









## 2016-2017 FREEDOM MIDDLE SCHOOL HANDBOOK

Walkers and bicycle riders will enter and depart from the building through the same entrance as bus riders. All bicycles should be secured to the bicycle rack located in the front of the building near the bus entrance/exit. The dismissal procedure starts at 2:30 p.m. Walkers and bicycle riders will report to the gym and will be dismissed after buses leave.

All students should be picked up by 2:45 p.m. unless supervised activities necessitate a change in pick up times. If a parent is unable to pick his/her child up by 2:45 p.m. and the child is not under the direct supervision of a teacher, we recommend the FSSD MAC program. Inquire at the front office if you need this service. **Supervision is not available after 2:45 p.m. In the interest of your child's safety, please do not leave your child unsupervised.** Unless prior arrangements are made with a school official, students **must** leave campus by 2:45 p.m. **Students remaining on campus (inside or outside) after 2:45 p.m. may be placed in Early Morning Detention.**

### After School Activities

All students must leave campus within 30 minutes after the end of a school-sponsored event (games, dance, etc.). Violators may be prohibited from attending future events.

### **Remember...**

- **Be where you are supposed to be**
- **When you are supposed to be there**

### General Rules

In keeping with the guidelines set forth in the Code of Student Conduct established by the Franklin Special School District Board of Education, the following rules have been devised for students attending Freedom Middle School:

1. Students shall not deliberately deface or destroy the school facility or any school property. If either of these actions occurs, the student shall pay for the cost of damages. In addition, disciplinary action may be imposed.
2. Students shall go directly to and from school and not play or quarrel in route. Any misbehavior that occurs while in route to or from school that threatens the reputation of the school will be dealt with by the school. It should be noted that parents have the right to file civil petitions against students who infringe on the rights of their children in route to and from school (for example: fighting, abuse, etc.).
3. Students shall not cross through private property when walking to or from school.
4. After arrival, students may not leave the school campus without going through early dismissal procedures.
5. Students shall not use profane, indecent, insulting, or threatening language on school grounds or while engaged in school-related activities.
6. Students shall not possess or use fireworks on the school premises. Students shall not have knives, box cutters, laser pointers, razor blades, water guns, guns (toy or real) or other unlawful weapons in their possession while at school, in route to and from school, or at school functions outside of the regular school day.
7. Students shall not bring to school or possess gambling devices including, but not limited to, playing cards, lottery tickets, and dice.
8. Students shall not consume food and/or drinks in the building except in the cafeteria or under the supervision of a teacher. With the permission of the classroom teacher, students may consume water from a transparent bottle.
9. Students shall not use or have in their possession tobacco including e-cigarettes, vapor cigarettes, lighters or matches.
10. Students shall display proper conduct at all school-related events and field trips during and after school. Students who do not exhibit proper conduct will be suspended from future events.
11. Students are not allowed to chew gum.
12. Students are expected to behave in a courteous way at all assembly programs. Students are expected to sit in assigned seats and to remain seated. Those who cause disruption will receive an appropriate consequence.

## 2016-2017 FREEDOM MIDDLE SCHOOL HANDBOOK

13. Students are not permitted in the halls before school or during classes without a hall pass.
14. Students are expected to walk on the right side as they move through the halls without excessively loud talking, running or other disruptive behavior.
15. Students are not permitted to enter the faculty lounge or teachers' planning rooms.
16. Students may not publicize or hang posters promoting non-school related organizations without the principal's approval.
17. Students cannot sell items at school. Any unauthorized selling will result in disciplinary action.
18. Students must keep their coats in lockers. Likewise, students with any bags or equipment that will not fit into their lockers must be taken to the area designated by their teacher or coach for safe storage during the school day.
19. Students may not carry backpacks, cinch sacks, book bags, ball bags or purses larger than an 8 1/2 x 11 sheet of paper during school hours. These items must be kept in a student's locker during the school day.
20. All students must sign an Internet agreement and abide by the rules as stated.
21. Students may only use computers when a teacher is present to supervise.
22. Student must keep their hands, feet, and objects to themselves.
23. Students may **only** use electronic devices and accessories as allowed by the teacher in the classroom **for academic purposes.**

All students shall obey the rules of the school and the directions of all teachers and staff while on school property or at school-related activities. **All school rules apply on field trips including dress code.** If students fail to conform, they will be subject to consequences. Students must submit to consequences prescribed for inappropriate conduct. **If a student or parent refuses to accept consequences, the offending student is subject to suspension or a juvenile petition.**

### **Bus Regulations**

Riding the bus is an extension of school activity. Therefore, bus students must conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent with the established safety standards of the FSSD. The rules and regulations established for the bus will be distributed prior to the beginning of each school year. **RIDING THE BUS IS A PRIVILEGE!**

**DISCIPLINE**

**Positive Behavior Support**

The Tennessee Behavior Supports Project (TBSP) through Vanderbilt is an exciting opportunity for us to receive assistance in building a school-wide positive behavior program at Freedom Middle School. Our goal is to create a safe and effective learning environment while increasing instructional time by reducing discipline issues within our school. We appreciate your support as we encourage all students to be **STARS** — Safe, Trustworthy, Accountable, and Respectful!

		Expectations			
		BE <b>S</b> <sub>AFE</sub>	BE <b>T</b> <sub>RUSTWORTHY</sub>	BE <b>A</b> <sub>CCOUNTABLE</sub>	BE <b>R</b> <sub>ESPECTFUL</sub>
<b>E N V I R O N M E N T</b>	<b>Everywhere</b>	-Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself	-Be honest	-Follow directions -Be on time -Communicate emergency situations to adults	-Treat others and their property how you would want to be treated -Always listen to adults
	<b>Learning Environment</b> (Classroom, library, theatre, assemblies, drills)	-Use classroom tools appropriately -Keep your area clean	-Do your own work	-Complete work on time -Stay organized -Seek help when needed -Take ownership of your learning	-Use kind words -Welcome the opinion of others
	<b>Social Environment</b> (Cafeteria, hallways, bathroom, arrival, dismissal, pep rallies, buses)	-Keep noise at an acceptable level	-Follow the rules, even without an adult present	-Take ownership for your own words and actions	-Leave your drama at the door -Leave every area in good condition
	<b>Extracurricular Environment</b> (Sports, clubs, drama)	-Arrange for transportation before the event	-Monitor your personal belongings and those of others	-Represent your school in a positive manner	-Use appropriate, positive language -Show school spirit and good sportsmanship in playing and cheering
	<b>Technology</b>	-Report inappropriate information/images immediately -Keep your headphones put away in the hallway	-Only use authorized websites/applications with permission -Only "search" with permission	-Keep food and drink away from all technology	-Keep your hands on your own technology -Keep from streaming music

**Violation of School Rules**

Students who violate school-wide and/or classroom rules will receive disciplinary action, which is appropriate for the particular offense. Efforts will be made to communicate with parents to help prevent further misconduct by students. Some of the consequences that could result if a student fails to adhere to established rules are:

- Verbal Reprimand
- Early Morning Detention
- Student Conference
- Alternative Classroom (AC)
- Special Duties / Activities
- Extended Day School
- Lunch Detention
- Extended Alternative Classroom (EAC)
- Loss of Privilege to Participate in School Related Activities
- Placement at the ALC
- Parent Contact
- Suspension/Expulsion
- Teacher Detention
- Juvenile Petition

**Definition of Disciplinary Terms**

**Office Referral Form:** A form completed by faculty/staff when a student’s behavior is not in compliance with school rules. The administrator handling the matter records his/her action on the form and returns one copy to the referring faculty/staff.

