Failure to serve academic referrals could result in further disciplinary actions.

**HALL PASS RESTRICTION** – Students on hall pass restriction will not be permitted to use the hall pass freely. Once in the morning and once in the afternoon will be arranged with specific teachers to monitor the student's use of the pass and to allow for restroom time. If a student needs to use the restroom during a class, he/she will be escorted to and from the assigned location by an adult. Abuse of this restricted time will result in detentions, extended day, in-school suspension, or out-of-school suspension. Student is not permitted out of his/her current class assignment during PLT. Teachers can restrict students from using the hall pass in their class at any time they feel the student has abused the privilege. The length of the restriction will be determined by administration.

**BEHAVIOR SUPPORT MEETING** – If a student receives three discipline infractions (write ups), a meeting may be called and scheduled with a parent/guardian to discuss the behaviors being exhibited. Every three consecutive infractions will require a meeting. The meeting will be scheduled by an administrator at a time that is convenient for the parent/guardian. Parents/guardians, student, teacher(s), and an administrator will meet to create a plan to resolve/reduce the negative behaviors. The administration assigns hour detention for infractions. Hour detention is held after school from 2:40-3:40 on Tuesdays. Due to the school calendar or other circumstances, detention for the day could change to Thursday upon parent/student notification. Failure to serve the detention will result in a two-hour detention and ultimately serving time in in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension or expulsion.

**NOTE:** If the student is absent from school on the day of the scheduled detention, he/she must serve it on the next scheduled day he/she returns to school. Also, **parents are responsible for transportation.**

### **DETENTION**

Detention will be held on an assigned day for one or two hours. Students will be informed of which day of the week detention will be held prior to the detention day. Students and parents are responsible for providing their own transportation at the end of the session. At the beginning of detention, all students must turn their cell phones into the person monitoring the detention. Since

this is a study session, students are required to report with books and other study materials. **No cards, games, electronic devices, cell phones, or food/drink are permitted.** Failure to report to a one-hour detention will result in a two-hour detention. Students who fail to report to automatically scheduled two-hour detention will be automatically assigned to **SATURDAY DETENTION (3 HOURS).**

Request for changes in dates for assigned detentions can only be made by parents and must be of a serious nature. No requests will be honored after the scheduled date. If a student is absent on the day of his/her detention or Extended Day, he/she will automatically be scheduled for the next detention, extended day or In-School Suspension.

**TWO-HOUR DETENTION** – The administration assigns a two-hour detention for infractions. Two-hour detention is held after school from 2:40-4:40 on Tuesdays. Due to the school calendar or other circumstances, the day could change to Thursday upon parent/student notification. Failure to serve the detention for infractions will result in a Saturday detention, day of in-school suspension, possible out-of-school suspension, or expulsion.

**NOTE:** If the student is absent from school on the day of the scheduled detention, he/she must schedule a make-up date with the assistant principal on the day he/she returns to school. Also, **parents are responsible for transportation.**

#### **RULES FOR AFTER SCHOOL DETENTION**

- Student(s) must be present at 2:45.
- Student(s) must sign in upon arriving.
- Student(s) must turn in his or her cellphone at the beginning of detention.
- There is no talking, sleeping, watching movies, or playing games in detention.
- If a student has a question about course work, they must raise their hand and it will be addressed by the detention monitor.
- If a student does not show up for detention or he/she cannot follow the rules, they will be assigned an additional detention (at a later date) or a Saturday detention.
- Students are permitted to use the restroom, however, if they are missing for a long period of time, they will need to make up that time.
- At 3:40 (1-hour) or 4:40 (2-hour) students will be dismissed.

**SATURDAY DETENTION** – The administration assigns a Saturday detention for class cuts or other disciplinary infractions. Saturday detention is held on Saturdays from 8:00 – 11:00 AM. Failure to serve a Saturday detention will result in additional discipline, but will not eliminate original discipline. **NOTE:** If a student is unable to attend an assigned Saturday detention, the parent/guardian must notify the administration with a valid excuse no later than 12:00 on Friday before detention. Also, **parents are responsible for transportation. Reasonable notice will be provided so students can arrange for transportation and/or adjust work schedule.**

**IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION** – ISS is held in the Library. All core subject teachers will send class work to the ISS room during the day. All students must turn their cell phones in to the office at the beginning of ISS. Students are expected to work quietly and cooperate in all matters while in ISS. Breaks are worked into the schedule and the students eat lunch together. Misbehavior in ISS will result in out-of-school suspension.

## **IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION (ISS) EXPECTATIONS**

- Student(s) must report to the office on the day when he or she has ISS.
- Upon arriving in the office, student(s) must turn in their cell phone. They will receive it at the end of the day.
- During ISS, student(s) must remain in their seats with their feet on the floor, with their hands to themselves, and facing forward.
- Student(s) are not permitted to play games, listen to music, use their headphones, or watch videos.
- Student(s) are only permitted to use their laptops for school work.
- There is no talking, making noises, or sleeping in ISS.
- If you have a question, raise your hand and it will be addressed by the ISS monitor.
- Student(s) will eat lunch in the ISS room. At 11:45, the ISS monitor will escort the student(s) to get their food. Lunch will be 11:55-12:25.
- Teachers will submit work for the students to complete during ISS.
- Student(s) are required to complete written assignments regarding their behavior that resulted in receiving an ISS.
- Student(s) will also meet with a guidance counselor to discuss why he or she received an ISS.
- Failure to follow the rules will result in another ISS.

**SUSPENSION (1-3 DAYS)** - Out of school suspensions are assigned for applicable infractions. Parents must be notified before a student can be suspended from school. In addition, the parents will be notified by mail about the reasons for the suspension. **A suspended student is not permitted on school property and cannot participate in or attend any extra-curricular activities during the suspension.** If a snow day falls during a student suspension, the suspension return date is delayed by the number of snow days incurred. A parent conference may be scheduled before the student can return to school. Parents may request an informal hearing upon receipt of the notice of suspension.

**SUSPENSIONS (4-10 DAYS)** – Suspensions of four or more days are used for more serious offenses. The same restrictions as listed for 1-3 day suspensions are in effect. In addition, the parents will be notified by mail about the reasons for the suspension. Included in the letter will be the scheduled time, place, and location for an informal hearing with the administration, which is mandatory before the student can return to school.

**EXPULSION** – The most severe disciplinary consequence is an expulsion. Expulsion requires a formal hearing in front of a committee of the school board. Parents will be notified of all procedures and their due process rights before the hearing.

**OTHER ALTERNATIVES** – A student can be referred to the school psychologist, counselor, or an outside agency for counseling. The student will have to comply with the recommendations of these professionals. Expulsion from school is the last resort.

**PROBATION** – Probation will last for one semester. The student will be on hall pass restriction. The student will not be able to participate in or attend any extra-curricular activities (This is subject for review upon completing any counseling services during the probationary period). The student must meet daily with an assigned faculty/staff member. The student must adhere to all school rules and policies. Any school tardy or absence must be confirmed by telephone before 8:00 a.m. by a

parent or guardian. Students may be required to avoid, whenever possible, certain areas and/or peers that have contributed to his/her making poor decisions in the past. Also, the student may not be permitted to attend field trips. Continued disciplinary actions during the period of probation may lead to long term suspension or expulsion.

### **DUE PROCESS**

No disciplinary action will be taken until the student is first notified on the reason(s) for the action taken by the administration.

No detention will be served until sufficient time is given for the student to notify their parents.

It is our policy that ISS and OSS will not be served until parents have been notified. However, if parental contact is unsuccessful, ISS may be initiated.

Any suspension of 4-10 days must be accompanied by an informal hearing in the Principal's office within five days. The following requirements will be observed:

- A. Notification of the reasons for the suspension shall be given in writing to the parents or guardian and to the student.
- B. Sufficient notice of the time and place of the informal hearing shall be given.
- C. A student has the right to question any witnesses present at the hearing.
- D. A student has the right to speak and produce witnesses on his own behalf.

Any hearing for an expulsion from school in front of the Board of Education will follow these requirements:

- A. Notification of the charges shall be sent to the student's parents or guardian by certified mail.
- B. Sufficient notice of time and place of the hearing must be given.
- C. The hearing must be held in private unless the student or parent requests a public hearing.
- D. The student has the right to be represented by counsel.
- E. The student has the right to be presented with the names of witnesses against the student, and copies of the statements and affidavits of those witnesses.
- F. The student has the right to request that any such witnesses appear in person and answer questions or be cross-examined.
- G. The student has the right to testify and present witnesses on his own behalf.
- H. A record must be kept of the hearing, either by stenographer or by tape recorder. The student is entitled, at the student's expense, to a copy of the transcript.
- I. The proceeding must be held with all reasonable speed.
- J. Where the student disagrees with the results of the hearing, recourse is available in the appropriate state or federal court.

## **DRIVING TO SCHOOL**

Any student driving to school must register in the office. Parking will be limited to the area assigned by the Administration. All rules and regulations and procedures must be followed or the student will lose his/her privilege to drive to school.

1. All students must submit a completed and signed Parking Pass Application.
2. The cost of a parking pass is \$25 for the 2024-2025 school year.
3. Parking Passes must be displayed from the vehicle's rear view window.
4. Students will be assigned a parking spot in the upper lot only.
  - a. **PARKING IN THE LOWER LOT IS NOT PERMITTED WITHOUT ADMINISTRATION APPROVAL.**
5. Students must not drive recklessly on school property.
  - a. Driving privileges may be suspended or revoked by the Administration.
6. Student must not loiter in the parking lot before or after school.
7. Vehicles displaying offensive paraphernalia will not be permitted to park on school property.
8. Students are not permitted to go to their cars for any reason during the school day without being escorted by a hall monitor.
9. Students must park in their designated spaces.
10. CTC students are not permitted to drive to CTC unless permission is granted by CTC, the parents/guardians, and the high school administration.
  - a. All passengers are required to have written permission from both parents and CTC administration.
11. Those students who ride with illegal drivers will be subject to the same disciplinary action as the driver of the vehicle.
12. All vehicles parked on campus are subject to search.
13. Smoking/possessing alcohol products in a vehicle on school property is a smoking policy violation.
14. Students who leave school without permission will have their driving privileges suspended for one week for the first violation.
  - a. Subsequent violations may lead to long-term or permanent suspension of driving privileges.
15. Drivers who are tardy to school ten (10) or more times during the school year will lose their driving privileges as defined by the Administration.
16. [CLICK HERE](#) for the CTC Driving Permission Slip. This form needs to be completed by the driver and the passenger.

**FINES** - A \$5.00/day fine can be imposed for the following reasons:

1. Any vehicle parked without a parking pass.
2. Any vehicle parked in the wrong spot in the upper lot
3. Any vehicle parked illegally or in unauthorized areas

**NOTE:** Any student who has lost his/her driving privilege and continues to drive to school will be disciplined. Further offenses can result in suspension, trespassing fine or loss of driving privilege for the remainder of the year without reimbursement of parking fees.

### **FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION**

Students have the right to express themselves unless such expression materially and substantially interferes with the educational process, threatens immediate harm to the welfare of the school or community, or encourages unlawful activity, or interferes with another individual's rights.

Students have the responsibility to obey laws governing libel and obscenity and to be aware of the full meaning of their expression. Students have the responsibility to be aware of the feelings and opinions of others and to give others a fair opportunity to express their views. (See harassment policy)

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/FLAG SALUTE**

It is the responsibility of every citizen to show proper respect for his/her country and its flag. However, students may decline to recite the pledge of allegiance and may refrain from standing and saluting the flag on the basis of personal belief or religious convictions.

### **SEARCHES**

A student, his/her locker or personal possessions (including his/her car on school grounds) may be searched when a school authority has established reasonable suspicion. Students may be asked to make personal bags and/or book bags available during random sweeps by police canines. Any student locker, personal bag, or vehicle may be searched under reasonable suspicion if a police canine identifies a scent on the item. Students are also subject to personal searches when a police canine identifies a scent coming from any student item or when reasonable suspicion has been established by administration. Any student who is in the restroom when a vape detector activates is subject to a search. (Please refer to District Policy 226)

### **STUDENT IN GOOD STANDING/STUDENT DEBT LIST**

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month, a notice will be sent to all teachers, staff & coaches asking for the names of students who owe money, equipment, uniforms, etc. to the school. Students whose names are reported will be given notice both in writing and in person of their debt. Students will then be given two weeks to turn in the reported items to remain a "Student in Good Standing". Students who do not fulfill their obligations within the two weeks' grace period will be placed on the "Student Debt List". They will also not be able to participate in any extra-curricular activities. This includes but is not limited to: sports, fine arts performances, dances, trips, etc.

**If a student does not rectify their student debt, driving privileges may be revoked.**

### **STUDENT VOICE IN GOVERNMENT**

Students will have the opportunity to voice their opinions and ideas for change through student government elections, class officer elections or through Principal's Advisory Council.



**FREEDOM AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
POLICIES:**

**To Access All the District Policies:**

<https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/free/Board.nsf/Public#>

**(District Policies are located in the top right-hand corner)**

**Sexual Harassment of Students  
District Policy 103**

The Freedom Area School District is committed to ensuring equal educational opportunities to all persons and does not discriminate on the basis of sex. Furthermore, the Freedom Area School District is committed to maintaining an educational environment for all its students which is free from any type of sexual harassment.

The Board of School Directors of the Freedom Area School District will not tolerate any behavior by administrators, faculty, staff or students which constitutes sexual harassment of a student.

For the purposes of this policy, the definition of sexual harassment of a student includes, but is not limited to, the following action: unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct or written communication of an intimidating, hostile or offensive sexual nature, where submission to such conduct is made, either implicitly or explicitly, a term or condition of the student's status in a course, program or activity; or submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as a basis for academic or other decisions affecting such student; or such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with a student's educational experience or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive academic environment.

All reports of sexual harassment will be investigated in a confidential manner. Appropriate disciplinary action, including termination of employment or permanent expulsion from the school roles, may be imposed in proven circumstances.

**Harassment Policy**

Harassment in any form (verbal threats/hate acts) will not be tolerated.

Any incident that jeopardizes the health, safety or welfare of another student/staff member should be reported to the office for disciplinary action.

All threats will be taken seriously, and appropriate action will be taken up to and including fines and expulsion.

No student has the right to harass anyone. This includes verbal outburst, name calling, intimidation acts and third party messengers who instigate trouble.

Please remember that words can get you in trouble; think before you speak.

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Please remember that words can get you in trouble; think before you speak.

## **Weapons Policy District Policy 218.2**

The Board of Education of the Freedom Area School District does hereby enact the following policy relative to use or possession of weapons upon School property.

1. **Purpose:** Weapons serve no educational purpose. The Board of Education directs that students of the Freedom Area School District found to be in possession of a weapon upon School property shall be subject to discipline as outlined herein.
2. **Definitions:** As used in this Policy, the following words shall have the meanings given to them by this section:
  - A. District – Freedom Area School District
  - B. Elementary – Grades Kindergarten through Fifth, inclusive
  - C. Explosive – Any substance or instrument by whose decomposition or combustion gas is generated with such rapidity as to cause a sudden breaking or bursting, usually accompanied by a loud noise. The term includes, but is not limited to, a bomb, incendiary device, gas bomb, grenade or ammunition of any kind.
  - D. Firearm – Any instrument, including but not limited to, a pistol, shotgun, rifle, starter gun or any look-alike of the same, which is designed or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or the expansion of gas therein.
  - E. Possession – That set of circumstances by which a student exercises control over an inanimate article, whether upon his or her person or in a place under his or her sole or mutual control.
  - F. Secondary – Grades Sixth through Twelfth, inclusive.
  - G. Student – A registered pupil of the School District in either the Elementary or Secondary Divisions.
  - H. Weapon – Means any explosive, firearm, blackjack, metal knuckles, dagger knife, razor or cutting instrument, cutting tool, nun chuck stick and any other tool, implement or instrument capable of inflicting serious bodily injury.
3. **Prohibited Activity:** Any student of the District who is in possession of a firearm, explosive or weapon as defined herein, on property being used by the District, or at any school function or activity, including District-authorized events held away from District property, including while the student is going to or returning from school, shall be in violation of this Policy.
4. **Procedures:**
  - A. Any employee of the District, upon learning of a violation of this Policy, shall immediately notify the Building Principal of the violation and the identity of the student(s) involved.
  - B. The Building Principal shall immediately investigate the alleged violation and take steps to confiscate the weapon(s).
  - C. After the weapon(s) is/are taken into custody or the Principal has otherwise confirmed the violation of the Policy, the Principal shall notify and/or summon:
    1. the local police
    2. the Superintendent of the district
    3. the parent(s) or guardian of any student(s) involved in the violation.
  - D. After the Principal has confirmed the violation of the

Policy, the Principal shall immediately notify the student(s) and the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student(s) that the student(s) is/are suspended from school as outlined in the “Penalties” provisions of this Policy.

- E. The Building Principal shall be directly responsible for Investigating the violation on behalf of the District with the requested assistance of District Administrative personnel.

If the student involved is an elementary student & the violation is the possession of a firearm or explosive, as defined in this Policy, the student shall be cited for a ten (10) day out-of-school suspension and notified of the scheduling of a due process hearing to consider expulsion before the Board of Education, or a committee thereof, of the District. Said hearing shall be conducted pursuant to Department of Education regulations and the provisions of the Public School Code. If, after the formal expulsion hearing before the Board of Education, it is determined that the student had possession of a firearm or explosive on School property, or otherwise contrary to the provisions of this Policy, the student may be expelled for a period of up to one (1) year. The Board may consider possible defense(s) or other extenuating circumstances in setting the duration of the expulsion or other appropriate discipline measures.

- A. If the student involved is an elementary student and the violation is the possession of a weapon, not a firearm or explosive, the student shall be cited for a ten (10) day out-of-school suspension. The Building Principal will complete the investigation, consult with District and non-District professionals concerning the incident, and, through consultation with the District Superintendent and/or Assistant Superintendent, either:

- A. Re-admit the student after the ten (10) day out-of-school suspension, with provisions for his/her behavior and activities on School property, or
- B. Notify the student and parent(s) or guardian(s) of the scheduling of a due process hearing to consider expulsion before the Board of Education, or a committee thereof, of the District. Said hearing shall be conducted pursuant of Department of Education regulations and the provisions of the Public School Code. If, after the formal expulsion hearing before the Board of Education, it is determined that the student had possession of a firearm or explosive on School property, or otherwise contrary to the provisions of this Policy, the student may be expelled for a period of up to one (1) year. The Board may consider possible defense(s) or other extenuating circumstances in setting the duration of the expulsion or other appropriate discipline measures.

- E. In all cases proceeding under this Paragraph 5, it shall be a possible defense to be considered by the Board of Education, if evidence is offered by the student, that the weapon was possessed by the student in conjunction with a lawful supervised School activity or course or was possessed for other lawful purpose.

## **Fighting Policy District Policy 218.1**

The Freedom Area High School Fighting Policy consists of five (5) distinct elements:

1. Establish a significant consequence for fighting
2. Provide time for administrative action by the High School Administration
3. Initiate an Anger Control component for all combatants
4. Implement a “Conflict Resolution” course for students
5. Conduct “Conflict Management” training for faculty and staff.

These elements are integrated into two (2) formal categories that make up the policy:

- A. Confrontation Intervention
- B. Confrontation Prevention

Elements #1, #2 and #3 are contained in category “A”, and elements #4 and #5 are contained in category “B”.

### **Policy Operational Definitions**

#### **FIGHTING**

Violent physical confrontation between two or more individuals in which combatants are involved in the exchange of blows by hands, arms, legs and/or feet. **POLICE MAY ALSO BE CALLED AND DISORDERLY CONDUCT CHARGES FILED FOR FIGHTING ON SCHOOL GROUNDS.**

#### **ALTERCATIONS**

Offensive interactions between two or more individuals that may or may not involve physical activity, but demonstrating disruptive behavior and action, including but not limited to:

1. pushing
2. shoving
3. verbal shouts and/or name calling
4. verbal or physical harassment
5. disruptive behavior that interferes with the learning environment

#### **CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

Strategies and skills that prepare individuals to handle confrontational situations without the use of physical force. These strategies include effective communication, listening and anger management.