**Lunch Detention:** A detention that requires a student to be isolated from his/her peers during the lunch period.

**Early Morning Detention (EMD):** A 60 minute detention assigned by a teacher or an administrator held in a designated detention room before school. **Early Morning Detention may not be postponed or rescheduled by a student. A parent must contact the school to reschedule a detention. Failure to attend an assigned EMD will result in a 3-hour Extended Day School.**

**Extended Day School (EDS):** A 3-hour session providing a structured learning environment. **The session includes a writing assignment and a discussion with emphasis on behavior and consequences.** The curriculum consists of learning packets with emphasis on academic support. Extended Day School begins at 2:30 p.m. and concludes at 5:30 p.m. The session will be held in a designated classroom. Parents are responsible for transportation. All students are to be picked up promptly in front of the school building at 5:30 p.m. **Extended Day School may not be postponed or rescheduled by a student. Failure to attend EDS will result in placement in AC.**

**Alternative Classroom (AC):** An alternative classroom within the school building in which students are removed from the regular school population for a designated period of time. The students are closely supervised in a structured environment. They are required to complete all core academic work assigned by their academy teachers. Additionally, the students in AC are required to complete a packet that coincides with their misbehavior with the aim of helping them make better choices in the future.

**\*\*While students are in AC, they cannot attend or participate in any school activities until after 2:30 p.m. on the last day of assignment to AC, including those activities held on weekends.**

**Extended Alternative Classroom (EAC):** A classroom designed to provide a disciplinary alternative to out-of-school suspension and to placement at the Alternative Learning Center (ALC). This program does not completely eliminate the use of these disciplinary tools, but it does offer another opportunity for behavior modification within a school setting before such measures are taken. The EAC program enables a student to receive all of his/her educational services, but it separates him/her from the general student population. The program is designed to be therapeutic in nature, in that various strategies will be employed in an attempt to determine the underlying causes of the misbehavior. Based on the information acquired, suitable interventions will be explored.

**\*\*While students are in EAC, they cannot attend or participate in any school activities until after 2:30 p.m. on the last day of assignment to EAC, including those activities held on weekends.**

**Alternative Learning Center (ALC):** A restricted classroom serving students throughout the county who have demonstrated chronic discipline problems. Assignment may be made through Juvenile Court.

**\*\*Students who are in ALC, or suspended from school, may not be on FMS premises at any time and may not attend or participate in after-school or weekend activities.**



## 2016-2017 FREEDOM MIDDLE SCHOOL HANDBOOK

**Out-of-School Suspension:** A suspension from all school classes and activities for a designated period of time. In order to be officially readmitted, a parent must come to school with his/her child for a conference.

### **Behavior Documentation**

- Teachers will maintain documentation of student behavior offenses. The word "offenses" means any significant behavior that is in violation of classroom rules, school rules or school district rules.
- Teachers will inform students of each offense, the consequence for that offense, and what the next consequence will be if another offense occurs.
- Severe offenses are those behaviors that result in automatic office referrals.
- When referring a student to the office, the teacher will provide the administration a completed Office Referral Form.
- The administrator handling the matter will write the action taken on the form and return the teacher's copy to the referring teacher. One copy of the Office Referral Form will be kept in the administrator's files.
- Teachers will call parents, refer students to a counselor, or schedule a conference with parents as deemed necessary.

*Important! Please Note! The Early Morning Detention teacher will refer students who fail to stay for Early Morning Detention to the administration; the student(s) will then receive Extended Day School. Failure to attend Extended Day School may result in placement in AC or EAC.*

### **Severe Behavior**

ALL VIOLATIONS OF LAW WILL BE REPORTED TO THE APPROPRIATE AUTHORITIES!

### **Disciplinary Consequences**

#### **1-3 Days AC:**

- Selling of banned substances such as gum, candy or drinks.
- Instigation/Slander: Students who incite disruption, confusion, and conflict (rumors, gossip, he said/she said)

#### **1-5 Days AC:**

- Profanity
- Leaving the classroom without permission/out of place
- Forgery or giving false information
- Continued/Serious disruption in the classroom or on school grounds
- Disrespect to students
- Inappropriate physical contact, verbal or body language, written language or any other inappropriate item(s)
- Cheating or attempted cheating (includes plagiarism, copying another test, homework, or class work); using cell phones to take pictures of tests and/or answer keys is a form of cheating
- Improper or unsupervised use of any electronic devices, including downloading or violating Internet Agreement
- Skipping class or failure to sign in the front office before arriving to class
- Acts of vandalism or property destruction and/or vandalism to another student's or school's property

#### **3-5 Days AC**

- Aggressive behavior
- Theft
- Bullying, extortion, intimidation, harassment, or threats
- Disrespect to faculty/staff
- Improper use of a product as an inhalant (paint, markers, glue, white out, etc.)

#### **3-10 Days AC/EAC**

- Using any object with the POTENTIAL OR INTENT to harm.

#### **5 Days of AC**

- Possession of lighters, matches, or other such devices
- Gross defiance or insubordination
- Skipping school
- Possession/Usage of tobacco products including e-cigarettes and vapor cigarettes

## 2016-2017 FREEDOM MIDDLE SCHOOL HANDBOOK

### **Minimum 5 Days AC**

- Verbal abuse of faculty/staff
- Gang Activity or Association: Gangs that initiate, advocate, or promote activities that threaten the safety or well-being of any person(s) or property on school grounds or that disrupt the school environment are harmful to the educational process. The use of hand signals, graffiti, or the presence of any apparel, jewelry, accessory, or manner of grooming that, by virtue of its color, arrangement, trademark, symbol, or any other attribute that indicates or implies membership or affiliation with such a group, presents a clear and present danger. This is contrary to the school environment and educational objectives and creates an atmosphere where unlawful acts or violations of school regulations may occur. (FSSD Board Policy 6.3101)

### **Minimum 10 Days EAC**

- Fights
- Sexual harassment or racial slurs
- Possession of “over the counter” medications including vitamins, cough drops, or medication prescribed for a student that has not been registered with the nurse

### **Out of School Suspension**

- Inappropriate physical contact, verbal or body language, written language or any other inappropriate item(s)
- Fights
- Possession and/or selling drugs or alcohol
- Continued disregard of school rules (unruly)

### **ALC**

- Fights
- Bullying, extortion, intimidation, harassment, or threats
- Acts of vandalism or property destruction and/or vandalism to another student’s property
- Possession and/or selling drugs or alcohol
- Assault
- Continued disregard of school rules (unruly)

### **Filing a petition with juvenile court**

- Fights
- Theft
- Bullying, extortion, intimidation, harassment, or threats
- Gross defiance or insubordination
- Verbal abuse of faculty/staff
- Acts of vandalism or property destruction and/or vandalism to another student’s property
- Improper or unsupervised use of any technology or electronic device
- Possession and/or selling drugs or alcohol
- Assault
- Continued disregard of school rules (unruly)
- Gang Activity or Association: Gangs that initiate, advocate, or promote activities that threaten the safety or well-being of any person(s) or property on school grounds or that disrupt the school environment are harmful to the educational process. The use of hand signals, graffiti, or the presence of any apparel, jewelry, accessory, or manner of grooming that, by virtue of its color, arrangement, trademark, symbol, or any other attribute that indicates or implies membership or affiliation with such a group, presents a clear and present danger. This is contrary to the school environment and educational objectives and creates an atmosphere where unlawful acts or violations of school regulations may occur. (FSSD Board Policy 6.3101)

**We encourage any student who is aware of a potentially violent or destructive situation here at FMS to report it to the nearest available adult. IT IS YOUR DUTY TO ASSIST IN CREATING AND MAINTAINING A SAFE ATMOSPHERE AT FMS! The Freedom Middle School administration reserves the right to adjust consequences when deemed necessary or appropriate.**

## 2016-2017 FREEDOM MIDDLE SCHOOL HANDBOOK

### Tennessee State Law

A minor shall not, directly or indirectly, purchase or acquire smoking paraphernalia. Any minor purchasing or acquiring smoking paraphernalia is subject to juvenile proceedings (Section 39-15-409, Tennessee Code Annotated).

### **Zero-Tolerance Behavior**

In order to ensure a safe and secure learning environment, any student who engages in the following behaviors will be subject to suspension for a period of not less than 1 calendar year. The Director of Schools shall have the authority to modify this suspension requirement on a case-by-case basis.

### **Zero-tolerance acts are as follows:**

1. Students who bring or unlawfully possess a drug (including marijuana and alcohol) or a dangerous weapon onto a school bus, onto school property or to any school event or activity.
2. Any student who, while on a school bus, on school property or while attending any school event or activity:
  - (a) Unlawfully possesses a drug (including marijuana or alcohol, but not limited to) or dangerous weapon;
  - (b) Commits battery on a teacher or other employee of the school.

Any student in possession of a substance, which resembles or is believed to be a drug, will be subject to the Zero-Tolerance policy. The school administration shall have the authority to modify the suspension on a case-by-case basis.

### **Student Disciplinary Hearing Authority**

The Franklin Special School District in accordance with the state law has established a Disciplinary Hearing Authority (DHA) to conduct hearings for students who have been suspended for more than 10 school days. Copies of the policy including the appeals process and appropriate forms are available in the principal's office.

**Severability Clause:** State laws and local policies are subject to change from time to time. These laws and policies are severable. If part of a law or policy is changed, that is the only part that is affected. The entire law or policy is not void.

## DRESS CODE

### Franklin Special School District Dress Code for Grades 5-8

***Interpretation of potential dress code violations is ultimately decided by FMS faculty, staff, and/or administration.***

The FSSD/FMS dress code has been created with the idea of promoting a positive learning atmosphere and a wholesome attitude for each and every student. Safety, neatness, cleanliness, good taste, and common decency will be the guiding standard of appropriateness for all student dress.

The FSSD/FMS dress code will be in effect during the school year and summer school.

1. Students may only wear collared shirts except on Thursdays when FMS/FSSD T-shirts may be worn.
2. Dresses must have a collar.
3. No cleavage, undergarments, midriffs, etc. may be exposed.
4. Shorts, skorts, skirts or dresses must be no more than three inches above the top of the knee.
5. Leggings and jeggings may only be worn under garments of appropriate length.
6. No athletic shorts, sport shorts, recreational shorts, lounge shorts, lounge pants, or pajama pants are allowed.
7. No bagging or sagging—pull up your pants!
8. No holes, frays, or patching are allowed above the knee on any article of clothing.
9. Jewelry, colored hair, etc. must not have the potential of disrupting the classroom environment.
10. Logos or images of substances that are illegal for teens or are otherwise offensive and disruptive to the school environment may not be worn.
11. Pants or shorts with words or letters printed across the rear may not be worn to school.

## 2016-2017 FREEDOM MIDDLE SCHOOL HANDBOOK

12. The following items **may not** be worn:

- Hats
- Headphones
- Hoods
- Bandanas
- Caps
- Sweatbands
- Curlers/Rollers
- Night scarves/head wraps
- Sunglasses
- Skate shoes or house shoes

13. No distracting or potentially dangerous body piercings, visible tattoos, or dental decorations are permitted.

14. Heavy coats may be worn when entering or exiting the building. They may not be worn in the classroom during the day.

15. Students may not carry backpacks, tote bags, cinch-bags during school hours and must store these in their school locker at the beginning of each day. Purses smaller than an 8.5" x 11" sheet of paper may be carried to classes.

The dress code is subject to amendment at any time at the discretion of teachers and administration. Teachers will check for dress code compliance each morning. If a student fails to comply with the dress code and cannot correct the violation in the classroom, he/she will be sent to the office where appropriate clothing will be exchanged for his/her inappropriate clothes. He/She will receive his/her clothes at the end of the day. **Students may NOT call home to get a change of clothes.** If the FMS clothing is not returned, the student must pay for the item(s). Non-compliance will also result in a consequence.

### **BRING YOUR OWN TECHNOLOGY (BYOT)**

All FMS students are expected to comply with the BYOT policy. If an electronic device is found to not be in compliance with the policy, the following procedures will be followed:

#### **Electronic Device Policy**

- **1<sup>st</sup> Time—Verbal warning**
- **2<sup>nd</sup> Time—Student must serve a 1-hour detention**
- **3<sup>rd</sup> Time—Student must serve a 3-hour detention; a parent must come to the school to retrieve phone and meet with an administrator**
- **4<sup>th</sup> Time, etc.—Student must serve a 3-hour detention; a parent must come to the school to retrieve phone and meet with an administrator**

### **ATTENDANCE**

Regular school attendance is vital to the academic success of a student. Therefore, it is imperative that a student attends school every day. The state law authorizes judges to assess a \$50.00 fine against parents when a child has more than 5 unexcused absences during any school year. The state law also requires the principal to notify parents when a child has accumulated 5 unexcused absences. When and if a student accumulates 5 unexcused absences, he/she will be referred to the school principal, which may result in juvenile court proceedings.

*"The sole responsibility and authority for the enforcement of the compulsory attendance laws are placed in the local board of education, and its designated employees."*

The principal has the authority to excuse student absences under certain conditions.

#### **Excused Absences**

Absences are usually considered excused under the following circumstances

1. Illness of the student (Medical verification may be required)
2. Illness of a member of the immediate family (Medical verification may be required)
3. Death in the family
4. Recognized religious holiday

When a student is absent, the parent/guardian must call the school to inform the attendance secretary of his/her child's absence. Upon return to school, the parent/guardian must send a note to school with the student. The note bearing the student's first and last name, specific date(s) of absence(s), reason(s) for absence(s), telephone number and parent/guardian's signature, should be placed in the black wire basket located on the right-hand side of the front counter in the front office. **If a note is not provided, the absence(s) will be considered unexcused.** Notes for absences must be turned in to the front office within 7 days of the student's return to school. After 7 days, the absences will be recorded as unexcused.