#### **CONFLICT MANAGEMENT**

Strategies and skills that train individuals to intervene in confrontational and conflict situations, to diffuse the violence, neutralize the parties and install calm so that diverse action can be taken.

### **CATEGORY “A”**

#### **1. Fighting**

- A. Up to a five (5) day suspension automatically imposed for the first offense. Parent conference necessary before student(s) re-admitted to school.
- B. Five to ten (5-10) day suspension on second offense, plus required Anger Control sessions. Informal hearing with school administration necessary before student(s) are re-admitted to school.

- C. Ten (10) day suspension automatically imposed on the third offense plus formal hearing before the Board of Education and the Superintendent for expulsion.
- D. Investigation of all fights will be conducted by the High School administration. After facts have been gathered, the administration will turn data over to local police with potential recommendations for pursuit of disorderly conduct or assault charges against any or all of the combatants.

**2. Altercations**

- A. For all disruptive behavior (pushing, shoving, name calling, harassment, etc.) up to three (3) days suspension for the first offense. Phone call to parents will alert parents of the incident. Parents must accompany student(s) back to school after serving suspension.
- B. Second offense of the altercation rule will invoke similar action as those in the fight section. Up to five (5) days suspension and necessary Parent Conference to re-admit the student(s) to school.
- C. Third offense will invoke a five to ten (5-10) day suspension, plus required Anger Control sessions and an informal hearing with High School administration to re-admit student(s) to school.
- D. Any and all subsequent incidents will invoke a minimum ten (10) days suspension plus a formal hearing before the Board of Education and the Superintendent with a recommendation for expulsion.

**NOTE:** If at any time during a student fight or altercation a teacher, administrator or staff member is struck, the individual responsible for inflicting the blow will immediately be suspended for ten (10) days and a formal hearing before the Board of Education and Superintendent for expulsion will be held.

**CATEGORY “B”**

**1. Conflict Resolution**

Conflict resolution course of study will be offered through the Health curriculum. All students will be required to take this mini course which is designed to provide students with skills and strategies to diffuse anger and handle conflict and confrontation in non-combative ways.

**2. Conflict Management**

Faculty, staff and students will be trained in techniques that are proven measures to control violence. Skills will be developed that permit these individuals to intervene in a volatile situation, neutralize the combatants, diffuse the anger and return order to the situation.

## **FREEDOM AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT**

### **Drug and Alcohol Policy and Administrative Guidelines**

#### **PREAMBLE**

This policy including its rules, regulations and guidelines is a coordinated effort by the Freedom Area School District to openly and effectively respond to potential and current uses and abuses of drugs, alcohol and mood altering substances by members of its entire student population. It is intended to protect the health, safety and welfare of all concerned as well as to maintain the rapport existent among students and staff.

#### **STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY**

The Freedom Area School District recognizes that the misuse of chemicals is a serious problem. The district adopts the position that students must be chemically free in order to function and develop in the most productive and healthy manner. Concern for the individual as well as for the health, safety and welfare of the entire school community is addressed in this policy.

#### **DEFINITION OF TERMS**

**Assessment** – includes both psychological and physiological examinations. Any costs involved are the responsibility of the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s).

**Behavior, Cooperative** – shall be defined as the willingness of a student to work with staff and school personnel in a reasonable and helpful manner, complying with requests and recommendations of the members of the Student Assistance Program Team.

**Behavior, Uncooperative** – is resistance or refusal, verbal, physical or passive, on the part of the student to comply with reasonable request or recommendations of school personal. Defiance, assault, deceit and flight shall constitute examples of uncooperative student behavior. Uncooperative behavior shall also include the refusal to comply with the recommendations of the members of Student Assistance Program Team. (Any uncooperative behavior will result in a minimum of 5-day suspension)

**Distributing** – deliver, sell, pass, share or give any alcohol, drug or mood altering substance, as defined by this policy for one person to another.

**Drug** – alcohol, anabolic steroids, mood altering substance, narcotic or other health endangering compound that includes but is not limited to alcohol, any alcoholic beverage, tranquilizer, amphetamine, synthetic opiate, marijuana, LSD or other hallucinogen, glue, solvent-containing substances, controlled substance, abused substance or medication for which a prescription is required under the law and/or any substance which is intended to alter mood.

Examples of the above include but are not limited to beer, wine, liquor, marijuana, hashish, chemical solvents, glue, "look alike and counterfeit substances" and any capsules or pills not registered with the nurse, annotated within the School District Policy for the administration of medication to students in school. A more comprehensive list would include all substances identified in the following laws.

1. Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act 1971(Commonwealth of PA) as Amended.
2. Public Law 91-513 Comprehensive Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Act of 1979 (Federal Law) as amended.

3. The Controlled Substance Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act of April 1972 (P.L. 233, No. 64) as amended.

**Drug Paraphernalia** – includes any utensil or item, which can be associated with the use of drugs, alcohol or mood altering substances. Examples include, but are not limited to, roach clips, pipes and bowls.

**Look-A-Like Drugs** – are any substances manufactured or designed to resemble drugs, narcotics or other health endangering compounds included above in the definition of drug.

**Possession** – possesses or holds, without any attempt to distribute, any alcohol, drug or mood-altering substance determined to be illegal or as defined by this policy.

**Prevention/Intervention Specialist** – is a program specialist with expertise in the area of chemical dependency and other student high-risk behaviors.

**Student Assistance Program (SAP)** – is a multi-disciplinary team composed of teachers, administrators, nurses, counselors and a prevention/intervention specialist. This team has been trained to understand and work on issues of adolescent chemical use, abuse and dependency and will play a primary role in the identification and referral process of students coming to their attention through the procedures outlined on this policy.

A Student Assistance Program is a way to identify students who are having problems in school because of drug or alcohol use (or other high-risk behaviors) and refer them for help. It is an intervention, NOT a treatment program. A student assistance program provides a way for school officials to help students at the same time as they are dealing with the student's chemical use as a disciplinary offense. The heart of the program is the student assistance team, a core group of school personnel who are specially trained to work with these students. Core team members receive referrals from administrators, faculty and staff, parents and students themselves. Referrals can be initiated by drug and alcohol policy violations: but more commonly, they happen because of observed changes in behavior or performance, which may or may not be drug related. The team's job is to conduct a pre-assessment to determine if the student can be helped within the school or if the student needs to be referred to an outside agency.

## **RULES, REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES**

All school district personnel are to report any student who, while under the school's jurisdiction, is under the influence of alcohol, other drugs or mood altering substances, or who possesses, uses, dispenses, distributes, sells or aids in the procurement of alcohol, other drugs or mood altering substances. Students observed doing any of the above behaviors shall be subject to discipline pursuant to the provisions and procedures outlined in this policy.

As a key component of the Freedom Area School District Drug and Alcohol Prevention/Intervention Program, these guidelines represent one component in a district-wide effort to respond effectively to drug, mood altering substance and alcohol related situations that may occur at school or at school-sponsored activities. The following guidelines are intended to provide a consistent disciplinary means to respond to drug, mood altering substance and alcohol related incidents. The Freedom Area School District will provide a consideration for the students' legal rights and responsibilities. The School Board reserves the right to use extraordinary measures



deemed necessary to control substance abuse even if the same is not provided for specifically in any rule or regulation enumerated herein.

### **BREATHALYZER POLICY**

Students reasonably suspected of consuming or having consumed alcohol may be required to take a test, which determines blood alcohol concentration. Only the police shall conduct the test. Refusal to take the test may be considered uncooperative behavior.

If the results are negative and the student still exhibits abnormal behavior, further assessments will be required.

## **Drug and Alcohol Policy and Administrative Guidelines District Policies 222 & 227**

### **Purpose**

The Board recognizes that tobacco and vaping products, including the product marketed as Juul and other electronic cigarettes, present a health and safety hazard that can have serious consequences for users, nonusers and the school environment. The purpose of this policy is to prohibit student possession, use, purchase and sale of tobacco and vaping products, including Juuls and other electronic cigarettes.

### **Definition**

State law defines the term tobacco product to broadly encompass not only tobacco but also vaping products including Juuls and other electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes). Tobacco products, for purposes of this policy and in accordance with state law, shall be defined to include the following:

1. Any product containing, made or derived from tobacco or nicotine that is intended for human consumption, whether smoked, heated, chewed, absorbed, dissolved, inhaled, snorted, sniffed or ingested by any other means, including, but not limited to, a cigarette, cigar, little cigar, chewing tobacco, pipe tobacco, snuff and snus.
2. Any electronic device that delivers nicotine or another substance to a person inhaling from the device, including, but not limited to, electronic nicotine delivery systems, an electronic cigarette, a cigar, a pipe and a hookah.
3. Any product containing, made or derived from either:
  - a. Tobacco, whether in its natural or synthetic form; or
  - b. Nicotine, whether in its natural or synthetic form, which is regulated by the United States Food and Drug Administration as a deemed tobacco product.
4. Any component, part or accessory of the product or electronic device listed in this definition, whether or not sold separately.

The term tobacco product does not include the following:

1. A product that has been approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration for sale as a tobacco cessation product or for other therapeutic purposes where the product is marketed and sold solely for such approved purpose, as long as the product is not inhaled.

NOTE: *This exception shall be governed by Board policy relating to Medications.*[3]

2. A device, included under the definition of tobacco product above, if sold by a dispensary licensed in compliance with the Medical Marijuana Act. NOTE: *Guidance issued by the PA Department of Health directs schools to prohibit possession of any form of medical marijuana by students at any time on school property or during any school activities on school property. This exception shall be governed by Board policy relating to Controlled Substances/Paraphernalia.*

### **Authority**

The Board prohibits possession, use, purchase or sale of tobacco and vaping products, including the product marketed as Juul and other e-cigarettes, regardless of whether such products contain tobacco or nicotine, by or to students at any time in a school building; on school buses or other vehicles that are owned, leased or controlled by the school district; on property owned, leased or controlled by the school district; or at school-sponsored activities that are held off school property.

The Board prohibits student possession or use of products marketed and sold as tobacco cessation products or for other therapeutic purposes, except as authorized in the Board's Medication policy.

The Board prohibits student possession of any form of medical marijuana at any time in a school building; on school buses or other vehicles that are owned, leased or controlled by the school district; on property owned, leased or controlled by the school district; or at school-sponsored activities that are held off school property.

The Board authorizes the confiscation and disposal of products prohibited by this policy.