## 2016-2017 FREEDOM MIDDLE SCHOOL HANDBOOK

It should be noted that a student must be present for a total of 3 hours and 30 minutes daily in order to be considered present by state regulations. **If a student is absent from school, he or she may not participate in any after school activity. A student is considered “present” if he/she is at school for a total of 3 hours and 30 minutes.**

When and if a student accumulates 6 unexcused absences, he/she will be referred to the school principal, which may result in juvenile court proceedings. Students with excessive excused absences, students who are truant, and students who establish a pattern of absences (e.g., every Thursday) will also be referred to the school principal. An accumulation of 10 excused absences is considered excessive. A student who accumulates 10 excused absences will be required to bring a doctor’s note each day that he/she is absent thereafter. If the student does not bring a doctor’s note, the absence will be considered unexcused. When the student accumulates 5 unexcused absences, an attendance referral will be filed.

### **Make-Up Work Due to Absences(s):**

A student may make up work upon return to school. Students must make up work missed within a period equal to the number of days absent unless otherwise agreed upon by the teacher. It is the student’s responsibility to get assignments while still at home. Upon return to school the student is responsible for getting the assignment and turning it in within the specified time.

If a student misses school on a day of a scheduled test, the student should be prepared to make up the test on the next day he/she attends school. If a student misses one day and returns on test day, then the student will take the test as scheduled provided the test was announced prior to the absence.

Your child will be expected to have the homework completed upon returning to school. If you are picking up your child’s assignments, please remember to pick up all books from student’s locker needed to complete those assignments.

\*\*\*Please note: In the event that a student is absent from school for an extended length of time as a result of a lengthy recuperation or recovery period, arrangements may be made through the Principal’s office for homework assignments to be sent home or to secure a homebound teacher (if the student meets the criteria for a homebound teacher). Assignments are **only** prepared for students who have an extended illness for more than three days. A parent must call the school by 8:00 a.m. on the fourth day of the student’s absence and request assignments. These assignments will be collected from the student’s teacher and be ready for pickup by 2:45 p.m. on the day requested.

### **Tardies**

A student is tardy to school if he/she is not in his/her first class of the day at 7:30 a.m. **A student who is tardy to school (not in class before 7:30 a.m.) must report promptly to the office to sign in and to get a class admission slip.** A tardy may be excused if the student is able to provide a note from his/her parents and if the reason for the tardy is acceptable. Examples of unexcused tardiness are: oversleeping, traffic, weather, or not leaving home on time or early dismissal. Early releases for appointments, as well as sign in and sign outs, are also noted as tardies. If excused tardiness becomes excessive, they will be treated as unexcused.

Students will be assigned consequences if they accumulate four (4) or more unexcused tardies.

- 4 tardies:** one hour of Early-Morning Detention
- 5 tardies:** two hours of Early-Morning Detention
- 6 tardies:** one day of Extended Day School
- 7 tardies:** two days of Extended Day School
- 8+ tardies:** one day in AC

The tardy procedure will start over at the beginning of the second semester.

### **Early Dismissals**

If a student must leave school early, the parent/guardian must show valid ID, sign the student out documenting the time dismissed, and provide the purpose of the dismissal. If a person other than the parent/guardian is to pick the student up, he/she must be on the parent/guardian-approved list documented in Skyward, the student management system used by the FSSD schools, show valid ID, sign the student out documenting the time dismissed, and provide the purpose of the dismissal.

**School attendance may affect participation in school-sponsored trips.**

## 2016-2017 FREEDOM MIDDLE SCHOOL HANDBOOK

### Withdrawal Process

To initiate the withdrawal process, the parent/guardian must notify the front office of the intent to withdraw his/her student from school. On the student's last full day of attendance at Freedom Middle School, he/she should report to the front office. The student will be given a Withdrawal Form to be completed. This form must be signed by all of the student's teachers, the librarian, the cafeteria and the counselor. These signatures indicate that all textbooks, library books, and locks have been accounted for and that any debts owed have been settled. The form must then be returned to the attendance secretary for an official clearance from our school. When the student has been officially cleared from our school, records will be sent upon request from the new school that the student will attend.

### SCHOOL HEALTH PROTOCOLS

First aid and health care provided by the school nurse is primarily for illness and injuries that occur during the school day. The school nurse, according to law, is not allowed to make a diagnosis, prescribe treatment, or administer medication without a signed medication form. Please help us to provide a safe and healthy environment by reading and following the policies and procedures below. Please feel free to contact the school nurse to discuss any health concerns you have regarding your child.

### Immunization Records

Tennessee State law mandates all students maintain current immunization records. Students entering the 7<sup>th</sup> grade must provide documentation of Tetanus-diphtheria-pertussis booster (Tdap) and verification of immunity to varicella (2 doses or history of disease). Without this information, they may not remain in school. Please call and speak to the school nurse if there are any questions.

### School Health Screenings

Free health screenings will be provided throughout the school year in compliance with guidelines of the Tennessee State Department of Education. These may include, but are not limited to, vision, speech, hearing, dental, height, weight and blood pressure. Please contact the school's nurse if you wish to decline screening or have questions.

### Emergency Procedures at School

Each school in FSSD is equipped to deal with life-threatening emergencies. The school nurse and school personnel who have been trained in accordance with state regulations are available to respond to these emergencies. An AED (automatic defibrillator) is located in each gymnasium and will be used in the event of a suspected cardiac emergency. Emergency epinephrine auto-injectors are also available in each school and will be used to treat severe allergic reactions (anaphylaxis) that can occur in response to a known or unknown allergen. Students, with a known life-threatening allergy, are required to have their own medications as prescribed in their "Individualized Healthcare Plan" that can be available if needed at school or on field trips. In the event of these and other emergencies, 911 will be called. Contact the school nurse or administrator for any questions or concerns regarding emergency procedures.

### Medications at School

State law prohibits dispensing of medications, both prescription and non-prescription, at school without a completed medication form. This includes over the counter medications such as cough drops, Tylenol, Motrin, and ointments, such as Neosporin. If your child requires medication during the school day, or if you would like to have medications available at school to be given if needed, please complete a medication request form. An Individualized Health Care Plan is required for students with chronic illness such as asthma, diabetes, food allergies, etc. Forms are available from the school nurse or on the website at [www.fssd.org](http://www.fssd.org). The first dose of any new medication is to be administered at home.

**Prescription medications** require both a doctor's signature and a parent/guardian signature. *It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to obtain the physician's signature.* The medication must be brought to school in a labeled prescription medication bottle from the pharmacy. **Non-prescription (over the counter) medications** require a parent/guardian signature. The medication must be in a new, unopened container with the name of the medication and expiration date clearly visible. The parent/guardian will be responsible for informing the nurse of any change in the student's health or change in medication. A new medication form must be completed to reflect any change in medication. Freedom Middle School has a full-time nurse on staff from 7:15 a.m. until 2:45 p.m.

**\*\*\*A PARENT OR GUARDIAN MUST BRING MEDICATIONS TO THE SCHOOL CLINIC. IT IS A VIOLATION OF STATE LAW AND SCHOOL POLICY FOR A CHILD TO BRING MEDICATIONS TO SCHOOL.**

## 2016-2017 FREEDOM MIDDLE SCHOOL HANDBOOK

### **Illness at School**

#### **Students should not come to school if...**

- They have had fever of 100 degrees or higher in the past 24 hours.
- They have had vomiting or diarrhea two or more times in the past 24 hours.
- They have been on antibiotics for strep throat, pinkeye or other infections for **less** than 24 hours.

#### **Students will be sent home for...**

- Fever of 100 degrees or higher. A student must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school, without the use of fever-reducing medications such as Ibuprofen and Tylenol.
- Vomiting or diarrhea. A student must be free of vomiting/diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Unexplained rash. A student must be rash-free or have a doctor's note stating he/she can return to school.
- Suspected Pink Eye. A student must be symptom-free or have a doctor's note stating when he/she can return to school.
- Lice (FSSD has a no nit-lice policy). Please see the school nurse for lice eviction guidelines.
- Injuries/Illnesses that are determined by a school nurse or school administrator to require subsequent physician care or close monitoring (e.g. suspected fractures, head injuries, allergic reactions, asthma symptoms not controlled by available medications, etc.).

**It is very important that we have your home, work, and cell phone numbers. Please make sure to notify us of any changes. We must be able to contact you in case of an emergency, illness or injury. In case of an emergency, if the parent/guardian cannot be reached, an ambulance will be called.**

## **COMMUNICATION TO PARENTS**

Generally, information such as online newsletters, notification of special events, etc., will be communicated through Blackboard Connect phone messaging, email, and the FMS website ([www.fssd.org/FMSweb](http://www.fssd.org/FMSweb)). To enhance the communication from school to home, parents should ask their children if they have information from school. Parents are encouraged to stay abreast of school happenings so they will be more effective in monitoring their children's activities and progress.

Other means of communication to parents include:

1. Student Daily Planner (check the planner daily for homework assignments and comments from teachers)
2. Newsletters posted online
3. Automated telephone calls
4. FMS website ([www.fssd.org/FMSweb](http://www.fssd.org/FMSweb))
5. Twitter (Freedom Middle @fssdFMS)
6. Facebook: Freedom Middle School
7. Instagram: FSSDfms

### **School Closings**

If inclement weather or some other school emergency occurs that might cause schools to close, the following outlets will post the information:

- FSSD Web Site ([www.fssd.org](http://www.fssd.org))
- Local Television Stations (channel 2, 4, 5 and Fox 17) and their web sites.
- Cable Channel 3 (Williamson County Schools Channel)
- WAKM-950 AM

If you hear Williamson County schools, this does not mean that we are closed. Although, we live in Williamson County, we are a separate school system. Listen for **Franklin Special School District**. In addition, FSSD will use Blackboard Connect to send a recorded message to the telephone numbers and email addresses on record for each student. If the contact's phone number(s) has/have changed, please make sure the school has the updated phone number(s) on file so important information will not go unheard.

### **Delivery of Messages**

Parents may call and leave important messages for students by **2:00 pm**; the school secretaries will notify students they may pick up the message(s) in the main office at 2:30 p.m. Please make all after school car/bus arrangements prior to school. **Only emergency messages from parents will be delivered to students during the school day.**

## 2016-2017 FREEDOM MIDDLE SCHOOL HANDBOOK

### **Student Use of School Telephones**

If it is absolutely necessary for a student to call parents during the school day, he/she may request the use of the telephone in the school office provided the student has a signed note from a teacher.

### **Announcements**

School announcements will be made each morning at 7:25 a.m. Some announcements may also be made at the end of the day.

## **CAFETERIA**

Breakfast and lunch are served at FMS. Breakfast is served each morning in the classroom. Lunch will be served as designated yearly by the school schedule. The daily lunch menu will consist of three choices: a hot bar (meat, vegetable, fruits, and bread), a cold bar (assorted sandwiches), and a salad bar. Parents are welcome to join their children for lunch in the school cafeteria. Food from restaurants/eating establishments may not be brought into the cafeteria on these occasions. Students and parents will be notified of payment information and prices at the beginning of the school year.

### **Free and Reduced Price Meals**

Parents/guardians may request information regarding qualifications for free and reduced price meals. If they feel they qualify, they should fill out the appropriate form(s) completely and return these to the front office. If a parent has more than one child who qualifies for the lunch program, he/she must complete a separate form for each child. If using a case number from Human Services, use the 10-digit number that begins with either 2 or 3 zeros. It is important that these forms be completed and sent back immediately so they can be processed at the Central Office. Parents will be notified when a determination is made for their child's qualification for the program. Students who qualify for reduced meals will follow the same procedures as other students who are paying for meals. If a need arises during the school year for a free and reduced lunch form, one may be picked up from the front office.

### **Lunchroom Procedures:**

1. Students are to arrive and depart from the cafeteria promptly.
2. Students purchasing only a drink must go through the line with their classes.
3. Students must sit in designated areas.
4. No electronic devices are allowed in the cafeteria.
5. Objects and food items are not to be thrown.
6. All trays and utensils must be returned to the dishwashing area.
7. Students are to clear all debris and spills from tables and the area where they are seated. They are to deposit all litter in the waste container before they leave the lunchroom.
8. Food and drink may not be taken out of the cafeteria.
9. Students must obey the directions of all faculty and staff.
10. Students must not bring fast food items to school.
11. When a student's meal charges exceed the board-approved three meals, the student will no longer be allowed to select the meal choice; a meal will be provided that includes a cold sandwich, milk and a fruit.
12. A la carte items must be purchased with cash or a prepaid account. A la carte items cannot be charged.
13. Online payment options are available. All cafeteria accounts must be kept current.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

### **Visitors**

All visitors must report to the main office upon arrival to sign in and obtain a visitor's pass. Students shall not bring friends, younger brothers and sisters, babies, etc. to school.

### **Student Lockers**

Students are issued lockers and locks for personal use in keeping notebooks, supplies, backpacks, coats, etc. Only locks issued by the school may be placed on lockers. After the first week of school is complete, students are expected to be familiar with their lock combination and locker operation. Students must make sure locks remain



## 2016-2017 FREEDOM MIDDLE SCHOOL HANDBOOK

locked on lockers and should not give their combination to anyone. Lockers may not be shared. Each student should keep his/her items in his/her locker. Lockers should be kept in good condition. Students shall not write on lockers. Decals and stickers shall not be placed on/in lockers.

If a lock gets misplaced, it is the student's responsibility to pay for the lock so that another one can be issued. The fee for replacing a lock is \$10.00. The student should give the fee to the front office staff. The locks and lockers are the property of FSSD and are made available for student use. Should there be any reason to believe that a locker contains stolen items and and/or items that are hazardous to the health and welfare to the students, a search may be conducted. We will have a locker check and clean out day periodically.

### **Valuables**

The School will NOT be responsible for lost or stolen items.

### **Lost and Found**

Items found should be turned in to the front office. Inquire about lost items there. Items not claimed will be donated to charity at the end of each semester.

### **Hall Passes**

Students shall be in their assigned areas at all times unless otherwise directed by a teacher/administrator. If a student must leave his/her assigned area, he/she must have permission from his/her teacher and have his/her planner hall pass signed.

### **Grievances**

If a student has a complaint or a suggestion to voice, he/she should consult a member of the Student Council, class representative, etc. Petitions shall not be circulated unless the principal or his/her designee approves them.

## **FSSD GRADING POLICY**

### **Academics & Related Arts:**

A 93 -100  
B 86 - 92  
C 76 - 85  
D 70 - 75  
F 0 - 69

### **High School Courses:**

A 91 - 100  
B 81 - 90  
C 72 - 80  
D 70 - 71  
F 0 - 69

I Incomplete \*\*\*Students receiving "Incomplete" (I's) on their report cards must complete the work necessary to remove them within 2 weeks after the grading period. The teacher must turn in the grade on Friday of that second week.