The Board directs the Superintendent or designee to cause each electronic cigarette that is confiscated to be tested for the presence of THC or other controlled substances. The costs of these tests shall be paid by the student or their parent.

### **Delegation of Responsibility**

The Superintendent or designee shall develop administrative regulations to implement this policy.

The Superintendent or designee shall notify students, parents/guardians and staff about the Board's tobacco and vaping products policy by publishing information in student handbooks, parental newsletters, posters, and by other efficient methods, such as posted notices, signs, on the district website and in the Code of Student Conduct.

### **Reporting**

*Parental Report –*

The Superintendent or designee shall notify the parent/guardian of any student directly involved in an incident involving possession, use, purchase or sale of a tobacco or vaping product, including a Juul or other e-cigarette, immediately, as soon as practicable. The Superintendent or designee shall inform the parent/guardian whether the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school property has been or may be notified of the incident. The Superintendent or designee shall document attempts made to reach the parent/guardian.

#### *Office for Safe Schools Report -*

The Superintendent shall annually, by July 31, report all incidents of possession, use or sale of tobacco and vaping products, including Juuls or other e-cigarettes, by students to the Office for Safe Schools on the required form.

#### *Law Enforcement Incident Report –*

The Superintendent or designee may report incidents of possession, use or sale of tobacco and vaping products, including Juuls or other e-cigarettes, by students on school property, at any school-sponsored activity or on a conveyance providing transportation to or from a school or school-sponsored activity to the school police, School Resource Officer (SRO) or to the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school's property, in accordance with state law and regulations, the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement and Board policies.

### **Guidelines**

A student who violates this policy shall be subject to prosecution initiated by the district and, if convicted, shall be required to pay a fine for the benefit of the district, plus court costs. In lieu of the imposition of a fine, the court may admit the student to an adjudication alternative.

Tampering with devices installed to detect use of tobacco or vaping products shall be deemed a violation of this policy and subject to disciplinary action.

### **Students with Disabilities**

In the case of a student with a disability, including a student for whom an evaluation is pending, the district shall take all steps required to comply with state and federal laws and regulations, the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement and Board policies.

### **Purpose**

The Board recognizes that the abuse of controlled substances is a serious problem with legal, physical and social implications for the whole school community. As an educational institution, the schools shall strive to prevent abuse of controlled substances.

### **Statement of Philosophy**

The Freedom Area School District recognizes that the misuse of chemicals is a serious problem. The district adopts the position that students must be chemically free in order to function and develop in the most productive and healthy manner. Concern for the individual as well as for the health, safety and welfare of the entire school community is addressed in this policy.

### **Definitions**

For purposes of this policy, controlled substances shall include all:

1. Controlled substances prohibited by federal and state laws.
2. Look-alike drugs.
3. Alcoholic beverages.
4. Anabolic steroids.
5. Drug paraphernalia.
6. Any volatile solvents or inhalants, such as but not limited to glue and aerosol products
7. Substances that when ingested cause a physiological effect that is similar to the effect of a controlled substance as defined by state or federal law
8. Prescription or nonprescription (over-the-counter) medications, except those for which permission for use in school has been granted pursuant to Board policy.

For purposes of this policy, under the influence shall include any consumption or ingestion of controlled substances by a student.

For purposes of this policy, look-alike drug shall include any pill, capsule, tablet, powder, plant matter or other item or substance that is designed or intended to resemble a controlled substance prohibited by this policy, or is used in a manner likely to induce others to believe the material is a controlled substance.

### **Authority**

The Board prohibits students from using, possessing, distributing, and being under the influence of any controlled substances during school hours, at any time while on school property, at any school-sponsored activity, and during the time spent traveling to and from school and to and from school-sponsored activities.

The Board may require participation in drug counseling, rehabilitation, testing or other programs as a condition of reinstatement into the school's educational, extracurricular or athletic programs resulting from violations of this policy.

In the case of a student with a disability, including a student for whom an evaluation is pending, the district shall take all steps required to comply with state and federal laws and regulations, the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement and Board policies.

### **Off-Campus Activities**

This policy shall also apply to student conduct that occurs off school property or during nonschool hours to the same extent as provided in Board policy on student discipline.

## **Delegation of Responsibility**

The Superintendent or designee shall develop administrative regulations to identify and control substance abuse in the schools which:

1. Establish procedures to appropriately manage situations involving students suspected of using, possessing, being under the influence, or distributing controlled substances.
2. Disseminate to students, parents/guardians and staff the Board policy and administrative regulations governing student use of controlled substances.
3. Provide education concerning the dangers of abusing controlled substances.
4. Establish procedures for education and readmission to school of students convicted of offenses involving controlled substances.

## **Guidelines**

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion and referral for prosecution.

The Superintendent or designee shall immediately report required incidents and may report discretionary incidents involving possession, use or sale of controlled substances on school property, at any school-sponsored activity or on a conveyance providing transportation to or from a school or school-sponsored activity to the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school's property, in accordance with state law and regulations, the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement and Board policies.

The Superintendent or designee shall notify the parent/guardian of any student directly involved in an incident involving possession, use or sale of controlled substances as a victim or suspect immediately, as soon as practicable. The Superintendent or designee shall inform the parent/guardian whether or not the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school property has been or may be notified of the incident. The Superintendent or designee shall document attempts made to reach the parent/guardian.

In accordance with state law, the Superintendent shall annually, by July 31, report all incidents of possession, use or sale of controlled substances to the Office for Safe Schools.

In all cases involving students and controlled substances, the need to protect the school community from undue harm and exposure to drugs shall be recognized.

No student may be admitted to a program that seeks to identify and rehabilitate the potential abuser without the intelligent, voluntary and aware consent of the student and parent/guardian.

### **Anabolic Steroids**

The Board prohibits the use of anabolic steroids by students involved in school-related athletics, except for a valid medical purpose. Body building and muscle enhancement, increasing muscle bulk or strength, or the enhancement of athletic ability are not valid medical purposes. Human Growth Hormone (HGH) shall not be included as an anabolic steroid.

Students shall be made aware of the dangers of steroid use; that anabolic steroids are classified as controlled substances; and that their use, unauthorized possession, purchase, or sale could subject students to suspension, expulsion and/or criminal prosecution.

### **Reasonable Suspicion/Testing**

If based on the student's behavior, medical symptoms, vital signs or other observable factors, the building principal has reasonable suspicion that the student is under the influence of a controlled substance, the student may be required to submit to drug or alcohol testing. The testing may include but is not limited to the analysis of blood, urine, saliva, or the administration of a Breathalyzer test.

### **Breathalyzer Policy**

Students reasonably suspected of consuming or having consumed alcohol may be required to take a test which determines blood alcohol concentration. Only the police shall conduct the test. Refusal to take the test may be considered uncooperative behavior.

If the results are negative and the student still exhibits abnormal behavior, further assessments will be required.

## **No-Smoking Policy District Policy 222**

This no-smoking policy in school buildings and school buses and on school property owned by, leased by or under the control of the school district is authorized under Act 168 of 1988 regulating smoking in certain public places and signed by the Governor of Pennsylvania on December 21, 1988 and became effective sixty days thereafter. Please refer to Freedom Area School District Policy 222, Tobacco Use.

**SECTION I:** Tobacco use by pupils, including smoking, E-cigarettes/vapors, and the use of smokeless tobacco in any form, is prohibited in all school buildings and school buses and on school property owned by, leased by or under the control of the Freedom Area School District.

**SECTION II:** Tobacco use by School District employees, including smoking, E-cigarettes/vapors, and the use of smokeless tobacco in any form, is prohibited in all school buildings of the Freedom Area School District.

**SECTION III:** Tobacco use by all persons who are not pupils or employees of the School District, including smoking, E-cigarettes/vapors, and the use of smokeless tobacco in any form, is prohibited in all school buildings and school buses owned by, leased by or under the control of the Freedom Area School District.

**SECTION IV:** The following penalties may be imposed when the no-smoking or no-tobacco use policy is violated:

- A. Penalties for violation of this policy by a pupil are as stated in the Student Handbook;
- B. A violation of this policy by any person, including a pupil or an employee, may be cause for removal from the school building and/or for charges to be filed before a District Justice.

**SECTION V:** This Resolution became effective immediately upon adoption by the School Board of the Freedom Area School District at a regular meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of September, 1992.

**SECTION VI:** Notice of this policy was given to the Freedom Area School District employees, students and parents and to the public, as provided in Act 168 Of 1988.

*Note: Act 145 has been amended to include possession of lighted and unlighted tobacco products and smokeless tobacco.*

1<sup>st</sup> Offense - possession = One Day OSS/File with District Magistrate - FINE

2<sup>nd</sup> Offense - possession = Three Days OSS/ File with District Magistrate - FINE

1<sup>st</sup> Offense - smoking/chewing = Three days OSS/ File with District Magistrate - FINE

2<sup>nd</sup> Offense - smoking/chewing = Five Days OSS/ File with District Magistrate – FINE, student required to complete Smokeless Saturday program.

- Strong circumstantial evidence will result in disciplinary action.
- Hiding in bathroom stalls or around corners, acting as a look-out and smoking in a car on school property are prohibited.
- First time offenders may be eligible to attend a Tobacco-user Program in lieu of a fine.
- The items will be confiscated and properly disposed of.
- The district reserves the right to test e-cigarettes/vapes/smoking devices for THC.

## **Searches**

### **District Policy 226**

#### **Purpose**

The Board acknowledges the need to respect the rights of students to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures while fulfilling the district's interest in protecting and preserving the health, safety and welfare of the school population, enforcing rules of conduct, and maintaining an appropriate atmosphere conducive to learning.

#### **Authority**

School officials have the authority to lawfully search students or their belongings, including lockers, automobiles, electronic devices, purses, backpacks, clothing, and other possessions, without a warrant, when in school, on school grounds or when otherwise under school supervision, if there is a reasonable suspicion that the place or thing to be searched contains prohibited contraband, material that would pose a threat to the health, safety and welfare of the school population, or evidence that there has been a violation of the law, Board policy, or school rules. The scope and extent of searches must be reasonable in relation to the nature of the suspected evidence, contraband or dangerous material and to the grounds for suspecting that it may be found in the place or thing being searched.

The district has a compelling interest in protecting and preserving the health, safety and welfare of the school population, which under certain circumstances may warrant general or random searches of students and their lockers, vehicles or other belongings without individualized suspicion, for the purpose of finding or preventing entry onto school property of controlled substances, weapons or other dangerous materials.

#### **Delegation of Responsibility**

The Board authorizes the administration to conduct searches of students or their belongings, including lockers, automobiles, electronic devices, purses, backpacks, clothing, and other possessions in accordance with the standards set forth in this policy.

The Superintendent or designee, in consultation with the district solicitor, shall develop guidelines and procedures to implement this policy, and shall ensure that school staff who are involved in carrying out searches or determining when searches will be conducted receive appropriate periodic training about such procedures and currently applicable legal standards.

Students, parents/guardians and staff shall be notified at least annually, or more often if deemed appropriate by administration, about the standards and procedures in effect pursuant to this policy.

#### **Guidelines:**

##### **Individualized Suspicion Searches**

Students or their belongings, including lockers, automobiles, electronic devices, purses, backpacks, clothing, and other possessions, may be searched without a warrant when in school, on school grounds or when otherwise under school supervision, if there is a reasonable suspicion that the



place or thing to be searched contains prohibited contraband, material that would pose a threat to the health, safety and welfare of the school population, or evidence that there has been a violation of the law, Board policy, or school rules. The scope and extent of searches must be reasonable in relation to the nature of the suspected evidence, contraband or dangerous material and to the grounds for suspecting that it may be found in the place or thing being searched.

In determining whether reasonable suspicion exists, the principal or designee always should be able to articulate what is being looked for, and why it is thought to be located in the particular place to be searched. The scope of a search should be limited to the place or places the item sought is believed to be.

Examination by school staff of text messages, call logs, files, images or other data contained in a student's mobile telephone or other electronic device, without the student's consent, normally constitutes a search that must be justified by reasonable suspicion that material in violation of law, district policy or school rules, or evidence of such a violation, is contained in the particular files, directories or other data locations being examined in the device.

### **Random or General Searches Without Individualized Suspicion**

Under certain circumstances, random or general searches of students and their belongings, including student lockers or vehicles parked on school property, may be conducted during the school day or upon entry into school buildings or school activities, in the absence of suspicion focused on a particular student or students, for the purpose of finding or preventing entry onto school property or activities of controlled substances, weapons or other dangerous materials. Such searches normally will be conducted in a minimally intrusive manner using screening methods such as dogs or other animals trained to detect controlled substances, explosives or other harmful materials by smell, as well as metal detectors and other technology. When such screening methods provide a reasonable suspicion that particular students, items or places possess or contain controlled substances, weapons or other dangerous material, screening may be followed by physical searches of those particular students, items or places on an individualized basis.

Random or general searches for weapons may be conducted when there are circumstances, information or events tending to indicate increased likelihood that students may be armed or headed for physical confrontation because of community strife or tensions, or as a continuation or escalation of a prior incident, in or out of school, which threatens to spill over into school, into a school-sponsored activity, or into other times and places that students are under school supervision.

Random or general searches for controlled substances may be conducted when there are circumstances, events or information tending to indicate significant drug use, possession or trafficking among students in school.

### **Searches Upon Consent**

Searches may be conducted at any time, with or without reasonable suspicion, if the student has given knowing and voluntary consent specific to the place to be searched.

The administration may establish rules and procedures governing certain privileges enjoyed by students, such as the privilege of parking a vehicle on school grounds, that make the student's consent to random searches or inspections a condition of access to the privilege.

### **Searches by or at the Request of Law Enforcement Officials**

The legal standards governing searches initiated by school officials are less strict than the standards applicable to law enforcement authorities in many situations. When searches of students, student belongings, vehicles or lockers are conducted by or at the request of law enforcement officials, with or without the involvement of school staff, the law enforcement officials are solely responsible for ensuring that a warrant has been issued or that the circumstances otherwise permit the search to be lawfully conducted in accordance with the standards applicable to law enforcement actions. School staff will not interfere with or obstruct searches initiated by law enforcement, but may assist when law enforcement officials have requested such assistance and have represented that a warrant has been issued or that they otherwise have proper authority for a lawful search.

### **Locker Inspections and Searches**

Lockers are assigned to or otherwise made available to students as a convenience for the safe storage of books, clothing, school materials and limited personal property, and to facilitate movement between classes and activities and to and from school. Such lockers are and shall remain the property of the school district, and to the extent students have any expectation of privacy of lockers at all, it is very limited.

No student may place or keep in a locker any substance or object that is prohibited by law, Board policy or school rules, or that constitutes a threat to the health, safety or welfare of the occupants of the school building or the building itself. Students are required to ensure that their lockers do not contain spoiled food items or beverages, or soiled clothing which may attract pests, create odors or cause unhealthy conditions. A student locker may be opened and inspected for cleanliness, with or without the consent of the student, whenever there are odors, pests or other indications that a locker contains spoiled food, soiled clothing in need of laundering or similarly unhealthy matter.

Students are exclusively responsible for locking their assigned lockers to ensure the security of their personal belongings and school property entrusted to them. Students are permitted to secure their assigned lockers only with locks provided by the district, or if the district does not provide locks, personal combination locks for which the combination has been provided to designated school staff.

Prior to an individual locker search or inspection, the student to whom the locker is assigned shall be notified and be given a reasonable opportunity to be present. However, when there is a reasonable suspicion that a locker contains materials which pose a threat to the health, welfare or safety of the school population, student lockers may be searched without prior notice to the student.

The principal or a designated staff person shall be present whenever a student locker is inspected for cleanliness or is searched. The principal or designee shall maintain written records of all occasions when a locker is searched or inspected. Such records shall include the reason(s) for the search, persons present, objects found and their disposition.

### **Searches Involving Removal of Clothing or Examination Beneath Clothing**

Searches of students involving the removal of undergarments or examination beneath undergarments are subject to stricter standards than are required to justify other searches of a student's person or belongings. Such searches are permitted only when the basis for suspicion establishes either:

1. That the reasons for believing that the items being searched for are concealed specifically inside undergarments are stronger reasons than grounds that would support only a more general reasonable suspicion that the student is in possession of the items or has them somewhere on the student's person; or,
2. That the quantity or nature of the items being sought present a higher level of danger to the school population than other kinds of contraband.

Searches involving the removal of or examination beneath any clothing of a student, other than jackets, coats or other outerwear, shall be conducted only by a staff person of the same gender as the student, with at least one (1) other staff person of the same gender present as a witness, and in a location assuring privacy from observation by persons not involved in the search or of the opposite sex.

Searches involving the removal of undergarments or examination beneath undergarments will be conducted only after consultation with the district solicitor.

### **Handling and Disposal of Items Found in the Course of Searches**

Any items or material found during a search or inspection, the student's possession of which is in violation of law, district policies or school rules, or otherwise is evidence of such a violation, may be confiscated, and may be used as evidence in student discipline proceedings or a criminal investigation, even if such items or material were not the original objective of the search or inspection.

The principal shall be responsible to ensure that confiscated items or material are properly inventoried and secured until the conclusion of disciplinary action, if any, and are then properly disposed of if not appropriate to be returned to the student. Items or materials that are evidence of a criminal offense, or that are not lawful for ordinary citizens to possess will be promptly turned over to proper law enforcement authorities for custody or disposal.

## **Depression/Suicide – Responding to Students-At-Risk District Policy 236.1**

### **PURPOSE**

Adhering to District procedures in a crisis situation expedites the critical decision making process, thus providing timely intervention to our students. In addition, our procedures support and protect staff by providing for shared responsibility. Effective and efficient management of suicidal ideation behavior in a system as large as Freedom is contingent on staff awareness of role responsibilities.

The Freedom Area School District recognizes the need for a program that intervenes on behalf of students at risk. The purpose of the program is to coordinate efforts of staff members, family and community services in a response to a crisis situation. Services will be provided in an attempt to prevent harm to the student at risk and to develop within the student a feeling of self-worth.

### **AUTHORITY**

Every Freedom School District employee, certified and non-certified, must report any evidence of a student's being at risk for suicide to the counseling staff. If counseling staff are unavailable, the building administrator must be contacted. If evidence of physical injury or need for medical attention exists, the school nurse should be the initial contact. Evidence of at-risk behavior may be manifested in the following ways:

1. Student classroom writings, i.e. notes, assignments
2. Direct expression of suicidal ideation
3. Indirect fatalistic expressions by student
4. Self-abusive or self-mutilating behaviors
5. Expressions of peer concern
6. Expressions of parental concern

In these situations, students and staff members must understand that the issue of confidentiality shall no longer apply until the student's safety and welfare are secured.

### **DEFINITIONS**

**Crisis** – an unpredictable tragic event which can happen, either on or off of school property, and has the potential to have significant impact upon the school community

**Crisis Team** – is a team of trained personnel who help establish and implement a pro-active plan which would respond to the unique needs of a particular building and ensure an effective response if and when a crisis occurs

**Intervention** – is a means of assisting an individual to learn more effective ways of coping with the present critical situation

**Prevention** – is a process that serves to counteract stressful and life-threatening situations

**Post-vention** – consists of those activities that serve to reduce the after-effects of a traumatic event. The purpose is to help survivors live longer, more productive and less stressful lives than they are likely to do otherwise and to discourage "copy-cat" behaviors.

**Student Assistance Program (SAP) Team** – is a multi-disciplinary team composed of teachers, administrators, nurses, counselors and a prevention/intervention specialist. This team has been trained to understand and work out issues of adolescent chemical use, abuse and dependency and will play a primary role in the identification and referral process of students coming to their attention through the procedures outlined in this policy.

**Students at Risk** – a student who has indicated by changed behavior, depression or verbal remarks that he/she may be contemplating a suicide attempt.

## **SUICIDAL IDEATION**

Suicidal ideation by a student shall be considered an attitude of hopelessness and despair, verbal or written expressions of death, or a wish/desire to die (examples: social isolation, giving away personal belongings, suicide notes, wills).