### **FMS HOMEWORK POLICY**

Homework counts for less than or equal to 20% of a student's total grade average. **Students are expected to complete all assignments.** Failure to complete assignments may result in a consequence ranging from EDS to placement in ALC.

### **Honors and Recognitions**

Students who excel academically will be recognized. Their names will be placed on the Principal's List or the Honor Roll and their names will appear in the local newspaper.

### **Principal's List**

At the end of each nine-week grading period, those students who make all A's on their report cards will be placed on the Principal's List.

### **Honor Roll**

At the end of a nine-week grading period, students who make A's and/or B's in all subjects on their report cards will be placed on the Honor Roll. A student must have at least one A to be on the Honor Roll.

**FSSD ASSESSMENTS**

<b>FIRST ASSESSMENT WINDOW (AUGUST 5, 2016 - OCTOBER 6, 2016): 44 DAYS</b>		
<b>Assessments</b>	<b>Grades</b>	<b>Assessment Dates</b>
W-APT (ELL Students Only)	5-8	August 8, 2016 - August 26, 2016
STAR Math Enterprise & STAR Reading Enterprise	5-8	August 15, 2016 - August 31, 2016
Kuder	7-8	August 15, 2016 - August 26, 2016
<b>SECOND ASSESSMENT WINDOW (OCTOBER 7, 2016 - DECEMBER 21, 2016): 43 DAYS</b>		
STAR Math Enterprise & STAR Reading Enterprise	5-8	November 28, 2016 - December 6, 2016
<b>THIRD ASSESSMENT WINDOW (JANUARY 9, 2017 - MARCH 15, 2017): 46 DAYS</b>		
ACT Explore Test (for Honors Program qualification)	5-7	January 26, 2017
WIDA ACCESS (ELL Students Only)	5-8	March 6, 2017 - April 21, 2017
NAEP (randomly selected 8th graders)	8	PGMS: March 7, FMS: March 8, 2017
<b>FOURTH ASSESSMENT WINDOW (MARCH 16, 2017 - MAY 24, 2017): 44 DAYS</b>		
Iowa Algebra Aptitude Test (for Algebra I qualification)	6-7	March 16, 2017
Modern Language Aptitude Test-Elementary (for high school credit World Language qualification)	6	March 16, 2017
STAR Enterprise Reading & STAR Enterprise Math	5-8	April 3, 2017 - April 13, 2017
Final exams: High School World Language classes	8	May 19, 2017
<b>Last Day of School</b>	<b>PreK - 8</b>	<b>May 24, 2017</b>

**FMS COURSE OFFERINGS**

The seventh and eighth grade curriculums are designed to provide students with a strong foundation in the basic core courses and a variety of exploratory experiences. Listed below are the core academic courses, the related arts courses, and the extended services offered at our school. This list may change according to student numbers and other parameters.

**Core Academics:** English Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Algebra I, Geometry, and Foreign Language (French I or Spanish I).

**Related Arts:** Instrumental Music (Band or Strings), Vocal Music (Chorus), Physical Education, STEM, Computer Technology, Exploratory, General Music, Art, Health, Math and Language Arts Intervention, Directed Studies, ELA Enrichment

**English Language Learners (ELL):** Designated to facilitate the teaching of students within our school population who speak little or no English.

## 2016-2017 FREEDOM MIDDLE SCHOOL HANDBOOK

### Extended Services

Support services, which include, but are not limited to, counseling, consultation, and remediation in reading, language arts, and math. These services are provided on a need basis as determined by a battery of tests. The State of Tennessee requires all seventh and eighth grade students to have physical education, health, art, music, and computer technology.

### Testing for High School Credit

Students who are enrolled in Algebra I, Geometry, and/or French or Spanish may earn high school credit in said subject if certain guidelines are met.

### Promotion/Retention Policy

- In order to be promoted to the next grade, a student must pass all academic subjects, e.g. science, math, English language arts, social studies, and/or foreign language, as well as a composite of the related arts subjects.
- Any student with a final average below 70 in any core class or related arts composite may be retained.
- A student who does not fail more than two subjects may receive remediation during summer school and, with daily attendance and successful completion, be promoted to the next grade.
- A student who fails three or more classes including the related arts composite may not be eligible for summer school as a basis for promotion.
- The ultimate decision of whether or not a student is promoted or retained shall rest with the building principal.

### High School Registration

To determine which high school a student is zoned to attend, the current address on record as of February 1<sup>st</sup> will be used. Any change of address must be reported to the office prior to February 1<sup>st</sup>. In the case of special transfers, a copy of the transfer must be submitted to the office prior to March 1<sup>st</sup>. If your address changes after that date, you will need to contact the Williamson County School District. The registration will be based on the list we have received from the county.

## GUIDANCE SERVICES

The Guidance and Counseling Program is designed to help each student benefit positively and productively from his/her experience at FMS. The program is implemented to ensure that all students acquire the skills needed to become independent, contributing members of society.

FMS offers a broad spectrum of guidance services ranging from personal, interpersonal, social, academic counseling, and adolescent development to career exploration. Counselors work with students, individually and in large or small groups, with the goal of helping students achieve their maximum potential. Students may see the counselors through teacher or self-referral. Parents are encouraged to call the guidance office for any questions they may have or for an appointment with the counselors.

When a student transfers to another school, his/her records will be forwarded to the new school when all debts are settled. Requests for transcripts should be made one week prior to the date needed. If recommendations are also needed, requests should be made two weeks in advance.

## EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The following applies to any student participating in extracurricular activities including, but not limited to, sports, drama, and academic clubs:

If a student has a failing grade, at either progress report time or report card time, he/she will be placed on probation for one week. The student must show a passing progress report from **all subject areas** in order to resume participating in the extracurricular activity. **All grades must be passing**, not just the one he/she originally failed. **The student may neither dress nor participate in any school activity during the probationary period.**

### Clubs and Organizations

**National Junior Honor Society:** The National Junior Honor Society at Freedom Middle School was chartered in October of 2004. Membership is based on character, scholarship, citizenship, service, and leadership. Seventh

## 2016-2017 FREEDOM MIDDLE SCHOOL HANDBOOK

graders are invited to become members if they have met the requirements listed by the national by-laws and maintained a B average for the first two grading periods of their seventh grade year. Eighth graders who were not invited for membership during their seventh grade year are also eligible for membership if they meet the requirements. Students who qualify on the basis of maintaining a B average are then selected based on recommendations by all of their teachers.

### **Drama Club:**

The FMS Drama Club has as its mission to develop students' skills in and appreciation for the performing arts. The members of this club prepare for the annual musical and variety show and hold twice-weekly practices (every Tuesday and Thursday from 2:45 p.m. until 4:00 p.m.) beginning in late August and ending in early May. Students learn the fundamentals of acting and theater and further experience the skills and benefits of working together as a group toward a single goal.

Other clubs and organizations available at Freedom Middle School in which students may participate include:

- Student Council
- Art Club
- Best Buddies Club
- Cubs Club
- The Freedom Family Readers

### **Athletic Programs**

The following athletic activities are available for all seventh and eighth grade students:

#### **Fall sports:**

- Football (boys)
- Cross-country (boys/girls)
- Soccer (boys/girls)
- Volleyball (girls)
- Tennis (boys/girls)
- Golf (boys/girls)

#### **Winter sports:**

- Basketball (boys/girls)
- Wrestling (boys)

#### **Fall and Winter:**

- Cheerleading (girls)
- Dance team

#### **Spring Sports:**

- Softball (girls)
- Baseball (boys)
- Track (boys/girls)

A current physical (dated within a 12-month period of the sport in which the student desires to participate) must be on file at the school before a student may try out or participate in any athletic program. The physical must be signed by a physician and must state the student is cleared to participate in any school athletic program. Students and parents must sign a concussion awareness form. A student is ineligible to participate in athletic activities if he/she has not been promoted to the next grade. Athletes must display good sportsmanship. Regulations apply to team managers as well as athletes. Complete information on eligibility of athletes may be obtained from the coaches.

#### **Social Media for Sports:**

- Instagram: fssdFMSsports
- Twitter: fssdFMSsports

## **LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER**

Library hours are from 7:00 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. The following regulations apply to the library:

- All library books are due two weeks after they are checked out and are stamped with the due date.

## 2016-2017 FREEDOM MIDDLE SCHOOL HANDBOOK

- A book may be renewed if a student still wishes to continue to use the book. The student does not have to bring the book into the library in order to renew it; he/she only has to tell a member of the media center staff.
- Students may not check out more than 3 books at a time.
- A fine of five cents per day will be charged for each overdue book. Fines will not accumulate over weekends or holidays.
- When a student checks out any materials from the library, the student and the parents automatically assume responsibility for payment of loss or damage to materials.
- If a student has an overdue book, the student may not check out another book until the overdue book is returned.

### **STATE AND FSSD POLICIES**

#### **POLICY AMENDMENTS**

These policies, guidelines, and procedures are not all inclusive. They may be amended as deemed appropriate by the Franklin Special School administration. A complete copy of FSSD Board Policy is available at [www.fssd.org](http://www.fssd.org).

#### **FRANKLIN SPECIAL BOARD of EDUCATION DISCRIMINATION /HARASSMENT POLICY (Sexual, Racial, Ethnic, Religious)**

Students shall be provided a learning environment free from sexual, racial, ethnic, and religious discrimination/harassment. It shall be a violation of this *policy for any employee or any student to discriminate* against or harass a student through disparaging conduct or communication that is sexual, racial, ethnic, or religious in nature. The following guidelines are set forth to protect students from discrimination/harassment. Student discrimination/harassment will not be tolerated. Discrimination/harassment is defined as conduct, advances, gestures or words either written or spoken of a sexual, racial, ethnic, or religious nature that:

- Unreasonably interfere with the student's work or educational opportunities; or
- Create an intimidating, hostile or offensive learning environment; or
- Imply that submission to such conduct is made an explicit or implicit term of receiving grades or credit.

#### **GANG ACTIVITY OR ASSOCIATION POLICY**

Gangs that initiate, advocate, or promote activities which threaten the safety or well-being of persons or property on school grounds or which disrupt the school environment are harmful to the educational process. The use of hand signals, graffiti, or the presence of any apparel, jewelry, accessory, or manner of grooming which, by virtue of its color, arrangement, trademark, symbol, or any other attribute that indicates or implies membership or affiliation with such a group, presents a clear and present danger. This is contrary to the school environment and educational objectives and creates an atmosphere where unlawful acts or violations of school regulations may occur. (FSSD Board Policy 6.3101)

#### **ZERO TOLERANCE OFFENSES POLICY**

**Weapons & Dangerous Instruments:** Students shall not possess, handle, transmit, use or attempt to use any dangerous weapon in school buildings or on school grounds at any time, or in school vehicles and/or buses or off the school grounds at a school sponsored activity, function or event. Dangerous weapons for the purposes of this policy shall include, but are not limited to a firearm or anything manifestly designed, made or adapted for the purpose of inflicting death or serious bodily injury or anything that in the manner of its use or intended use is capable of causing death or serious bodily injury. (FSSD Board Policy 6.309)

#### **DRUG-FREE SCHOOLS POLICY**

Students will not consume, possess, distribute or be under the influence of illegal drugs or alcoholic beverages in school buildings or on school grounds, in school vehicles or buses, or at any school-sponsored activity at any time, whether on or off school grounds. (FSSD Board Policy 6.307; TCA 39-17-417; TCA 39-17-715)

#### **UNSAFE SCHOOL CHOICE POLICY**

The Tennessee Board of Education, in compliance with the receipt of funds under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, approved an Unsafe School Choice Policy to be implemented by every Local Education Agency (LEA). This policy states that the LEA shall provide any student who attends a persistently dangerous public elementary or secondary school, as determined by the State in consultation with a representative sample of local educational agencies, or who becomes a victim of violent criminal offense, as determined by State law, while in or on the grounds of a public elementary school or secondary school that the student attends, be allowed to attend a safe public elementary school or secondary school within the local educational agency, including a public charter school.

## 2016-2017 FREEDOM MIDDLE SCHOOL HANDBOOK

Transportation shall be provided by Franklin Special School District. All staff (teachers, custodians, office workers, cafeteria workers, etc.), parents, and students must be made aware of this policy.

Likewise, parents of students who attend schools designated as “unsafe” due to a pattern of violence and/or the student is a victim of a violent crime on school premises may choose to transfer their child(ren) to a school that is not designated unsafe. Transportation shall be provided by Franklin Special School District.

### **EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES**

It is the policy of the Franklin Special School District not to discriminate on the basis of sex, race, national origin, creed, age, marital status or disability in its educational programs, activities or employment policies as required by Title VI and VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act (prohibits discrimination on the basis of race), Title IX of the 1972 educational Amendments Act (prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex), and Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of the 1973 (prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicap). Inquiries about compliances with Title VI & VII, Title IX, or Section 504 and grievance procedures may be directed to the Civil Rights Coordinator at the Franklin Special School District Board of Education at 794- 6624.

### **DIRECTORY INFORMATION STATEMENT**

The district may publicly disclose certain student information, known as directory information, at its discretion without consent. However, if you prefer NOT to have this information released, you must send a written notice annually to the school office before September 1<sup>st</sup> of the school year. Non-disclosure forms are available in the school office for your convenience. The following information is considered directory information: name, address, date and place of birth, participation in officially recognized sports, weight and height of the members of the athletic teams, dates of attendance, photographs, and other similar information that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. Public release would include, but not limited to, news media (newspaper, radio, etc.), other schools and districts (especially athletics), and the district web site.

### **TITLE VI OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964**

Title VI is a federal law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance.

### **TITLE IX OF THE EDUCATION AMENDMENTS OF 1972**

Title IX is a federal law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in any federally funded education program or activity. It states that: “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”

### **SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973**

Section 504 is a federal law designed to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education. It states that: “No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States . . . shall, solely by reason of his or her disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance . . .”