### **IMMEDIATE ACTION:**

Staff member will notify Principal, SAP Team, Prevention Specialist and Counselor

Prevention Specialist or Counseling staff will take the following action:

1. Interview the student to assess the level of risk in terms of:
  - a. history of previous ideations/attempt
  - b. existence/specificity of plan
  - c. availability of planned method
  - d. availability of the means – guns, pills
  - e. loss or losses as a prescription factor
  - f. symptoms of sleep disturbance, eating disturbance, social withdrawal, feelings of helplessness, agitation, hospitality
  - g. history of impulsivity and coping mechanisms
  - h. motivational clues/precipitating stressors
2. Collect all pertinent information

### **IF STUDENT IS ASSESSED TO BE:**

#### **High Risk**

The student conveys an attitude of hopelessness and despair, expresses a desire, wish or willingness to die, expresses a desire to threaten or harm others and or indicates a place, time and method for suicide attempt.

- a. If possible, have student relinquish any weapons or pills
- b. Arrange for an appropriate staff member to stay with the student
- c. Contact parent/guardian requesting immediate in-school parent conference with principal/SAP team member
- d. Immediate and mandatory referral to a County SAP Mental Health Liaison (724)869-2222, Staunton Clinic Emergency Mental Health Services (724)775-5208 or a private licensed psychologist.

- e. Parent/guardian is to transport to appropriate MH facility
- f. Student admitted back to school based upon the recommendation of assessment and a back to school conference with principal/SAP team member
- g. Student must follow through with all treatment recommendations.
- h. Student will be monitored by a SAP team member upon return to school
- i. Refusal to comply with the above procedures will result in an informal hearing and a referral to Children and Youth Services (CYS)

### **Low Risk**

The student conveys an attitude of hopelessness and despair.

- a. If possible, have the student relinquish any weapons or pills
- b. Corroborate low-risk assessment with County SAP Mental Health Liaison (724) 869-2222
- c. Contact parent/guardian requesting in-school parent conference within three (3) school days with principal/SAP team member
- d. Provide immediate support and develop a plan with student and parent, to provide ongoing follow-up and support, i.e., counseling, outside referral
- e. Student will be monitored by a SAP team member

### **SUICIDAL GESTURES**

Suicidal gestures by a student shall be considered an intentional, non-verbal or symbolic, self-destructive act. It is differentiated from ideation by a past or current behavioral manifestation as opposed to verbal expression (examples: self-mutilation, innocuous overdose, playing with knives or other weapons). Staff member with knowledge of the gesture will take the following action:

- 1. Notify nurse if student is injured
- 2. Notify Administrator, Prevention Specialist or Counseling Staff. Counseling staff will take the following action:
  - a. Interview the student to determine the extent of the gesture
  - b. If possible, have student relinquish any weapons or pills
  - c. If the student is resistant, combative, runs or in possession of a weapon, the local law enforcement agency will be contacted:  
New Sewickley – 774-2473, Conway – 869-9530, Freedom – 775-7490
  - d. Arrange for an appropriate staff member to stay with the student
- e. Contact parent/guardian requesting immediate in-school conference with principal/SAP team member to discuss:
  - 1. The need for medical attention
  - 2. Immediate and mandatory referral to County SAP Mental Health Liaison (724) 869-2222, Staunton Clinic Emergency Mental Health Services (724) 775-5208 OR PRIVATE LICENSED PSYCHOLOGIST...
- f. Student admitted back to school based upon the recommendations from the assessment, and a back to school conference with the principal/SAP team member
- g. Refer student to SAP team for additional monitoring and follow-up
- h. Refusal to comply results in a hearing and CYS referral

## **SUICIDAL ATTEMPT**

Suicide attempt by a student shall be considered any intentional self-destructive act, which is potentially lethal. It is differentiated from a gesture by increase in likelihood that the method used will result in fatality (examples: serious overdose, ingestion of highly toxic substance, self-infliction or serious injury)

The staff member with knowledge of the attempt will take the following action:

1. Follow medical emergency procedures
2. Do not leave student alone
3. Contact school nurse to come to student's location. Attempt to advise nurse of severity or injuries so that the need to contact rescue squad can be assessed.
4. Contact Building Administrator, Prevention Specialist and Crisis Team

The nurse, counseling staff, building administrator will, in collaboration, take the following action:

1. If the student is physically agitated, refuses to stay in an area where directed, is combative, runs away or possesses a weapon, the local law enforcement agency should be contacted: New Sewickley – 774-2473, Conway – 869-9530, Freedom – 775-7490
2. If possible, interview the student to obtain details about the attempt
3. Interview witnesses to determine time, place and method of attempt
4. Contact parent/guardian immediately to inform of situation and request an in-school conference within 3 days with the Principal and SAP team member
5. Contact the emergency room of the hospital that has been selected as the rescue squad departs from the school. Inform the hospital of the incident and of the anticipated time of the student's arrival.
6. Immediate and mandatory referrals to Base Service Unit (724)775-7262, inform the center of the incident and the location of the student.

If the attempt is done outside of school the counseling staff and SAP team will:

1. Contact parent/guardian to confirm
2. Offer services of SAP team to family

## **Post-intervention Procedures**

Despite the best prevention and early identification methods utilized by district staff, a student may attempt to take his/her life. If a suicide/death does occur, it is the intent of the Freedom Area School District to provide support for students, parents and members of the school staff. We have, therefore, established procedures to help all affected individuals react in a positive fashion and serve as a deterrent to future suicides.

If a youth suicide does occur, the community needs to deal with the problem of extreme grief and the fact that one suicide can lead to another. How a school district handles the aftermath, or post-intervention, of a youth suicide can prevent the cluster phenomenon and help the community deal with grief.

1. Verify incident with police or family member
2. Administrator to notify Crisis Team and Superintendent
3. Crisis Team to meet immediately

4. Administrator will call a meeting of the faculty and brief the staff in consultation with the counselors, nurse and SAP team. Faculty will be given information about referring “at risk” students to various support personnel. Counselors and support staff from other buildings can be temporarily assigned to affected buildings to provide support as needed. Counseling staff and/or SAP team will make referrals to outside agencies.
5. Prepared statement to be read in homerooms
6. The Superintendent or his designee will coordinate all media contacts.
7. The victim’s family shall be contacted to offer supportive services and referral to outside agencies when deemed appropriate.
8. Families of other “at risk” student’s will also be notified to alert them to their child’s concerns and to offer supportive counseling and or referrals to outside agencies.
9. Counseling will be available for all students and staff
10. Debriefing to be held for all staff at 2:40 p.m.

### **Things to Do**

Emphasize that suicide is a permanent solution for a temporary problem  
Emphasize that help is available and that people care  
Emphasize that no one is to blame  
Provide small group opportunities for grieving students  
Refer any student in need to the counseling team  
Follow a normal schedule

### **Things NOT to Do**

Do not dismiss school  
Do not dedicate anything in the student’s memory  
Do not schedule an assembly



## **Bullying/Cyberbullying Policy District Policy 249**

The Board strives to provide a safe, positive learning climate for students in the schools. The Freedom Area School District recognizes that bullying of students has a negative effect on the educational environment of its schools. Students who are bullied, intimidated or fearful of other students may not be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered by the school district. Bullying can also escalate into more serious violence. Therefore, the school district strives to offer all students an educational environment free from bullying.

Bullying shall mean unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at a student by another student that has the intent and effect of, but is not limited to:

1. Bullying is characterized when a student is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more students. Bullying implies an imbalance in power or strength. The student who is bullied has difficulty defending himself/herself.
2. Bullying behaviors (direct or indirect) include three (3) forms: physical, verbal/written, and emotional. Some examples of bullying are as follows, but are not limited to:
  - A. Physical – hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing, stealing and/or damaging personal belongings, sexual acts, and invasion of one's personal space in an aggressive manner.
  - B. Verbal/Written – taunting, malicious teasing, name-calling, making threats, phone and Internet, and sexual remarks.
  - C. Emotional – spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships or environment, engaging in social exclusion, extortion, ridiculing, and intimidating.
  - D. Cyber – Taunting, manipulating, spreading rumors, ridiculing, and intimidating through use of electrical device (Cyber Bullying found to occur on school issued technology during the school day or outside of school will result in disciplinary action).
3. The term bullying shall not be interpreted to infringe upon a student's right to engage in legally protected speech or conduct.

The school district will not tolerate any acts of bullying occurring on school district property, at school-sponsored activities scheduled on or off school grounds, or during the time students necessarily spend traveling to and from school or school-sponsored activities.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop administrative procedures to increase the awareness of the problems of bullying, and train teachers to effectively intervene if bullying is witnessed in their presence or brought to their attention.

## **Intervention**

Teachers and other staff (including, but not limited to, secretaries, custodians, bus drivers, hall monitors, etc.) who observe acts of bullying shall take reasonable steps to intervene to stop such conduct, unless intervention would threaten a teacher's personal safety. The nature of the intervention will vary depending upon the age of the student (both the victim and aggressor), the severity of the bullying and the student's involvement in prior acts of bullying. The purpose of the intervention is to take prompt remedial steps to ensure observed acts of bullying cease and to teach students that bullying is not acceptable behavior.

## **Student, Parent and Employee Reporting**

The school district encourages all students and parents who become aware of any act of bullying to immediately report that conduct. Students may report acts of bullying to their teachers, building principal or other school employees supervising school-sponsored activities. Parents may contact the building principal to report acts of bullying.

If teachers and/or other staff cannot reasonably remediate acts of bullying through their own intervention, they should report the bullying to the building principal. Other school employees who observe acts of bullying shall report that conduct to the building principal.

## **Investigation Procedures**

Each building principal or designee is authorized to complete an impartial, thorough and confidential investigation of the bullying brought to their attention by students, parents or school employees. Any investigation of a report may include meetings with students, parents or employees; a review of student records and other reasonable efforts to better understand the facts surrounding a reported incident.

## **Consequences/Discipline**

Consequences for students who are found to have bullied others may include counseling, a parent conference, detention, suspension, expulsion, a loss of school privileges and/or exclusion from school-sponsored activities. All incidents of bullying will be documented.

Depending upon the severity of a particular situation, the building principal may also take appropriate steps to ensure student safety. Such steps may include the implementation of a safety plan; separating and supervising the students involved; providing employee support for students as needed; reporting incidents to law enforcement, if appropriate; and developing a supervision plan with parents.

## **Interplay with Other School District Policies**

Nothing in this policy shall prevent school employees from enforcing or imposing discipline, or fulfilling their professional responsibilities under other school district policies or student disciplinary rules.

## **FREEDOM AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT ONE-TO-ONE CHROMEBOOK PROGRAM**

### **Philosophy**

Freedom Area School District's One-to-One initiative is designed to transform teaching, learning, and assessment at all levels. We believe that infused technology accomplishes the following goals:

- Increased academic rigor is preparing students for continued success at the secondary level.
- Increased student engagement in classrooms through meaningful integration of technology.
- "Levels the playing field" allowing equal access to technology for ALL students.

### **Chromebook Use Guidelines**

The Chromebooks are the property of the Freedom Area School District. They will be assigned to a student enrolled in district courses once the parent/guardian has signed off on the responsibility agreement (Addendum A). The Chromebooks are only educational tools and are to be used only in that capacity. Students using Chromebooks are bound by the Freedom Area School District's Acceptable Use Policy (see Addendum B). The policy is available through the District Website ([www.freedomareaschools.org](http://www.freedomareaschools.org)). The use of the Chromebook is a privilege that can be revoked upon violation of this policy. Inappropriate use or neglect of a Chromebook, the internet, the school network, or any installed software will result in disciplinary action.

### **Internet and Software Guidelines**

The FASD Acceptable Use of Policy must be followed at all times. Students have no expectation of privacy related to Chromebook use and can expect teachers, technical support staff, and administrators to conduct spot checks of their Internet History. Logs and other records of usage will be checked as well. Students may not install or run software that has been approved by the administration.

### **General Rules**

- Students will be responsible for the Chromebook at all times.
- Students are not authorized to use other student's Chromebooks. Sharing machines is prohibited.
- Students must keep their passwords confidential.
- Students are responsible for regularly backing up school documents on the Google Docs account or external hard storage device. Failure to back up documents does not constitute an excuse for not turning in work on time. If a hardware failure occurs, student work may be lost.
- Obscene language and inappropriate screensavers, backdrops, and pictures are strictly prohibited.
- Illegal use or transfer of copyrighted materials are prohibited
- Students are responsible for reporting any technical issues affecting the performance of the laptop to a member of the technical staff or administration. This needs to occur in a timely manner to ensure loaner laptop availability.

### **General Operating Guidelines**

- Do not mark the Chromebook in any way; no stickers or other decorations are permitted.
- Do not remove school identification tags from the Chromebook.
- Food and drink are not to be used near the Chromebook.
- Use the Chromebook on a flat, stable surface.
- Students are responsible for reporting any technical issues affecting the performance of the Chromebook to the teacher. This needs to occur promptly to ensure loaner Chromebook availability.

### **Charging and Cleaning Guidelines**

- Enter school each day with a fully charged Chromebook. Students will have the opportunity throughout the day to charge their Chromebook in a specified area.
- Failure to charge the Chromebook is equivalent to not being prepared for class.
- Do **NOT** use water or other cleaning solutions on the Chromebook. Students should visit the “Technology Help Center” for proper cleaning of their Chromebook.

### **Technology Maintenance Fee**

Each student in the One-to-One program will be required to pay an annual technology maintenance fee of \$50.00. This fee is being used to cover maintenance, repair, and software upgrades.

**Intentional Chromebook damage, as determined by district staff, will not be covered.** The entire cost to repair or replace intentionally damaged machines falls on the student/parent. Multiple repair claims by any one student will be reviewed and appropriate action will be taken. Action may include a ban on taking the Chromebook from the building.

### **Repair Policy**

In case of loss, theft, repeated misuse, or vandalism, the following approximate costs will be incurred by the parent and paid to Freedom Area School District:

Keyboard Breakage: \$50.00 - \$75.00

Screen Breakage \$150.00 - \$200.00

Plastic Case Replacement \$30.00 - \$40.00

Charger Replacement \$30.00 - \$60.00

Battery Replacement \$90.00 - \$100.000

Hard Drive \$50/00 - \$75.00

Loss/Theft According to Scale (See Addendum D)

## **FREEDOM AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT**

### **Acceptable Use of Technology**

#### **PURPOSE**

The Board supports the use of technology and other computer networks in the district's instructional program in order to facilitate learning and teaching through interpersonal communications, access to information, research and collaboration. The use of network facilities shall be consistent with the curriculum adopted by the school district as well as the varied instructional needs, learning styles, abilities and developmental levels of students.

#### **AUTHORITY**

The electronic information available to students and staff does not imply endorsement of the content by the school district, nor does the district guarantee the accuracy of information received on the Internet. The district shall not be responsible for any information that may be lost, damaged or unavailable when using the network or for any information that is retrieved via technology. The school district shall not be responsible for any unauthorized charges or fees resulting from access to technology. The district reserves the right to log network use and to monitor file server space utilization by district users, while respecting the privacy rights of both district users and outside users. The Board establishes that use of technology is a privilege, not a right; inappropriate, unauthorized and illegal use will result in the cancellation of those privileges and appropriate disciplinary action.

#### **RESPONSIBILITY**

The district shall make every effort to ensure that this educational resource is used responsibly by the students and staff. Administrators, teachers and staff have a professional responsibility to work together to help students develop the intellectual skills necessary to discriminate among information sources to identify information appropriate to their age and developmental levels and to evaluate and use the information to meet their educational goals.

Students and staff have the responsibility to respect and protect the rights of every other user in the district and on the Internet. No student will be permitted to use technology or the school network without a signed copy of the Internet and Technology Usage Agreement on file in the principal's office. This agreement shall be in effect until the student changes buildings. The building administrator shall have the authority to determine what inappropriate use is, and his/her decision is final.

#### **GUIDELINES**

Network accounts will be used only by the authorized owner of the account for its authorized purpose. All communications and information accessible via the network should be assumed to be private property and shall not be disclosed. Network users shall respect the privacy of other users on the system.

## **PROHIBITIONS**

Students and staff are expected to act in a responsible, ethical and legal manner in accordance with district policy, accepted rules of network etiquette and federal and state law. Specifically, the following uses are prohibited:

1. Use of technology to facilitate illegal activity.
2. Use of technology for commercial or for profit purposes.
3. Use of technology for non-work or non-school related work. Students may be disciplined for using a laptop in an inappropriate way both during and after school hours.
4. Use of technology for product advertisement or political lobbying.
5. Use of technology for hate mail, discriminatory remarks and offensive or inflammatory communication.
6. Unauthorized or illegal installation, distribution, reproduction or use of copyrighted materials.
7. Use of technology to access obscene or pornographic material.
8. Use of inappropriate language or profanity while using technology.
9. Use of technology to transmit material likely to be offensive or objectionable to recipients.
10. Use of technology to intentionally obtain or modify files, passwords and data belonging to other users.
11. Impersonation of another user, anonymity and pseudonyms.
12. Use of technology or facilities for fraudulent copying, communications or modification of materials in violation of copyright laws.
13. Loading or use of unauthorized games, programs, files or other electronic media.
14. Use of technology to disrupt the work of other users.
15. Destruction, modification or abuse of network hardware and software.
16. Quoting personal communications in a public forum without the original author's prior consent.
17. Teacher permission must be required before student use.

## **SECURITY**

System security is protected through the use of passwords. Failure to adequately protect or update passwords could result in unauthorized access to personal or district files. To protect the integrity of the system, the following guidelines shall be followed:

1. Employees and students shall not reveal their passwords to another individual.
2. Users are not to use a computer that has been logged in under another student's or teacher's name.
3. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to the network.

## **SAFETY**

To the greatest extent possible, users of technology will be protected from harassment or unwanted or unsolicited communication. Any network user who receives threatening or unwelcome communications shall immediately bring them to the attention of a teacher or administrator.

Technology users shall not reveal personal addresses or telephone numbers to other users on the network.

### **CONSEQUENCES FOR INAPPROPRIATE USE**

The technology user shall be responsible for damages to the equipment, systems and software resulting from deliberate or willful acts.

Illegal use of the network; intentional deletion or damage to files of data belonging to others; copyright violations or theft of services will be reported to the appropriate legal authorities for possible prosecution.

General rules for behavior and communications apply when using technology, in addition to the stipulations of this policy. Loss of access and other disciplinary actions may be consequences for inappropriate use.

Vandalism will result in cancellation of access privileges. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user, Internet or other networks. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses.

#### **Copyright**

P.L. 94-553 Sec. 107

The illegal use of copyrighted software by students and staff is prohibited. Any data uploaded to or downloaded from the network shall be subject to “fair use” guidelines.

### **ADDITIONAL RULES & REGULATIONS**

- Each student will be provided the space secured by a username and password
- Each student folder will be limited to 1GB of disk space
- School personnel have the right to view all student folders and files at any time.
- Students will not be allowed to save to the hard drive of any computer. All information is to be saved to their thaw space or to their own personal floppy disk, flash drive or memory stick.
- Any damage or abuse to the computer or any other equipment by students may result in the student being responsible to pay up to and including all costs of repair and or replacement.
- All graduating seniors and/or any other student that leaves the district should be aware that their private folder will be deleted immediately upon their departure.
- Students will not be allowed to have access to any computer or related technology, nor will they be issued their username or password for their private folder, until they have returned the required school issued agreement for Use of Internet and Technology to the school with both student and parent/guardian signatures.
- Violations of this policy are taken very seriously and will not be tolerated in any way. For that reason, any violation of this policy will be treated minimally as a Level 2 Disciplinary Offense in accordance with the levels of our discipline referral system as stated in our parent/student handbook as follows:

## **DISCIPLINE CODE**

1. Students must not download games, music software, and use proxy servers, browsers or instant messaging. Violations could result, but are not limited to, loss of technology privileges, detention, in-school suspension, suspension or expulsion.
2. Students must not download pornographic images, movies and excessive music files. Violations could result, but are not limited to, loss of technology privileges, detention, in-school suspension, suspension or expulsion.
3. Students must not violate the including but not limited to network security, by password compromise, hacking network/Internet servers or theft of identity. Violations could result, but are not limited to, loss of technology privileges, detention, in-school suspension, suspension or expulsion

# **SCHOOL NURSE AND SCHOOL SAFETY**

## **HEALTH, MEDICAL, SCHOOL NURSE**

### **EMERGENCY CARDS**

Every student, without exception, must fill out and return the emergency card with phone numbers to contact parents in case of an emergency. These cards will be collected by the school nurse during the first week of school.