Section 504 regulations require school districts to provide a “free appropriate public education” (FAPE) to each qualified student with a disability who is in the school district’s jurisdiction, regardless of the nature or severity of the disability. Students with disabilities should be provided with educational services designed to meet their needs to the same extent as the needs of students without disabilities are met. An appropriate education for a student with a disability under the Section 504 regulations could consist of education in regular classrooms, education in regular classes with supplementary services, and/or special education and related services. To be protected under Section 504, a student must be determined to:

- have a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities (walking, breathing, learning, seeing, hearing, speaking, performing manual tasks, working, and caring for oneself);
- have a record of such impairment;
- be regarded as having such impairment.

In order to fulfill its obligations under Section 504 and the ADA, the FSSD recognizes a responsibility to avoid discrimination in policies and practices regarding its personnel and students. No discrimination against any person on the basis of a disability will knowingly be permitted in any of the district’s programs or practices. The school district has specific responsibilities under both acts, which include the responsibility to evaluate and determine if the

## 2016-2017 FREEDOM MIDDLE SCHOOL HANDBOOK

child is eligible under Section 504/ADA, and to then afford access to appropriate educational accommodations. If the parent/guardian disagrees with the determination made by the professional staff of the school district, he/she has the right to a hearing with an impartial hearing officer.

### **SAFE AND DRUG FREE SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES ACT**

The Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Act is designed to support programs that prevent violence in and around schools; that prevent the illegal use of alcohol, tobacco, and drugs; that involve parents and communities; and that are coordinated with related Federal, State, school, and community efforts and resources to foster a safe and drug-free learning environment that supports student academic achievement.

### **HOMELESS EDUCATION**

Children may qualify for consideration under the **McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act** if any of the following apply: you live in a shelter, motel, vehicle, campground, abandoned building or trailer, or other inadequate accommodations, or if you live with friends or relatives because of the inability to afford adequate housing. If any of these apply, you may be entitled to all services, rights and protection provided under this law. Children have the right to attend school. They have the right to continue in the school last attended before becoming homeless (if that is your choice and it is feasible) and receive transportation to the school last attended prior to becoming homeless if requested. Children may enroll in a school without a permanent address, school records, or immunization records in hand. The school will provide assistance in obtaining proper documentation and homeless children will receive the same special programs and services provided to all other children.

### **RIGHT TO REVIEW TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS – NCLB Title I**

Title I of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) provides parents the right to request information regarding the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teachers and any paraprofessionals providing support to the child. Parents must be provided, upon request, state qualifications and license criteria for teachers and paraprofessionals.

### **STUDENT RECORDS**

The FSSD schools collect and maintain student records to provide a basis for evaluation and delivery of services to students. The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) sets out requirements designed to protect the privacy of parents and students. Specifically, the statute governs disclosure of records maintained by educational institutions. In brief, the statute provides that such institutions must provide parents of students access to official records directly related to the student, and an opportunity for a hearing to challenge such records on the grounds that they are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise inappropriate; that institutions must obtain the consent of parents before releasing personally identifiable data about students from records to other than a specified list of exceptions; and that parents and students must be notified of these rights.

#### **Types of Information**

The school system maintains various types of records as described below:

- Attendance Records
- Scholastic Records
- Medical Records
- Discipline Records including individual assessment
- Directory Information
- System-wide group test results
- Special Education data

#### **Locations and Authorized Custodians**

The primary source of access is the school in which a student is enrolled. The principal is the authorized custodian for these records. The Director of Special Education regulates records of students involved in Special Education Programs, including the dates of individual assessments. If a student leaves the FSSD, the student record will be sent to the new school upon request from that school.

#### **Non-Release Forms**

Pursuant to the terms of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C.&1232(g), FSSD schools designate the following personally identifiable information contained in a student's educational record as "directory information": name, address, date and place of birth, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance and other similar information that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. Public release can also include, but is not

## 2016-2017 FREEDOM MIDDLE SCHOOL HANDBOOK

limited to, the district's web site. It is not our policy, however, to post student information (including first and last names or addresses) on the web site for public view.

The district assumes student/parent consent to the public release of directory information unless a Non-Release form is completed by a parent or guardian and returned to the school. **Please note that this form excludes a student's photograph and information from being included in school publications, such as the yearbook.** Forms are available in all school offices and remain active throughout a student's time in the FSSD. Only a parent or guardian may void the consent form.

### **Respect for Student Privacy Online**

When attending school events, the Franklin Special School District recognizes that attendees often want to videotape and/or photograph the students. However, in an effort to respect the privacy concerns of others, as well as to honor the state and federal privacy laws of individual students whose parents/guardians have specifically requested not to be photographed, the District strongly request that any video footage and/or still images of non-custodial students NOT be posted online to sites such as, but not limited to, Facebook, Flickr, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, etc. Although the FSSD strongly urges attendees to respect the privacy of others, families must also recognize that the District has no means for preventing attendees from taking such actions. A general courtesy is to ask for parental permission before posting video or photographs of students/families online.

### **CHILD FIND INITIATIVE**

The FSSD Child Find program identifies preschool through eighth-grade children with special education needs including mental retardation, development delays, autism, specific learning disabilities, serious emotional disturbance, multiple disabilities, intellectually gifted, traumatic brain injury, blindness, and the following impairments: speech/language, hearing, orthopedic, visual, and physical.

Screenings and/or evaluations may be provided free of charge by the school district. If deemed necessary, the child may then be referred for special education services.

### **MORE INFORMATION**

For more information, please contact FSSD Central Office @ (615) 794-6624.

Inquiries and complaints may also be directed to the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue S.W., Washington D.C. 20202; telephone: (800) 421-3481 or (877) 521-2172.

### **Rights of Children with Disabilities and Parent Responsibilities**

Parents may access information about child advocacy groups and information on how to contact the state department of education for information on student rights and services from the following agencies:

#### **Tennessee Department of Education Legal Services Division**

710 James Robertson Parkway, Andrew Johnson Tower, 5th floor, Nashville, TN 37243-0380, 615-741- 2851, Fax: 615-253-5567 or 615-532-9412.

#### **Child Advocacy Groups Contact Information**

In addition to the state and local resources available to parents and children, there are many agencies and organizations that offer support, information, training, and help in advocating for persons with disabilities in Tennessee. A few of these organizations are listed below:

- **The ARC of Williamson County**, 129 W Folkes Street, Suite 151, Franklin, TN 37064, 615-790-5815, Fax: 615-790-5891.
- **Support and Training for Exceptional Parents (STEP)**, 712 Professional Plaza, Greenville, TN 37745, 615-463-2310, Web: <http://www.tnstep.org>
- **Tennessee Protection and Advocacy (TP&A)**, 416 21st Avenue South, Nashville, TN 37212, 615-298-1080, Toll free: 1-800-287-9636, TTY: 615-298-2471, Fax: 615-298-2046
- **Tennessee Voices for Children**, 1315 8th Avenue South, Nashville, TN 37203, 615-269-7751, Fax: 615-269-8914, TN Toll Free: 800-670-9882, [TVC@tnvoices.org](mailto:TVC@tnvoices.org).

These are but a few of the organizations available to help with information, training, and advocacy. For a more extensive list visit the Tennessee Disability Services-Disability Pathfinder Database:

<http://kc.vanderbilt.edu/tennesseepathfinder/ServiceFinder/Default.aspx>

The Department of Education and Franklin Special School District do not intend this as an endorsement or recommendation for any individual organization or service represented in this list.