### **EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL FOR HEALTH REASONS**

A pupil may be excluded from school when his/her condition endangers the health of other students or he/she has symptoms that suggest a serious infection or illness. Exclusion from school for communicable diseases or conditions includes, but is not limited to:

1. Chicken Pox – Six days after last outbreak of lesions and until all lesions are dried.
2. Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye) – Twenty-four hours after receiving medication; or until doctor gives permission; or until eyes are clear if untreated.
3. Impetigo – Lesions must be dried and not draining; also depends on severity of the case.
4. Mumps – Nine days or until swelling is down.
5. Pediculosis (Head Lice) – May return as soon as treatment is complete providing nits are removed. Most treatments must be repeated 7 – 10 days and proper cleaning at home must be carried out.
6. Rubella (German Measles) – Four days from onset of rash.
7. Rubeola (Nine-Day Measles) – Four days after rash starts and well enough to return to school.
8. Scabies – One day and after treatment is completed.
9. Strep Infection (Including Scarlatina and Scarlet Fever) – Twenty-four hours after receiving antibiotics, if the child is well enough to return to school and fever is normal.
10. Whooping Cough – Seven days from receiving treatment; four weeks if untreated.



## **HEALTH EXAMINATIONS AND SCREENINGS**

Pupils are given health exams and screenings according to the following state mandates:

1. Physicals – K, 6th and 11th Grades unless done by your private physician.
2. Athletic Physicals - are given for school sports for grades 7 – 12.
3. Dental Exams – Kindergarten, 1st, 3rd and 7<sup>th</sup> grades unless done by your private dentist.
4. Vision Screening – Yearly
5. Hearing Screening – K, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grades.
6. Weighing and Measuring – Yearly
7. Tuberculin test – According to state regulations
8. Scoliosis Screening – 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grades
9. Pediculosis (Head Lice) – As needed in all grades

Note: Parents will be notified when an examination or screening results in other than normal findings. When students are referred for further evaluation, parents should report the findings to the nurse.

## **IMMUNIZATIONS**

Pennsylvania law requires that all students must follow certain requirements for attendance in school. A certificate of immunization will be kept on file at the school. Students will receive this card when graduating from our district. Parents may request a copy of the certificate when withdrawing a child from our school. You will need proof of immunization in other districts in Pennsylvania, and you may need proof in other states.

## **MEDICATION POLICY**

Students will not be permitted to carry any medication during school hours except approved emergency medical equipment which are registered in the nurse's office. The school nurse has information regarding the use of inhalers during the school day. Only prescription medication will be given as ordered by a doctor or dentist, and the medication must be registered and kept in the nurse's office. The prescription bottle or container must be sent to school along with a written note from the parent/guardian for that day. A parent permission form will be sent home that day and must be returned the following day. Prescription medications that are given once, twice or three times a day will not be given at school unless the physician or dentist has indicated such on the prescription or by a note on his letterhead. **STATE LAWS PROHIBIT STUDENTS FROM CARRYING ANY MEDICATION – EVEN OVER THE COUNTER MEDICATIONS.**

Non-prescription medications will not be given without a doctor's order and must be registered and kept in the nurse's office. Medication will be kept in a locked cabinet. Medication permission forms may be obtained in the nurse's office.

## **SCHOOL NURSE**

Students must have a pass from class to see the nurse unless it is an extreme emergency. Do not report to the nurse's office without a pass. Students who miss class or arrive late to class from the nurse's office without first seeing their classroom teacher will be considered unexcused cut/tardy. No student can be excused early from school until the nurse can confirm the illness; otherwise, it is an illegal early dismissal.

**Note:** Under no circumstances are students permitted to stay in the restrooms when they are sick. This will be considered a class cut.

## **SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN**

The Administration is committed to providing an atmosphere that is safe and secure by our student body and faculty. To ensure this, we have hall monitors that are trained to reduce potential problems by keeping the hallways clear and seeing that students get to classes on time to learn. We have secured the building exits/entrances with locks once the student body is in first period. Additional building measures include a surveillance camera system. Only the front door is open for latecomers or visitors to enter. We have limited the frequent arrival of visitors to our school, especially those who are not here for school business. Each faculty member is provided a plan of action to follow in cases of emergency in their classrooms. Evacuation and non-evacuation drills are included in the handbook. Harassment and intimidation and fighting policies are enforced strongly by the Administration so that each and every student feels comfortable throughout our high school building. Any concerns of personal safety should be directed to the Administration immediately.

### **EVACUATION DRILLS (FIRE, BOMB, ETC.)**

Upon hearing the alarm, students should quietly and quickly exit the classroom and building through the appropriate avenues. Exiting in single file allows for more students to move quickly through the corridors during the evacuation. Each room should have the map for evacuation for each area of the building. All windows and doors should be closed upon leaving each room. Please turn out the lights also. Students are not to panic but remain orderly as they exit the building. Teachers should take roll once the students get to the evacuation areas.

Note: Entrances to the building must be clear so that emergency vehicles or personnel can enter freely. Students must gather in a safe area away from those working on the emergency.

#### **Evacuation Areas:**

From Cafeteria – to left-center field of baseball field

From Gymnasium – to bank of soccer field across roadway

From Industrial Arts – to open field (50 yards away) or to the rear of cafeteria parking area

From Front of Building - Lower exits – extreme end of roadway  
Office exits – near flag pole

**NOTE:** Students are not to stop by their lockers on the way out unless told to do so because of cold weather. The administration may make an announcement to alter these procedures depending on the type of emergency that may be occurring.

### **NON-EVACUATION DRILLS**

- A. Severe weather – Students are to exit their classrooms and line up against the wall of the middle corridors of the first and second floors. Students are to sit on the floor against the walls with head down and arms wrapped around their knees. All doors

and windows should be closed (except in case of tornados) and the lights should be turned off.

- B. Lock and Teach – Students are to remain in their classrooms while each teacher locks the door. Teachers will continue providing instruction until an “All Clear” Announcement is made.
- C. Lock Down - Students are to remain in their classrooms while each teacher locks the door. Students are to remain quiet until further instructions are received from the Administration. Under no circumstances are students permitted to leave a classroom during this emergency.

### **CRISIS PREVENTION – PLAN OF ACTION**

(Sickness, seizure, fighting, weapons, insubordination, etc.)

Each teacher must designate a student who can get to the Nurse’s office or Administrative office in case of extreme emergency. The student should be someone reliable who can move quickly and communicate effectively when carrying a message.

Each teacher will be required to write the name of the team teacher that is near enough to help in a crisis situation. This teacher should be the first responder in an emergency. This should be organized for each period of the school day.

**NOTE:** Teachers should refer to the Emergency Procedure flip chart as well as the published District Wide Emergency Operations Plan.

Guidelines for Crisis Prevention:

- A. Remain calm – do not panic
- B. Those not directly involved should go about their business as usual. Avoid crowds and unwanted excitement. Separate the individual from the group if possible.
- C. Evaluate the situation:
  - What is the immediate risk?
  - Who needs to be summoned? Administration? Nurse?
  - What is the most appropriate immediate action to take?
  - Comfort? First aid? Reassurance?
  - Attempt to reason with the person? Do not threaten or blame.
- D. Send for help immediately (Team Teacher, Nurse, Administrator). Do not leave the area. Wait for help to come.
- E. Keep an accurate written record of all pertinent facts and actions. List date, time, and location. Give names of people involved in the emergency and any witnesses. Describe the emergency situation, condition or the persons in the emergency and/or the physical location. Include relevant comments whenever possible.

# PARENT SECTION

## **CLEARANCE REQUIREMENT**

There are three clearances that must be obtained prior to working in the Freedom Area School District. Certain volunteers are also required to get one or more of these types of clearances. The types and information on how to obtain them are found on the district website under the district forms section.

## **VISITORS**

All visitors must check in at the office and be given a visitor's pass. Visitors will not be permitted to visit any student or teacher during the school day. Visitors not in the building for school business will be asked to leave. Failure to leave will result in a trespassing fine. All visitors must be escorted to and from their destination.

## **EARLY DISMISSAL** - *All early dismissals will accumulate on a yearly basis.*

If your child needs to be dismissed early for any reason, the parent/guardian must inform the school office in writing. The note must be specific and the reason must be covered under the acceptable excuses outlined in the attendance policy. The parent/guardian must include a phone number on the note for the school to confirm in case of any questions. Please state in the note who will pick up the student for safety.

Any child dismissed before 2:40 pm must be picked up in the office. This policy is established for the safety of your child. All students leaving before 2:40 pm must be signed out by an adult. Be advised that any adult who is picking up a child is required to provide ID. No student is permitted to leave school without permission from the nurse, attendance office or administration.

## **EDUCATIONAL TRIP REQUEST**

Please complete the *Student Application for Educational Tour or Trip* and return it to the school office at least two weeks prior to the proposed absence. A separate form must be filled out for each school student. Absences for trips which have not been pre-approved or do not include acceptable educational activities will be marked "unexcused" and addressed appropriately within the attendance policy. The Pennsylvania School Code requires that we classify absences as "unexcused" unless the educational trip is approved by administration in advance. Please note that only one educational trip of a maximum of 5 school days will be approved per year. If a student is deemed habitually truant according to Board Policy 204, the request for the educational trip may be denied and would be considered as "unexcused".

**Please visit the district website at [www.freedomarea.org](http://www.freedomarea.org) to print the necessary form.**

## **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.
- Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.
- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):
  - School officials with legitimate educational interest;
  - Other schools to which a student is transferring;
  - Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
  - Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
  - Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
  - Accrediting organizations;
  - To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
  - Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
  - State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, photograph or likeness, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.

## **Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)**

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) is a federal law that affords certain rights to parents of minor students with regard to surveys that ask questions of a personal nature. Briefly, the law requires that schools obtain written consent from parents before minor students are required to participate in any U.S. Department of Education funded survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning the following areas:

1. Political affiliations;
2. Mental and psychological problems potentially embarrassing to the student and his/her family;
3. Sex behavior and attitudes;
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating and demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's parent\*; or
8. Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program.)

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 contains a major amendment to PPRA that gives parents more rights with regard to the surveying of minor students, the collection of information from students for marketing purposes, and certain non-emergency medical examinations.